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A CULTURAL LEARNING PROGRAM  
FOR ACCULTURATION:  
A SOCIAL COGNITIVE APPROACH

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

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A Cultural Learning Program for Acculturation:  
A Social Cognitive Approach

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Submitted as fulfilment of the requirements for the award of

Doctor of Philosophy

Central Queensland University

Faculty of Sciences, Engineering and Health

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## DECLARATION OF ORIGINALITY

I hereby declare that this dissertation is the product of my own work except where otherwise acknowledged in references. This is the first time this thesis has been submitted for assessment.

Angela Buntain

## ABSTRACT

This research aimed to construct a program of support for acculturating individuals through the creation of a cultural learning program that promotes a positive sense of cultural competence. Social Cognitive Theory (Bandura, 1986) was applied as a unifying framework to accommodate both the behavioural and psychological concomitants of cultural transition, in addition to other pertinent factors such as personal, behavioural and environmental elements. An initial qualitative study explored the acculturation experiences of 14 Japanese international university students studying in Australia. The data analysis revealed six common themes that influenced students' perception of acculturation: Language, Racism, Age, Social Connectedness, Self-efficacy and Wellbeing. These themes were subsequently incorporated into the design of a one-day cultural learning program involving group-focused participative activities, and interactions with Australians in local settings. Nine Japanese university students participated in the cultural program and 11 others were represented in the control group. Socio-demographic data were collected and psychological measures were assessed both at baseline and 2 weeks following the facilitation of the cultural learning program. The control group recorded no significant improvements on any measured variable over time. In contrast, the cultural group revealed significant increases in cultural self-efficacy, satisfaction with life and reassurance of worth; with decreases in anxiety and stress. Interaction effects also revealed a relative decrease in anxiety, and social anxiety and distress measures for the cultural group compared to increases in these measures for the control group.

Cultural group participants were also found to have a significantly higher reassurance of worth than their control group counterparts. These findings provide evidence of the benefits of support programs for acculturating individuals, specifically in relation to the positive effects on wellbeing outcomes.

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## CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW

In an age of transportation and technological advancements, the world has taken on the appearance of a global village, with neighbours represented as adjoining continents rather than bordering states and countries. The increasingly accepted concept of globalisation also reflects this sense of unity, where the developed western world appears bound together in both prosperity and disaster. Technological advancements in areas such as travel and communication mediums represent other vital sources of global unity. People can bridge vast gaps in distance between lands with instantaneous contact via the Internet, or book travel to any country through the expanding low-cost worldwide transportation industry. Omnipresent, and often regarded as omnipotent, the media are another avenue that keep us abreast of events transpiring worldwide. Indeed, world events such as war, oppression, and the economic disparities of nations may be closely linked to the convergence of ethnic peoples (Hermans & Kempen, 1998). This may be witnessed through the steady stream of migrants seeking relocation into different countries and different cultures either as refugees, migrants or sojourners in business and student roles.

The potential tribulations associated with culture contact are illustrated in the following vignette:

Vanessa is an Australian working as an English language instructor in Osaka, Japan. She has been offered a position teaching English to upper management in a Sanyo branch, and has been informed that she is required to meet the President of the branch before

commencing work that evening. Vanessa attempts to tidy her hair and straighten out her blouse as she gingerly makes her way up the street from the subway station. She has just experienced for the first time the peak-hour pandemonium that the Japanese subway system is notorious for and she wills herself to shrug off the uneasy feeling of this abject violation of personal space. She signs in at the front desk of the company and is swiftly escorted to the President's office by an interpreter with a strong American pronunciation to his English. After pocketing business cards from the interpreter and two of his colleagues she enters the spacious office of the president.

The room is hazy with smoke and the smell is overpowering for Vanessa who is a staunch anti-smoking advocate since the passing of her father from lung cancer. She waves her hand at the heady plumes and makes a grimacing face while wondering if anticancer campaigns actually exist in Japan. The president moves towards her and nods his head slightly while presenting his business card with both hands. Vanessa takes the card with her left hand while extending her right for a handshake. She notices that his business card won't fit into her jacket pocket, which is brimming with the newly acquired cards, so she shoves it into her pant pocket instead. Vanessa wonders how many more cards she will have to receive before the evening is over and whether recycling paper is a priority for Japan.

She is invited to sit at a low coffee table where she discovers the culprit – a large cigar smouldering in a full ashtray. She still feels overheated from the subway ride and now her stomach turns with the odour of the cigar. She reluctantly takes a seat in front of three Japanese businessmen who are barely recognisable through the smoke. She is offered tea and politely refuses. Vanessa doubts her ability to swallow anything under these conditions and has no intention of prolonging this greeting or her escape to fresh air. She answers, in her opinion, some tedious questions about Australian life – where she grew up, what she likes about Japan, does she have kangaroos in her backyard, and does she drink Fosters beer. She notices the President nod to the interpreter who seamlessly guides her out of the office where she is grateful to be acquainted with her classroom.

Short of folding the business card into a paper crane or wiping it with her nose, Vanessa's treatment of the President's card was culturally insensitive. Social etiquette governs the exchange of business cards in Japan and essentially a card represents the face of the owner. It is customary for recipients to receive the card with both hands while bowing in salutation. One should then spend a cursory amount of time studying the card and perhaps commenting on the owner's name or position in the company before placing the card in front of them on the table face up. Putting the card away too prematurely is akin to dismissing the card owner from the social exchange; and a trouser pocket is an appalling location for the President's "face".

Vanessa's dishevelled appearance following her subway commute would not have impressed her new employer either, as the Japanese highly regard outward presentation. Additionally, tea is an indispensable custom that spans the home and business environments for many formal and informal occasions such as greetings, business discussions and ceremonies. According to polite custom, tea should never be refused regardless of whether one is genuinely thirsty. Furthermore, the annoyance Vanessa displayed to the cigar smoke was neither subtle nor polite.

Socialisation instils in Japanese people a strong sense of concern for the thoughts and feelings of others (Lebra, 1976). The intensity of concern toward others parallels the status the other person holds in the hierarchy of society. Elders and superiors receive the utmost regard (Kondo, 1990). For example, some businessmen feel obligated to accept an invitation to go drinking with their boss despite being allergic to beer. One individual stated that he could not refuse this invitation, but if he thought he might die from an allergic reaction, he would consider saying no (Personal communication, 2000). The businessman's actions demonstrate complete deference toward one's *senpai* (senior), an entrenched cultural avoidance of conflict, and a desire to maintain group harmony. Vanessa's hypothetical refusal of tea due to an upset stomach appears insensitive to these concerns.

What does Vanessa's scenario reveal about cultural relations between Australians and Japanese? Will there come a time when Vanessa realises the cultural mistakes she unknowingly made, and is there a better way to facilitate this knowledge? What impact did her behaviour have on her Japanese audience?

Were they offended or merely resigned to expect ignorance from *gaijin* (foreigners)? Unquestionably both parties would not have thought the encounter was to their liking, but was that enough to cause serious damage to their relationship or to their individual wellbeing? Where is the harm in cultural miscommunication and why do we care about these differences?

The issues at hand have been explored in several decades of literature spanning psychological, anthropological, sociological, political, linguistic and economic research. The field of cross-cultural psychology has dedicated a vast amount of research to examining cultural diversity and the effects that transpire when people from different cultures come in contact with one another. As countries progressively transform into interconnected world societies, cross-cultural psychologists have busily endeavoured to understand, conceptualise and measure the psychological changes that ensue (Hermans & Kempen, 1998). Vanessa's vignette would be a familiar example to cross-cultural psychologists of the challenges of acculturation. Acculturation involves cultural changes that occur as a result of continuous contact between two or more distinct cultural groups (Berry, 2001). Whilst it was originally defined as the study of two cultures, typical acculturation research focuses upon the changes to a minority culture as a function of residing within a majority culture.

Interest in the area of acculturation fluctuates with international events such as war and oppression; domestic issues relating to globalisation, population and economic growth; and the ever-changing public opinion on migration policies. Indeed, the last decade has witnessed numerous events of international significance that have highlighted the interconnectedness of the world's

population and the effects of culture contact. Some of the major events pertinent to Australians include the September 11 attack, the international alliances forged during the “War on Terror”, the global financial crisis, the swine flu pandemic and the devastating earthquake and tsunami in Japan. With respect to Australia and similar pluralist countries, acculturation research has enjoyed a long history spanning policy changes from the closed white-only restrictions, to a national discourse reflecting a modern vision of multiculturalism.

Acculturation research appears largely focused on measuring the ‘product’ of cultural transitions. This is reflected in a vast amount of research dedicated to the construction of scales, which attempt to measure the outcome of minorities’ cultural adaptation. Essentially, migrants have been assessed as adopting one strategy of acculturation such as assimilation (Berry, Kim, Power, Young, & Bujaki, 1989), and are subsequently believed to reside within that restrictive category for the duration of their lives within their new culture (Rudmin, 2003b). This perspective does not accommodate an evolving concept of cultural change, and problematically presents both human development and cultural learning as immutable and rigid. Indeed, the empirical scales employed to measure adaptation rarely acknowledge the mutually interactive elements that create continual change within individual, behavioural and social domains. Consequently, the dynamic acculturative process is seldom captured through cross-sectional quantitative measures, and often reflects an outsider’s exploration of an insider’s experience.

Acculturation research also appears fragmented, with abundant interest appearing in two primary areas including theory building (i.e., stage theories and

conceptual models) and investigations into the negative aspects of cultural transition (i.e., acculturation stress and psychopathology). A comparative paucity of studies, however, have been dedicated to devising preventative or treatment programs aimed at maintaining and enhancing psychological wellbeing for acculturating individuals.

The behavioural changes required to negotiate daily interactions in a new culture are commonly measured within acculturation scale items but are seldom incorporated within the conceptual framework of acculturation theory. Behavioural skills have largely been studied separately as a conceptually distinct aspect of cultural adaptation (Zea, Aner-Self, Birman, & Buki, 2003). Behavioural adjustments from cultural influence appear predominantly accommodated in interdisciplinary research relating to intercultural communication. This is in spite of research demonstrating the positive influence of behavioural skills (i.e., intercultural competence) on psychological outcomes for acculturating individuals (Chapdelaine & Alexitch, 2004; Torres & Rollock, 2007; Ward, 1997). Indeed, cultural learning programs that promote cultural competence have demonstrated efficacy in contributing to travellers' feelings of wellbeing and self-confidence, positive estimations of intercultural relationship skills, and the development of appropriate perceptions relative to members of another culture (Black & Mendhenhall, 1990; Deshpande & Viswesvaran, 1992). These findings question the current focus on training culturally competent counsellors to treat psychological symptoms of cultural adaptation, rather than skilling travellers in the art of a healthy, positive cultural exchange.

The phenomenon of acculturation is indisputably complex and arguably diffuse. The distinction between psychological and behavioural adjustments during cultural transition has attracted an “either-or” approach to research, where investigations take the form of studies into one of the areas to the exclusion of the other. This thesis proposes that both psychological and behavioural components of acculturation are important aspects requiring simultaneous consideration, in addition to other contextual factors relating to the new cultural environment. Acculturation research appears in need of a unifying framework that can accommodate a dynamic and continually evolving state of cultural adjustment. Such a framework should afford equal status to both the psychological and behavioural components of acculturation, as well as other personal and environmental elements related to an individual’s acculturative journey. Bandura’s Social Cognitive Theory (1986) is robust enough to fulfil these requirements.

Social Cognitive Theory (SCT) incorporates a triadic causative structure where change is viewed in the context of the social environment, behavioural actions, and the individual’s cognitive, affective and biological features. The socio-cognitive perspective also places emphasis on understanding how individuals learn new information, and outlines methods of facilitating learning by strengthening perceptions of performance capabilities and coping skills (Bandura, 1986). The current program of research employed SCT in a two-part investigation whereby socio-cognitive elements were initially investigated to determine their influence on the experience of acculturation. Secondly, socio-cognitive modes of learning were utilised in the development of a cultural

learning program to assist Japanese university students during their acculturation in Australia.

Due to the research being located in Australasia, it is not surprising that the highest source of international students at Australian universities is from the Asian regions, with Japan representing a consistent source of students following the full-fee paying tertiary option introduced in 1986 (Anderssen & Kumagai, 1996). During the past two decades, international education has represented an area of prolific expansion in Australian migration trends. International education in the form of university placements and English language tuition currently ranks as the highest export service industry (Australian Education International, 2011), and has become a source of revenue upon which many Australian universities have come to rely (Marginson, 2008).

Japan enjoys a distinct cultural homogeneity with considerable differences in cultural norms, customs, and values (Matsumoto, 1996). During their time in Australia, Japanese university students will undoubtedly be confronted with a multicultural society imbued with divergent social attitudes and behaviours from those they have been accustomed to whilst growing up in Japan. The geographical location of Japan as an island detached from mainland Asia has contributed to an enduring history of isolation from foreign cultural influence and a truly unique, indigenous culture. It was therefore anticipated that Japanese students might similarly possess unique acculturative needs during their transition into an unfamiliar cultural environment.

Japanese university students are consistently underrepresented in research investigating the acculturative experiences of international students in Australia.

Japanese are often grouped into larger studies of 'Asian' samples (i.e., India, China, Korea, etc.), where various scaled measurements of cultural adjustment are implemented. This practice invariably reveals limited within-culture data and typically lacks cultural sensitivity, as the variables explored are those prescribed by the researcher and not by the individual experiencing acculturation. This study, therefore, initially adopted a qualitative approach to investigating acculturation from the perspective of a distinct and relatively homogenous group.

An additional consideration was that Japanese have often been described as stoic and emotionally restrained when issues of assistance, support or psychological care have been explored (Furnham, Ota, Tatsuro, Koyasu, 2000; Sue & Sue, 2003). The typical Japanese international student will seek academic support during his or her stay overseas, whilst favouring culturally defined strategies such as willpower or peer support when psychological issues of stress or depression are present (Nippoda, 2002). This is further compounded by the independent cultural orientation of service provision in Australian universities, whereby students are expected to use their own initiative in seeking and accessing assistance (Beard, 2008). This contrasts markedly with Japanese cultural values, which promote a fundamental dependency on seniors and authority figures to provide appropriate instruction and guidance (Lebra, 1976). Hence, a key objective in this research was to develop a culturally sensitive and accessible support program for Japanese students that would facilitate cultural competence and wellbeing during acculturation.

### Purpose and Significance of Current Study

The principal purpose of this research was to gain a greater understanding of the daily experiences of acculturating individuals, with a view to developing a culturally appropriate and accessible program of support. This thesis also presents Social Cognitive Theory as a unifying framework that accommodates both behavioural and psychological adjustment, which are often studied distinctly in acculturation research. This research employed a two-part investigation into acculturation. The initial study involved a qualitative exploration of the meaning and relationship of social cognitive elements in the everyday acculturative experiences of Japanese university students. The second study involved the construction and evaluation of a cultural learning program promoting a positive sense of cultural competence.

The significance of this study lies in the following novel paths of exploration:

- (i) A limited number of studies in psychology have been dedicated to understanding the acculturation difficulties experienced by Japanese university students in Australia. Fewer still have explored these issues through a qualitative approach where understanding and meaning is derived from the perspective of the Japanese students experiencing acculturation.
- (ii) Acculturation research has predominantly adopted large-scale explorations of factors applied to heterogeneously grouped populations (i.e., “Asians”). This study samples a relatively homogenous group of Japanese students, which allows for the understanding and development of a cultural learning

program for one nationality, in a two-stage research design that may be applied to other ethnic groups.

(iii) Psychological studies of acculturation appear focused upon conceptualising, predicting and measuring factors that impact negatively upon cultural adaptation. This study attempts to develop an intervention program that draws upon the positive aspects of cultural interactions to ultimately improve acculturation experiences and cultural competence.

(iv) Social Cognitive Theory has not previously been applied as an encompassing theoretical framework for both investigating acculturation issues and facilitating learning and support during acculturation.

The following chapters will include a literature review on acculturation research. Chapter 2 will discuss the historical considerations of migration in Australia including current immigration trends, and those involving Japanese university students in particular. Chapter 3 will review and critique the theories and assessment of acculturation before exploring existing research involving international tertiary students. The concept of cultural competence will be addressed in Chapter 4 along with coverage of existing programs that promote cultural knowledge and skills - commonly referred to as 'intercultural training'. Finally, Bandura's SCT will be introduced and discussed in relation to a cultural context in Chapter 5.

## CHAPTER TWO: ACCULTURATION IN THE AUSTRALIAN CONTEXT

### What is Acculturation?

Similar to the multitude of disparate descriptions for the term 'culture' (Segall, 1986), acculturation is also lacking a universal definition. It was initially referred to by Powell (1880) as the psychological changes induced by cross-cultural imitation (as cited in Rudmin, 2003a). While the definition of acculturation is broad and fragmented, it essentially involves changes in cultural attitudes, values, and behaviours that occur when two distinct cultures are placed in continuous and direct contact (Redfield, Linton, & Herskovits, 1936). Over the 85 years in which it has been studied by various disciplines, acculturation has reflected the alternating perspectives of host nations to racially disparate groups, both intra-nationally with indigenous groups, and internationally with migrants. The historical conceptions of acculturation appear to mirror the societal and political perspectives of their time. Hence, acculturation in Australia has moved from the staunch assimilation edict where migrants were required to abandon their ethnic traditions and embrace Australian values and customs, to a more inclusive integration and multicultural model of immigration reform.

Australia may be viewed as an infant nation in comparison with the history of other developed countries. Australia has chiefly been shaped through migration. Due to the reciprocal nature of acculturation, the social and cultural environment into which migrants enter should be taken into account when exploring any research into individual acculturative experiences. Therefore a

brief review of Australia's migration history will aid further discussion of intercultural relations. In addition, the unique cultural challenges faced by international students, and more specifically Japanese university students, will be discussed in this historical context.

### Australia's History of Immigration

In 1952, historian R. M. Crawford declared, 'the history of Australia is a chapter in the history of migration' (as cited in Wilton & Bosworth, 1984, p. 6). This statement coincided with great efforts to create an ideal migration scheme that would allow Australia to prosper, fuelled by an increasing population base. Australia's history of immigration began with the 'White Australia Policy', reflected in the Immigration Act of 1901 (Castles, Alcorso, Rando, & Vasta, 1992). As an isolated continent of 7 million, white Australians prided themselves on being derived from almost exclusively British stock, and the most British colony of all in terms of ancestry (Wilton & Bosworth, 1984). Yet, in the post-WWII era, immigration became a necessary commodity to help industrialise and populate a burgeoning nation.

During the late 1940s to the mid 1960s migrants were allowed entry on assimilation conditions. Such provisions were purported to ensure the protection of national identity - or British colonialism - from foreign influence. It was, therefore, demanded that migrants embrace Queen Elizabeth II as their new sovereign ruler; adopt the English language; refrain from the public use of their native tongue; and assume other supposedly 'Australian' cultural values and activities (Castles, Kalantzis, Cope, & Morrissey, 1988).

The assimilation perspective on migration was also advocated by some prominent psychologists. Active in the analysis of immigration and settlement policies were social psychologists such as Ronald Taft, a past president of the Australian Psychological Society. Early assimilation studies on immigrants were conducted in relation to his 28-item 'Scale of Australianism', which measured assimilation through opinion convergence (Taft, 1962). Migrants were asked to agree or disagree with opinionative statements that were then compared against the responses of general Australians. Clearly indicative of the discriminatory attitude of the time, statements included 'A country is far more enjoyable to live in when the people come from a wide range of racial and National backgrounds' (an Australian would disagree); 'One can hardly have more than one or two true friends in a lifetime' (disagree); and, 'Mass-produced goods are better than hand-made goods' (agree) (Taft, 1962, p. 48). With dated and ambiguous subject content, the Australianism Scale has not lasted the test of time. Rather, it illustrates the cultural bias of early studies into acculturation and the reactionary intensity of such culture contact.

Overseas researchers such as John Berry (1970) and his colleagues were also attracted by new government policies on Aborigines, which proposed assimilation over current segregation. Berry, who is largely credited for the fourfold acculturation stratagem discussed later, dedicated three decades working actively in acculturation research, and developing a framework to explain the complexities of this phenomenon.

This period of research in the late 1960s coincided with growing political embarrassment of the White Australia Policy, which undermined expanding

international positions in trade relations with Japan and South-East Asia. There was also pressure from the international stigma of Australia's treatment of Aborigines as virtual apartheid (Castles et al., 1988). The demise of the discriminatory policy came as the British source of migrants had diminished, and therefore no longer provided a basis for substantial population growth. Similarly, the Nordic Nations (Switzerland, Sweden), and 'tolerated' Europeans (e.g., Italians, Greeks, Slovaks, Croatians) failed to provide adequate population growth (Wilton & Bosworth, 1984). Australia entered into an era of multicultural reform, where the policies of assimilation were treated with contempt and the concept of 'integration' heralded a new chapter in immigration history.

Integration was born of the belief that migrants do not come from culturally inferior backgrounds, and that much of their ethnic culture should not be forgotten or discarded upon entry into Australia. It was the United States, another relatively young nation, which principally influenced the inception of precepts of integration into Australian immigration policies. American scholars were beginning to influence political circles with their arguments against the conformity and deception of the 'melting pot' metaphor in academic literature (D'Innocenzo & Sirefman, 1992). Research was consistently suggesting that most migrants were retaining their distinctive aspects of cultural identity in spite of the pressures to conform to native standards. This finding was referred to as producing a 'salad bowl' effect, wherein each component, while mixed, can still be clearly distinguished from the other (D'Innocenzo & Sirefman, 1992). Gradually, Australia began to eradicate discriminatory migrant tests, which had prevented Asians from entry due to limited language proficiency. Over time,

more and more skilled non-European professionals were encouraged to apply for visas, while calls to embrace our emerging pluralist society dominated the media (Wilston & Bosworth, 1984).

### Current Trends in Australian Migration

Current figures on Australian immigration illustrate that over 22% of Australians are born overseas, with 10% of Australian born residents having at least one parent born abroad (Australian Bureau of Statistics [ABS], 2006). The United Kingdom (20.4%) and New Zealand (9.1%) continue to represent the two largest groups of migrant settlers in Australia (Department of Immigration and Multicultural Affairs [DIMIA], 2010). However, over the past decade the number of migrants born in the People's Republic of China has almost tripled (2.8% in 1996 to 6% in 2009), with the number of Indian migrants also dramatically increasing (2% in 1996 to 5.3% in 2009) to represent the fourth largest ethnicity to make up the population of overseas-born migrants (DIMIA, 2010). Statistics also reveal that one in six families in Australia comprise a marriage between an overseas-born and an Australian-born partner. Moreover, approximately three-quarters of children from migrant families marry people of different cultural backgrounds to their own (DIMIA, 1999). Future projections, therefore, indicate that the population will become more culturally diverse if these recent trends in intercultural marriages continue. In addition, refugees and people seeking residency for humanitarian reasons also comprise a sizeable component of Australia's overall migrant intake, with 750,000 people from over 100 different countries accepted since WWII (DIMIA, 2010).

Media headlines pertaining to asylum seekers appear divisive and often draw heated public debate. Australia's approach to asylum seeker and refugee needs has received constant scrutiny with events such as the Tampa Crisis in 2001 ("children overboard affair"), where the Howard government refused entry to mainland Australia to 460 Afghani refugees whom they falsely reported as throwing children into the ocean to ensure naval intervention (Nelson, 2001). This was followed by the Christmas Island boat tragedy in 2010, where an estimated 50 men, women and children seeking asylum died as their boat smashed against rocks in high seas. Both incidents sparked public debate about people-smugglers, Australia's policy of offshore detention centres, and the comparatively low refugee intake of Australia compared with other developed nations.

Other areas of public and professional concern involve issues of resettlement and detention of refugee populations. Psychological studies on the negative psychological sequelae experienced by refugees as a function of prolonged detention suggest the need for changes to current immigration policies (Gridley, Burke, & Pham, 2008; Murray, Davidson, & Schweitzer, 2008). Individual cases such as Cornelia Rae's mistaken imprisonment in an Australian detention centre, being a German immigrant with permanent residency status, exemplify concerns regarding the operational standards within these institutions.

Understandably, the trend in psychological research has been toward the study of, and intervention methods for, disadvantaged refugees and migrants. This is predominantly due to their vulnerability in relation to issues involving trauma, physical and mental health, finances, prejudice, and resettlement. Consequently, other categories of migrants such as sojourners – temporary

residents such as international university students, occupy a comparatively minor space in current academic literature regarding acculturation and interventions. This is also presumably owing to the relative economic security of these migrants, the temporary nature of their visit, and the assumption of ongoing support through the sojourner's affiliated educational or business institution. However, the cross-cultural implications of psychological service delivery coupled with the unique problems faced by international students suggest further consideration of this vulnerable group is warranted.

#### *International University Students in Australia*

University students were chosen for this current program of study as they represent an area of migration that has experienced rapid and continued growth in a relatively brief period of time. Australia is reportedly the third most popular English-speaking destination for overseas students, and the fifth most popular worldwide (Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations [DEEWR], 2010). In 2005, international students comprised approximately 18% of all university students in Australia, before rising to 26% in 2007 (ABS, 2007). There are currently 267 164 international students recorded in enrolment statistics in Australian public universities (DEEWR, 2010).

The high demand for overseas education does not appear isolated to Australia. The United Kingdom and United States have experienced similar rises in international student rates, and remain the two most desirable countries for prospective students in the Asian region (Nippoda, 2002). Global interest in English language education, comparatively lower tuition fees, and Australia's

physical proximity to Asian countries are reasons underpinning the demand for educational services (Marginson, 2008). However, studies focusing on the adjustment of international university students to life in Australia have not matched the burgeoning rate of student growth.

Some academics may experience a sense of unease at the abrupt change in the form of active marketing of higher education opportunities, and viewing the student as a client or consumer (Ward, Bochner, & Furnham, 2001). Studying the adjustment of international students, therefore, treads a fine line between market research into customer feedback and valuable psychological contributions. Hence, Ward et al. (2001) stress the importance of theory driven, culturally sensitive research that offers possible extension to other cultural groups as important factors relevant to the development of studies in this area.

The challenges faced by the average tertiary student are significant without added complications of language barriers, culturally divergent norms and values, separation from family and familiar support networks, and social difficulties faced by international students. Bochner (1972) reminds us that international students are predisposed to difficulties inherent to their status as an adolescent or young adult, and a student. Hence, it is important to remain aware of the difficult stage of development encountered by international students in addition to the unique challenges of acculturation.

Psychological research into the difficulties experienced by international students suggests the need for extra support for these individuals (Chapdelaine & Alexitch, 2004; Leder & Forgasz, 2004; Leung, 2001; Rosenthal, Russell, & Thomson, 2006; Zheng, Sang, & Wang, 2003). Comparative studies in the United

States conducted on international and American tertiary students indicate that the former group appear less involved in campus activities and experience greater difficulty, particularly in: interacting socially with other students, adjusting to academic work, managing finances and new living conditions, and coping with curriculum and teaching procedures (Day & Hajj, 1986; Kaczmarker, Matlock, Merta, Ames, & Ross, 1994). Australian studies have found similar results, with international students reporting greater difficulty making friends, working productively with other students, and overcoming feelings of loneliness (Leder & Forgasz, 2004; Leung, 2001; Rosenthal et al., 2006).

These difficulties appear further compounded by the student's culturally specific preferences for programs of support or intervention. Asian international students have been found to rely upon in-group social support resources such as family and friends, and medical-based treatment as opposed to psychological counselling (Sue & Sue, 2003). Furthermore, international students are more likely to access counselling services for educational, vocational or medical problems, rather than seeking assistance for personal issues (Pedersen, 1994). This is an important limitation to the provision of culturally appropriate therapeutic services that offer counselling support to international students. The presence or absence of such services appears a moot point when international students appear to refrain from accessing them due to cultural stigmas associated with mental health.

The volume of international students currently studying in Australia provides a compelling argument for the need to investigate alternative approaches to facilitating a positive experience of cultural adjustment. International

university students represent a financially lucrative revenue source that has benefits for tertiary institutions and the wider community. The intercultural interactions of studying abroad also benefit the home and host countries by increasing campus diversity, linguistic exchange, and opportunities to establish global professional networks. Furthermore, international university students have reportedly gained several non-academic benefits from studying abroad such as increased self-confidence, greater self-awareness, and heightened cultural sensitivity (Clyne & Rizvi, 1998). Thus, investing research into the needs of international clientele might ensure that Australia remains competitive with other international university providers, in addition to encouraging diversity, global networking, and contributing positively to students' personal development.

#### *Japanese University Students in Australia*

In 2005, Japanese international students entering Australia for study purposes numbered approximately 25, 600, and Japan was the third highest Asian contributor to tertiary study behind China and Korea (ABS, 2007). However, Japanese students appear to be underrepresented in Australian acculturation research. The typical Japanese student studying in an Australian tertiary institution is believed to be female, between 20-24 years of age, and studying an Arts degree (commerce, education and science were also in moderate demand in survey results) (Anderssen & Kumagai, 1996). Various reasons have been put forward for the rise in female students, with the majority of researchers citing both economic and societal changes in Japan (Anderssen & Kumagai, 1996). Until recently, the Japanese Yen had been at historically high levels relative to the

Australian Dollar and other major world currencies. Japanese families have consequently enjoyed increased buying power that has allowed them to entertain the prospect of their child studying abroad (Ayano, 2006). Additionally, traditional societal norms that expect males to establish a career and women to nurture a family appear increasingly at odds with the desires of Japanese youths. Women especially are dissatisfied with the limited wages and positions offered by Japanese companies, and are looking to increase their qualifications and other marketable human capital such as English fluency through foreign university placements (Anderssen & Kumagai, 1996).

Approximately 80% of Japanese students continue to overlook Australia in preference for educational pursuits in other nations (Japanese Ministry of Education, Culture, Sport, Science & Technology, 2004). The United States and United Kingdom remain the favoured destinations among Japanese students looking to study abroad (Ayano, 2006). Similarly, Japan has never been a traditional nation that Australia has targeted in the promotion of tertiary education. Australia has actively marketed educational programs predominantly in Malaysia, Singapore and Hong Kong since the implementation of full-fee paying placements in 1986 (Andressen & Kumagai, 1996). Nevertheless, Australia provides Japan with a proximal distance, a significant history of trade, free-trade agreements pertaining to the recognition of educational qualifications, and a comparatively inexpensive cost of tertiary enrolment. It is timely, therefore, to investigate the acculturative needs of Japanese university students. It is also prudent to explore appropriate methods for improving the intercultural experience of Japanese students during their adjustment to Australian university life.

Japanese students were also chosen for this study due to the unique cultural homogeneity of this ethnic group, and the cultural distance between Australia and Japan. Japan's history of development created a uniquely isolated country both in terms of geography and culture. Whilst no culture is completely homogeneous or unique, Bochner (1982) suggests that Japan is close to this definition. A monocultural or homogenous society is typically identified by societal perceptions that mixed cultures are undesirable and lead to negative outcomes, coupled with minimal actual or perceived cultural diversity in society (Ward et al., 2001). Japanese mainlanders typically grown up with limited contact with foreigners in their homeland, which in turn impacts upon their ease of adjustment when travelling abroad (Nippoda, 2002).

“Cultural distance” is the original term used to describe the degree of difference in cultural norms, values and behaviours between one's heritage culture and the host culture (Berry & Sam, 1997). Early studies involving sojourners discovered increased psychological adjustment problems as a function of the disparity between the minority and majority cultures (Babiker, Cox, & Miller, 1980). This finding has since been replicated in numerous studies (Furnham & Bochner, 1982; Furukawa, 1997; Galchenko & Van de Vijver, 2006; Redmond & Bunyi, 1993; Searl & Ward, 1990; Ward & Kennedy, 1993) and is decidedly relevant to Japanese and Australian relations. The significant difference between these two countries with respect to cultural norms, expectations and behaviours may be partially explained by their cultural orientation - *individualism* versus *collectivism*.

Triandis (1989) delineated a distinction in cross-cultural psychology between what he described as individualist and collectivist cultures. According to this theory an individualist culture places greater priority on personal goals over the goals of the collective, and individuals operate independent of social pressures toward conformity. This cultural label is commonly associated with European – American cultures or the collectively termed “West”, to which Australia is observed to belong despite its geographic location. Conversely, Asian countries, or the “East”, are often portrayed as representative of the antithesis to individualism. Japan has often been the prototypical example of collectivism; which is conceptualised as placing paramount importance on the in-group or collective, where individuals subordinate their personal aims to group goals. Collectivist cultures are geared toward fitting in and belonging, rather than standing out (De Vos, 1985).

The norms of collectivism are often reflected in Japanese culture through religion, philosophy and socialisation (Weisz, Rothbaum, & Blackburn, 1984). For example, the indigenous Shinto religion promotes God in all living things and teaches the individual to view themselves as one with nature, not as the master or controller of the elements but one of the many pebbles that scatter the beach (Kondo, 1990). Similarly, Zen Buddhism promotes an acceptance of existing realities and the eradication of intense desires for realities that do not exist. Both religions appear to foster an almost fatalistic sense of acceptance, where satisfaction or goodness of fit for things as they exist is promoted (Weisz et al., 1984). Hence, Japanese often embrace the maintenance of collectivist harmony, and are resistant to instigating change or disrupting collective objectives.

Triandis and colleagues also identified that the purest collectivist cultures such as Japan tended to include hierarchical, vertical social structures (Triandis, McCusker, & Hui, 1990). This is witnessed by males often superordinating females; older individuals being shown greater deference than one's peers and juniors; and the family unit often taking a secondary role to the demand of higher hierarchy - such as one's employer. Interactions with higher vertical members are socially sanctioned by typical behavioural observances to the formality of language, the use of eye contact and the depth of one's bow. Alternatively, individuals of the same age often share a relaxed intimacy devoid of such mandated customs (De Vos, 1985). In Japan, friendship groups can be described as one's "uchi" (inside) or in-group, connoting belonging or attachment (Kondo, 1990). In-group members often share mutual opinions, avoid disagreements, and ultimately value the concept of conformity, saving face and harmonious interpersonal relations (Matsumoto, 1996).

In contrast, Australia has been ranked as the second highest individualistic nation behind the United States; in accordance with Hofstede's (2001) research into cross-cultural differences in work values. Hofstede's original study (1980) involved 117, 000 employees of multinational companies in 40 nations, and compared individual and group relations within each cultural group. Four bipolar dimensions emerged for his study (individualism-collectivism, uncertainty avoidance, power distance, and masculinity-femininity) of which Individualism-Collectivism has received the most attention. This is perhaps owing to its observable distinctions that dictate many noticeable differences across cultural

groups. Indeed, Japan ranked roughly at the mid-point (46) for individualism when compared with the other surveyed countries (Hofstede, 2001).

The disparity between Japan and Australia with respect to individualism-collectivism, religion, language, social norms, customs and climate all indicate a significant level of cultural distance. As cultural distance has reliably been identified as a contributing factor to increased acculturation difficulties in sojourners, it was anticipated that these differences would impact upon the experience of the population group currently under investigation.

### CHAPTER THREE: THEORIES, LIMITATIONS AND RESEARCH INTO ACCULTURATION

The process of cultural change has been studied in terms of measuring what has been described in varying terminology as the individual's *original*, *minority*, or *heritage* culture, in relation to the individual's *secondary*, *dominant*, or *mainstream* culture (Ryder, Alden, & Paulhus, 2000). For the purposes of this research the less pejorative terms of "heritage" and "mainstream" culture will be applied. There are currently two major conceptual models that explain acculturation in terms of one's heritage and mainstream culture, through either a linear or bilinear representation.

#### Linear Perspective

The linear model reflects the process of assimilation, whereby migrants ultimately shed their heritage culture during the course of acquiring the mainstream culture (Ryder et al., 2000). Essentially, individuals are believed to be adopting the attitudes, values and behaviours of their new society's culture, while gradually relinquishing those of their ethnic culture. Acculturation is therefore viewed on a continuum with a starting point represented by individuals highly entrenched in their heritage culture. As individuals acquire new knowledge about mainstream values, and begin to practice these aspects of culture, they move toward biculturalism. Finally, success is believed to be the arrival at virtually exclusive adoption and attachment to the mainstream culture at the expense of a diminished heritage culture.

Such a perspective is in accordance with Gordon's (1964) assimilation model, which suggests that entry and immersion in the mainstream culture is inextricably linked with the loss of heritage values, resulting in the eventual disappearance of the ethnic group. In this view, it is commonly conceived that the ultimate goal of migrants is to achieve social acceptance by members of the mainstream culture. Until such time, the individual will suffer alienation and isolation that can lead to stress and psychological illnesses if the process of assimilation becomes stagnant (Ruiz, 1981). Much research has been dedicated to this approach to acculturation in terms of assimilation. Research that has investigated generational status; age at immigration; years lived in the new country; and other demographic variables, has demonstrated a greater adaptation to the mainstream culture with the passage of time (Ryder et al., 2000).

Empirical measures of the linear approach have largely utilised quantitative measures in the depiction of acculturation on a continuum; with heritage culture on one end of the spectrum, mainstream culture on the other, and biculturalism in the middle. For example, the Suinn-Lew Asian Self-Identity Acculturation Scale (SL-ASIA) is the most widely used Asian acculturation scale which adopts the linear construct, with one pole indicating high heritage culture, the other pole representing high mainstream culture, and biculturalism as a midpoint (Suinn, Rickard-Figueroa, Lew, & Vigil, 1987). More recently the SL-ASIA has been altered to include a multidimensional approach in assessing cognitive, behavioural and attitudinal components of Asian and American acculturation (Abe, Okazaki, & Goto, 2001; Ponterotto, Baluch, & Carielli, 1998). These revisions occurred in response to an increasing body of research

demonstrating the empirical superiority to a bidirectional model, as a broader and more valid framework in which to view acculturation (Ryder et al., 2000).

The self-evident flaw of the linear approach is the continued presence of heritage attitudes, behaviours and social norms long after contact with other cultures has occurred. According to the linear approach one would expect unique cultures to simply die out, and a homogenous world-culture to be left in its place. This perspective appears inconsistent with current multicultural societies wherein individuals demonstrate the desire to engage with their ancestral roots, rather than to shy away from them. This may be witnessed by the recent popularity in Australian television programs that offer genealogical exploration of one's family tree, and documentaries that follow first-generation Australians as they acquaint themselves with life in the cultural homeland of their migrant parents.

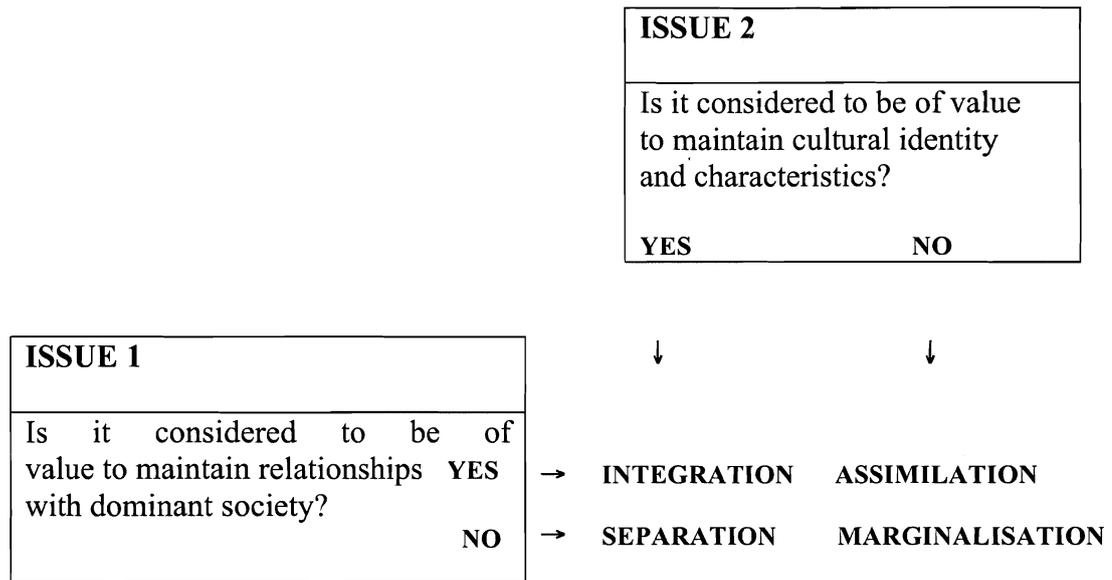
Another obvious criticism of acculturation viewed along a continuum is the use of biculturalism as a midpoint. It is difficult to argue how an individual, who scores low in heritage culture and low in mainstream culture, could be described as bicultural. By definition, bicultural individuals are well versed and equally comfortable in the social competencies of both their heritage and mainstream cultures (LaFromboise, Coleman, & Gerton, 1993). The linear model, however, makes it difficult to identify whether the 'bicultural' individual is well skilled in the competencies of their heritage culture and the host culture, or equally low in both. Indeed, the linear approach "fails to consider alternatives to assimilation" (Ryder et al., 2000, p. 50). Consequently, the results often present an inaccurate, incomplete, and misleading portrayal of one's acculturating experience.

### Bilinear Perspective

The alternate, bilinear perspective assumes that an individual may possess knowledge, understanding, and emotional ties to two different cultures at the one time (LaFromboise et al., 1993). Indeed, it is believed that one may possess any number of cultural identities, each varying independently in strength. The bilinear model views one's heritage culture and one's mainstream culture as orthogonal in nature. The most influential advocate of the bilinear perspective is Berry (1970, 1984, 1997, 1998, 2001), whose approach to acculturation incorporated the use of "acculturation attitudes". Berry and his colleagues' conceptual framework in Figure 1, suggests that each acculturating individual faces two issues: cultural maintenance and culture contact (Berry et al., 1989). The former relates to one's ethnic distinctiveness in the decision to maintain or eliminate customs and practices unique to one's ethnicity. The latter refers to inter-ethnic contact and the value of seeking interaction with the larger society. An individual's response to these two issues is described as the adoption of one of the four strategies: assimilation, integration, separation, and marginalisation (Berry et al., 1989).

According to Berry and his colleagues (1989), the strategy of *assimilation* involves individuals severing ties with their heritage culture and actively engaging in, and seeking interaction with, the mainstream culture. People who also value contact with the mainstream culture, yet retain contact and practices of their heritage culture, are engaging in an *integration* strategy. Those who actively avoid interaction with the mainstream culture and who solely practice their heritage culture are adopting a *separation* strategy. Finally, individuals who disengage from contact with both their heritage and mainstream cultures are

adopting a *marginalisation* strategy. The development of these four categories has proved so popular as to lead to their almost exclusive adoption in all succeeding acculturation research.



*Figure 1.* Four modes of acculturation based on orientation toward issues of cultural maintenance and intergroup contact (Berry et al., 1989, p. 184).

Consistent with current political conceptions, integration is widely regarded as the ideal strategy, as it allows for the greatest sense of wellbeing for individuals (Yeh, 2003). Conversely, conflict, reaction and other resistive strategies have been identified as contributing to the concept of acculturative stress (Berry, Poortinga, Segall, & Dasen, 1992). Acculturative stress is believed to manifest in heightened psychosomatic symptoms and poor mental health, feelings of alienation, marginality and identity confusion (Berry, Kim, Minde, & Mok, 1987). It is important to note that acculturative stress, however, can be

positive as well as negative, and is also believed to lead to some element of growth and change (Berry, 1997).

A large body of literature has been dedicated within a variety of cultures to the exploration of factors that contribute to acculturative stress. In a review of significant studies in this area, Berry and his colleagues identified the following aspects as relevant to acculturative stress development (Berry et al., 1992). Firstly, the mode or strategy of acculturation appears important, with studies suggesting that marginalisation contributes to the highest amount of stress while integration results in minimal stress. Additionally, those who choose the strategy of separation also exhibit significant levels of stress, whereas intermediate stress is associated with assimilation (Berry et al., 1987). The phase or stage of acculturation has also been identified as important, with higher acculturative stress presenting in the early stages (first 6 months) of cultural transition (Berry, 1985; Furnham & Bochner, 1986; Ward & Kennedy, 1996). Age and gender are also believed to play a role with older individuals and females more commonly presenting with higher stress levels. In addition, social supports in the form of membership to ethnic associations or clubs, the presence of extended family and compatriots, and the accessibility of community welfare or health clinics are all believed to play a vital role in the moderation of acculturative stress (Berry et al., 1992).

Finally, the social context of the host environment impacts upon acculturative stress. Successful cultural transitions may only be achieved if the mainstream society is one that is open to multiculturalism and pluralist perspectives (Segall, 1986). These views may be reflected in government

policies, and in citizens' reaction and interaction with migrants within their country. Indeed, the constraints or imposed influence of mainstream society placed upon acculturating individuals is an important issue often overlooked in empirical measures of acculturation outcomes.

In the past decade, acculturation research has almost exclusively adopted a quantitative approach, with a gradual transition from a linear representation to a bilinear process of acculturation change (Zea et al., 2003). There are now several bilinear and multidimensional scales that can be used for specific minority groups such as Hispanic, Arabic, Asian-American, African-American, and Jewish-American (Barry, Elliott, & Evans, 2000; Ponterotto et al., 1998; Stephenson, 2000; Zea et al., 2003). All of the scales employ a self-reporting Likert-scale inventory, with standard subscales relating to: behaviour, ethnic identity, knowledge, language, values and attitudes, and friendship preferences. Questions may also pertain to distress, psychopathology, life satisfaction, and other measures of adaptation that may determine the level of stress and coping by the individual.

While the bilinear perspective appears to hold more validity and explanatory potential in relation to the linear approach (Ryder et al., 2000), it too appears to have limitations. The major areas of empirical criticism involve the use of self-reporting measures and the increasing scepticism of the fourfold acculturation theory in interpreting acculturation results. In addition, the current quantitative approach to studying cultural adjustment and its accompanying experiences may not be adequately captured by self-reporting batteries.

### Limitations of Empirical Acculturation Measures

Self-reporting inventories have been described as inaccurate and subjective assessment tools when implemented to discern concepts of ability (Rudmin, 2003b). With constructs such as knowledge and language ability, it is difficult to ascertain the accuracy of self perceived ability and actual proficiency. Knowledge of one's heritage and mainstream culture is generally measured on a Likert-scale by responding to historical topics such as, "How well do you know American National heroes?" or "How well do you know American history?" (Zea et al., 2003, p. 119). Such questions are general and non-directive, allowing individuals great freedom in determining their own ability level. For example, an individual may recall two presidents and the landing date of the Mayflower resulting in the self-perception of a high degree of knowledge. Alternatively, when asked to name the first five presidents, two wars in which America has participated, the face on the five dollar bill, the fifty states, and recall the first verse of the American National Anthem, different results may ensue. Put simply, due to a lack of specificity in the structure of the questions, respondents have little information in which to gauge or compare their ability.

Similarly, language is addressed by responses to rather vague questions such as, "How well do you speak English: at school or work? With American friends? On the phone? In general?" (Stephenson, 2000, p. 9). In this instance, there appears to be ambiguity as to whether ability should be compared to native standards or to an internal yardstick measure of performance. Additionally, should one infer that the meaning of 'American friends' includes only individuals born in America or one's friendship circle during his or her stay in America?

These questions, without a specific contextual basis, are prone to misinterpretation and misleading responses.

Acculturation scales are also believed to be influenced by acquiescence bias (Rudmin, 2003b). Administering questionnaires to individuals who are hoping to be accepted into a country, grateful to be living in a country, or intimidated by the imposing figure of a researcher, will invariably affect responses. Additionally, the sociocultural context of the host nation is not factored into acculturation scales, and can result in varied outcomes for ethnic groups (Matsudaira, 2006). For example, the host nation's immigration policies, education system, cultural distance, prejudice, and homo/heterogeneity all impact upon one's acculturative experience - but are not included in typical acculturative measures (Berry & Sam, 1997; Searle & Ward, 1990). Consequently, ethnic groups might appear to be adopting a state of separation or marginalisation on acculturation scales, where in reality this may be a reasonable response to high levels of intolerance and segregate policies within the host society.

The fundamental criticism of acculturation research, however, is the increasing doubt in the validity of the fourfold acculturation paradigm. The most damaging critique of the fourfold paradigm can be seen in Rudmin's (2003b) review of acculturation research. While supervising a student's thesis on acculturation, Rudmin discovered illogical results, with individuals espousing more than one, and as many as four of the operationally mutually exclusive acculturation strategies. Rudmin has subsequently criticised the paradigm for poor validity and psychometrics, incorrect statistical assumptions, susceptibility to response bias, and excessive focus on minorities.

Rudmin's (2003b) comments have been echoed in the findings of other research studies. Van de Vijver, Helms-Lorenz and Feltzer (1999) used a factor-analytic study to conclude that the four acculturation scales measure only one dimension, not two or four. Escobar and Vega (2000) have also recommended dismissal of fourfold acculturation measures, due to their ambiguity, lack of predictive power, and presumptuous depictions of culture. Essentially, the validity of scale constructs and their ability to accurately describe acculturative experiences appears dubious. With the validity and reliability of acculturation measures in question, it is concerning that acculturation scales are currently proliferating without any comparative, critical reviews of their performance (Rudmin, 2003b).

Results of an early study on Koreans' acculturation experiences in Canada (Kim, 1988) revealed that the fourfold paradigm explained little of the acculturation phenomena. The acculturation questionnaire employed was administered to: Koreans residing in Canada, Koreans residing in Korea who had applied for emigration to Canada, and Koreans residing in Korea who had not applied for emigration to Canada. The mean scores of the three Korean groups showed high concordance correlations for mean scale scores, and similar standard deviations. It seems unlikely that a Korean person who has experienced contact with a new cultural society and the subsequent cultural transitions that ensue from such contact, can be similar to a Korean person who has not yet undergone such experience, and yet another Korean who has no expressed interest in such an endeavour.

Lending further doubt to the applicability of the fourfold paradigm, Rudmin (1996) administered the same questionnaire to Norwegian students. Students were requested to respond as to how they imagined Koreans in Canada would answer. Results indicated that Norwegian students, with little knowledge of either Korea or Canada, achieved almost identical mean scores as the three Korean groups. Rudmin concluded that the fourfold paradigm failed to explain any of the transitory events and experiences that are vital in understanding acculturation.

The questionnaire appeared similarly ineffective in measuring the idiosyncrasies of each culture. This illustrates the insensitivity of quantitative measures in determining inherent practices and mores, and emotionally pertinent adaptive experiences. As demonstrated in Rudmin's (1996) study, the implementation of ambiguous and overly general constructs may allow any individual to respond appropriately to acculturation scales without ever travelling to the two cultures in question, and without possessing ancestral ties to the two cultures.

A further example of this point can be found by examining the typical questions in an Asian-American acculturation questionnaire, such as "Do you enjoy eating Japanese food?" and "Can you use chopsticks?" Japanese, Japanese-Americans, and Australians who frequent sushi-bars and enjoy moderate dexterity with chopsticks, can all answer these questions in a similar manner. A more culturally sensitive question would be, "Do you eat sushi with chopsticks or your fingers?" Most Japanese individuals know that it is ill mannered to use chopsticks when eating sushi, as the texture of the fish and the delicacy of the rice-fish

structure can only be fully appreciated by touch. The question, while ostensibly simple, is therefore measuring a more inherent cultural canon and practice unlikely to be known to most non-Japanese individuals.

The lack of culture-specific sensitivity in acculturation scales can also belie a more important issue that is evident in Australian society's increasing interest and knowledge of foreign cultures. With populations of migrants prevalent in many countries, it is unreasonable in the present age to presume that most individuals have had no contact with other cultures and foreign influences. Nor do individuals enter into a new country without preconceived ideas or knowledge of what that society's culture entails. The cosmopolitan society in western countries created by a fusion of cultures is reflected in daily activities such as yoga classes, the pursuit of Zen enlightenment, ethnic dining experiences, and ethnic dance classes. With many people looking to other cultures for inspiration in fitness, wellbeing, and what to cook for dinner, it may be unreasonable to maintain this dichotomised focus on only two cultures, when clearly there are many others involved in the adoption of a broad range of cultural practices. Therefore, asking questions pertaining to food preference (e.g., "Do you prefer to eat your ethnic cuisine" or "Do you prefer to eat Australian cuisine") may discount the presence of several other ethnic dining experiences in which the respondent regularly engages.

Most importantly, however, the underlying question remains as to what food preferences, language ability or even cultural knowledge reveal about acculturating individuals and cultural adaptation. The implementation of quantitative methods appears to have clear limitations when attempting to

understand fundamental information such as migrants' hopes, needs, and acculturative experiences. Existing acculturation measures essentially fail to capture a detailed conception of the human aspect of cultural transition, resulting in the absence of workable knowledge that may be utilised to assist migrants with their social, emotional and cognitive needs. It is also the contention of this thesis that measuring the outcome of acculturation provides limited value to acculturating individuals requiring support and guidance during this period of significant change. This research, therefore, initially employed qualitative methods to gain an understanding of acculturative experiences directly from descriptions given by Japanese international university students. These first-hand accounts subsequently provided the foundation for developing an appropriate and beneficial cultural learning program.

#### Limitations of Acculturation Conceptualisation

The conceptual framework of acculturation has largely been geared toward an outcome exploration. The original theory of acculturation, as a phenomenon affecting both cultural communities (Redfield et al., 1936), is now tantamount to minority individuals adopting one of four strategies such as assimilation or integration. This approach to investigating acculturation may not adequately reflect the transitional experiences leading up to one's current state of adaptation. Nor does it illuminate which elements impact upon one's acculturation experiences. Research inevitably describes one's destination with little insight or consideration for the progressive journey.

The exclusive focus on the outcome of acculturation, as opposed to the process of the phenomenon, may be seen in Berry's (1997) acculturation framework of the fourfold paradigm. While it is commendable for its attempt to capture a complex phenomenon; it has also received intense criticism for its lack of utility and explanatory force (Horenczyk, 1997; Kagitçibasi, 1997; Pick, 1997; Rudmin, 2003b; Schönflug, 1997; Triandis, 1997; Ward, 1997). Specifically, Schönflug (1997) argued for the inclusion of 'identity changes' into the framework of acculturation, and for a developmental approach to be adopted. He also questioned the validity of the stress-coping paradigm in regard to predicting long-lasting adaptations. Pick (1997) described the framework as a Lego structure - rigid and inflexible. She further commented that the model "does not allow for new situations, groups and social actors...and it does not take into account the transitory nature of the phenomena" (p. 50). Finally, Triandis (1997) expressed concern for the adequacy of the terminology used, and suggested an expansion on cultural distance to include other dimensions of cultural variations such as the disparity in egalitarian, individualist, loose cultures; and hierarchal, collectivist, tight cultures.

The suggestion that individuals answer only two questions in the development of their acculturation strategy (Berry et al., 1989) may be an oversimplification of the pressures and influences affecting the individual's choice. Acculturation is largely an imposed environment. In order to survive in a new society - and provide for individual or family needs, some participation in the larger society must be sought. Often people do not have the luxury to separate or marginalise due to their responsibilities to others. Alternatively, international

students who travel for the purpose of fulfilling educational goals may feel little motivation to involve themselves with the wider community, particularly if it does not fit into requirements for academic success. Indeed, there are a number of variables that impact upon an acculturating individual's decisions with respect to cultural maintenance and contact with the host society. It appears, however, that macro-level issues and assumptions are dominant in the analysis of acculturation and overshadow the micro-level phenomena at work.

With exclusive focus upon the outcome of acculturation, many precipitating events and continuing acculturative experiences are simply omitted from conceptual and empirical interest. There exist several moderating influences upon acculturation that are often dismissed or hidden in demographic data. For example, the degree of choice in travelling and staying in a new country, the purpose of this stay, and the positive and negative experiences with a new country will essentially influence the way in which individuals view their new society – accepting, welcoming, tolerant, or racist. It is here where the journey begins; an important place to embark upon an investigation into cultural transitions. Unfortunately, it is also an area of acculturation that receives little attention.

Finally, the personal qualities and abilities that an individual brings to the acculturation experience, combined with the environment in which one is exposed to, and the behaviours with which one engages in, are all vital components in understanding the progressive acculturation experience. Current acculturation measures provide few insights into these interactive elements, and the effect they have on cultural learning and adaptation. Essentially, it remains unclear as to what the most effective methods of cultural learning are, and which crucial

ingredients are required for a successful transition from one culture to another. Why is it that two individuals from similar backgrounds can possess vastly different experiences of cultural interactions or transitions? How can one individual thrive in new cultural surroundings while another longs to return home? How do individuals navigate their way through foreign social exchanges and implicit cultural norms and customs, without knowledge of the inherent purpose for such behaviour? Acculturation is unquestionably complex for researchers and travellers alike. This research aims to contribute toward understanding the acculturation experiences of Japanese university students studying in Australia and to provide a program of cultural education and support.

#### Acculturation Research and Current Population Under Study

##### *Acculturation Research on Sojourners*

International students belong to a category of migrants termed as sojourners. A sojourner may be identified as a short-term visitor to a new culture, often with a specific task or motivation for travel (Berry & Sam, 1997). Indeed, international university students neatly reflect this definition as they often come with a specific purpose for completing their university course or improving their English proficiency, and plan to return home after the completion of this task.

Several theories have been proposed to describe the process of adjustment experienced by these transient migrants. Early theorist such as Lysgaard (1955) suggested that the stages of cultural transition were best depicted as a U-curve with greater adjustment difficulties emerging between 6 – 18 months into relocation. The “U-Curve” hypothesis posits a sense of “entry euphoria” that

gradually dissipates as cultural difficulties arise later into the sojourner's stay. Subsequent research, however, has found the opposite effect, with the most amount of distress appearing to occur early in the cultural transition (Ward & Kennedy, 1996; Ward & Rana-Deuba, 1999; Westermeyer, Neider, & Callies, 1989; Zheng & Berry, 1991).

Other scholars continued with the theme of applying stages or levels to account for sojourner adjustment as a function of time in the new culture. Oberg (1960) proposed the concept of "culture shock", which was defined as a disease suffered by individuals adjusting to a new cultural environment. Culture shock was attributed to the absence of recognised cultural signs and symbols; which produced feelings of anxiety, frustration and helplessness in the traveller. Oberg described this process as encompassing four stages, including: the honeymoon, crisis, recovery and adjustment stages. The honeymoon period emphasised reactions of euphoria, enchantment, fascination and enthusiasm; while the crisis stage involved feelings of inadequacy, frustration, anxiety and anger. The recovery stage included crisis resolution and culture learning, while adjustment reflected enjoyment of, and functional competence in, the new environment. Similarly, Adler (1975) outlined five states: initial contact, disintegration of old, familiar cues, reintegration of new cues, process of reintegration, and reciprocal interdependence. Both Oberg and Adler described their stages as distinct and sequential, which allowed little room for deviation and culture-specific differences.

More recently, Berry and colleagues (Berry & Kim, 1988; Berry et al., 1992) proposed that sojourner populations such as international students progress

through five stages, culminating in a state of adaptation where one of the fourfold strategies is adopted. The stages include:

1) *pre-contact* : where the sojourner is preparing to leave home, often in possession of limited personal knowledge concerning life in the new cultural environment.

2) *contact* : involving initial interactions with the host culture wherein unfamiliar social situations, language, and general activities of daily living are encountered. During this stage, typical sojourners are believed to make changes to their behaviour in an attempt to fit into the new culture.

3) *conflict* : which is characterised by stress associated with an attempt to balance societal pressure toward cultural conformity with one's motivation and ability to adjust to new expectations of behaviour.

4) *crisis* : which is dependent upon the level of stress response achieved during the conflict stage. A heightened stress level is believed to initiate potentially destructive behaviours such as substance abuse, depression, withdrawal and suicide or homicide.

5) *adaptation* : refers to the resolution of crisis culminating in the adoption of one of four acculturation modes discussed earlier: assimilation, integration, separation or marginalisation.

These stage theories appear highly similar, despite 30 years of acculturation research spanning between Lysgaard and Berry's models. The processes identified in various stage theories reflect that the overwhelming majority of theorists appear to view acculturation through a stress and coping framework. This approach is believed to originate from the work of Lazarus and

Folkman (1984) on stress, appraisal and coping. From this perspective, a large number of variables associated with the categories of stress and coping have been applied to the cross-cultural exploration of acculturation. Examples of these variables include personality factors, coping styles, social support, locus of control, cognitive appraisals, and personal and demographic characteristics (Ward et al., 2001). Consequently, investigations into acculturation stress and psychopathology have dominated acculturation research.

A comparative paucity of studies has been dedicated to the prevention and treatment of problems that occur during cultural transitions. The vast majority of studies regarding acculturation stress and psychopathology conclude with recommendations for counselling or psychological intervention by culturally competent practitioners. This does not appear to be a considered cultural approach, as conventional psychotherapy has a distinctly western orientation, and is vulnerable to cultural stigmas that would prevent various ethnic groups from seeking or engaging in such intervention (Sue & Sue, 2003). Hence, an imbalance exists between psychological knowledge of the predictors of acculturation difficulties and evidence-based methods of alleviating these symptoms. Additionally, stressful reactions in response to culture contact have been qualified conceptually to include positive development and change for the acculturating individual (Berry, 1997). However, this has not been a focus of studies. Consequently, large amounts of research have been dedicated to identifying predictors for psychopathology, whilst limited studies have explored methods for maintaining or enhancing positive psychological wellbeing during acculturation.

Another fundamental aspect of acculturation relating to behavioural changes appears similarly overshadowed by an overriding interest in psychological and emotional responses to cultural adjustment. Behavioural adjustments - referred to as “behavioural shifts” (Berry et al., 1992) - include various changes in daily interactions and activities in a new culture that may include language use, dress, and food choices. These activities are typically measured in acculturation scales. However, the adoption of a new behavioural repertoire for managing daily activities in a foreign culture has received more attention in a different section of literature: referred to as intercultural competence or intercultural communication skills (Brislin, 1979; Kim, 2001). Intercultural or cultural competence, as it is referred to in this study, will be explored further in chapter 4. However, it is important to mention here that it generally lacks behavioural and therapeutic investigations of acculturation.

#### *Acculturation Research on International Students*

International students have received a large amount of attention in academic literature: across disciplines from education, linguistics, sociology, psychology and commerce. This is perhaps owing to both their representation as a convenient sample pool for academics to draw on, and their consistent presence as a population of migrants in the post war era. The volume of studies, however, markedly decreases as a function of refining one’s search to relate directly to Japanese tertiary students in Australia. Australian studies typically include research conducted on “Asian” students, where Japanese students represent a small percentage (2 - 5%) of the sample. Other relevant studies included in this

review investigate Japanese students' adjustment in countries other than Australia. In the absence of more specific research, general acculturation studies of international students will be discussed, with reference to Asian and Japanese samples where possible.

Research suggests several factors play an important role in the adjustment of international students. Berry and Kim (1988) identified concepts including language usage, length of time in the host nation, continent of origin, reception of host nation, and religion. In particular, language ability has been consistently identified as a significant predictor of successful adaptation in various studies. Leder and Forgansz (2004) charted the daily activities of Australian and international university students and examined factors that may facilitate or detract from their studies. They found that language competence was cited as a substantial problem by international students in the fulfilment of both academic and social activities. Similarly, Heikenheimo and Shute (1986) administered a 2-hour semi-structured interview to 46 international students from Asia and Africa, and found that English language proficiency was one of the most important factors in international students' acculturation. Students also reportedly identified other areas in which they needed to adapt, including academics, social interaction, racism and cultural differences. Similarly, Greenland and Brown (2005) studied the predicted effects of acculturation and intergroup contact on the wellbeing of Japanese students living in the United Kingdom over a twelve-month period. Findings suggested that individuals' English language ability coupled with perceived cultural distance were associated with both acculturative stress and

psychosomatic illness. The authors further contended that acculturation levels accurately predicted acculturative stress and psychosomatic illness.

Personality variables have also been explored to determine individual differences that may influence adjustment outcomes (Ward et al., 2001). Ward and Low (2004) reported higher levels of extraversion, agreeableness, and conscientiousness - combined with lower levels of neuroticism - were associated with better psychological adaption to acculturation. Additionally, extraversion and low neuroticism were found to positively assist individuals during the negotiation of various social interactions in a new culture.

In studies conducted on high school migrants, age was found to relate to acculturation with older migrant youth found to experience more difficulties than younger participants (Bandura, Barbaranelli, Caprara, & Pastorelli, 1996; Sam & Berry, 1995; Yeh, 2003). Specifically, Yeh (2003) found that older students reported more general mental health symptoms and that age was a significant predictor of mental health. Additionally, younger foreign tertiary students have been found to engage in more social contact with host nationals than their older counterparts, who alternatively appear to gain more satisfaction with academic success (Hull, 1978). Other influences shown less consistently as influencing sojourner adjustment include gender, educational level, status, self-esteem, and prior cross-cultural experience (Rosenthal et al., 2006).

The presence of social interactions, social support and perceived prejudice have also been associated with international students' experiences. In a study investigating the social connectedness of international students in Melbourne, findings suggested that Asian students socialised more with co-nationals than

Australians, despite a desire for more interaction with locals (Rosenthal et al., 2006). Asian students in Melbourne who engaged in interactions with Australians reportedly displayed a positive sense of social connectedness. Additionally, membership to organisations of national, cultural or religious significance off campus was found to increase students' sense of connection (Rosenthal et al., 2006).

Leder and Forgansz (2004) found that international students frequently admitted to being lonely, having few friends, and finding it difficult to work fruitfully with others. International students also stated that socialising and peer support came primarily from other international students rather than Australians. Similarly, Leung (2001) found that loneliness was related to psychological distress in overseas international students studying in Australia. Other factors such as length of time in Australia, locus of control, social relationships and personal sense of competence were deemed relevant to the adjustment of tertiary students. Moreover, the greater number of friends identified by exchange students was found to significantly increase life satisfaction (Sam, 2001). Sam (2001) explored the concept of friendship and found that the size of a student's peer group, and the extent of perceived discrimination, were significant elements that affected life satisfaction.

Perceived discrimination across educational, social, and occupational contexts was identified as a considerable concern for both Hispanic and Asian American students (Sodowsky, Lai, & Plake, 1991). Additionally, an investigation into the acculturation of international students in relation to demographics and experiential variables found that African, Asian and South American participants

were significantly less acculturated; and perceived more prejudice than their European counterparts (Sodowsky & Plake, 1992). The study also suggested that Asian international students tended to experience most difficulty with language skills and used their English less frequently than did students from Europe and Africa. Rahman and Rollock (2004) also found that perceptions of prejudice were important in relation to their impact upon the mental health of South Asian (Indian, Pakistani and Bangladeshi) international students studying in America. Findings suggested that higher levels of depressive symptoms were associated with higher perceived prejudice and lower self-reported competence in work, personal/social efficacy and intercultural behaviours.

Intercultural behaviour was also explored by Chapdelaine and Alexitch (2004), who tested Furnham and Bochner's (1982) social skills and culture learning model on 156 male international students in Canada. Results suggested that cultural distance was negatively related to cross-cultural interactions. That is, students from countries with greater cultural disparity reported the least amount of social interaction with host citizens. It was also found that as the size of the international student group increased, the frequency of interactions with hosts decreased, ultimately resulting in a greater sense of culture shock. The authors contended that these findings were supportive of Furnham and Bochner's (1982) argument that without meaningful social interactions with hosts, international students are unlikely to learn and develop the culture-specific social skills that would enable effective cross-cultural interactions.

### Summary of Research into Acculturation

The existing state of investigation into acculturation largely incorporates quantitative, paper and pencil measures of arguably ambiguously phrased constructs, represented in either a bidirectional or unidirectional perspective. These measures largely continue to adopt the four-fold taxonomy (i.e., assimilation, integration, separation and marginalisation) despite criticism following studies showing that travellers adopted more than one, and as many as four of these operationally mutually exclusive acculturation strategies (Rudmin, 2003b). Additionally, significant moderating factors such as the degree of choice exercised in migration; the positive or negative interactions experienced with host citizens; and the personal, environmental and behavioural elements present during acculturation are often empirically overlooked.

Studies conducted on international students suggest that a variety of factors such as ethnic origin, length of stay, age, gender, religion, personality, language proficiency, previous cultural experience, social support, and prejudice can impact upon acculturative experiences. Research involving Asian international students suggests this population demonstrates particular difficulty in the area of communication (i.e., English language proficiency), social engagement (i.e., friendships with non-Asian people) and managing prejudice. A review of acculturation studies also reveals a predominant focus on the negative psychological concomitants of cultural transition. This perspective is associated with a stress and coping conceptualisation for the process of acculturation. There appears comparatively limited research on culturally appropriate prevention or intervention programs for acculturation difficulties. Additionally, the daily

behavioural adjustments that allow individuals to interact within a new cultural environment appear less integrated into a stress-coping framework and are instead accommodated in an associated body of literature governing intercultural communication skills.

One of the aims of this study is to devise and test a cultural learning program of support for Japanese tertiary students transitioning into Australian culture. The fundamental objective of such a program is to promote cultural competence and positive intercultural relations, while ultimately enhancing individuals' wellbeing during acculturation. Therefore, the next chapter will define the concept of cultural competence and introduce "intercultural training", which is a key tool in the promotion of cultural knowledge and skills. The therapeutic considerations of acculturation within the context of Japanese culture will also be discussed.

## CHAPTER FOUR: THE NEED FOR CULTURAL LEARNING INITIATIVES DURING ACCULTURATION

An essential aspect of acculturation change is reflected in the demonstration of new behavioural actions. Even short-term travellers to Japan would observe the cultural gestures of bowing, removing shoes at entrances, the way Japanese point to their nose instead of their chest when referring to “me”, and the modest way women cover their mouths while chewing. For some sojourners it is not long before they find themselves adopting these actions or mirroring their Japanese associates over lunch as they observe the perfunctory verbal thanks for food, the etiquette for chopsticks and the reciprocal attendance to a companion’s drink. Similarly, visitors to Australia may quickly observe our obsession with sport and the weaker class structure, where for instance most people are addressed by their first name regardless of their social or occupational position. International travellers to northern states, such as Queensland, may also marvel at the casual dress of locals who don T-shirts and shorts, even in winter. Australians may also be considered as the only western rival to Japan’s consummate adoration for things as ubiquitous attire in both formal and informal occasions.

Participation in a new cultural environment invariably requires some measure of behavioural adjustment (Kim, 2001). These changes may manifest in wearing a headscarf, adopting the bicycle as a primary mode of transport, exchanging salutations in a foreign language, or embracing a new body clock to accommodate afternoon siestas. The behavioural changes that stem from contact with a new culture have been defined by various terminology including socio-

cultural adaptation (Ward & Kennedy, 1993), functional fitness (Kim, 2001), cultural intelligence (Earley, 2002), social skills (Furnham & Bochner, 1982) and culture learning (Brislin, Landis, & Brandt, 1983). Each of these terms refers to abilities in the outward display of behaviours that increase an individual's capability to negotiate daily social interactions with locals. For the purpose of this study, the term 'cultural competence' is adopted to describe these skills and other important facets of intercultural exchanges that will be discussed later.

Behavioural change as a function of culture contact appears more relevant to investigations involving sojourner populations than any other migrant group. The presence of a specific motivating goal (e.g., recreation), coupled with the short-term nature of a sojourn, may lend itself to a comparatively superficial involvement in the host culture where mostly behavioural changes – and not attitude changes - are manifest (Berry & Sam, 1997; Kim, 2001). For example, female sojourners to Dubai who cover their head with a scarf may do so in respect to the cultural and religious values of the host nation. This behavioural change may not instigate deeply entrenched psychological change, where for instance sojourners embrace and incorporate new religious and cultural beliefs into their way of life.

With respect to international university students, behavioural adjustments may involve necessary changes that assist with the fulfilment of their goal (i.e., completion of a university degree or English language training), rather than significant personal and lasting adjustments (Ward et al., 2001). Conversely, long-term plans for residency associated with other migrant groups may evoke both immediate behavioural and long-term psychological forms of adjustment.

For migrants, a desire to belong and fit-in to their new cultural environment may produce conflict with issues such as ethnic or cultural identity, as well as psychological distress (e.g., stress and psychopathology). As genuine and enduring psychological change is often unnecessary for international students to complete their goals, behavioural changes associated with cultural competence may be a more relevant area of investigation with respect to students' acculturation experiences (Rahman & Rollock, 2004):

The promotion of cultural competence has commonly taken the form of intercultural training, which seeks to facilitate knowledge and understanding as well as behavioural competence in a new culture. Intercultural training also prepares people for emotional experiences such as managing exposure to prejudice and culture shock by challenging their own expectations and cultural stereotypes (Brislin & Horvath, 1997). Surprisingly, however, intercultural training appears firmly established in research pertaining to multinational companies and business enterprise, rather than migrant research. While it is arguably underused as an intervention in acculturation studies, its potential benefit to international university students in the promotion of positive intercultural skills and psychological wellbeing will be further explored in this chapter.

### Cultural Competence

Issues of terminology abound when discussing the concept of cultural competence. Various terms such as intercultural effectiveness, intercultural communication, and intercultural skills appear employed in an interchangeable fashion within cross-cultural literature (Kim, 2001). There appears to be no

universally recognised definition of *competence*. The majority of studies within this area of interest appear focused on identifying individual traits that lend themselves to positive cultural exchanges (Berry et al., 1992). An example of this can be found in Hammer, Gudykunst and Wiseman's (1978) research that identified a three-factor model of intercultural effectiveness which included ability to: manage psychological stress, communicate effectively, and establish interpersonal relationships. This area of study has produced inventories designed to measure desirable traits for intercultural sensitivity such as the Cross-Cultural Adaptability Inventory (CCAI), which explores factors including emotional resilience, flexibility/openness, perceptual acuity, and personal autonomy (Kelley & Meyers, 1989). However, trait theories do not sufficiently account for the contextual nature of cultural competence (Lustig & Koester, 1999). For example, positive attributes in one culture; such as assertiveness, self-esteem, and authoritarianism; are not always advantageous in cultures that require sensitivity to the social setting and adaptability to the cultural etiquette.

Intercultural interactions involve both relational and situational contexts that transcend the importance of individual traits (Lustig & Koester, 1999). Intercultural competence is therefore the ability to establish positive relationships with others whilst recognising cultural expectations inherent to the situation and setting. For example, western businessmen travelling to Japan would presumably be schooled on the etiquette for business card exchanges and the formality of language used at first meetings or in business transactions. However, in the situation of after work drinks with Japanese colleagues, the same observances to business card exchanges and language formality may be considered inappropriate

or even rude. Essentially, the adoption of formal behaviour and language in an informal setting with colleagues may be interpreted as cold and unfriendly. Additionally, if the Japanese colleague is younger and lower in occupational status within the company this overly formal or deferential treatment can cause considerable embarrassment. Thus, cultural competence requires sensitivity to the social context and flexibility in adapting one's behaviour and communication in congruence with the social setting.

Language is evidently an essential aspect of cultural competence. It is important to recognise that cultural competence and intercultural communication are often indistinguishable in cross-cultural literature relating to cross-cultural interaction. Language and behaviour are indispensable facets of social interaction occurring simultaneously in the one social milieu. For this reason, a large amount of literature on behavioural and social negotiations of cultural exchanges may be found in literature on cross-cultural communication and linguistic studies (see Chomsky, 1968, 1986). Whilst language is expected to play a significant role in the cultural competence of Japanese students, social and behavioural elements are anticipated to feature more prominently in program material. This is due to the focus on culture training as opposed to English language education.

The absence of an agreed definition for cultural competence reflects the variance in theoretical and empirical measures that attempt to capture this construct. Intercultural measures are widely used in acculturation scales and often include daily activities or social interactions such as friendships, language use, food choices, and forms of dress (Stephenson, 2000). However, cultural skills are often absent from conceptual considerations that are largely outcome based and

geared toward measuring the psychological adaptation of migrants. Recent studies on competency-based variables of acculturation suggest that cultural competence should not be subsumed under the acculturation domain but rather viewed separately as a unique aspect of cultural adaptation (Zea et al., 2003).

Ward and colleagues have also argued for the distinction between psychological adjustment in acculturation, which is explored in reference to stress and coping strategies; and socio-cultural adjustment, which relates to the acquisition of social skills and behaviours that reflect social competence in the new culture (Ward & Kennedy, 1993). Ward and Rana-Deuba (1999) assert that psychological and socio-cultural adjustment are conceptually distinct as they are predicted by different variables, exhibit different patterns of fluctuation over time, share a variable relationship affected by cultural integration and cultural distance, and are associated with different acculturation styles such as assimilation and marginalisation. Similarly, Sodowsky and Lai (1997) proposed two broad types of cultural adjustment difficulties as acculturative distress and intercultural competence concerns. Acculturative distress was defined as general and cultural stress reactions associated with transitioning to a new culture, while intercultural competence comprised difficulties relating to other people in the new cultural environment.

The origins for the distinction of competency-based formulations of adaptation, such as cultural competence, may be found in both culture learning and social skills theory. Both theories suggest that sojourners experience adjustment difficulties because they are unskilled in the culture-specific rules that regulate social interactions with locals (Bochner, 1982). Sojourners typically rely

upon their own cultural references to interpret, evaluate, and respond to situations in a new culture. Consequently, social difficulties are the direct result of deficiency in knowledge and skills required to negotiate everyday social encounters with locals (Bochner, 1982; Furnham & Bochner, 1986).

Both culture learning and social skills theories have been credited as stemming from the work of social psychologist, Michael Argyle (1969), who investigated interpersonal communication and social skills. Argyle and Kendon (1967) originally proposed that social interactions were governed by mutually recognised behaviours within a single cultural group. Intracultural social inadequacy was posited as the result of deviation from commonly recognised behaviours, which leads to friction amongst individuals and a break down in the performance of appropriate behaviours. The universal acceptance of social skills may be observed in popular culture reactions to observational comics such as Jerry Seinfeld. The humour associated with the program 'Seinfeld' was arguably based around the introduction of socially unskilled characters whose behaviour flouted social conventions as witnessed by the close talker, the high talker, the quiet talker and the social kisser. Essentially, these characters that stood too close when talking, spoke at inaudible levels or greeted others with uncomfortable intimacy in lip kissing, personify the frustration and communication problems associated within one cultural environment. The culture learning and social skills approach extends this focus within cultures to cross-cultural relations. Even individuals considered adept in the social skills of their own culture are reportedly susceptible to difficulties in interacting with individuals from a different culture, as social skills vary cross-culturally (Argyle, 1982). It is also important to

consider that individuals may be equally lacking in the social skills of their home country as well as the host country. Essentially, each individual traveller may be initiating their sojourn equipped with a disparate level of intracultural social skills, which may impact upon their adoption of intercultural competencies.

Cross-cultural differences in social communication are typically divided into verbal and non-verbal domains. Verbal communications include high and low context cultures, polite language use, forms of address and approaches to conflict resolution (Ward et al., 2001). Japanese culture is indicative of a high context culture where individuals are influenced by situational cues and often convey limited information in an indirect manner. This is also reflected in polite communications where Japanese often use “yes” to indicate they are listening, not that they agree; and “maybe” when they really mean “no”. Additionally, saving face in avoiding open criticism, while also observing the power differential between high and low social status individuals, are important factors when issues of conflict arise (Argyle, 1982). Essentially, Japanese communication has been described as founded on subtle messages, where for instance a Japanese husband should be able to discern that his wife is upset by simply observing her flower arrangement (Lebra, 1976). This is in stark contrast to Australian communication, which is often direct, assertive and typically unambiguous (Doria, 2005).

Non-verbal communication also reflects cross-cultural variability in areas such as proxemics, facial expressions, eye-contact, and gestures (Ward et al., 2001). Japanese are highly attuned to situational cues, which typically involve deciphering the non-verbal behaviours of others. Unfortunately for western travellers to Japan, many of the behaviours demonstrated by Japanese reflect the

opposite meaning of those typically associated with the same behaviour in one's homeland. For example, Japanese often demonstrate deference by averting eye contact, looking down, avoiding bodily contact, and routinely nodding their head to convey they are listening. Yet these behaviours may be interpreted as aloof, dismissive, uninterested or even dishonest in western cultures (Ward, 2001). Even simple gestures may be cause for confusion as the upright hand that beckons another person to come closer is held upside down in Japan and often looks like the western gesture to shoo people away.

Argyle (1982) also presents an exhaustive list of other areas of cross-cultural disparity including, but not limited to: social and family relationships, nepotism, gifts, bribery, eating and drinking, values, assertiveness, buying and selling, rules regarding time and the seating of guests. Cross-cultural variations in rules and conventions are commonly derived from differences in values, particularly power distance and individualism versus collectivism (Hofstede, 2001). As previously discussed, Japan's collectivist perspective emphasises "fitting in" with the larger group through the maintenance of group harmony. Additionally, Japan is concerned with high in power distance relationships, as evidenced in the importance of identifying others' status in the social hierarchy. Essentially, language, behaviour and other social conventions are chosen in accordance with the status of one's audience and the social situation. In contrast, Australia is a highly egalitarian society where strong divisions in class would be commonly regarded with contempt (Brislin & Yoshida, 1994a).

The culture learning approach suggests that sojourner difficulties are the result of these cultural differences in social expectations and communication,

which ultimately result in confusion, miscommunication and ineffective exchanges of information. Consequently, educating travellers on the relevant social norms and behaviours of the host culture is advocated as the remedy for acculturation difficulties as opposed to therapeutic approaches. Bochner's (1982) social skills model similarly rejects the pathology associated with acculturation problems by asserting that training in culturally relevant social skills is desirable over conventional therapeutic intervention. In addition, Furnham and Bochner (1986) contend that culture skills training is easier, more economical and more effective than remedial approaches based on counselling and psychotherapy. This thesis supports the assertion that intercultural skills are an important feature of acculturation and aims to develop a cultural learning program that will promote cultural competence in Japanese students.

### Intercultural Training

Intercultural training, or cross-cultural training as it is often referred, aims to educate individuals in how to interact effectively with members of another culture (Waxin & Panaccio, 2005). Intercultural training has been implemented predominantly in the organisational realm with occupations such as business travellers, diplomats, health professional, and missionaries. Consequently, few studies on the implementation of cultural learning programs that promote cultural competence exist outside of a workplace context. Moreover, the field of psychology has arguably lagged behind the investigative initiatives of international business where methods of improving intercultural relations remain an enduring area of interest. Multinational companies have dedicated

considerable research into how expatriates manage and execute their assignments in foreign countries with a view to improving intercultural training initiatives and ultimately profit margins. This interest may be motivated by alarming cost estimates ranging from US\$250,000 to US\$1,000,000 for each expatriate failure (defined as early return of staff from international operations or failure to retain workers following their completion of international assignments) (Varner & Palmer, 2002). Regardless of the motivation for research, empirical evidence supports the efficacy of culture training in the promotion of intercultural skills, task performance and cultural adjustment (Black & Mendenhall, 1990).

Intercultural training programs facilitate cultural skills and knowledge through the promotion of affective, behavioural and cognitive competencies (Landis & Brislin, 1983). Accordingly, Brislin (1979) outlines an ABC approach (**A**ffective, **B**ehavioural and **C**ognitive) for effective learning outcomes from engaging in intercultural training. (**A**)ffective change involves training that exposes participants to emotionally provocative content in order to develop coping and management strategies. Intercultural contact invariably produces some measure of emotional response in people, which can trigger psychological symptoms such as anxiety and depression (Triandis, 1975). Helpful affective programs ultimately assist people to manage their emotional reactions with the ultimate goal of increasing coping and enjoyment within a new cultural environment (Brislin & Horvath, 1997). Self-insight, cultural sensitisation and cultural awareness training are all examples of affective approaches to intercultural training (Brislin & Bhawuk, 1999; Brislin & Horvath, 1997; Littrell, Salas, Hess, Paley, & Riedel, 2006). These training methods are predominantly

self-reflective in highlighting aspects of one's own culture; such as attitudes, values and behaviours; to develop an understanding and appreciation for cultural differences that exist with other cultures.

The instigation of **(B)**ehavioural change involves training practices aimed at improving participants' capacity to adapt their communication style and to establish positive relationships with members of another culture (Brislin, 1979). Participants are commonly introduced to a new repertoire of interpersonal and social skills, which are intended to assist interactions with host nationals. Behavioural approaches typically adopt procedures such as video feedback, role-play and modelling to simulate culturally authentic situations (Ward, 2001). Additionally, trainers differentiate between behaviours that are acceptable in the new culture and those that are regarded as offensive and inappropriate (Brislin & Bhawuk, 1999). Experiential methods are categorised as a form of behaviour training, where participants engage in role-plays, simulations, case studies and field trips. These activities aim to develop intercultural skills through repeated exposure and practice of real-life situations that may be encountered in the new cultural environment (Brislin & Horvath, 1997). Effective behavioural training initiatives have demonstrated efficacy in various task related performance such as increased productivity in the workplace (Black & Mendenhall, 1990) and improved academic achievement in international students (Westwood & Barker, 1990).

Finally, **(C)**ognitive outcomes are often facilitated by didactic instruction via conferences or non-participative sessions on a foreign cultural environment (Brislin, 1979). This area of education utilises cognitive training to convey

factual or knowledge-based content regarding the living, working and social environment of the new culture. Attribution training also assists cognitive outcomes by addressing travellers' expectations and beliefs about another culture. Cross-cultural interactions are fraught with a multitude of potential problems owing to differences in cultural patterns of beliefs and interpretations of the world (Triandis, Vassiliou, Vassiliou, Tanaka, & Shanmugam, 1972). Inaccurate attributions regarding the behaviour or motives of others form the basis of many misunderstandings, as meaning for the actions of others is often interpreted by one's own cultural frame of reference (Bochner, 1982). Therefore, attribution training facilitates what Triandis (1975) describes as isomorphic attributions, where sojourners make similar judgements about the cause of behaviour as do people in the host culture. Cultural assimilators and critical incident techniques are common aspects of cognitive training aimed at improving travellers' isomorphic attributions. The following example is both a critical incident question and correct response (Brislin, Cushner, Cherrie, & Yong, 1986, p. 210-211 and p. 221), which illustrates Japanese values relating to power distance and avoiding conflict with indirect communication:

Mariko was a recently arrived student from Japan at a large US university. Although at first apprehensive, she was now accustomed to the different routines and lifestyle and was doing quite well in her courses. She had become quite good friends with one of her classmates, Linda, and they often had lunch together. One afternoon the professor in their class asked for two volunteers to come in early the next morning to help code some research data. Linda volunteered and suggested Mariko might also be willing. Mariko replied hesitantly that she did not think her English was good enough to do it and that it would be better to ask someone else. Linda said that she would be quite capable and told the professor they

would do it. The next day Mariko failed to turn up and Linda was obliged to do all the work herself. The next time she saw Mariko she asked her rather coldly what had happened to her. Mariko apologised and said that she'd had to work for an exam that day and she didn't really feel capable of doing the work. Linda exasperatedly asked her why she had not said so clearly in the class at the time. Mariko just looked down and said nothing.

How would you explain Mariko's failure to explicitly state her intentions not to come?

- (1) She didn't really understand what was asked of her and didn't want to show her lack of comprehension in front of the class
- (2) She felt it wrong to give a direct refusal to the professor
- (3) She probably forgot or confused the time but was too embarrassed to admit her silly mistake
- (4) She resented Linda publicly volunteering her without asking her first

Answer: **(2)** In many cultures it is considered rude to give a direct rejection or refusal. Hesitancy and ambiguity are used to convey reluctance and so avoid embarrassment to either party. Linda, however, failed to perceive this and regarded Mariko's actions as basically dishonest or deceptive. To Mariko, however, honesty is of lesser value than preserving dignity in interpersonal interactions and one of the akin sources of cultural conflict in this situation is the differing weight attached to honesty. Whilst many Western cultures view the direct and honest statement of intentions or opinions as a very positive trait, others regard such behaviour more ambivalently or even as discourtesy. When uncertain of the cultural "rules", discretion and tact are always advisable.

Superior cultural training programs are those that incorporate all three components (affective, behavioural and cognitive) in content material (Brislin & Horvath, 1997). The primary objective is therefore to enhance learning and create change in the way participants react, behave and think about other cultures and

their people. The diverse range of training methods is indicative of an interdisciplinary approach to culture learning that lacks a unified theoretical framework (Littrell et al., 2006). The subsequent absence of theory driven enquiry has resulted in limited knowledge regarding the reasons for culture training's effectiveness (Black & Mendenhall, 1990). This should not, however, diminish the value of empirical research that supports the efficacy of training as both a moderating effect for psychological distress during acculturation, and a valuable teaching tool for the acquisition of intercultural skills (Black & Mendenhall, 1990; Deshpande & Viswesvaran, 1992; Torres & Rollock, 2007).

Mendenhall and Oddou (1985) outline three categories of intercultural skills required to achieve success in another culture: (1) skills related to the maintenance of self, which include issues related to mental health, psychological wellbeing and feelings of self-confidence; (2) skills related to the fostering of relationships with host nationals such as interpersonal skills and social skills; and (3) cognitive skills that facilitate accurate attributions and knowledge of the host culture. In a meta-analysis of twenty-nine cross-cultural training studies, Black and Mendenhall (1990) concluded that intercultural training programs were effective in enhancing all three aspects of the aforementioned intercultural skills. Specifically, cultural training was associated with feelings of wellbeing and self-confidence, positive estimations of one's relationship skills, and the development of appropriate perceptions relative to members of another culture (Black & Mendenhall, 1990). These findings were also supported in Deshpande and Viswesvaran's (1992) meta-analysis of managerial training, which found a positive relationship between intercultural training and the three skills sets

discussed. Whilst the studies under review varied with respect to the training method employed, the majority of studies reflected positive effects on intercultural skills with no negative effects established in any training program (Black & Mendenhall, 1990). These meta-analyses demonstrate the potential for innovation in cultural training design, as positive outcomes were found despite variations in training duration, training methods, experimental settings, and cultural groups.

### University Programs of Support

The patent benefits of cultural education appear incongruent with their uptake, as few international travellers participate in any formalised cultural training program. The majority of universities offer some form of orientation at the commencement of study. This program typically involves guided tours, instructional seminars, and written information including maps, brochures and academic guidelines. International students in particular receive a substantial amount of written information both before and after entering Australia regarding various issues such as visa conditions, working limitations, and changing educational providers (Department of Immigration and Citizenship, 2011). Yet, few studies have investigated the extent to which international students comprehend this information, and major concerns have been raised about the complexity of the language used as well as the limited recognition for cultural communication differences (Beard, 2008).

Specifically, the use of technical and higher level vocabulary has been described as beyond the reasonable ability of second language English speakers.

Additionally, cultural differences relating to values, attitudes and educational structure are proposed to impact upon international students' interpretation and utilisation of information (Beard, 2008). For example, Japanese society imbues children with a sense of dependency on others that requires compliance and deference to the will of elders (De Vos, 1985). This concept extends to the classroom where students are taught to be dependent upon the teacher who provides information that students memorise and repeat back with limited variation (Brislin & Yoshida, 1994a). In contrast, western students are encouraged to exercise their own initiative in learning information and drawing their own conclusions or interpretation of the content, sometimes independent to the thoughts of the teacher (Brislin & Yoshida, 1994a).

Universities in Australia provide a wide range of beneficial services including International Liaison staff and a variety of voluntary cultural organisations. However, many of these services invariably require "individual initiative," whereby students need to access these facilities to receive help (Beard, 2008, p. 4). The passive learning style instilled in Japanese students would indicate that students may not take the initiative and access university support services due to the expectation that authority figures such as university educators and staff would provide this information to them if it were relevant. Consequently, international students struggling with the task of acculturation may only come to the attention of others when issues of academic failure, medical or psychological health problems, or illegal behaviours become apparent (Ward et al., 2001).

Positive contributions to international student welfare have been made by studies adopting programs of social and cultural support with a focus on mentoring. Mentoring programs in general have been advocated due to an underlying assumption that increased exposure to and interaction with locals is important for the development of social connectedness, social skills and satisfaction (Bochner, 1982; Rosenthal et al., 2006; Sam, 2001). For example, Abe, Talbot and Geelhoed (1998) studied the effects of a peer program involving local and international students at an American university. The authors concluded that increased interactions with American students resulted in international participants achieving significantly higher social adjustment scores than their counterparts who did not participate in the program. Similarly, Westwood and Barker (1990) conducted an academic pairing program at an Australian university, where international students were linked with local students. Findings following this 8-month program of mentoring support suggested higher grades and higher retention rates for program participants compared with the control group.

A novel program emphasising intercultural social competence entitled, Excellence in Cultural Experiential Learning and Leadership (EXCELL) (Mak, Westwood, Ishiyama, & Barker, 1999a), has also demonstrated positive benefits for international university students in Canada, the United Kingdom and Australia (Mak, Barker, Logan, & Millman, 1999b). The program integrates established learning paradigms within operant conditioning, classical conditioning, and social learning theory to facilitate socio-cultural competence through behavioural intercultural training approaches. The EXCELL program incorporates coaching and practice opportunities within a group setting where participants are instructed

on six social situations such as seeking help from their lecturer, expressing disagreement and initiating social contact (Mak, 2000). Participants attend four to six sessions of three hours duration where they are exposed to two role models in the form of a minority culture instructor and a host national instructor. Studies conducted in two Australian universities revealed a significant increase in self-report feedback on social self-efficacy and interaction skills for recently arrived (i.e., residing in Australia for less than 1 year) Asian students (Mak et al., 1999b). A second sample included both local and overseas born students who similarly reported significant increases in efficacy beliefs related to managing social behaviour in academic and social situations (Mak et al., 1999b). However, the authors noted limitations in the research design in not providing for control measures for either sample group. It is also unclear whether Japanese students were included in either sample as the study only reported the major countries of origin, of which Japan was not included.

Another informal mentoring program, known as 'Ongoing Support for Asian Students' (OSAS), was created in New Zealand in response to academic underperformance and coping difficulties in Asian university students (Liew, 2004). The program employed volunteers in the form of local students and teaching staff who provided both educational and emotional support on a range of issues including language, culture, career and academic information. The findings after a four-month period suggested increased benefits in the areas of: self-confidence, interpersonal skills, communication skills, and social networking (Liew, 2004). However, this research did not include a control group and the nationalities of "Asian" participants were not described.

The positive findings associated with mentoring and cultural learning programs for international students validate their addition to university services. The previously discussed studies also demonstrate positive benefits from intercultural training for students of various ethnicities, including local students. However, it is the contention of this thesis that greater learning opportunities regarding within-group differences may be achieved by eliminating across-group variances in the form of multiple ethnicities. Brislin and Yoshida (1994b) also assert that training programs are most powerful when content material is adapted and constructed in accordance with the expressed needs of the target audience. Hence, the content of the proposed learning program will be derived from an investigation into the needs, concerns and experiences of Japanese university students. Further considerations with respect to methods of program delivery and content will be discussed by exploring the unique cultural values, attitudes and coping style of Japanese people.

#### Cultural Considerations for Interventions with Japanese

A common conclusion reached in literature on acculturation and acculturation difficulties is the recommendation for psychological intervention. These suggestions are often couched in a Westernised conception of psychotherapy. The context of which typically involves individual psychologist and client sessions. The cultural consideration of this intervention appears to relate to ensuring that the psychologist or counsellor is culturally competent - familiar with the language, values and social conventions of the client's culture (Sue & Sue, 2003). However, there are other factors that may influence whether a

Japanese student approaches a psychologist's office that warrant further consideration.

A dominant perspective in Japan involves the notion that socially permissible sickness is confined to physical afflictions such as heart disease or diabetes (Munakata, 1986). Consequently, mental disorders are commonly viewed as a problem involving the afflicted persons' willpower, rather than a recognised state of ill health. Japanese society essentially views mental health as being controllable by the individual or the responsibility of the individual's family. Hence, psychiatric care is only sought as a last resort following the family becoming exhausted and overwhelmed by the care of the individual (Munakata, 1986).

Japanese society also fosters a sense of belonging and conforming to the group identity. Mental illness is seen as deviating from the norm and an element that does not "belong" to the group, and is therefore shameful (Lebra, 1976). Asian populations in particular have been noted to generally underreport their levels of psychological distress because of cultural values related to emotional restraint and the stigma of mental health problems (Sue & Sue, 2003). This was evident in a study involving the help-seeking behaviour of Japanese university students in Britain. Results suggested that only 20% of participants sought assistance from university services within a one-year period despite recording clinical levels of psychological fatigue, homesickness and severely low levels of general wellbeing (Ayano, 2006).

Cross-cultural studies also lend support to the contention that there are marked differences between western and eastern attitudes towards mental health

and psychological interventions. Psychological symptoms, such as depression and its treatment, have been shown to be highly influenced by culture (Brewin & Furnham, 1986; Furnham, 1984; Furnham & Malik, 1994; Landrine & Klonoff, 1994). These cultural sensitivities were apparent in Furnham and colleagues' (2000) cross-cultural analysis of health attributions. The study compared Japanese students in Japan, Japanese students in Britain, and British students studying in Britain on their beliefs regarding the perceived efficacy of strategies to combat various psychological problems including depression. British participants generally rated professional help as more important for all psychological problems, particularly depression and agoraphobia. In contrast, both Japanese groups rated understanding (knowledge of the problems) as more important for depression than did the British group. The authors suggested that Japanese people are more stoic than British people, preferring to exert will power or inner control before seeking professional help. However, another explanation for the findings might be that British people have a greater belief in the efficacy of psychological interventions and help-seeking behaviours.

Differences in coping styles have also been demonstrated cross-culturally, where individuals from collectivist cultures adopt collectivist strategies when negotiating stressful situations. For example, Bailey and Dua (1999) conducted a comparative study on coping style and acculturative stress on Asian and Anglo-Australian students studying in Australia. Asian students reported utilising collectivist coping strategies such as peer and other social support (i.e., family) more often than Anglo-Australian students who used more individualist coping styles (i.e., problem solving). Ayano (2006) also found that Japanese university

students studying abroad reported listening to music, talking to Japanese friends or phoning someone in Japan as the most commonly reported methods of coping during acculturation. Similarly, international students have been found to rely on culturally relevant in-group social support resources such as family and friends, rather than more formal mechanism such as a counselling centre (Sue & Sue, 2003). Factors thought to prevent international students from presenting at university counselling centres include the cultural and language differences with counsellors, cultural stigmas associated with mental health and receiving counselling, and cultural values affirming the use of indigenous coping strategies to address problems (Constantine, Chen, & Ceesay, 1997; Sue & Sue, 2003).

Indigenous coping and therapeutic approaches are highly relevant to Japan, which possesses two indigenous psychotherapies known as Morita and Naikan therapy. Morita therapy was named during the 1920s after its founder, psychiatrist Shoma Morita, who proposed a short-term (4-6 weeks) treatment program founded upon social isolation and rest (Reynolds, 1980). Morita therapy is based on Zen Buddhism and is considered to liberate the individual from the excesses of self-preoccupation so that acceptance for things as they are can be embraced (Lebra, 1976). Naikan therapy similarly involves a great deal of quiet introspection as its name suggests with *nai* meaning “inside” or “within” and *kan* referring to “looking” (Murase, 1986). Treatment also initially includes isolation followed by moral instruction from a therapist regarding the individual’s connection to significant others. Specifically, the patient is encouraged to contemplate the care they have received from others and the trouble their behaviour has caused in order to reduce self-centeredness (Tanaka-Matsumi &

Draguns, 1997). The outcome of Naikan therapy appears to be improved interpersonal relationships (Murase, 1986).

Both of these therapies are believed to focus on *amae* and *sunao*, which have no direct translation in English (Lebra, 1976). *Amae* involves dependency upon others and is typically used to describe relationships between two people, particularly towards one's mother (Doi, 1986). *Sunao* connotes compliance, obedience, meekness, tolerance, self-control, flexibility and maturity (Murase, 1986). These concepts are fostered during early socialisation of Japanese children, and are promoted across the life span to ensure harmony and conformity in Japanese society (Doi, 1986).

The founding premise of both these indigenous therapies appears to involve the exploration of the individual's connection to others and their acceptance of their role and duty in the wider community. This is fundamentally different from the western perspective of psychotherapy that promotes considerable contemplation of the individuals' thoughts, emotions, and behaviours, often independent to the perspective of others. Other dissimilarities from the western perspective of psychological practice relates to the role of the Japanese therapist as a moral instructor or re-educator of socially sanctioned behavioural and cognitive styles. In contrast, western psychologists are routinely educated in non-judgemental practices that avoid coercive or overly instructive approaches in creating insight for clients regarding appropriate or inappropriate behaviours (Sue & Sue, 2003). Additional differences involve the use of isolation and limited communication in Japanese therapies, which was described by Reynolds (1980) as "silent therapies" promoting minimal verbal interaction

between therapist and client. This also demonstrates a marked contrast to a psychodynamic emphasis on verbalisations.

Essentially, the literature discussed in this section suggests that Japanese demonstrate the following tendencies to: (a) avoid the formal structure of counselling and typically underreport problems regarding mental health concerns; (b) seek support from in-group members such as Japanese peers and family members; and (c) attribute increased knowledge of a problem with better outcomes in overcoming difficulties. Based on these suggested propensities, Japanese sojourners would arguably be better served by a method of intervention incorporating aspects of education and information sharing, facilitated in a supportive environment of peers. However, most universities provide student services in the form of individualised academic and psychological counselling. These provisions may be adequate for local students but it remains dubious as to whether the unique cultural considerations of Japanese students are adequately catered for with respect to issues of wellbeing. Additionally, the culture learning approach of skilling students in intercultural competencies appears apposite with Japanese sensibilities regarding mental health and information acquisition. That is, Japanese students may be more likely to participate in a program offering knowledge and skill development, as opposed to a program implying therapeutic intervention.

### Summary

Behavioural adjustment as a function of cultural influence may be viewed as one of the most prominent components of acculturation; as it is observable and

directly impacts on interactions with locals. For sojourner populations such as university students, behavioural change is debatably more relevant to studies of acculturation than investigations measuring deeper psychological adjustment (Berry & Sam, 1997; Kim, 2001). The culture learning approach posits that sojourners become more effective in a new culture through training programs promoting intercultural competence. Intercultural competence is thought to involve the acquisition of skills relating to psychological maintenance, intercultural relationships and culturally congruent cognitions (Mendenhall & Oddou, 1985). Training programs have established benefits in improving sojourner's sense of confidence and wellbeing, relationship skills and cognitive attributions toward the new culture (Black & Mendenhall, 1990; Deshpande & Viswesvaran, 1992). These areas relate to Brislin's (1979) ABC approach to cultural training: where affective training aims to increase coping and enjoyment within a new cultural environment; behavioural training emphasises interactions and engagement within the cultural environment; and cognitive training incorporates knowledge based education on facts and information by a credible expert. These training aims will be incorporated into this study's cultural learning program, where cultural competence will be assessed in relation to psychological maintenance, social relationships, and cognitive awareness.

Few travellers participate in cross-cultural programs and fewer studies have examined cultural training initiatives outside of the workplace context. University students are not typically exposed to intercultural training, as the onus of responsibility for their cultural learning is usually placed on the individual (Ward et al., 2001). This appears at odds with Japanese cultural expectations that

value dependency and passive learning styles (De Vos, 1985). Additionally, Japanese students may not access university services due to the requirement of individual initiative on the part of students to seek help (Beard, 2008). This concern is further compounded by Japanese cultural implications relating to the stigma associated with mental health concerns coupled with culturally unique coping styles and indigenous therapeutic orientations. These issues will be considered in the development of an appropriate cultural learning program discussed in the next chapter.

A core proposal of this thesis is that a new conceptual framework is required for further acculturation research. Acculturation theory appears diffuse due to separate or unequal regard for both behavioural and psychological features of cultural adjustment. This thesis proposes Bandura's Social Cognitive Theory (1986) as a unifying structure from which to explore, understand and support individuals at all stages during the process of acculturation. The applicability of a socio-cognitive perspective in studying acculturation will be explored in the next chapter, subsequent to a more thorough description of social cognitive theory and its components.

CHAPTER FIVE: A NEW APPROACH TO ACCULTURATION -  
A SOCIO-COGNITIVE PERSPECTIVE

The complex nature of acculturation demands an equally comprehensive framework of analysis in which the fundamental elements of the *individual*, *environment*, and *behaviour* can be examined. Social Cognitive Theory (SCT; Bandura, 1986) allows for the investigation of these factors in an interactive causative structure. Social Cognitive Theory has been applied extensively within the fields of developmental, health, psycho-educational, and organisational psychology to provide an understanding and prediction of behaviour.

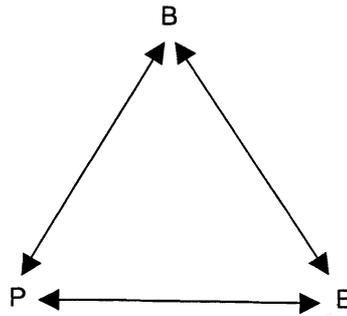
Research that has adopted SCT has predominantly employed the concepts of 'self-efficacy' and 'motivation' for the purpose of behaviour modification. Applications of the theory range from such disparate domains as understanding individuals' fat-related dietary behaviour (Liou & Contento, 2001), to examining corporate efficiency through perceived group efficacy (Gibson, 1999). SCT has also proven effective in describing processes of development and learning, such as gender role conception and differentiation (Bussey & Bandura, 1999).

SCT allows for the investigation into an evolving state of change where individuals are viewed in relation to their social environment, their behaviours, and their personal attributes of cognitive, affective, and biological features. Moreover, SCT is an extension of Bandura's Social Learning Theory (1977) and consequently emphasises learning processes. The theory explicates methods of facilitating cognitive and behavioural skills by strengthening efficacy beliefs related to performance capabilities and coping skills. This focus on both

understanding and facilitating learning is highly relevant to studying individual adjustment in culturally divergent environments. Additionally, SCT's fusion of cognitive and behavioural elements accommodates psychological and behavioural features of acculturation that are frequently afforded imbalanced importance in contemporary acculturation approaches. The theory also takes into account the influence of environmental factors, which are inconsistently considered in typical affective, behavioural and cognitive concerns of cultural adjustment.

### Social Cognitive Theory

The social cognitive perspective may be described in terms of a dynamic state of reciprocal determinism (Bandura, 1986). This structure, depicted in Figure 2, illustrates the mutual interaction of one's personal, environmental and behavioural elements in the promotion, inhibition, or alteration of motivation, thoughts and action. Patterns of interaction vary in strength and direction depending upon the individual, the situational context, and the specific behaviour being examined (Bandura, 1986). The individual may be subsequently viewed as a developing entity shaped by three possible interactive relationships: person-behaviour interaction, person-environment interaction, and behaviour-environment interaction.



*Figure 2.* Schematic of three determinants in triadic reciprocal causation (Bandura, 1986, p. 24).

Bandura's SCT regards the 'person' as the multifaceted product of cognitive, biological, and affective elements. Such elements comprise an exhaustive list of one's beliefs, intentions, expectations, goals, gender, age, ethnicity, personality, mood, and cognitive competencies. The interaction that occurs between the person and behaviour results from this union of personal factors that effectively shape, guide, and give rise to individual behaviour. In turn, the behaviour in which one engages will invariably impact upon one's thoughts, emotions, and expectations. An example may be viewed in relation to one's religious beliefs. Such cognitions and beliefs may dictate behaviour exhibited through attendance at church or the practice of ritualistic actions such as kneeling or crossing oneself. Engaging in such activities may then strengthen or reaffirm one's beliefs, as well as evoke appropriate emotions. Support for this interaction may be found in the argument that "One feels more ardent by kissing, more humble by kneeling and more angry by shaking one's fist" (Mol, 1979, p. 33).

Similarly, the interaction between the person and environment involves the impression of personal qualities such as age, gender, and physique, upon one's social environment. For example, one's physical attractiveness combined with age will impact upon the way in which others perceive and interact with the individual. It may also influence the varying environmental settings to which one is exposed or actively seeks out. Similarly, an individual's mood, expectations and cognitions are stimulated, maintained, and modified by the powerful social messages received from the environment. Such methods of social influences may simply involve watching the actions of others or receiving communicative cues of instruction or persuasion.

The final interactive relationship occurs between behaviour and the environment. Behaviour in which one engages and demonstrates to the social world may serve to actively select the environment that the individual occupies (Gist, Stevens, & Bavetta, 1991). For example, the display of gregarious, outgoing behaviour would lead to the creation of a social, stimulating lifestyle and environment. Equally, the aggressive actions of an angry individual would create an environment beset with tension, hostility, and angst. It is, therefore, the course of action or demonstrative behaviour adopted that determines the environment to which one is presented. The environment then exerts influence over which behaviours are encouraged and developed in various social settings. Certain social situations inhibit or encourage diverse behaviours in addition to affording an opportunity to practice behaviour specific to the situational context and etiquette.

SCT provides an explanation for an infinite number of interactions that may transpire between these three determinants of influence. The continually evolving state of each element in their influence on each other may assist in understanding the processes occurring during a developing state of cultural adaptation. This may be illustrated by applying SCT to the opening vignette (refer to pg 1) involving Vanessa's interaction with her new employer in Japan.

Vanessa's 'personal' element may have included negative cognitions such as her anti-smoking stance, yearning for recycling in the face of the ubiquitous business card, and the tedium of the conversation topics. Her nerves appeared frazzled and her physical appearance displayed an outwardly dishevelled woman due to the unpleasant subway ride. These personal elements may then interact with her 'behaviour' in the display of grimacing expressions and a waving hand toward the plumes of cigar smoke. Additionally, her refusal of tea and agitation in looking for a quick escape from the room would have undoubtedly impacted upon the 'environment' wherein her employer clearly observed her disregard for cultural and socially polite practices. Consequently, her employer prematurely ended the meeting and advised his employee to escort Vanessa to the classroom. Vanessa's 'personal' component is her reaction of being affectively relieved to leave the room and start her teaching, but later upset when her contract is not extended after the initial four-week period. She felt she worked very hard during her employment and went beyond her textbook manual in providing a number of beneficial language training opportunities for her class. This negative feedback from her 'environment' serves to confirm her previous cognitions that Japan languishes in a male dominated business society where women are not valued in

the workplace. This 'personal' cognition then impacts upon Vanessa's future 'behavioural' encounters with businessmen - and perhaps this unenviable cycle continues without Vanessa gaining insight into the intercultural mistakes that may be triggering negative environmental responses.

Of course, this is a rather bleak portrayal of the causal structure of SCT at work. It should be recognised, however, that one's reaction to, and interpretation of events, is heavily dependent upon the constructed set of personal elements one possesses to assist in such a construal (Bandura, 1986). Individual behaviour is not simply reactive to external cues. Rather, individuals possess the cognitive capacity to attend to information that is relevant, form an interpretation of those facts, and decide upon their subsequent actions. The social cognitive perspective is founded in this core belief that individuals enjoy the unique capability of self-regulation, which directs thoughts, motivation, and behaviour (Bandura, 1986). The concept of 'self-efficacy' is commonly regarded as the most influential mechanism involved in self-regulatory functioning.

### *Self-efficacy*

Bandura (1997) defines self-efficacy as the central belief that one has the power to produce desired effects through one's actions. Efficacy beliefs are attributed to the activation and organisation of motivation, cognitive and social resources, and behavioural capabilities in the mastery of an action (Bandura, 1989). Success is subsequently achieved through positive beliefs in one's ability, reflected in perseverant effort and united cognitive and social skills, in the testing and retesting of behavioural strategies. Successful transactions effectively raise

efficacy appraisals. Those who enjoy robust self-efficacy are more likely to attribute failure to situational factors, deficient effort, or inadequate strategies (Bandura, 1997). Alternatively, individuals who are prone to doubt their capabilities are thought to lack determination in the face of initial failures. Repeated failure effectively diminishes efficacy beliefs, particularly when early setbacks occur in the absence of extenuating external circumstances or insufficient effort. Research indicates that individuals effectively engage in activities in which they deem themselves capable and avoid situations or tasks that are perceived as beyond their abilities (Bandura, 1997). Efficacy, therefore, is not simply a reflection of not knowing what to do or being unfamiliar with a particular behavioural repertoire. Rather, it is the sustained belief that one's functional capabilities can be utilised effectively to achieve success at a specific task.

With respect to learning new information or patterns of behaviour, self-efficacy beliefs may be attributed to self-aiding or self-debilitating effects through the organisation of attentive and cognitive processes (Bandura et al., 1996). Individuals with high self-efficacy direct their attention and analytical skills to devise several relevant behavioural strategies. Alternatively, those low in self-efficacy display the proclivity to direct their doubts inward, and consequently focus their attention upon situations where their actions proved unsuccessful (Bandura et al., 1996). These individuals are effectively immobilised through intense scrutiny of their personal inadequacies and the preoccupation of worst-case scenarios that may befall their behavioural attempts (Beck & Lund, 1981; Lazarus & Folkman, 1984). Individuals who dwell in this recess of personal

deficiencies produce intense stress, which debilitates the adept competencies they possess.

Differences in efficacy beliefs may assist understanding of how individuals who possess similar social, cognitive, and behavioural capabilities differ in their ability to cope effectively under diverse circumstances (Bandura, 1986). Acculturating individuals' self-efficacy beliefs relating to their ability to successfully acculturate may correlate both with their capacity to cope with cultural transition and their ability to interact with mainstream citizens. The regulatory component of self-efficacy may assist in the facilitation of motivational, emotional, and cognitive faculties during the process of cultural learning. Hence, the role of self-efficacy is expected to play a significant part both in the exploration of Japanese students' acculturation experiences and in facilitating motivation and coping skills during the cultural learning program.

#### *Socio-cognitive Modes of Learning*

Individual development is effectively shaped by the acquisition of knowledge gathered from our social world (Bandura, 1977). Exposure to environmental influences through socialisation is fundamental to the development of appropriate social skills and an understanding of familiar cultural practices (Kitayama, Markus, Matsumoto, & Norasakkunkit, 1997). Children are greatly dependent upon others both physically and educationally. Children invariably look to the actions of important caregivers and seek to replicate modelled behaviour. Subsequent enhancements in language ability facilitate children's capacity to learn through more complex sources of information. Communication

operates as our dominant source of social engagement and information gathering (Caprara, Scabini, Barbaranelli, Pastorelli, Regalia, & Bandura, 1998). Individuals are driven by a sense of belonging, which fosters the importance of communicative connectedness (Triandis et al., 1990). Individuals effectively listen to the instructions and advice of others and learn from the positive and negative reactions to their behaviour. During the progression into adulthood, the resources for social learning extend to the perception of moods, nuances, body language, and the words left unspoken (Bandura, 1986).

Acculturation is similarly dependent upon social learning as a means of navigating through unfamiliar social milieus. Every individual has invariably negotiated intricate social exchanges in one's own culture. However, the acquisition of often complex and entrenched social transactions becomes problematical when individuals from a different culture, endowed with a different set of cognitive, emotional, and motivational processes, encounter an apparently unfamiliar social situation (Kitayama et al., 1997). The ability to gauge one's performance of cultural practices, the opportunity to learn and adjust to new customs, and the measurement of success in adapting to a new cultural society, are largely provided for and determined by reference to one's environment. An individual's social environment wields enormous power in its capacity to impart a wealth of cultural knowledge and act as a yardstick for what is socially acceptable in various situational contexts. Operating within the environment are three universally accessible modes of influence, which may facilitate the acquisition of cultural knowledge - observational learning, direct tuition, and enactive learning (Bussey & Bandura, 1999).

*Observational Learning*

The power of observational learning has been well documented, especially within the developmental domain. The capacity to watch and learn from others reflects what SCT defines as ‘vicarious capability’ – to learn through models without actually performing behaviour (Bandura, 1986). Hence, the term modelling and observational learning are applied interchangeably. Observational learning has also been applied cross-culturally and has been found to represent a universalised human capacity with various implementations across cultural milieus (Bandura, 2002). Modelling is believed to facilitate the acquisition of information beyond basic behavioural mimicry. Such acquisitions include knowledge, attitudes, values, emotional proclivities, and social competencies (Bandura, 1986). The utilisation of models to convey information may extend beyond the one-on-one interactions to include media influence such as the powerful and far-reaching scope of televisions and computers. This medium effectively extends to socially isolated individuals who are unable to forge friendships or experience the gamut of social exchanges that lie beyond daily salutations. These individuals essentially learn from watching characters demonstrating a various array of human behaviours and emotional displays.

The colloquially termed act of “people watching” constitutes a favourite past time for individuals. It may also be described as one of the most powerful methods for learning. The human capacity for symbolisation assists in the retention of observed behaviour into mental pictures, creating accessible indicators of appropriate action (Bandura, 1977). Learning from social models is also ubiquitous across the lifespan (Bandura, 1986). When placed in unfamiliar

situations, individuals invariably watch the behaviour of others to determine the appropriate course of action. Socially astute individuals effectively queue when they see others are lined up, remove their shoes when they observe others taking them off, and wait to be seated in a restaurant when they see others waiting. This strategy for learning is anticipated to play an important role in acculturation where individuals are repeatedly placed in unfamiliar situational contexts and expected to perform in accordance with other social agents. Observational learning also alleviates the burden on foreign language proficiency as its emphasis on non-verbal communication transcends language barriers.

#### *Direct Tuition*

Direct tuition involves the imparting of relevant information and instruction regarding behaviour (Bussey & Bandura, 1999). Humans are communicative beings who rely on talking both as a form of information sharing and for social interaction. Words have the ability to resonate in one's thoughts, and provide detailed descriptions of visually vague situations (Bandura, 1986). Direct tuition also affords individuals with descriptions of cultural information in the absence of observational opportunities. For example, cultural information on the private sanctum of the home may heavily depend upon verbal communication to impart such knowledge as domestic role assignment, partner and child role expectations, family structure, and sexual propriety. Similarly, relational values and norms that dictate dating practices and partner protocol are difficult to discern observationally for the typical novice. The explanation of 'why' for unfamiliar cultural situations may assist in the retention of the significance for specific cultural practices. Direct tuition is therefore effective in generalising the

applicability of modelled behaviour, in addition to elaborating on the meaning and significance of witnessed events (Bussey & Bandura, 1999).

Similar to young children who lack the communicative ability to understand or convey complex meanings, Japanese students may lack the English proficiency to utilise this strategy in every situation. Verbal instruction, therefore, may often come from individuals who speak the same language and who are also in a state of acculturation. This process of information sharing may be subject to difficulties when the compatriot instructor lacks a well-rounded understanding of the issues and a clear conception of the social intricacies at work. Without such comprehension, student-to-student direct tuition may be fraught with problems, which perpetuate across time and situational context.

### *Enactive Learning*

Lastly, enactive learning is often regarded as a protracted operation wherein individuals construct understanding of behaviour through the outcomes of their actions. This involves a trial-and-error approach to behaviour modification wherein one is actively engaged in the attribution of their actions to responses incurred (Bandura, 1986). Enactive learning involves both intrinsic and extrinsic information feedback that serves to inform the individual of the effects their behaviour produces. Sensory effects, which may be evoked by the performance of behaviour, constitute intrinsic feedback (Bandura, 1986). The sights and sounds of crossing a busy street, the warmth of donning a woollen jumper, and the discomfort of boarding a crowded train are indicative of intrinsic response information.

Extrinsic feedback further augments the competencies achieved through sensory awareness. Through societal norms and etiquette, individuals are provided with guidance from locals regarding the appropriateness of their actions. Such response information may adopt the form of a nodding head, smiles, praise, punishment, criticism, active ignoring, or dismissal. As extrinsic information responses are socially mediated, the ensuing feedback from one's behaviour may vary dramatically according to the society or the cultural milieu (Bandura, 1986). Acculturating individuals' cultural knowledge and social competencies are highly dependent upon the guidance and information received from engaging in social interactions within a cultural context (Bandura, 1986). While enactive learning yields comparatively little knowledge in relation to the other modes of learning, this process is constantly employed to refine and perfect what is learnt through observational or verbal influences (Bandura, 1986).

All three socio-cognitive modes of influence are undoubtedly used in everyday situations, and some are perhaps more efficacious in various environments. Indeed, logic and empirical research suggest that they are most effective when employed together in a cumulative learning effort (Bandura & Bussey, 1999). Modelling is believed to result in faster learning outcomes than enactive strategies, which can be laborious as people are required to carefully observe reactions to their behaviour and be aware of differential outcomes (Bandura, 1986). Language barriers may also diminish the strength of direct tuition, as people may not fully comprehend the information provided in either oral or written form (Bandura & Bussey, 1999). These learning modes are accessible and coalesce successfully in a setting where mainstream citizens model

appropriate behaviour, support a sojourner's actions by giving verbal instruction, and afford opportunities for practice and feedback on subsequent behaviour. Difficulties arise, however, when sojourners are placed in an altogether unfamiliar environment without a constant or easily accessible source of visual or verbal tuition. It is impractical to conceive of acculturating individuals being constantly accompanied by a tutor instructing them on the requirements for social interactions. Similarly, not all cultural encounters are observed before participation is required in an unfamiliar situation. Consequently, isolated individuals commonly rely upon a trial-and-error approach when learning new information, attitudes, and behaviour, which can be a long, arduous and stressful process (Bandura, 1986). Indeed, Black and Mendenhall (1989) rightfully question the ethics of placing sojourners in unfamiliar settings without the aid of instructional tools, considering the high stress and personal cost associated with cultural adjustment.

While most acculturating individuals will possess a basic understanding of their new cultural practices, the majority of social customs may remain unknown or vague in description. Sojourners are invariably thrust into unfamiliar cultural practices, in which a delicate balance must be negotiated between participation in, and respect for, the relevant custom. For example, a Japanese student may arrive in Australia with the correct preconception that Australians are a relaxed people who enjoy their beer. When invited to a social engagement at the local pub the student's extent of cultural knowledge may be that beer would be the appropriate beverage of choice. In the absence of verbal instruction or discerning observation, the student may be unaware of the 'shout' system in Australian 'pub culture'.

Accepting rounds of drinks from local companions may appear to be an exceedingly enjoyable social outing for the student who may interpret this behaviour as generous and welcoming. However, locals may disapprove of the student's acceptance of drinks without reciprocation and may cast negative aspersions on the student's character as miserly or selfish. In typical Australian fashion, however, the student would presumably be informed that it was his or her turn to 'shout'. Even to those familiar with the English language, such vernacular expressions might be easily misunderstood.

Research studies that employ social cognitive theory in investigations of acculturation appear limited. The majority of relevant studies have adopted Bandura's Social Learning Theory (1977) for the purpose of skill development and cultural instruction (Black & Mendhenall, 1990; 1989; Mak et al., 1999a; Mak, 2000), rather than utilising SCT as an encompassing framework for investigating and supporting individuals' acculturative experience. Other literature on socio-cognitive learning modes have been predominantly gained through studies into individual development, personality formation, gender differentiation acquisition, and self-construal (Bussey & Bandura, 1999; Markus & Kitayama, 1991; Pastorelli, Caprara, Barbaranelli, Rola, Rozsa, & Bandura, 2001). Such research has focused upon the developing formation of specific cognitive, affective, and behavioural concepts through exposure to these socio-cognitive modes of influence.

Acculturation may similarly be conceived as a developing formation of cognitive, affective, and behavioural concepts, where the individual is predominantly schooled through exposure to a new social environment. Indeed,

the pervasive social orientation of all three modes is reflected in their employment within the environment through social watching, social listening, and social performing. This provides a strong argument for their pertinence in cultural learning, and indeed the acculturation process, where society and the environmental setting provide the fundamental source of tuition. These three learning modes will be incorporated in training strategies utilised in the cultural learning program for Japanese students.

#### Applicability of Social Cognitive Theory

Throughout this comprehensive theory is the fundamental recognition of the mediating influences of personal attributes, behavioural patterns, and environmental factors in its approach to understanding behaviour. The inclusive nature of such a perspective may be attributed to the first of three principal reasons for the adoption of social cognitive theory in this current study. The socio-cognitive perspective signifies a departure from notions of biological determinism in its regard for the individual as the creation of a number of interacting elements, rather than the mechanical product of stimulus-response learning (Bandura, 1986). SCT demonstrates flexibility in accommodating a changing society imbued with advancing technological and societal pressures. This progressive approach recognises that the importance of biology has been, to some extent, transcended by environmental influences. The renowned evolutionary term, 'survival of the fittest' may be accordingly altered to 'survival of the progressive'.

SCT proposes that individuals possess the potential to become masters of their destiny in impacting and shaping their own world (Bandura, 1986). It also acknowledges the limitations on such autonomy due in part to the interactive relationship of societal, behavioural, and personal constraints. It provides for a life-span approach to understanding individuals and their evolving state of being. SCT is not transfixed by behaviour patterns. Rather, it seeks to understand behaviour by examining the wider influences of the individual's internal and external structural systems. This perspective presents an invaluable alternative to the current era of universal dichotomies in which individuals are placed in either one category or the other.

Secondly, SCT was selected owing to its capacity to understand the way in which humans learn behaviour. As an extension of his Social Learning Theory (1977), Bandura was the first to incorporate the notion of 'modelling' as a form of social learning. This learning method is subsumed under the socio-cognitive mode of observational learning in SCT, which has demonstrated itself as an omnipresent practice across age and culture (Bandura, 1977; 1986). Social learning theory has been applied to cross-cultural training programs as a guiding paradigm that has aided explanations of why training programs are effective (Black & Mendenhall, 1989; 1990; Mak et al., 1999a; Mak, 2000). Specifically, the attentional, retentional, production and motivational sub-processes governing observational learning have been applied as an explanation for the mechanics of culture learning approaches.

Thirdly, SCT was selected for its efficiency as a teaching model, which may lend itself to a course of intervention benefiting acculturating individuals. In

Australian universities, international students typically receive comprehensive written information that seeks to educate students on the services and living conditions in their respective university locations. Universities also provide counselling services for educational, vocational and personal issues. However, practical, hands-on programs of cultural support appear limited. Similarly, other migrant groups to Australia exclusively receive information-based services that describe access to housing procurement, employment, English language classes, and cultural networks (Department of Immigration and Citizenship, 2011). Hence, services that promote relevant methods of cultural learning and coping during cultural adjustment may prove invaluable to those floundering in incomprehensible foreign contexts.

### Summary

Social cognitive theory integrates cognitive and behavioural theories, in addition to motivational features associated with the concept of self-efficacy, to account for the mutually interactive relationship between personal, behavioural and environmental elements. Bandura's (1986) description of reciprocal determinism accounts for the multitude of interactions that transpire between these elements in daily life and the way in which this interplay influences human learning and development. SCT places great emphasis on learning and the facilitation of knowledge as well as behavioural mastery. The socio-cognitive methods of observational learning, direct tuition and enactive learning provide a comprehensive description for the watching, listening and doing components of discovery.

Bandura's SCT has demonstrated cross-cultural applicability and recognises individual "free will" in determining thoughts and actions in response to situations. The theory also demonstrates efficacy in learning and training areas, which allow for its utilisation in programs of intervention focusing on behavioural change and educational awareness. This thesis adopts SCT as an inclusive framework in which to investigate the experiences associated with acculturation and in the creation of a cultural program aimed at facilitating cultural competence in Japanese university students.

## CHAPTER SIX: CURRENT STUDY AND RESEARCH AIMS

The conception of the world as a global community suggests the importance of investigating factors that facilitate or impede cultural adaptation, with a view to assisting those embarking on the process of cultural transitions. Acculturation is fundamentally the practice of learning and adapting to unfamiliar cultural experiences (Gibson, 2001). Acculturation may be described in terms of a continually evolving accommodation of new cultural phenomena. This process is incessant, with development occurring throughout the lifespan (Bandura, 1986). Research into acculturation is currently dominated by paper and pencil measures designed to gauge the outcome of acculturation. Less attention has been given to prevention or intervention during acculturation, and creating programs that promote positive experiences of acculturative change.

The principal purpose of this research was to gain an increased understanding of the experiences of Japanese university students during acculturation, and to develop a cultural learning program that would promote positive estimations of cultural competence. The current study incorporated a two-part examination of acculturation. The combined focus of both studies was to answer the following research questions:

- (1) What are the issues that are of significance to the acculturation experiences of Japanese students during their stay in Australia?
- (2) Can a cultural learning program, designed to accommodate the identified issues, improve students' sense of cultural competence?

## Study 1

The first stage of research aimed to achieve greater insight into the experience of acculturation by exploring the meaning and relationship of SCT's elements in the everyday experiences of Japanese university students studying in Australia. Specifically, SCT was utilised as an organising framework to explore those elements inherent within the individual, occurring in the environment, and displayed in behaviour that may influence cultural adjustment.

In a review of literature, SCT has not been employed in the study of acculturation, despite its numerous applications in the health and psychology domains. It should be noted that singular SCT components such as self-efficacy or outcome expectancies have been used in some acculturation studies (Bandura, 2002; Mak et al., 1999a; Pastorelli et al., 2001). However, the theory's triadic elements have not been applied in the investigation of acculturative experiences. In the absence of such literature it was determined that a qualitative approach to explore in-depth how these variables impact upon acculturation was required. Additional reasons for adopting a qualitative methodology in the initial research study are discussed in more detail on page 103.

The first study invited students to express their perceptions of everyday life experiences during the acculturation process in a semi-structured interview. Interview questions were guided by the exploration of moderating factors that reside within SCT's triad of elements – personal, environmental, and behavioural. Specifically, the study examined the influence of *personal* factors such as perceptions, needs, personality and psychological issues, perceived self-efficacy, the degree of choice in migration, and perceived cultural knowledge and language

ability. *Environmental* factors included the investigation into positive or negative interactions with mainstream citizens, the presence of family support systems and membership to social support networks. Lastly, the *behavioural* factors involved questions regarding students' proclivity to speak English in public, study Australian cultural or language, engage in interactions with locals, and the socio-cognitive learning modes utilised.

Interview questions also included general queries with respect to areas in which students may need support. For example, several interview questions referred to everyday tasks of living in Australia such as paying bills, grocery shopping, taking transport, using banks and interacting with other agencies. These questions were included in anticipation that students may benefit from practising the skills associated with these tasks in the subsequent cultural learning program. It should also be noted that the daily acculturating needs of Japanese students was the focus of this study rather than targeting academic issues. This objective was chosen due to research identifying that increased social contact within the host community is related to positive academic outcomes for international students (Ward & Masgoret, 2004). Interview questions were therefore geared toward the exploration of issues outside of classroom and academic concerns.

Participants' responses were recorded and analysed to determine common themes relevant to students' experiences of acculturation. These themes were then incorporated into the content of the cultural learning program discussed in Study 2.

*Rationale for Qualitative Methods*

Acculturation is a complex phenomenon in a constant state of fluctuation. Quantitative measurement has been highly useful in gathering large amounts of information about various predictors of acculturative stress or adjustment problems but is limited in a more inductive approach to understanding the process and experiences associated with acculturation. Quantitative measures have often assigned and measured ethnic groups within larger categories derived from geographical locations and broad cultural orientations. This may be seen in studies on “collectivist cultures” or “Asian” studies that group individuals from various countries such as India, Korea, Malaysia, Hong Kong and Japan. These studies are often deficient in explanations regarding between-culture differences and further in-group variations. Studies subsequently appear focused toward discovering etic findings (universal principles) without adequate regard for emic (culture-specific) differences (Matsumoto, 1994).

Berry (1970) recognised the need for emic approaches that allowed for the study of each cultural group within the specific environmental context of their acculturative experience. Unfortunately, the majority of acculturation research has been conducted by western academics on minority experiences. This approach invariably adopts the viewpoint of an outsider looking in, rather than capturing an insider’s perspective looking out. The desire for greater understanding of the way in which individuals view their world and create meaning from diverse life experiences is best derived from qualitative methods (Padgett, 1998). Hence, this research employed a qualitative approach to the initial study in order to gain more detailed or “rich” data from the perspective of

students currently experiencing acculturation. Additionally, the adoption of a mixed-method approach, which combines qualitative and quantitative methods, is widely regarded to unify the understanding of a research problem and strengthen the validity of the research findings (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2007). Furthermore, Brislin and Yoshida (1994b) assert that an effective training program should involve close consultation with the target audience to ensure the content and methods employed are relevant to their collective needs. As previously discussed, limited studies have focused exclusively on Japanese tertiary students studying in Australia. It was therefore seen as essential to use qualitative interviewing methods to gain an understanding of the key issues relevant to Japanese students, rather than employing pre-defined categories within quantitative scales.

## Study 2

The second stage of research involved the construction of a cultural learning program incorporating the results yielded from Study 1, as described above. This program sought to facilitate cultural competence by utilising motivation, the socio-cognitive modes of influence (observational learning, direct tuition and enactive learning) and self-efficacy within SCT. Specifically, Japanese participants were provided with highly motivating rewards for participation, modelling, verbal instruction, opportunities for behavioural practice and supportive feedback on their performance of a series of novel tasks.

In addition, the personal, behavioural and environmental elements of reciprocal determinism were targeted with regard to program activities and

content. For example, the 'person' element was afforded activities focusing on affective and cognitive cultural learning designed to increase cultural knowledge, Australian language expressions, problem solving skills, coping skills and stress management. The 'environment' element involved the use of Australian facilitators for each activity to increase students' engagement and interactions with locals. Additionally, all of the program activities were conducted at scenic locations such as on the beach or around a beachside barbeque to increase aesthetic appeal, enjoyment and connection with the natural environment. Finally, the 'behaviour' element involved opportunities to enact practical actions related to real-life situations to enhance mastery of behaviours, confidence and self-efficacy appraisals.

Scores recorded on several standardised scales determined the effectiveness of the cultural learning program by comparing the intervention group with a control group receiving no program of support. The three areas of cultural competence were assessed in relation to participants' psychological maintenance (i.e., satisfaction and wellbeing), social relationships and cultural cognitions. Specifically, the area of psychological maintenance was assessed through several self-report measures including the Satisfaction with Life Scale (SWLS) (Diener, Emmons, Larsen, & Griffin, 1985), the Subjective Happiness Scale (SHS) (Lyubomirsky & Lepper, 1999), and the Depression, Anxiety and Stress Scale (DASS) (Lovibond & Lovibond, 1995). Social relations were assessed with the Social Avoidance and Distress (SAD) Scale (Watson & Friend, 1969) and the Social Provisions Scale (SPS) (Russell & Cutrona, 1984). Lastly, culturally congruent cognitions was measured through three "critical incident"

scenarios (Brislin et al., 1986) and a cultural self-efficacy scale constructed in accordance with Bandura's guidelines for domain specific self-efficacy questionnaires (2006).

The following hypotheses for Study 2 proposed:

(1) Participants in the cultural learning program will score higher on measures of cultural competence following intervention.

(2) Participants in the cultural learning program will score higher on measures of cultural competence compared with participants in the control group receiving no intervention.

## CHAPTER SEVEN: STUDY 1

### Method

#### *Participants*

The study involved the purposive sampling of 14 (9 female and 5 male) Japanese undergraduate students studying at the Rockhampton campus of Central Queensland University. University students were chosen for this study owing to the consistency in their language ability due to English proficiency (TOEFL or IELTS) requirements for tertiary education. Language was an important consideration due to the absence of translating services and the need to glean descriptive information from each participant. The participants' ages ranged from 19 to 26 years of age with a mean of 21.6 years. Participants varied in their length of stay from 4 months to 36 months. The average length of stay was 18.28 months.

#### *Materials*

##### *Interview and Guidelines*

An interview guide was created using semi-structured, open-ended questions designed to encourage participants to share their individual stories and background (See Appendix A). Questions related to concepts drawn from the literature review on acculturation and the moderating factors that reside within SCT's triad of elements – personal, environmental, and behavioural. Demographic questions such as age, and length of stay in Australia were also collected. The interview generally consisted of broad, open-ended questions that

were further probed with follow-up questions to clarify and delineate one issue from another.

Questions examined the influence of *personal* factors such as cognitive perceptions, needs, personality traits, psychological concepts such as stress, perceived self-efficacy, reason for studying in Australia, and perceived knowledge of Australian culture and people. Examples of these questions included “tell me what causes you the most stress about living in Australia?” and “what are the main differences between Japanese and Australians?”

*Environmental* factors included the investigation into positive or negative interactions with Australians, the presence of family support systems and social support networks. These factors were explored by questions such as “tell me about the help you’ve received from Australians since your arrival?” and “how easily have you made friends since arriving?”

Lastly, the *behavioural* factors consisted of questions regarding students’ proclivity to speak English in public, to engage in interactions with Australians, to engage in study regarding Australian cultural behaviour or language, and the socio-cognitive learning modes utilised. Examples of these questions included “How often do you speak English each day?” and “How have you increased your understanding of Australians and the way they live?” In addition, participants were invited at the conclusion of the interview to contribute issues to the discussion that had not been previously raised. Not all questions were asked during every interview, as previous answers and unprompted discussion had at times already addressed such questions.

*Procedure*

Participants were recruited through research posters, which were displayed throughout the university campus, advertising the project and participant requirements. The majority of participants, however, were additionally recruited with the assistance of the International Student Services of the university and Japanese staff members. Each interview was kept to no longer than 90 minutes in duration. The thesis author conducted all interviews and possesses a rudimentary grasp of Japanese, which assisted with minor translations. A Japanese-to-English dictionary was also present, but this was only required during one interview when the participant wanted to explain a Japanese proverb. Each interview was digitally recorded (in English) and transcribed verbatim. Observational data, including gestures, facial expressions and body posture, was also recorded within the body of each interview. For example, non-verbal communication such as facial expressions, long pauses or sighs and other emotional reactions were recorded alongside verbal communication. These observations were recorded to provide context and depth of understanding to the participant's dialogue. In addition, the researcher reflected with the interviewee on written field notes following each interview in an attempt to clarify significant communications of the interview. It should also be noted that the semi-structured nature of interviews has an inherent potential for bias, as questions may be geared toward the exploration of issues raised by the researcher. It was therefore important to ensure that interview questions provided an initial topic for discussion only, and that participants were free to diverge into other issues of concern.

*Data Analysis*

The strategy of triangulation was employed to enhance the rigour of the current study. The concept of triangulation is taken from navigational science where two or more references are used to enhance resolution of one location or fixed point (Padgett, 1998). Hence, triangulation is employed in qualitative research as a method that draws upon more than one source of information to achieve greater accuracy and depth to the subsequent conclusions drawn from the content. Denzin (1978) suggested four types of triangulation, including: theory, methodological, observer, and data triangulation. The current qualitative study employed data triangulation through the use of verbal transcripts, observational data and researcher interpretations recorded in field notes. The study also employed a second coder to strengthen the reliability of the interpretations gathered from the data. Due to limited resources, the second coder was provided with only a sample of the data, in coding four randomly selected interview transcripts (29% of data) in accordance with the researcher's coding protocol described below.

This study does not claim to adhere rigidly to a particular theoretical approach to qualitative research. The paramount aim of this study was to understand the way in which acculturation is experienced within the context of Australian life from the perspective of those experiencing it – Japanese tertiary students. A qualitative methodology was chosen as it was considered most suitable to investigations of contextual and experiential nature, yielding more detailed and comprehensive information. The study may therefore be described as oriented in the phenomenological approach of qualitative design, yet the methods

of analysis employed are not consistent with typical phenomenological techniques. Padgett (1998) proposes that there is no singular approach to qualitative data analysis and that the researcher should determine the best method given the data at hand. This was determined based on factors relating to the size of the data, the resources available and the purpose of enquiry.

In reviewing the transcripts, material was initially examined individually whereby each interview was coded separately before being compared at a group level with other interviews. To ensure the 'voice' of each participant formed the basis of the research analysis, only direct quotes were used to attach to each nominated code or category. Individual interviews were firstly examined by applying one or more codes to describe the content within each sentence of dialogue. This method was suggested by Glaser (1978) and is commonly referred to as line-by-line coding where a name is applied to each line of written data. This is typically a painstaking process but it was deemed important to start with line-by-line coding to avoid research bias and maintain an analytic stance toward the data (Charmaz, 2008).

Line-by-line coding yielded over 100 codes (see Appendix B for inclusive list). Several sections of interview material initially received double or triple coding. For example, an interviewee stated, "If I speak very good English, like native English, I would have less trouble with racism". This sentence was subsequently coded under three categories – 'English ability', 'Racism' and 'Poor English results in prejudice'. Additionally, several codes overlapped or shared common characteristics such as 'English ability', 'frustrated by language barrier', 'Australian slang', and 'difficulty with Australian accent'. As another example of

overlap, 'using mobiles', 'banking and finances' and 'guidance and asking for help' appeared better represented by a superordinate code such as 'daily tasks'. Therefore, the next step was to refine the numerous codes into more 'focused' codes.

Glaser (1978) describes focused coding as more directed, selective and conceptual. Focused codes were derived by identifying initial codes deemed to be significant, and also those that appeared frequently across interviews. The term 'significant' refers to both the importance of the material from the interviewees' perspective and to the topic of acculturation. For example, a common code found amongst the data included 'Australian nature' and referred to participants' comments about creatures such as spiders, kangaroos and mosquitoes. Whilst this represented a commonly discussed topic amongst some interviewees, 'Australian nature' was not deemed as significant to participants' daily life when compared to other commonly discussed topics. Additionally, 'Australian nature' was not deemed significant to the process of acculturation. If, however, participants were forced to adjust to Australian life in the bush, or their exposure to Australian animals was associated with anxiety or other deleterious reactions, then the significance level of this code would heighten accordingly. Hence, focused coding involved reviewing previous assigned codes and analysing transcripts again to identify conceptually significant data that was commonly found across sets of data.

This process of refinement prompted further evaluation of emergent themes and consideration of the relationship between them (Charmaz, 2008). A hierarchical diagram (see Appendix C) depicts the changes made to each code, as

themes were refined across several reviews of the data. Any changes to the title of a code required a review of the existing quotes to ensure that the new code accurately represented the meaning of previously encoded content. For example, codes were initially created for 'friendship' and 'interactions with others', which were placed under a larger category of 'social relations'. These concepts were interpreted as linking closely with other codes such as 'sense of belonging' and 'social identity'. The interrelated nature of friendship, a sense of belonging, social identity and interactions with others resulted in the need to redefine an encompassing theme as 'social connectedness' - an emergent theme that is further discussed in the results section. Upon ascribing this theme, quotes were again reviewed to ensure that the new definition of social connectedness still represented previously encoded content. Through a repeated process of refining categories, a total of six themes emerged from the data.

The second coder's independent analysis was used to assess the reliability of the themes identified. The second coder identified fewer codes during line-by-line coding than the researcher. This is most probably due to the discrepancy in the volume of data assessed by the second and research coders (i.e., 29% versus 100% data). Whilst no new codes were identified, semantic differences were present. The most notable difference was the second coder's adoption of 'prejudice' and 'discrimination' to describe data the researcher had coded under 'racism'. In reviewing the transcripts it was mutually agreed that interviewees predominantly used the words, "racist" or "racism" to describe this behaviour; and this term was subsequently assigned. The second coder also used less focused codes before arriving at themes. For example, the second coder applied

‘Emotional Health’ as an initial focused code before describing the encompassing theme as ‘Health and Wellness’, which corresponds closely with the researcher’s assigned theme of “Wellbeing”.

## Results

### *Theme 1: Language*

Language was a topic that dominated much of the discussion about the acculturative experience for participants. Participants commonly agreed that using English was one of the most difficult things they had experienced since arriving in Australia. Additionally, all 14 subjects responded unanimously with “fluent English” when asked to consider “what would make living in Australia easier for you?” The participants went on to nominate other things such as a car or their own apartment. However, a higher level of English proficiency was viewed collectively as the most coveted asset.

A number of the participants reported that their English language training for tertiary entrance requirements, which focuses upon listening and reading comprehension, was not as helpful when it came to oral fluency needed in university tutorials and other daily interactions. The following was described by 20-year-old Mr H:

When I came to Australia I found my English very poor. I think I could understand and read okay, but it took a long time for me to respond in talking. This was most difficult in class when I wanted to join the conversation. When I finally got my idea the classmates had changed to a new topic. This was very frustrating for me, I think.

Other participants demonstrated positive approaches to coping with language barriers with one participant stating:

They (Australians) use a lot of slang and we don't understand easily. They also speak very quickly and it is difficult for me to understand. So I say 'okay mate', even if I don't know what they are talking about and people don't get so mad to me.

The majority of participants indicated that they spoke English on average 6 to 10 hours a day. This included attending lectures and tutorials, and interacting with other English speakers throughout the school day. At night the level of English speaking time depended on the living arrangements of the individual. Essentially, those who shared residences with Japanese friends reported speaking less English each day than those who lived with individuals from other language backgrounds where English was the common language used. Some participants who lived with fellow Japanese students indicated a sense of relief in being able to talk easily in their native language and take a break from English for the day. These participants commonly described "thinking in English" as tiring. Similarly, individuals who dwelled with non-Japanese companions, where English was required at all times for communication, reported a decrease in speaking English during the evening. This coincided with a reported increase in the evening of engaging in solitary pursuits, such as playing computer games, listening to music, or emailing/chatting on the computer. It would appear that downtime away from English use was sought by the majority of interviewees.

Language was also identified as a common career element, with many participants hoping to use their English skills in their future vocations. Some

participants wanted to become either Japanese teachers in the Australian school system or English teachers when they return to Japan. Other participants had desires of using their English as interpreters or in tourist occupations in Japan or Australia. Mr T explains his vocational aspirations:

I was not very good at exams in high school and I find schoolwork is very difficult for me sometimes. But I am good at languages and have a dream of becoming a good English speaker and then I can get a job very easy in Japan. People who speak English very well get paid a very good salary. I would like this very much (laughs)!

### *Theme 2: Racism*

The word 'racism' was predominantly used to describe two different situations involving interactions with Australians. One described either an individual making an overt comment about the student being Asian in an aggressive or contemptuous manner, typically independent from any interaction with the student. This was best illustrated by Ms K, who described the following experience whilst travelling on a bus:

Just little things, like whenever someone sees me, I obviously look like I'm Japanese or somewhere in Asia. And they think I don't understand English and then they just say something like...they talk little bit rude things about Asian women.

The other situation appears to involve a dismissive or intolerant reaction such as a sigh or rolling eyes to the presence or request of the student. This was commonly described as occurring when the student was requesting service from a

worker. There also appeared to be a connection between participant's perceptions of their English ability and feelings of prejudice from others. This is best illustrated through Mr Y's description of his interactions with cashiers.

...especially the shop assistants...At that time I did not have many specific opportunity to speak with other people who is not very familiar with me, and when I had to go to the shops I clearly saw two different responses. One, I had very good treatment and 50% of that kind of occasion I have very bad treatment. And that happened as soon as the shop assistant found that I am not a native English speaker. If I speak very good English, like native English, I would have less trouble with racism.

Of the 10 students who referred to "racism", 4 also acknowledged prejudice in their own country and conveyed the omnipresent nature of this attitude in all cultures. The following, was reported by Ms E:

I think in Japan also we are a little bit racist. Because we don't see so many foreigners in Japan still, and I'm sure if someone in a local village sees white people they just run away or whatever because we don't know what to do with them....if I am in Japan and someone comes in from another country, I like to see these people. But I'm sure some people think that this is Japan and you shouldn't stay here so long, you are only a visitor.

Responses from 4 other students within the 10 that discussed the concept of racism reflected a less accepting attitude toward what they perceived as prejudicial treatment. This appeared to be associated with both a behavioural response such as avoiding daily interactions with Australians and an emotional

reaction involving feelings of rejection, anger and isolation. Those students who acknowledged avoiding or limiting their daily interactions with strangers did not appear to present with a low sense of self-efficacy in their ability to perform tasks. Rather, they appeared to view their behaviour as a natural response to the negative actions of others. For example, one participant stated, “I think I am very capable of doing many things like normal Australians do. But that kind of bitter, bitter experience (racist or negative response from an Australian) actually prevents me from having more opportunity, more chance, of putting myself in that situation.”

### *Theme 3: Age*

The age of the participant was found to be a significant factor that extended beyond mere demographic information. Participants’ age appeared to contribute both positively and negatively in shaping an individual’s view of their acculturative experience. The age range of participants was seven years, which at first blush appears to be a slight difference and seemingly inconsequential. However, as the participants’ collectively expressed, significant life decisions and responsibilities are thrust upon them at this critical time in their life. For example, students are contemplating which career path to take, considering relationship expectations (i.e., “my mother is hoping I find a smart, successful boyfriend here – Japanese boy of course [giggles]”), and even debating over where to reside (“if I can stay in Australia on a bridging visa to find work, I think I would like to do this”).

The concept of age also appeared to relate to several other factors such as cultural expectations, dedication to their studies, and socialisation. As a 23-year-old, Ms E explains her parental and societal expectations for her age:

All through high school my parents told me to study very hard to go to university. Now I am at university they say study hard to get a good job. Many companies in Japan have entry exams ...if you fail exams or get rejected you sometimes need to wait a long time before trying again. If you are older, each time they (the companies) are not so interested in you. There is a lot of pressure to get a university degree and job quickly, while you are young, before companies do not want you. So I have no time to have fun, I think...I must succeed.

Similar sentiments were echoed by 19-year-old Mr T. However, his comparatively younger age, coupled with the fact he is just starting university, appears to allow him to adopt a different perspective in his cultural life cycle. He stated:

We Japanese work very hard in high school to get into university. Now I can enjoy my time in Australia, of course I still work hard, but I can enjoy with friends and maybe travel or something like this before I have to become a businessman. So I want to have many fun experiences now.

There did appear to be a pattern that relatively older participants appeared more goal-oriented and serious about their purpose for being in Australia, while younger participants were looking to have fun and undertake new experiences. This may in fact be a natural shift that occurs as one gets older where interests change and the need to focus on the future becomes paramount. It is also

inevitable that one may become more focused on goals such as a career path when the transition from studies to the workforce is more imminent.

The age of the participant appeared to contribute most consistently to individual's interactions with others and their own opinions of their abilities with acculturation. Essentially, younger participants reported spending more time with friends and attending activities or trips away than older participants. Younger participants also appeared less concerned about their English ability, were generally more forgiving about their mistakes with English, and experienced less trepidation about cultural interactions than their older counterparts. Mr. M, a 21-year-old stated, "I know I don't always understand native English speakers, but I always learn new things by listening. This is why I am here (in Australia) to fix my errors. I just keep trying". In contrast, 26-year-old Mr Y reported, "If I was younger I would have much, much easier access to this different culture, and of fitting myself into this culture". Similarly, 24-year-old Ms Y observed:

I came to Australia, I found my English poor. So that really knocked my kind of confidence or self-esteem. I come from a small community and at a young age I had already established like a kind of social position in Japan, and people know I am good at doing and organising many things. But in Australia people don't know anything about me, and I feel like I have to start from the beginning again. This makes me scared of making extra mistakes, which might cause more disadvantage to me.

*Theme 4: Social Connectedness*

Participants reported having very few to no Australian friends. They stated that they have made friends with other Japanese and international students and take pleasure in the multicultural aspect of Australian society. However, the majority of participants reported a desire for more Australian friends, but a lack of opportunities that would allow for this to occur. Participants provided several reasons for what they perceived as a lack of social connection with Australians. Many of the participants described the feeling that international students lived, studied and frequented the university campus more than Australian students. Therefore, the chances of interacting with Australians outside of tutorials and lectures appeared limited. Ms M stated, “they (Australian students) often come to lectures or tutorials and then drive home. I see some people I know from my class at the library, but not really anywhere else on campus like coffee places or lunch places”. Also, some participants appeared to agree that many of the courses chosen by Japanese or international students were similar, placing them all in the one group where often Australian students were a minority. Finally, some participants felt that Australians were not interested in making friends with them. Ms T observed:

I think they have their friends from high school and they are not so interested in new friends. It is not because they do not like Japanese but they are not needing new friends. I think also they get a bit frustrated with my English and want to be friends with people who are fluent English speakers.

Mr Y, as did several other participants, expressed the following sense of exclusion when it came to interactions with Australians:

...some people are very good at accepting me and some people who see that I am not Australian or very fluent English speaker: they stop talking to me. Even very simple phrases like “hey I went to the pub last night”, they stop saying to me and I feel totally out of the circle. But I also know there are people who try to involve me to that circle. I really, really appreciate that, and whenever they try speaking to me I try to respond to that question, because I think that will help me to be a part of the community.

Participants also discussed a desire for membership to a sporting, social or organisational group. However, these comments were consistently framed as “I would like to join a... (i.e., soccer, yoga, jazz) group” followed by the acknowledgement that they held no such membership. Essentially, it appeared that a consistent craving for group membership was present in the majority of participants interviewed but few actually belonged to any organisational group. For those that had joined an organisation or club successfully, they had done so with a friend who shared a similar interest. Those participants appeared to take comfort in safety in numbers when it came to engaging in activities. For example, Ms R explained her recent foray into the art of yoga, “of course I did not want to go by myself, because I am not so good at moving my body well, so I make my (Japanese) friend come with me”.

It also appeared that participants did not view Australians as their primary source for advice or guidance. Participants were asked “who would you go to for advice or guidance about things in Australia, who do you ask for help?”

Responses indicated an overwhelming reliance on fellow Japanese or other international students for advice on issues that involved living in Australia. Participants also identified they might approach faculty staff such as a trusted lecturer or residential staff. However, none of the participants identified an Australian friend or classmate as a source of assistance.

Participants' interactions with Australians tended to prompt various descriptions of Australians that ranged from lazy and relaxed people to honest and helpful. Responses from participants indicated that Australians were generally thought of as helpful and friendly people. When interpreting descriptors it is important to weigh the cultural implications of such terms by follow-up questioning. The Japanese culture dictates a sense of concern for the feelings of others, and it is often difficult to draw negative comments from participants if they feel their opinions may cause upset or offence to their audience. This was thought to be particularly relevant with an Australian researcher as the recipient of their views. Follow-up questioning was therefore employed to clarify and extract more information and meaning to such statements. For example, the 5 participants who reported that Australians were honest were subsequently asked "what do you mean by honest?" or "can you describe a situation where an Australian was honest?" These participants responded in common by referring to a free speaking style of conversation and behaviour. Mr H explains:

Some of them (Australians) have very strong opinions and strong ideas. They don't care about other people...if they think something and feel something about a situation they share it even if they know other people around them do not agree. We (Japanese) don't do this in Japan.

Ms M describes her thoughts on Australians' honesty:

Japanese people want to be like kind of perfect and polite for everybody. But sometimes I feel like it is just, what do you say, hypocrites, like just pretending they are nice to all of them. Australian people are more honest. Like when they feel unhappy, they show us. So we can know this person is not happy. But Japanese people can pretend they are okay when they are unhappy, but after that people tell other people about the bad things that are happening. I think Australian people are very honest. Sometimes too much honest. I think we need to mix together for good balance.

#### *Theme 5: Self-efficacy*

Arguably the most interesting finding from the interview material was the common agreement that negotiating everyday tasks whilst living in Australia was an easy affair. Participants described themselves as 'capable' to 'very capable' in dealing with everyday living activities such as grocery shopping, managing their finances (i.e., paying rent or bills as applicable) and negotiating transportation. Participants reported that they were not in need of guidance or instruction in dealing with these situations and that these daily tasks caused them minimum stress. Mr T explained:

Yes, I feel confident to do these tasks. I do not think there is a big difference in doing these things in Australia or doing the same things in Japan. Of course, my mother buys the groceries in Japan not me (laughs) but it is easy to do here and I do not feel concern for shopping or using ATMs.

It was important to note, however, that the types of tasks that were reportedly performed on a routine basis appeared to involve limited interactions with others. For example, banking or finances were managed through ATMs or internet banking, with few over-the-counter transactions. Similarly, rental units or houses were organised through friends or university representatives with minimal initiation from participants. Also, text messaging non-Japanese friends was highly favoured over phone calls.

These convenient, relatively non-interactive options such as text messaging, utilising automatic debit facilities and using ATMs or internet banking are widespread practices within Australian society. It is therefore, not surprising to discover that interviewees similarly adopt these practices in their everyday life. It is unclear whether these practices represent the adoption of modern conveniences or avoidance of more interactive and perhaps more stressful methods of interaction (i.e., face-to-face and over the phone).

The perception that transitioning to Australian life is straightforward was further reinforced in responses to “what advice would you give other Japanese students who were preparing to come to Australia?” Participants appeared to enthusiastically advocate for others to experience Australia and made statements such as “it’s very safe and easy to live here”, “there is nothing that you need to worry about here” and “it’s not difficult to fit into Australian life”. Participants also encouraged other Japanese travellers to learn English and stressed that this was most important for them during their stay.

Participants were also asked about how they respond to unfamiliar situations as a means of exploring the socio-cognitive modes that were commonly

employed. Female participants appeared to predominantly nominate observational learning and direct tuition as their most preferred means for understanding appropriate behaviour. Alternatively, male participants demonstrated a tendency toward enactive learning strategies. This is best demonstrated by Ms Y who stated: "I just watch what people do and I think, if I am not sure, I ask someone for help. But I think it is best to just watching others first. This is the easiest thing for me." However, Mr T responded by stating:

I just have a try, and if I am doing something wrong then I think I will discover this quickly or someone will tell me. For example, riding a bus here is very different from Japan. There is no announcement for the next stop or numbers for each stop. I was very confused where I was going when I first used the buses. And at this time I did not see people pushing bells or such things and then it is my stop and the bus did not stop. So I say "Stop please!" to the bus driver. The bus driver tells me to push the bell and he will stop at the next bus stop. I think he thinks this is very funny but also annoying as well. But anyway, I learned how to ride the bus that day and this is good.

The majority of participants identified that speaking English was the most important factor that caused difficulty in negotiating some tasks in Australia. One's perception of competency with everyday tasks appeared to relate to one's sense of proficiency with the English language. Hence, those participants who appeared to believe that they were capable of using their English in a number of unfamiliar situations appeared to have a similarly high level of self-efficacy in coping with daily life in Australia. This was reflected in statements such as Ms Y

who reported “Most Australians are helpful and I think I can talk to them and ask questions to them if I am not sure in a situation. I think my English is improving more and more each day, so stating my problem or my question is not hard for me”. Conversely, Ms R stated:

On the phone, sometimes people speak very fast and unclearly and I sometimes hang up when I couldn't understand. My English is not so good still, so sometimes I feel stressed and like, ask my friend or get my boyfriend to go with me.

Six interviewees, including Ms R reported avoiding some situations or requesting assistance from another party to help them or act on their behalf in an unfamiliar situation. The situations referred to by participants included random acts such as asking advice about how to install an air conditioning unit and seeking a refund from a store for an item that was faulty. These individuals identified that their language skills were responsible for their decision to not engage in the relevant situation. It appeared that the unscripted and potentially unknown elements of conversation, which may include things such as carpentry or other technical vocabulary, were cause for concern for participants.

Perceived racism and associated ridicule or derision was another reason identified by 3 other interviewees for avoiding situations. These individuals were all male and reported they were capable of engaging successfully in many situations in Australian society and that their English proficiency was good. They explained that they did not wish to engage in some situations such as social events due to previous negative reactions from Australians. Mr Y reported:

I was with my friends at a nightclub and we were sitting close to another group of people. My friends and I were speaking Japanese. One of the girls was laughing to me, but it was loud and I didn't hear what she said. Another girl was shaking her head and I think trying to stop her friend from being clearly rude to us, but the laughing girl said "they don't understand...they can't speak English" or something like this. Then her boyfriend looked at us and said very bad words..."Fucking Asians". I was very mad.... and I think why do you hate me when I do nothing to you? I clearly love your country, so I come here to study and you hate me because of where I am from or what I look like...this kind of incident has happened before but not so bad as this, and it makes me kind of not want to be around people like that, so I don't go to these places so much.

#### *Theme 6: Wellbeing*

The concept of mental health involved participants' emotional state throughout their acculturative experience. Interviewees were observed to use positive emotional descriptions when discussing their time in Australia, such as exciting, enjoyment, challenging, happy, etc. Participants also spoke with great adoration of the weather, beaches, and landscape of Australia. Ms K stated: "I love the nature and I like to go to the local camp site and I like to feel like local people are doing. Some people are from Australia but they are travelling around in a caravan. I would love to do that". Mr Y also states, "The Australian weather is excellent. Even in winter you can do washing any time of the day and it will still dry. This is excellent!"

Participants also reported that the landscape, natural beauty, and weather of Australia created a positive affect on their mood. Ms K explains, “The weather here is terrific. Sometimes the sky is all blue with no white clouds. I think it is difficult to be sad or have the blues during weather so nice”. Conversely, a common pattern involving three negative emotional states was observed involving notions of stress, loneliness and isolation.

The word stress appeared to be highly associated with discussions about English and using English in unfamiliar situations. Participants reported that English use was most stressful in situations when they did not understand what was being asked of them or when they were having difficulty communicating themselves. English language use appeared less stressful in situations that were predictable or familiar, or where previously successful social transactions had occurred.

Stress was also associated with discussions about university studies. Students nominated several academic concerns involving workload issues, translating material, oral presentations, and assignment or exam requirements. When asked how they cope with stress, most participants stated that they simply try their best or work harder to prevail over challenges in both their academic life and with their English skills. Very few participants reported engaging in any stress management practices of relaxation, physical tension relief or cognitive strategies. The common reaction to stressful situations appeared to be trying one’s hardest to overcome them. Additionally, none of the interviewed students indicated that they had sought any formal assistance such as counselling in response to stress or other negative emotional symptoms.

The word loneliness has been applied here to describe situations where interviewees have discussed their desire to have more contact with others. This may include situations where they have reported wanting more contact with Australians and other English-speaking students or where they have expressed a desire for group membership. The concept of loneliness was also found in reports of missing their family and friends back in Japan. Some students reported missing their high school friends the most, and keeping in contact via the computer with what was happening in their hometowns. Mr M described his sense of loneliness “my friends think I am the lucky one to be studying in Australia and I, most of the time, I think this too. But sometimes I wish I was back in Japan so I can be with my friends and have a good time with them, enjoying the things they are doing all the time”.

Telecommunication mediums such as Skype, iChat, MSN and regular email contact were reportedly popular for staying in contact with loved ones at home. Many participants reported that their parents were not familiar with chatting online and that email and phone calls were the main source of contact to their parents. A couple of participants reported that they had deliberately limited their use of the Internet, as too much contact with their friends and family at home had made them more homesick. Participants also reported that it was important to assure their parents that they were doing well at school, working hard and enjoying their time here to prevent their parents from unnecessary worry. Individuals who appeared to express a consistent theme of loneliness in their interviews also held no membership to any local or university group, reportedly

spent their free time in solitary pursuits and had a limited number of Japanese friends.

The final commonly discussed negative emotion was a sense of isolation. The idea of isolation discussed by participants involved limiting their interactions with others, either due to a perception of exclusion, or a voluntary withdrawal from engaging with others. Indeed, it was difficult to ascertain whether participants' isolation was due to self-sanctioned withdrawal or deliberate exclusion imposed by other parties, as each individual's perception of reality was different. For example, some individuals spoke about other students (typically Australians or native English speakers) excluding them from social conversations by not addressing comments to them. Japanese students then spoke of refraining from talking in such a social circle and not approaching these individuals.

Some participants limited their interactions where they believed they were not welcome in certain social settings and other participants avoided situations as it was not pleasurable or they were concerned about possible negative interactions. This behaviour appeared directly linked to previous negative interactions with others not limited to the mainstream population. For example, two individuals reported negative interactions with other international students and a feeling of being unwelcome by this group. However, the majority of students indicated that they found support from other Japanese students who provided a constant means of social interaction.

The negative emotions raised by interviewees also appeared to overlap strongly with previously discussed themes. For example, language appeared highly associated with stress, social connectedness appeared linked with

loneliness and isolation involved the perception of prejudice. It appears logical to attribute a cause and effect interpretation to these connections, but it is important to remain open to the presence of other contributing factors.

### Discussion

The interview material revealed findings that have meaning for research with Japanese university students in general, and for the construction of the cultural learning program in Study 2. The aim of this initial study was to understand significant issues relating to the experience of acculturation reported directly by Japanese students. The interview guidelines were based on the exploration of social cognitive elements and a search for their influence on daily life experiences during acculturation. The interview was designed to encourage Japanese students to voice their opinions in an open and unconstrained forum. Additionally, several questions relating to socio-cognitive methods of learning were raised to assist in the development of a cultural learning program promoting intercultural competence. Each emergent theme identified in the findings will be explored further in relation to previous research and the potential influence of these factors in the subsequent creation of a cultural learning program.

### *Language*

English language proficiency was confirmed as a meaningful issue in Japanese students' experiences of acculturation. Participants appeared to view language skills as vital to positive interactions with locals and an essential attribute for an easier and less stressful acculturative experience. Language also

appeared central to most of the emergent themes due to its association with concepts of self-efficacy, perceptions of prejudice, social engagement, and stress. Specifically, deficient language perceptions were reportedly related to lower self-efficacy resulting in avoiding interactions, perceived prejudice, feelings of social exclusion and stress associated with academic and social concerns.

A common focus for students who choose to study abroad is the opportunity to improve upon their relevant language competency (Ward et al., 2001). A large number of international students undertake the English Language Intensive Courses for Overseas Students (ELICOS) program before moving on to university courses (ABS, 2007). Similarly, resettlement programs in Australia offer free access to English language classes for migrants upon arrival into Australia (Department of Immigration and Citizenship, 2011). The rationale for language education is founded on the perception that inability to converse in a nation's language will adversely affect the individual's ability to function in society (Ward et al., 2001). Indeed, the importance of language skills has been well established in research as contributing to positive acculturation outcomes for international students (Berry & Kim, 1988; Greenland & Brown, 2005; Heikenheimo & Shute, 1986; Leder & Forgansz, 2004). Specifically, good language proficiency has been associated with psychological wellbeing, adjustment, general satisfaction and is often regarded as a core feature of intercultural competence (Ward et al., 2001).

The obvious remedy for participants' expressed desire for increased English language proficiency is enrolment in further language training programs. However, those who have studied another language will empathise with

interviewee comments regarding the difference between textbook language tutorage, and actual conversation skills. For the majority of second-language speakers, the grasp of pronunciation, dialect-specific expressions, and realistic conversational skills are not acquired until immersion in the relevant cultural environment occurs. Additionally, English language acquisition is made more difficult by inconsistencies in expressions and greetings used on a daily basis. Consider the various salutations exchanged with an Australian supermarket cashier who may ask, “How ya going today?” “How is your day going?” “Have you had a busy day?” “Is your day going well?” “How are ya?” This variability in conversation is in contrast with Japanese social interactions that follow predictable patterns of verbal exchanges, which allow novice Japanese speakers to rely on scripts.

Interview comments also suggested that students typically spoke English during the day at university, and either silently engaged in solitary activities or spoke Japanese with their friends at all other times. The cultural learning program therefore aimed to provide additional linguistic benefit in including more opportunities for unscripted social exchanges with locals in which realistic conversational topics were discussed. Other opportunities for linguistic learning included the integration and explanation of Australian slang or colloquialisms into program content, which may assist students’ repertoire of common expressions.

### *Racism*

Prejudicial responses were reported to result from both solicited and unsolicited interactions with locals. A number of Japanese students attributed

“racism” as a consequence of their deficiencies in language skills and others reported limiting contact with locals due to previous negative experiences of prejudice. This appears to be consistent with finding by Rahman and Rollock (2004) who reported that perceived prejudice plays an integral role in influencing acculturation levels and mental health symptoms such as depression. Specifically, higher perceived prejudice combined with lower personal, social and work efficacy beliefs predicted higher levels of depressive symptoms in Asian international students studying in America. These findings support the association found in this study between perceptions of racism and lower competency beliefs in language ability.

Bochner (1982) contends that most of the world’s conflicts are associated with differences in racial, linguistic and religious characteristics: as these discrepancies affirm a ‘them’ and us’ perspective. Japanese students have disparate physiognomy and commonly have noticeable accents despite good English ability. Locals, owing to these conspicuous dissimilarities, may therefore assign Japanese students to an out-group member status. The concept of in-group and out-groups is discussed in Tajfel’s (1970) research into discriminatory behaviour. Tajfel suggests that individuals construct a subjective social order where in-group members are favoured whilst a generalised norm of hostility and discrimination is displayed toward out-group members.

In a summary of research on social contact and ethnic relations, Amir (1969) identifies the following conditions that exacerbate prejudice: (a) competitive contact between groups; (b) unpleasant, involuntary, or tension-laden contact; (c) situations that result in a loss of status or prestige for one group; (d) a

state of frustration for one or both groups; (e) fundamentally conflicting moral philosophies; and (f) when members of the minority group are of lower status than members of the majority group. These conditions appear relevant to a university context given the combination of academic and social pressures that are present in this setting. The following provides various examples that correspond to Amir's conditions: (a) competition may relate to Japanese and Australians vying for academic awards and medals. Additionally, other social forms of competition may relate to securing romantic partners or acceptance into friendship groups; (b) university students are often compelled to work together in class to complete assessment tasks such as group presentations. Differences in working styles, verbal contributions and group dynamics may result in misunderstandings and a subsequently tense and unpleasant experience for both ethnic groups; (c) acculturation may trigger a perceived loss of status as individuals leave their Japanese identity and assume a different social identity in their new culture. Social identity theory posits that individuals possess several "social identities" that are contextually sensitive and derived from their perception of group membership (Tajfel & Turner, 1979). Hence, Japanese students may have several identities relating to their self-perception as an international student, a Japanese visitor, or a foreigner. The first two may evoke positive estimations of their social identity while the last identity may be associated with feelings of isolation, discrimination, or lower prestige; (d) language frustrations and other communication difficulties may be a two-sided affair as Japanese students struggle to express themselves with the fluency they are accustomed to in their native language, while Australians may struggle to fully comprehend Japanese

communication styles both verbally and non-verbally; (e) differences in social norms, values and philosophies between Japan and Australia are evident in the high degree of cultural distance between these countries. Sodowsky and Plake (1992) found that a greater degree of cultural distance was associated with increased perceptions of discrimination; and (f) a lower status may be assigned to non-Australians due to race, language ability and one's status as a foreigner.

Prejudice is a highly emotive concept often studied in relation to psychological manifestations and coping strategies (Noh & Kaspar, 2003). A common suggestion for intervention involves promoting a greater understanding of cultural differences through educational programs and open dialogue between ethnic groups (Liang, Alvarez, Juang, & Liang, 2007). Ethno-cultural research also suggests that increased contact and familiarity with out-groups is associated with positive intergroup perceptions (Berry, 1984). This notion has been further supported in a recent meta-analysis examining intergroup contact and prejudice, which found that intergroup interaction reduced prejudice between groups (Tropp & Pettigrew, 2005). Cultural training has also demonstrated efficacy in challenging prejudice by increasing cultural awareness; both in relating to one's own culture and understanding the relevant differences with other cultural groups (Brislin & Bhawuk, 1999). Therefore, the proposed cultural learning program was designed to promote activities that increased contact with out-group members, namely Australians. Australian facilitators were used as both credible instructors for the designed tasks (i.e., Surf Lifesavers instructing beach safety activities), who also engaged with students during task performance in providing support and feedback. Additionally, cultural stereotypes and awareness education

was incorporated through program content (i.e., the BBQ challenge incorporated social etiquette information on sharing a meal, bringing a plate etc) to increase students' knowledge on Australian culture and behaviour.

### *Age*

Age appeared to impact upon Japanese students' tendency to seek interactions with others, their perceptions of their abilities with English and in managing everyday tasks, their goal-orientations, and their comments regarding wellbeing. Specifically, older students who were presumably closer to graduating appeared more focused on their career objectives, less preoccupied with social networking and more likely to use the word "stress" in their interviews. These findings appear to support previous studies conducted on high school migrants, which found an association between age and mental health (Bandura et al., 1996; Sam & Berry, 1995; Yeh, 2003). In contrast, younger Japanese students reported more interest in social activities and exploring Australia with further travel. This supports Hull's (1978) finding that younger foreign tertiary students engage in more social contact with host nationals than their older counterparts who appear to gain more satisfaction with academic success.

Age is a critical concept in Japanese culture as it dictates one's status in the social hierarchy (Lebra, 1976). Japanese society fosters respect for elders, which is demonstrated by the adoption of deferential language and non-verbal behaviours. Japanese people consequently choose from a varying degree of informal to formal language depending upon their audience's age and social position. Utmost respect is commonly displayed toward elders while younger

associates are expected to silently comply and avoid questioning the decisions of senior members (Matsumoto, 1996). In contrast, an in-group relationship involves members of the same age, which allows for more informal, candid and relaxed interactions than contact with members of a disparate hierarchical status (De Vos, 1985).

Further considerations of age revolve around the Japanese obsession with youth, which appears to place added pressure on individuals to successfully achieve objectives relating to education, job procurement, or marriage by a socially sanctioned age (Lebra, 1976). This may be illustrated by a Japanese allegory likening Japanese women to Christmas cakes, which was explained to the researcher by a 24-year-old Japanese woman. Essentially, all males are presumed to desire a fresh Christmas cake, but as the date draws closer to Christmas day (25<sup>th</sup>), the cake loses its appeal as staleness sets in. Japanese women are effectively encouraged to find a husband before they turn 25, where after their “best-before” date is up. Japanese cultural expectations regarding age might explain the increased focus and goal-orientation that older students exhibited with respect to employment and career objectives.

Obviously a cultural program cannot alter age, but it can remain sensitive to the comments made by participants when designing activities requiring teams or partnered collaboration. Interview material effectively suggests that older students are experiencing a sense of added pressure to achieve their goals (i.e., educational, career), which may have resulted in these individuals limiting engagement in social activities to afford the majority of their attention on goal completion. Consequently, older students may be experiencing more stress, a

heightened sense of concern toward making mistakes with language or cultural behaviour, and increased isolation due to the predominant focus on study. Placing an older Japanese participant with a younger participant in a paired program activity may ultimately heighten stress responses, as cultural expectations would require the older participant to lead and take charge while the younger participant acquiesces. Additionally, the potential for the older participant to be unsuccessful in completing program tasks may result in further face saving conundrums that could damage self-efficacy beliefs. Hence, paired or team activities involved the deliberate grouping of participants of a similar age. Additionally, participation and “having a go” was promoted as successful task completion, rather than the exact replication of the activity’s behaviour. The focus on task participation as opposed to task replication was chosen to bolster efficacy appraisals and limit the potential stress responses from older students in particular.

#### *Social connectedness*

Japanese students reported that they had few Australian friends and typically interacted and sought support from other Japanese students or international students. Australian studies on international students have consistently recognised the importance of social support, social interactions and positive relationships with host nationals as important determinants for adjustment and wellbeing. Rosenthal and colleagues (2006) found that Melbourne international students who belonged to organisational groups or frequently interacted with locals were more likely to display a positive sense of social connectedness. Additionally, Leung (2001) associated the concept of loneliness

and having few social relationships with psychological distress in international students in Australia. International students, and Asian students specifically, have also been identified as socialising predominantly with other Asian or international students despite a desire to connect with Australians (Leder & Forgasz, 2004; Rosenthal et al., 2006).

These findings are also consistent with Bochner's Social Network Theory (1982), which describes three levels of friendship networks relevant to international students. The primary network includes relationships with fellow compatriots. Research has suggested that international students commonly indicate that their close friends are co-nationals, and this study appears to support this assertion (Bochner, Buker, & McLeod, 1976). Additionally, adequate contact with co-nationals has demonstrated efficacy in alleviating homesickness, decreasing psychological problems and increasing sojourn satisfaction and general wellbeing (Ward et al., 2001). The second friendship network consists of international students' relationship with locals. Bochner (1982) contends that this relationship is usually formal, rather than personal, and commonly involves contact with lecturers or fellow students with the expressed purpose of fulfilling academic and career objectives. The third network consists of friendships with other non-compatriot foreign students, which functions to provide "mutual support based on a shared foreignness" (Bochner, 1982, p. 63). Indeed, interviewees indicated that their social relationships largely included Japanese and international friends. This may be reinforced by the fact they reside together either on or off campus, choose similar university subjects, and recognise the difficulties associated with managing language and cultural differences.

Students also reported a desire for group membership to clubs or organisations. Japanese culture fosters a strong desire for a sense of belonging where self-esteem and identity is formed through group membership (De Vos, 1985). In addition, Japanese society promotes group interaction through structured activities within organisations. Adolescents in particular have limited solitary time due to their commitment to organisations. For example, a typical Japanese student might attend school all day, a *juku* (cram school) in the afternoon, followed by an English language conversation school in the evening. Conversely, Australians typically enjoy their free time and try to avoid filling it up with social obligations or organisational commitments beyond the typical weekly sporting event. In essence, having the freedom to choose activities without onerous commitment is desirable for Australians, while belonging to many clubs and demonstrating commitment to other group members is desirable to Japanese.

According to research studies, limited social interaction with host nationals may contribute to various acculturation difficulties such as acculturation stress (Berry et al., 1992; Leung, 2001; Sam, 2001). Therefore, the low rate of club/organisational membership coupled with limited relationships with Australians may impact negatively on Japanese students' acculturation experiences. Furthermore, limited social interaction with locals has been contended to stymie the acquisition of culture-specific skills, as culture learning is suggested to occur through daily participation in the new culture and intercultural friendships (Bochner & Furnham, 1982). Studies have supported this contention as sojourners who have more extensive contact with locals, and those who are satisfied with these relationships, appear to experience less sociocultural

adaptation problems and a positive sense of social connectedness (Rosenthal et al., 2006; Ward, 2001; Ward & Kennedy, 1993).

Providing opportunities for increased interaction with Australians was therefore a goal for the proposed cultural learning program. Participants have reported that they undertake their studies and live within the Australian community with limited need for direct interaction with Australians. The cultural learning program therefore created situations and tasks in which interaction with locals was required. It was anticipated that learning and rehearsing the skills of interacting and conversing with locals during a designated task might encourage this social behaviour to occur in future academic or social situations. Essentially, participants' repeated practice of unfamiliar social interactions might reinforce their self-efficacy beliefs relating to their ability to form new relationships or successfully negotiate unfamiliar social situations.

### *Self-efficacy*

The most important discovery involved the strong sense of self-efficacy amongst the participants for managing daily living tasks in Australia. The concept of developing a cultural learning program to assist individuals with the execution of everyday tasks appears moot when this did not reveal itself as an area of great need for participants. It was initially anticipated that guidance might be required in navigating interactions at the bank or in the grocery store in order to develop a positive sense of achievement with such activities, and a subsequently positive self-efficacy for various task performance. However, this anticipated 'need for guidance' was repeatedly dismissed by interviewees. This finding might

reveal more about Australian culture as opposed to Japanese perceptions. Australians typically disregard titles, support an egalitarian view of social class, and greet and interact with others without adherence to any rigid protocols (Doria, 2005). Australians' "easy going" nature may make it difficult for non-Australians to cause great offence in trivial daily interactions, thereby allowing Japanese students to perform daily activities without receiving excessive scrutiny or disapproval.

Students also reported that when they needed assistance, Australians were the last people they would consider asking for help. Alternatively, participants nominated Japanese friends or other international students as their first choice for information and assistance. Participants did, however, report some avoidant behaviours and difficulty in negotiating unfamiliar tasks where technical language might be used. A number of interviewees reported asking for assistance from friends in these instances, which demonstrates a commonsense approach to such circumstances. Interviews also suggested that the instances where a friend was asked to assist involved specific unrepeated events such as installing an air conditioning unit. These approaches to overcoming problems in everyday life appear to translate into a generally efficient sense of self-efficacy.

Reports from interviewees essentially suggested that self-efficacy decreased in response to interactions that were unfamiliar and where the potential for encountering difficult language terms was high. These responses appear consistent with research on self-efficacy, which proposes that individuals undertake activities in which they deem themselves capable and avoid tasks that are perceived as beyond their abilities (Bandura, 1997).

The generally high sense of self-efficacy in managing daily tasks reported by Japanese students may be incorporated into the cultural learning program. Program activities should effectively transcend simple, daily tasks in favour of more challenging, novel tasks in which students would typically not engage. Additionally, the repeated exposure and practice of novel tasks may assist in the development of increased self-efficacy beliefs for those participants who typically avoid challenging situations. Essentially, by increasing the degree of difficulty or the novelty of the task, it is anticipated that participants may feel more confident in attempting other unfamiliar activities they may encounter during their stay in Australia.

Also relevant to the self-efficacy section were Japanese comments relating to the socio-cognitive modes of learning. The minor gender differences between females' preference for observational learning and males' favoured enactive approaches may suggest that males would enjoy hands-on tasks while females may be more successful at non-verbal and non-instructive activities. In addition, both genders appeared to equally regard direct tuition as an effective means of learning cultural information. This is consistent with literature on Japanese learning styles where a high importance is placed on lecturing and rote learning methods (Brislin & Yoshida, 1994a). This also supports Furnham et al.'s (2000) findings that Japanese regard internally controlled practices such as education or knowledge as highly relevant to managing problems as opposed to external assistance from a counsellor. This finding supports the employment of Australian facilitators in the cultural learning program, as credible communicators of cultural knowledge, in the provision of direct tuition learning opportunities for students.

### *Wellbeing*

The extensive exploration of negative effects of cultural adjustment in acculturation research has been well documented and previously discussed in this thesis. Students' comments regarding the presence of loneliness, isolation and stress are not surprising findings due to their consistency within this body of literature. However, an important qualifying note relates to the potential for these negative emotions to also be present in local students who have commenced university either in or away from their hometown. Another important consideration relates to the presence of positive emotional responses from students such as happiness, enjoyment and fun. These features should not be overlooked in attempts to address negative emotional states. Rather, the positive emotions referred to by students might best be utilised to enhance program enjoyment and ultimately general wellbeing. This is in keeping with a recent paradigm shift in studying happiness, as opposed to focusing on depression, to understand the elements of positive wellbeing (Seligman, 1998). Essentially, students' positive comments were typically made in response to discussions regarding the Australian landscape and environment. Therefore, regularly exposing Japanese students to outdoor locations with natural beauty would presumably contribute to more positive emotional responses and a conceivably better sense of wellbeing.

Interviewees also indicated that they had not sought counselling or formal assistance during their stay in Australia, which was consistent with literature on Japanese health patterns and attitudes. Students asserted their reliance on personal attributes such as *gaman* (willpower, perseverance) to overcome negative

emotions such as stress. Additionally, loneliness and isolation appeared related to peer support from compatriots. These findings also support literature on mental health attributions and coping styles (Ayano, 2006; Bailey & Dua, 1999; Furnham et al., 2000).

Whilst the cultural learning program was not designed to be therapeutic, the program content involved information instruction, increased interactions with Japanese compatriots and Australians, outdoor activities, and a concerted focus on positive, engaging activities. It was anticipated that the combination of these features might contribute to both a positive experience of participation and a more general sense of wellbeing.

### Summary

The findings of Study 1 are predominantly supportive of previous research conducted on Japanese students and international students in general. The six themes that emerged as significant to the acculturation experience of Japanese university students have been previously identified in research as relevant to acculturation (Berry et al., 1992). Based on the findings from Study 1, the subsequent cultural learning program would benefit from the inclusion of the following features: challenging, novel tasks; opportunities for interactions with Australians in structured and unstructured formats; pairing participants of a similar age; outdoor, positive, and engaging activities; and linguistic learning opportunities involving spontaneous, unscripted interactions integrating Australian slang or colloquialisms. These findings provided the basis for the construction of a cultural learning program discussed further in Study 2.

## CHAPTER EIGHT: STUDY 2

## Method

*Participants*

Study 1 and 2 were undertaken four years apart and no overlap occurred in student participation across studies. Japanese students currently enrolled at various CQUniversity campuses were invited to participate in this study. Participants were identified through the university's administrative systems (webfuse), which revealed 25 (M = 7 and F = 18) potential Japanese participants (10 in Rockhampton, 5 in Gold Coast, 7 in Sydney, 1 in Melbourne and 2 in Brisbane). Potential participants constituted two quasi-experimental groups, with the cultural learning program available only to students studying at the Rockhampton campus. The quasi-experimental control group consisted of students studying at all other CQUniversity campuses both intra-state and interstate. Both experimental groups were sent an electronically mailed invitation to either participate in an online survey (control group) or a one-day cultural learning program (cultural group). Both groups were administered the same assessment measures twice at the same time intervals – one week prior to the cultural learning program and a fortnight following.

The cultural group consisted of 9 students (Male = 2 and Female = 7). Students' ages ranged from 19 to 30, with an average age of 22 years ( $M = 22.44$ ). All students identified their country of origin as Japan, and were single with no previous marital history. The majority of students were second-year undergraduates ( $n = 4$ ) with 2 first-year students, 2 third-year students and 1

fourth-year student. Two students had previously stayed abroad (one in Australia and one in USA), both for nine-months in duration. The majority of students were studying the discipline of education ( $n = 5$ ) with English studies and international relations identified as the other undergraduate degrees.

In the control group, a total of 11 students (Male = 2 and Female = 9) completed the first online survey with 7 (Male = 2 and Female = 5) completing the second follow-up survey. The average age of participants was 30 years ( $M = 30.45$ ), with a range of 20 to 39 years of age. Nine students identified as single with no previous marital history, while 1 was married and 1 widowed. Five students had previously stayed abroad in countries such as Australia, New Zealand, Canada and China. The length of previous stays abroad ranged from 6 months to 5 years, with an average stay of 2 years ( $M = 24.4$  months). The majority of students were second-year students ( $n = 5$ ) enrolled in various university courses, including Education, Accounting, Business and Tourism.

### *Materials*

#### *Constructing a Socio-Cognitive Cultural Learning Program: Program Design*

The learning program was designed for brevity, economy, efficacy, and engagement. Ward et al. (2001) reported that current intercultural training programs are expensive, logistically complicated and impractical for many migrant groups. Universities typically provide an extensive array of services, including orientation programs; club memberships; housing assistance; social network information; academic assistance; and vocational and personal counselling. The logistics and expense of introducing intercultural training

programs, which commonly run for several days or weeks, may explain the reluctance of universities to adopt these practices in their list of services.

The typical intercultural training program also requires guest speakers, experienced trainers, an appropriate venue, catering, print material for booklets, brochures and advertising flyers, and staff time and resources, to name a few (Brislin & Yoshida, 1994a). In addition, many international students may choose not to participate due to the commitment required in attending a prolonged program agenda that spans several days. Students may be preoccupied with other educational concerns such as their academic workload, navigating their way around campus and vying for convenient tutorial times. With a multitude of these tasks competing for students' attention, it was important that the cultural learning program be attractive to students, informative and worthwhile, while also being fun and engaging. It was also important that the program not require excessive commitment involving several weeks or consecutive days of participation. Benefits to cultural knowledge and confidence have been evidenced after exposure to intercultural training lasting as little as one hour (Bean, 2006). Hence, confining program content to a full day was anticipated to be appealing to potential participants - as well as sufficiently efficacious in achieving the objective of increasing participants' cultural competence.

Another consideration for the program design involved determining the most appropriate period of acculturation in which students should be exposed to cultural learning. The most common periods of exposure to cultural training are pre-departure, post-arrival and repatriation. Cultural training has demonstrated efficacy in increasing cultural knowledge, skills and subjective wellbeing,

regardless of an individual's period of participation (Black & Mendhenall, 1990). Therefore, the current study involved Japanese students during the post-arrival stage, with the aim that program participation would be beneficial regardless of the duration of time participants had been living in Australia. Research suggests that the post-arrival phase should incorporate experiential (behavioural) training activities such as field trips, and hands-on opportunities to interact within the cultural environment (Littrell et al., 2006). Hence, the proposed program aimed to encompass practical and interactive tasks with "real life" applications.

The adoption of novel and real life tasks involving interactions with Australians within attractive nature settings corresponded directly with Japanese students' comments revealed in Study 1. Six emergent themes of language, wellbeing, racism, age, social-connectedness, and self-efficacy were identified in Study 1, and addressed in the composition of program content. Specifically, results suggested the desirability of: a) pairing individuals of a similar age (age), b) incorporating knowledge-based learning of language and cultural information (language), c) implementing novel and challenging tasks (self-efficacy), d) utilising Australian natural settings (wellbeing), and e) providing opportunities for interaction between Japanese students and locals (racism and social-connectedness).

The program attempted to accommodate these features by: composing 2 person teams based on similarities in birthdates; using Australian facilitators as communicators and educators (giving credibility to content information); choosing unusual and unique activities beyond daily living tasks to challenge participants' social, motivational, cognitive and behavioural resources; selecting

salubrious Australian bush and surf settings for task challenges; and providing opportunities for spontaneous interactions with members of the general public and Australian facilitators throughout the day.

*Blending Social Cognitive Theory and Intercultural Training*

Selecting appropriate intercultural training methods appears to revolve around the concept of “rigour”, in addition to other factors associated with the purpose for training, the relevant cultures in focus, and the needs of the training group (Black & Mendenhall, 1989; Littrell, et al, 2006; Mendenhall & Oddou, 1986; Tung, 1987). Tung (1987) asserts that developing a successful cultural training program is contingent upon an appropriate consideration of the degree of cultural distance between the sojourner and host nationals, the degree of interpersonal contact required with hosts, and the type of job to be performed by sojourners during their stay in the new culture. Accordingly, low interaction levels coupled with low cultural distance is recommended to include a focus on job-related issues as opposed to cultural topics. Conversely, a greater degree of both interaction with hosts and cultural distance is contended to require a focus on intercultural skill development. Tung also refers to “low rigour” and “high rigour” programs, which corresponds with low or high degrees of both cultural distance and interaction. However, she fails to elaborate on what constitutes “rigour” or measures for discerning standards for high or low levels of training rigour.

Black and Mendenhall (1989) describe training rigour as the degree of cognitive involvement required of the participants. Information or fact-oriented training that requires participants to attend to information in passive learning

situations would constitute low training rigour. Alternatively, high rigour is associated with interactive methods, where the participant is required to first attend to information and then rehearse behavioural or language skills in role-plays or simulations. Black and Mendenhall's (1989) proposed association between the degree of rigour and forms of training methods is depicted in Figure 3.

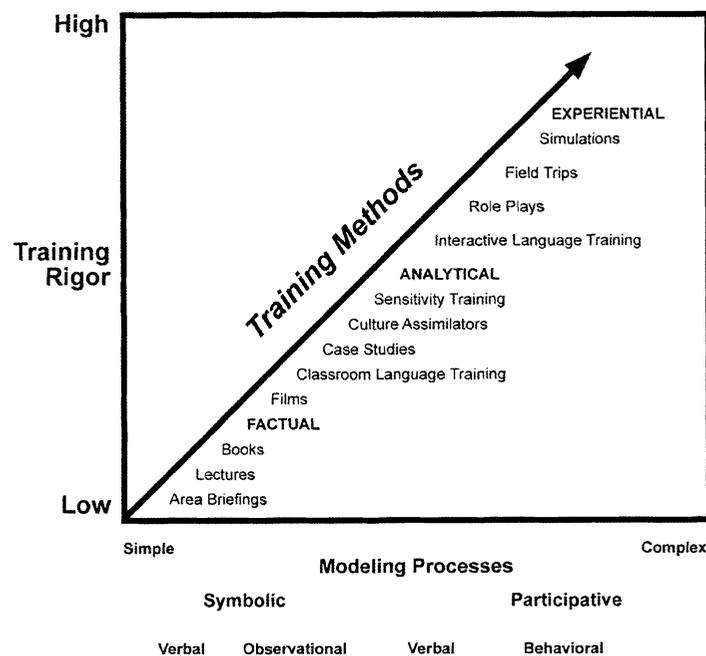


Figure 3. Modelling processes, rigour and training methods (Black & Mendenhall, 1989, p. 523).

Black and Mendenhall (1989) also discuss symbolic and participative modelling processes, which originate from Bandura's Social Learning Theory (1977). Symbolic modelling involves exposing participants to new information through verbal, written and visual displays, which are subsequently converted into

mental images in the participant's mind (Bandura, 1977). Participative modelling refers to the added component of engaging in the observed or described behaviour. For example, a trainer can verbally discuss the objectives of netball with the group, or physically engage participants in a game of netball. Essentially, a higher degree of cognitive processes involved in participative modelling is believed to constitute a greater level of training rigour (Black & Mendenhall, 1989).

With respect to Japanese university students studying in Australia, both a high degree of cultural distance and high expectations for required contact with host nationals (i.e., lecturers, students and administrative staff) is present. Tung's (1987) framework for intercultural training would therefore emphasise the instruction of cultural education and social skills above academic or job related material. Tung's priority for cultural education and intercultural engagement corresponds with research findings that cultural adjustment and interactions with host nationals are associated with greater perceived difficulty than job related difficulties (Black, 1988; Black & Stephens, 1989). In addition, Tung's conceptualisation would suggest a high level of rigour in the training program to correspond with the high degree of cultural distance between Australia and Japan, and the high degree of contact with Australians required for Japanese students to fulfil their educational goals. Black and Mendenhall (1989) suggest that the highest rigour in cultural training is provided through behavioural training in the form of experiential activities such as simulations, role-plays and field trips. Hence, the proposed cultural learning program incorporated experiential training

activities as the dominant approach within the area of behavioural training, in addition to affective and cognitive training features.

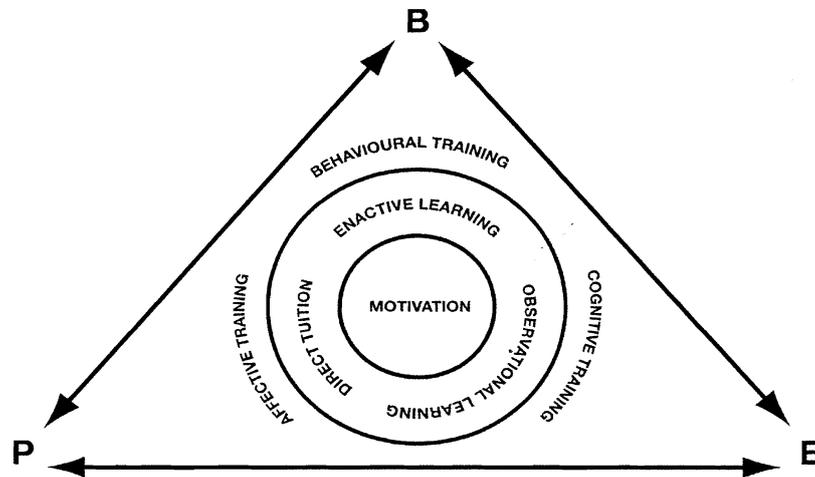
*Cultural Learning Program: “The True Blue Aussie Experience”*

The inspiration for this learning program is attributed to a popular television show called, “The Amazing Race”, in which teams of two contestants are exposed to various intercultural encounters whilst completing unfamiliar tasks within a global race (CBS, 2001). Program contestants are required to follow clues that lead them to various “pit stops”, which are typically in different countries. The primary objective of the show is for teams to arrive at each pit stop before other competing teams to avoid being eliminated for arriving last. Teams journey between pit stops in various vehicles such as planes, trains, and rental cars; or via local transportation such as rickshaws, tut tuts, gondolas, and dog sleds. Contestants are also required to perform novel tasks that are culturally relevant to their surrounding; such as eating exotic food, herding goats, or constructing a section of rail road; before receiving their next clue on where to continue their travels.

The premise of novel task completion, in a culturally divergent environment with limited instructional cues, appeared analogous to the everyday activities of acculturating individuals. Additionally, the experiential nature of task challenges, which would allow for practical opportunities to interact with Australians within natural Australian settings, was anticipated to provide for an innovative and engaging approach to culture learning. However, the focus of “The True Blue Aussie Experience” was not speed. Rather, the objective was to construct a cultural learning program grounded in Social Cognitive Theory, which

positively influences cultural competence through repeated exposure and interactions with Australians within the Australian cultural environment. “True Blue” is a colloquial term with an evolving history of definitions (Australian National Dictionary Centre, 2009). In this context it connotes an authentic Australian experience. The program aims to move beyond classroom teaching strategies toward real and participative engagement within the local environment. The program combines cultural training methods, socio-cognitive modes of influence, and motivational factors to influence the personal, behavioural and environmental elements of SCT’s reciprocal determinism.

In accordance with Bandura’s triadic reciprocity (1986), the three classes of determinants identified as central to understanding and shaping human behaviour include personal, environmental and behavioural factors. SCT posits that people are developing entities who are shaped by the interactive relationship between these three elements (Bandura, 1986). The theory also emphasises that the strength of each element will vary across individuals, situations and activities. Within a cultural context, it is anticipated that manipulating these domains will influence cultural learning outcomes. As illustrated in Figure 4, The True Blue Aussie Experience integrates affective, behavioural and cognitive methods of intercultural training, socio-cognitive modes of influence, and motivation within the triad of causality. The components within the triad should not be viewed as inert or singularly bound to one determinant. Similar to the bidirectional interactions and evolving state of influence between the three determinants, the components within the triad should be viewed as interactive and fluid between the three elements and each other.



*Figure 4.* Theoretical elements within the true blue Aussie experience: intercultural training methods, socio-cognitive modes of influence, and motivation

Intercultural training research suggests that superior training programs incorporate a variety of features within affective, behavioural and cognitive methods (Brislin & Horvath, 1997). Specifically, ‘affective training’ aims to increase coping and enjoyment within a new cultural environment; ‘behavioural training’ promotes new behaviours, social skills, and interactions within the cultural environment; and ‘cognitive training’ emphasises knowledge based education on cultural information and language. Intercultural training methods were considered an essential feature within a program of cultural instruction, owing to research supporting their established benefits in improving travellers’ sense of confidence and wellbeing, relationship skills and cognitive attributions toward a new culture (Black & Mendenhall, 1990; Deshpande & Viswesvaran, 1992). Additionally, experiential activities within the behavioural training area have been identified as important for ensuring a high degree of rigour within

program content, and accommodating the post-arrival needs of acculturating individuals (Black & Mendenhall, 1989; Littrell et al., 2006). Accordingly, the cultural program employed participatory activities involving interactions with Australians in local settings, rather than lecture or classroom based training initiatives.

The True Blue Aussie Experience also integrates socio-cognitive modes of influence such as direct tuition, observational learning and enactive learning (Bussey & Bandura, 1999). These learning strategies were chosen to support cultural training methods and further influence the way in which participants' feel, act and think about Australian culture. The modes can influence learning naturally, or in the case of cultural training, be harnessed to achieve specific learning objectives. The socio-cognitive modes of influence are universally accessible methods of knowledge acquisition and have established benefits in developmental and learning outcomes (Bussey & Bandura, 1999). 'Direct tuition' was incorporated into fact and information based cultural education through verbal instruction from an Australian facilitator. This learning method promotes the acquisition of appropriate (and highlights inappropriate) behaviours relevant to the cultural setting, and allows the individual to develop accurate outcome expectations regarding interactions with host nationals (Black & Mendenhall, 1990). Direct tuition aimed to promote cultural and linguistic information and to enhance isomorphic attributions. 'Observational learning' strategies were utilised in the instruction of various intercultural skills through the modelling of Australian facilitators. Each facilitator modelled relevant behaviours for participants prior to their commencement of tasks. The vicarious capability of

observational learning suggests that individuals can simply learn from watching others without participating in the same behaviours (Bandura, 1986). Vicarious learning opportunities extended beyond Australian facilitators to fellow Japanese participants, as group activities allowed each individual to observe and learn from the actions of one another. Additional benefits of observational learning relate to the emphasis on non-verbal communication, which alleviates the burden on English proficiency and creates a universally present cross-cultural communication method (Bandura, 2002). Finally, 'Enactive learning' involved opportunities for participants to replicate actions, which were either observed or described through verbal instructions. The strategy of enactive learning refers to a trial-and-error approach in the development of knowledge and skills (Bandura, 1986). The objective was to encourage learning and retention through repeated behavioural rehearsal requiring interaction with Australians within a local setting. To ensure consistency with this learning style, it was considered important to allow freedom from scripts or structured role-plays to enable students the opportunity to explore actions and consequences in a natural, albeit controlled, setting. Additionally, the novelty of the task activities coupled with minor feedback on task performance was anticipated to assist with the acquisition of skills and experience in negotiating unfamiliar social situations.

At the core of the triad (see Figure 4) is a motivational component of the program subsumed by self-efficacy and motivational incentives. Efficacy refers to peoples' perceptions of their capability to complete a task, and often determines the degree of effort and persistence expended (Bandura, 1986). Positive behavioural experiences can boost self-efficacy, and mastery of new skills can

reduce vulnerability to dysfunction whilst increasing coping (Bandura, 1986). In an attempt to improve efficacy beliefs, the act of participating in program challenges was the goal of successful task completion, rather than the perfect replication of observed behaviours. The majority of program activities were designed to be unique, unfamiliar and demanding on participants' energy and personal resources. Therefore, the concept of "having a go" and completing the activity was emphasised over the quality of replication. Similarly, motivational incentives regulate sustained effort in accordance with perceptions of positive future rewards (Bandura, 1986). Whilst the array of incentives is expansive (i.e., primary, status and power, and sensory incentives); this study adopted extrinsic incentives in the form of desirable prizes, to ensure participants were highly motivated to participate in each activity. Moreover, the vicarious motivators of observing fellow participants perform tasks and receive positive outcomes coupled with positive feedback on task completion were anticipated to increase both efficacy and motivational beliefs.

In summary, the blend of cultural training, socio-cognitive modes of influence and motivational features aimed to influence cultural competence in the following three SCT domains:

#### *Personal Element*

The way individuals think and feel has a profound effect on their acculturative experiences. Cultural stereotypes, beliefs, prejudice, phobias, values and mental health are all contributing features in people's acculturation journey (Berry et al., 1992). Affective and cognitive methods of cultural training are most relevant to influencing the personal element. These training methods have been

associated with improvements in cultural knowledge and increased confidence and wellbeing (Bean, 2006; Black & Mendenhall, 1990; Deshpande & Viswesvaran, 1992). Additionally, cultural training has been asserted to assist with other facets inherent in the personal element such as stress management, problem solving and the development of coping skills (Brislin & Yoshida, 1994a). Hence, affective and cognitive training methods, such as cultural awareness training and factually based cultural education, were implemented in the cultural learning program.

#### *Environmental Element*

The environmental element subsumes factors that relate to the social environment such as interpersonal relations and situational settings. The environment commonly influences cultural standards or expectations for behaviour that require social understanding and skills (Bandura, 1986). Additionally, increased exposure to a new cultural environment, coupled with increased interaction with locals, is posited to improve social skills and general satisfaction with a sojourn experience (Bochner, 1982).

Operating within the environment are the socio-cognitive modes of influence: direct tuition, observational learning, and enactive learning. All three socio-cognitive modes are dependent upon the social environment, as they require social models to observe, social models to explain and offer information, and opportunities to interact with society whilst replicating cultural behaviours. In the current study, 'direct tuition' involved verbal instruction and education from Australian facilitators. 'Observational learning' opportunities involved watching Australians perform behaviours and observing fellow participants' performance of

actions. Lastly, 'enactive learning' relates to the rehearsal of behaviours and social skills within real-life situations, which also included praise and feedback on performance.

#### *Behavioural Element*

The behavioural component involved the utilisation of "real life" scenarios to encourage mastery of cultural actions. Behavioural enactment allows the individual to perform, interact, and receive spontaneous feedback during or after task activities. Praise and positive affirmations were given to all participants who attempted program challenges. Australian facilitators also provided minor constructive feedback addressing actions and skills that either required improvement or were found absent in the participants' task performance (e.g., correcting surf life saving techniques). Research indicates that praise for positive aspects of one's performance, coupled with constructive criticism for skills found lacking, is a highly effective strategy for increasing individuals' mastery of behaviours (Bandura, 1986). Additionally, behavioural rehearsal in the form of physical practice opportunities is claimed to increase the level of cognitive attention and retention, which subsequently improves reproduction proficiency (Bandura, 1986). Literature also indicates programs that include opportunities for role-play and behavioural enactment enhance individual's perceptions of self-efficacy (Eden & Aviram, 1993; Gist, 1989; Stevens, Bavetta, & Gist, 1993).

#### *Assessment Measures*

The cultural learning program aimed to increase cultural competence, which has previously been measured by factors relating to psychological maintenance (i.e., satisfaction, efficacy and wellbeing), social relationships and

culturally congruent cognitions (Black & Mendenhall, 1990; Deshpande & Viswesvaran, 1992). Essentially, feeling capable and at ease within a new culture, sharing positive relations with others, and possessing adequate cultural knowledge about the new cultural environment were the areas promoted during the program. Therefore, these areas also formed the basis for measuring the effects of program participation. Table 1 details the assessment measures implemented.

Table 1.

*List of Assessment Measures*

Assessment Measure	Source	Element of Cultural Competence used to Assess	Ref
Subjective Happiness Scale (SHS)	Lyubomirsky & Lepper, 1999	Psychological Wellbeing	p. 245
Satisfaction With Life Scale (SWLS)	Diener, Emmons, Larsen, & Griffin, 1985	Psychological Wellbeing	p. 246
Depression, Anxiety & Stress Scale (DASS)	Lovibond & Lovibond, 1995	Psychological Wellbeing	p. 250
Social Avoidance and Distress Scale (SAD)	Watson & Friend, 1969	Social Relations	p. 247
Social Provision of Support (SPS)	Russell & Cutrona, 1984	Social Relations	p. 248
Critical Incident Scenarios	Brislin, Cushner, Cherie & Yong, 1986	Cultural Awareness	p. 253
Cultural Self-Efficacy Questionnaire	Constructed by the researcher in accordance with Bandura's (2006) guide to domain-specific efficacy scales	Efficacy beliefs regarding all three components of cultural competence	p. 249
Post-Evaluation Questionnaire	Constructed by Researcher	All three components of cultural competence	p. 252

The area of psychological maintenance was assessed through several self-report measures including the Satisfaction with Life Scale (SWLS), the Subjective

Happiness Scale (SHS), and the Depression, Anxiety and Stress Scale (DASS). These three assessments were chosen in an attempt to capture respondents' perceptions regarding their general wellbeing. The SWLS is a 5-item scale designed to assess people's satisfaction with life as a whole by measuring their agreement with five statements (Diener, Emmons, Larsen, & Griffin, 1985). Each item is scored on a 7-point scale with 1 representing "strongly disagree", 7 indicating "strongly agree" and 4 "neither agree nor disagree" as a mid-point. Scores range from 5 (low satisfaction) to 35 (high satisfaction). A high score on items indicates a high satisfaction with one's present life situation. The scale has also demonstrated cross-cultural applicability with Asian and European university students (Pavot & Diener, 1993).

Similarly, the SHS was constructed from mixed cultural sampling of global wellbeing measures. The SHS consists of four questions and requires respondents to characterise their sense of happiness both in comparison to, and independent of, their peers (Lyubomirsky & Lepper, 1999). The four items are rated on a 7-point likert scale, with the total score obtained by calculating the mean of the four responses. The average score for university students ranges from 4.63 to 5.07 ( $M = 4.89$ ,  $SD = 1.21$ ) (Lyubomirsky & Lepper, 1999).

Finally, the DASS was chosen due to its efficiency in measuring the three major psychological areas of mood problems that impact upon individuals' ability to manage everyday demands. The DASS provides a measurement for depression, anxiety and stress across the following five levels of severity: normal (N), mild (M), moderate (Mod), severe (S) and extremely severe (ES) (Lovibond & Lovibond, 1995). Specifically, the depression scale items assess negative

emotional states such as dysphoria, anhedonia, and inertia; the anxiety scale includes items such as autonomic arousal and situational anxiety; and the stress scale assesses features such as nervous arousal, agitation and irritability. Respondents are required to rate the extent to which they have experienced various emotional states over the past fortnight on a 4-point scale from “0 = did not apply to me at all” to “3 = applied to me very much, or most of the time”.

Social relations comprise another important area of cultural competence. The Social Avoidance and Distress (SAD) Scale and the Social Provisions Scale (SPS) were chosen to measure respondents' ease of interacting socially with others and perceptions of social support, respectively. The SAD scale was designed to assess both respondents' affective experiences (i.e., distress, discomfort, fear and anxiety) and behavioural responses (i.e., deliberate avoidance) to social situations (Watson & Friend, 1969). Respondents are asked to circle “true” or “false” in response to 28 statements that describe an aspect of social anxiety such as “I tend to withdraw from people”. High scores on the SAD indicate greater anxiety in real social interactions and less interest in participating in group situations. Scores on the SAD also correlate with other measures of shyness and social anxiety (i.e., Social Reticence Scale) (Robinson, Shaver, & Wrightsman, 1991).

The SPS provides a measure of the respondents' perceived social support from social relationships (Russell & Cutrona, 1984). The 24-item scale assesses six social support dimensions including attachment, social integration, reassurance of worth, reliable alliance, guidance, and opportunity for nurturance. Respondents rate the extent to which each statement applies to their social network on a 4-point

scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 4 (strongly agree). Twelve items are reverse scored, with the total represented by summing all items. A high score indicates a greater degree of perceived social support. The SPS was selected as it uses simply worded statements and gives an overall measure of perceived social support, which is an established protective factor against mental and physical health problems (Russell & Cutrona, 1984).

The third area of cultural competence involves culturally congruent cognitions or the perception of sufficient cultural awareness. Several “critical incident” scenarios were used to objectively measure participants’ awareness of potential conflicts based on Japanese and Australian cultural knowledge. Critical incidents are short vignettes of cross-cultural encounters such as the previously discussed situation negotiated by two college students, Mariko and Linda (see p.77). Critical incidents have been defined as, “typical of those faced by people living in other cultures, and they summarize common emotional experiences, communication difficulties and challenges to pre-existing knowledge” (Brislin et al., 1986, p.13). These scenarios are commonly used as pre-departure educational tools that assist isomorphic cognitions and prepare travellers for potential misunderstanding that may occur during their time overseas. However, they may also be used to assess the effectiveness of cross-cultural training workshops (Brislin et al., 1986). Three critical incidents were employed, with respondents given one point for selecting the correct answer from four multiple-choice options.

The primary objective of the True Blue Aussie Experience was to influence and improve participants’ cultural competence, which includes

individual's perceptions regarding their capabilities. Whilst the previously discussed assessments measure various aspects attributed to cultural competence, it was vital that participants' subjective perceptions of their cultural capabilities also be measured. In accordance with SCT's central tenet on self-efficacy beliefs guiding personal, social and behavioural change; a cultural self-efficacy scale was constructed to measure participants' perceptions of their cultural competency. Bandura (2006) suggests that, "There is no all-purpose measure of perceived self-efficacy...self-efficacy scales must be tailored to the particular domain of functioning that is the project of interest" (p. 307). It was therefore necessary to construct a measure rather than employ a general self-efficacy scale.

Bandura (2006) provides a guide for the construction of domain specific self-efficacy scales, which was adopted by this study. Specifically, the cultural self-efficacy scale was designed to measure participants' efficacy beliefs across all three areas of cultural competence: 1) perceived capabilities of coping and flourishing within Australian culture; 2) perceived capabilities of establishing and maintaining positive relationships within the Australian community; and 3) perceived capabilities of possessing adequate knowledge and understanding of Australian culture. Respondents were presented with 24-items describing daily actions they may participate in during their time in Australia, such as "Begin conversations with new people" and "Make and keep Australian friends". A confidence rating scale from 0 (cannot do at all) to 100 (highly certain can do) was used to measure participants' perceptions of their capabilities. Items were subtotalled in the three areas of cultural competence - personal self-efficacy, social self-efficacy, and cultural self-efficacy. Table 2 shows the Cronbach's

Alpha reliabilities of the 3 measured components of self-efficacy. Cronbach's Alpha is a measure of internal consistency, and thus Table 2 provides evidence that the subscales for efficacy are likely measuring one consistent construct for each measured component. Table 2 also shows the correlation between pre and post scores on each subscale as a means of demonstrating the test retest reliability of each subscale.

Table 2.

*Cronbach's Alpha Reliabilities for Cultural Efficacy Questionnaire*<sup>1</sup>

	# of Items	Pre	Post	r <sup>Pre and Post</sup>
Personal Efficacy	9	.881	.849	.753**
Social Efficacy	9	.883	.926	.855**
Cultural Efficacy	6	.897	.848	.825**

<sup>1</sup> Note: One subject was excluded in the Cultural Group for these calculations, as she scored at the top of the range for all questions (i.e., no variability in responding).

\*\*  $p < .001$

Finally, students in the cultural learning group were also given a post-evaluation questionnaire to complete on the day of the True Blue Aussie Experience, upon the conclusion of all activities. The questionnaire was designed to assess program content, relevance, confidence, future efficacy appraisals, enjoyment and overall benefit as perceived by participants. Scores were recorded on a 5-point Likert-scale ranging from Strongly Disagree (SD) to Strongly Agree

(SA) with Not Sure (NS) as a mid-point. Please see Appendix D for a list of Assessment measures in both English and Japanese.

### Procedure

Participants comprised two pre-existing groups: a cultural group and a control group. The quasi-experimental control group included acculturating Japanese students who did not receive a program of cultural support. Students in the control group were electronically mailed an invitation to complete an online survey at two time intervals, which coincided in time with the cultural group. Within the invitation was an attached link to a research service (Survey Monkey) that collected participant responses.

Japanese students in the cultural group were also sent an electronically mailed invitation to participate in an eight-hour, one-day cultural learning program entitled “The True Blue Aussie Experience”. Upon acceptance of the invitation, students were sent an attached link to Survey Monkey to complete the same online survey as the control group. Students were also given a post-evaluation questionnaire to complete on the day of the cultural program, upon the conclusion of all activities. The questionnaire was designed to assess program content, relevance, enjoyment and overall benefit as perceived by participants. Students in the cultural group were then sent a reminder email (with the attached link to Survey Monkey) two weeks following participation in the cultural program, to complete the online survey again. Control group subjects were also recruited to complete the repeat questionnaire at the same time. Hence, both the control and cultural group were administered the same assessment measures twice

- prior to the program day and a fortnight after the True Blue Aussie Experience. Several of the measures employed require the respondent to reflect on their thoughts, feelings and behaviours during the preceding fortnight period. Therefore, the cultural group required at least a fortnight to elapse before post participation effects could be measured.

All test material was presented in Japanese, with linguistic equivalence achieved through back translation (Brislin, Lonner, & Thorndike, 1973). This process requires the original English material to be translated into Japanese by one translator and then translated back into English by another translator. Finally, a third translator assesses discrepancies regarding vocabulary or nuances within the three versions and makes amendments accordingly.

#### *The True Blue Aussie Experience*

Participants in the cultural group were paired with a partner of a similar age with whom they would complete the program. This was in accordance with findings regarding age in Study 1, where it was determined that a relatively equal social status within groups was important to facilitate mutual decision-making, task delegation and decrease stress responses. Group focused activities were also chosen over individual participation due to studies demonstrating the importance of in-group support and coping styles among Japanese (Ayano, 2006; Bailey & Dua, 1999; Sue & Sue, 2003). Activities required each team member to undertake various tasks during each challenge, ensuring that team members contributed relatively equally to task completion. Participants were assigned their teammate before departing by bus for their first challenge. The 30-minute ride to the initial

destination provided a good opportunity for rapport building before undertaking challenges together.

### *Koorana Croc Challenge*

Participants travelled by bus to the Koorana Crocodile Farm located in Emu Park, Yeppoon. The owner of the Farm gave students a guided tour of the farm facilities and introduced teams to the resident crocodiles. The researcher instructed teams to take notes and pay close attention to the information in the tour, as they would be assuming the role of “Tour Guides” in a role-play following their tour. Each team member was required to contribute to the team challenge, and each team (pair) was informed that they would be required to talk about a section of the tour: such as introducing a crocodile and relating stories about how the crocodile was caught, or explaining the hatching process of a crocodile egg. Teams were informed that they were competing for a prize, with the winner being judged by a Koorana staff member as the best honorary Tour Guide. The winning prize included a full-day cruise for two to Great Keppel Island including sailing, snorkelling, kayaking and beachcombing with all food and drink included.

A number from 1-4, with a corresponding role-play scenario (e.g., talk about the breeding program at the farm) was written on paper and randomly chosen out of a hat by each pair to establish the order for the role-plays. The audience consisted of fellow Japanese students, the researcher and a Farm staff member as judge. The students were given 15 minutes to prepare their tour guide speeches before presenting them to the group. The audience were encouraged to ask questions and generally participate as a typical tour group. The researcher

praised each pair following their role-play by commending various aspects of their performance such as: depth of information, presentation style, body language, and level of engagement with the audience. Pairs were also given constructive feedback where appropriate such as suggesting possible information they could have included or correcting inaccurate information. The best pair, as judged by the Koorana tour guide, was then awarded their prize.

#### *Application of Theoretical Elements*

This task provided for several learning objectives within a novel and stimulating setting with indigenous wildlife. Participants were allowed to observe the Australian instructor during his tour (observational learning), listen to the content of the information and ask questions (direct tuition), and engage in the observed behaviour by role-playing a tour guide (enactive learning). Affective training aspects involved a fun and interesting challenge, the experience of managing a stressful and unfamiliar situation, and the role reversal of assuming the position as educator (tour guide). Behavioural training involved the opportunity to rehearse new actions and social skills with guidance from authentic, credible sources (Koorana staff and Australian researcher). Cognitive training elements related to educational information including new vocabulary and language skills shared by the Australian Tour Guide. Additional learning aspects included the opportunity to observe workplace culture, as participants were exposed to the operational aspects of the farm and interactions between employer and employees. Insight into Australians at work was anticipated to provide greater cultural awareness for Japanese about perceptions of their own culture, in addition to Australian's work ethic and workmate relationships.

Further learning opportunities relate to participants' assumption of the role of educator, which allowed Japanese students to actively take on the role as 'expert' or 'local worker'. This role reversal from 'tourist/visitor' to 'worker/educator' was designed to evoke empathy, decrease cultural stereotypes and increase isomorphic attributions, which may reduce animosity and misunderstandings of local behaviour. Additionally, the behavioural experience of undertaking a daunting public speaking role with newly acquired terminology regarding an unfamiliar subject area was anticipated to increase future efficacy appraisals.

#### *BBQ Cooking Challenge*

Food is afforded an important role in Japanese culture, where the opportunity to experience new tastes and cuisine is highly valued. For that reason, a typical lunch break was transformed into another opportunity for cultural learning through a cooking challenge. Cooking and sharing a meal is a common way to welcome guests and newcomers into a new situation. In Australia, the BBQ is a quintessential cooking appliance and most recreational parks supply public BBQ facilities. This challenge was set at public BBQ facilities on the Emu Park, Queensland beachfront.

Participants were again assigned to their teams and given a recipe, ingredients and utensils required for the completion of the dish. The researcher explained the use of the BBQ facility such as the cleaning, cooking and safety requirements. Participants were allowed to ask the researcher to explain or demonstrate any of the instructions in the recipe (i.e., shelling and deveining prawns). Teams were given one hour to complete their dishes, which were judged

by the researcher's mother, who was described to participants as a fantastic home cook. Winners were rewarded with a hamper of assorted Australian treats including: ginger beer, tropical fruits, lollies and various condiments (i.e., rosella jam and vegemite). Participants subsequently enjoyed a BBQ lunch together where they were encouraged to try each other's dishes and discuss various issues from eating etiquette to the international influences on Australian cuisine.

#### *Application of Theoretical Elements*

Social cognitive modes of influence were applied through the researcher: modelling various cooking techniques such as dicing or shredding (observational learning); explaining the meaning of cooking terms such as simmer and season and generally describing typical BBQ fare and etiquette (direct tuition); and encouraging students to practise cooking techniques and host the BBQ (enactive learning). Affective training elements included the beautiful beach location, the pressure of working under time constraints, and the challenge of working collaboratively within a group. Behavioural training involved the act of preparing, presenting and sharing unfamiliar dishes with each other and the skills required to operate BBQs and manipulate unfamiliar kitchen utensils. Cognitive training involved the introduction of new vocabulary and discussion regarding the changing face of Australian cuisine and cultural awareness of the similarities and differences between Japanese and Australian BBQ styles. Additionally, language skills relating to colloquial terms for food, the experience of new tastes and aromas of foreign food, the novelty of the situation, and the practice of cooking techniques were all anticipated to increase cultural learning retention.

This task was also chosen as it represents an area of knowledge that requires specific cultural and linguistic skills relating to food in general (i.e., tender, spicy, scrumptious) as well as other culinary techniques (i.e., dice, sift, knead, marinate, sprinkle). Japanese students might typically avoid trying new skills such as cooking different food, due to the unfamiliarity of the language terms and the uncertainty regarding how the finished meal should look and taste. Therefore, possessing the skills related to cook typical Australian fare was anticipated to increase efficacy beliefs in the student's ability to recognise food presented at an Australian party, or in creating a menu for one's own social occasion.

### *Surf Life Saving*

According to Surf Life Saving Queensland (SLSQ), international visitors represent a high-risk drowning group (SLSQ, 2010). Visitors are often unfamiliar with the concept of rips, variable surf conditions, swimming between the flags, stingers, and beach signage. Community awareness programs are therefore aimed at educating people on simple preventative measures they can apply to ensure their own safety at the beach (SLSQ, 2010). Surf Life Saving was selected as a final challenge due to both the value of learning essential safety information and techniques for the participant group, as well as the potential opportunity for participants to join clubs or become involved with the organisation during their stay.

This activity took place at Emu Park beach under the instruction of 2 lifesaving instructors. The students again worked with their assigned partner. The researcher explained that the lifesavers would be selecting the "best recruits"

based on each teams' performance in practical activities and a final quiz on the information presented during the afternoon. Students were informed that the winners of this challenge would receive free surfing lessons that included all equipment, lunch and transportation by 4WD along Farnborough beach.

The students were greeted at the Emu Park Surf Club by the lifesaving instructors and given a tour and explanation of the use of various rescue equipment such as surf skis, a 4WD beach buggy, an inflatable rescue boat (IRB), and rescue boards. The students were then shown a video on surf safety and the dangers of stingers and rips. This was followed by a tour of the first aid room, where instructors demonstrated the use of a defibrillator and resuscitation techniques. Each pair was subsequently encouraged to work together in practicing resuscitation techniques on a training manikin, with guidance from the instructors. The students were also shown and then instructed to practise first aid skills on their partner such as bandaging and placing their partner in the recover position.

The students were then taken down to the beach where the instructors originally intended to model the use of equipment in the water and take students out on the IRB. However, the weather was not conducive to water activities. As an alternative, the instructor demonstrated the use of rescue boards for close to shore rescues and allowed each pair to practise the use of the device on the beach. The instructor also demonstrated the use of the 4WD beach buggy and encouraged each pair (one navigator and one driver) to take turns in driving the vehicle around a course on the beach. During the last pair's attempt on the buggy, the vehicle rolled during a turn and the two participants required first aid attention with minor

cuts and abrasions. Consequently, the other beach and quiz activities were aborted and the students were taken for precautionary assessment at the local hospital, with no serious concerns found. The Japanese students collectively decided to award the surfing lesson prize to the injured pair. In addition, the majority of the students volunteered to accompany the researcher to the hospital to assist with translations and support their fellow participants.

#### *Application of Theoretical Elements*

The social cognitive modes of influence were utilised by the instructors through observational learning in modelling various activities such as resuscitation techniques, first aid treatment (initially hypothetical and then actual first aid for injured participants), the use of rescue boards for close to shore beach rescues, and the use of other equipment such as the 4WD beach buggy. Vicarious observational opportunities were also present with students learning by watching others correctly and incorrectly replicating actions and the consequences that ensued. For example, both the resuscitation training and the buggy driving course were two activities where students received immediate feedback upon their success at a task - as seen by the manikin's chest rising in a successful breathing technique and the safe completion of the driving course. Vicarious observation is a powerful learning strategy that assists one's enactive skills by simply observing another person's success or failure at an action (Bandura, 1986). Direct tuition was employed through verbal communication from the instructors and in the use of the video, which included verbal instruction accompanied by additional observational learning opportunities through social actors in the video. Lastly, enactive learning opportunities involved the practice of resuscitation techniques

on the manikin, first aid techniques with partners, harnessing the rescue boards for a beach rescue and operating the 4WD beach buggy.

This challenge also unintentionally gave the students the benefit of simulations as well as a real life event, where the information and skills (i.e., first aid, teamwork, knowledge of facilities) they had earlier been taught were called upon in the management of a beach accident. Consequently, there were additional unanticipated social cognitive learning opportunities present such as students' observation of: workplace health and safety procedures, authentic first aid treatment and rescue techniques from lifesavers, the process of seeking medical treatment at an Australian hospital, and displays of psychological and emotional support from lifesavers, the researcher and host families. Students were also exposed to the complexity of medical admission forms and taught the meaning of terms such as "next of kin" and "medicare". Some students also acted as translators for the injured pair with the admission nurse and later the consulting doctor. Furthermore, the experience of coping and supporting others may have reinforced self-efficacy beliefs in students' perceived ability to manage, cope with and prevail over unexpected accidents. It is acknowledged, however, that this event is not replicable and may represent a limitation of the study.

Affective training elements involved group cohesion and teamwork, as well as coping and stress-management skills associated with witnessing and assisting others following an accident. Behavioural training involved the replication and practice of moderately complicated and physical lifesaving skills in a group setting. Cognitive training involved exposure to the importance of a community organisation such as SLSQ, which is largely volunteer based and

integral to Australian communities. Many Japanese students did not reside near beaches in their hometowns and the cognitive resources provided regarding surf conditions, accident prevention and rescue information were novel and unfamiliar for them. Furthermore, abundant opportunities to learn new vocabulary relating to the ocean, beach, lifesaving and medical terms were present.

## Results

### *Descriptive Statistics*

Non-parametric techniques were adopted due to the small participant numbers in both experimental groups. The Mann-Whitney U test was used to assess baseline differences in socio-demographic information and psychological functioning as measured by the assessment scales. An Alpha level of .05 was used for all tests of significance. SPSS Statistics software was utilised for this study's statistical analysis.

### *Socio-demographic Data*

As the quasi-experimental groups were determined by campus location, it was anticipated that some demographic differences would exist between the two groups. Moreover, small samples can have potentially large demographic differences between groups even with random assignment. Nevertheless, both groups were remarkably similar in gender composition, marital status, previous experience living abroad, previous length of stays abroad, level of education, current course of study and current class year.

There was a significant difference, however, in age ( $U = 14, Z = -2.71, p < .006$ ) between the cultural ( $M = 22.40$  years,  $SD = 3.53$ ) and control groups ( $M = 30.45$  years,  $SD = 5.78$ ). Groups also differed in their length of stay in Australia ( $U = 13, Z = -2.84, p < .004$ ), with the majority of cultural-group participants staying less than six months in Australia ( $n = 6$ ). This was in contrast to the majority of control participants having resided in Australian for two years or more ( $n = 8$ ). Hence, participants in the cultural group and enrolled at CQUniversity's Rockhampton campus were comparatively younger and had lived in Australia for

less time. Table 3 shows the personal variables of participants and the significance difference test between the experimental groups as determined by the Mann Whitney U test.

Table 3.

*Socio-Demographic Characteristics of Cultural and Control Groups at Baseline*

Variables	Cultural (n)	Control (n)	Exact Sig. 1 - tailed
<b>Age (years)</b>			
<25	8	2	
25 -35	1	7	
>35	0	1	.006
<b>Gender</b>			
Female	7	9	
Male	2	2	ns
<b>Marital Status</b>			
Single	9	9	
Married	0	1	
Widowed	0	1	ns
<b>Previous Stays Abroad</b>			
Yes	2	5	
No	7	6	ns
<b>Length of Stay in Australia</b>			
< 6 months	6	1	
<1 year	0	2	
<2 years	2	0	
<3 years	1	2	
<4 years	0	2	
<5 years	0	2	
>5 years	0	2	.004

Table 3. (continued)

Variables	Cultural (n)	Control (n)	Exact Sig. 1 - tailed
Length of Stays Abroad			
<1 year	2	2	
1-2 years	0	1	
2-3 years	0	1	
over 5 years	0	1	ns
Level of Education			
High School	6	3	
Undergraduate Deg	3	7	
Trade certificate	0	1	ns
Class Year			
First year	2	4	
Second year	4	5	
Third year	2	1	
Fourth year	1	1	ns

#### *Assessment Scales*

Baseline differences were also assessed between the two experimental groups in relation to assessment scales. Both groups were similar at baseline on all assessment scales, with the exception of the Anxiety subscale on the Depression, Anxiety and Stress Scale (DASS). Pre-test measures indicated that the cultural group recorded higher anxiety scores ( $M = 9.70$  – Moderate Anxiety range) than the control group ( $M = 5.45$  – Normal Anxiety range) before intervention ( $U = 17$ ,  $Z = -2.49$ ,  $p < .012$ ). Table 4 displays the Means and Standard Deviations for each scale at baseline.

Table 4.

*Assessment Scale Measures of Cultural and Control Groups at Baseline*

Assessment Scale	Mean (SD)	
	Cultural	Control
Subjective Happiness Scale	5.22 (0.76)	4.59 (0.93)
Satisfaction With Life Scale	19.33 (6.12)	21.18 (5.65)
Social Anxiety and Distress Scale	8.22 (4.52)	9.54 (5.53)
Social Provisions Scale (SPS)	77.55 (7.82)	76.90 (10.42)
(Subscales on SPS)		
Attachment	13.33 (1.87)	13.18 (2.35)
Social Integration	11.66 (1.32)	12.18 (1.99)
Opportunity for Nurturance	13.22 (1.71)	12.27 (1.79)
Reassurance of Worth	11.66 (0.70)	12.54 (1.63)
Reliable Alliance	13.66 (2.54)	13.36 (1.85)
Guidance	13.77 (2.10)	13.36 (1.85)
Personal Self-Efficacy	67.11 (11.78)	62.63 (13.6)
Social Self-Efficacy	66.33 (13.68)	64.00 (12.0)
Cultural Self-Efficacy	41.11 (9.67)	44.36 (9.20)
Critical Incident Questions	1.89 (0.60)	2.11 (0.33)
Depression on DASS	7.66 (5.72)	4.00 (3.40)
Anxiety on DASS*	9.77 (3.63)	5.45 (2.65)
Stress on DASS	16.00 (7.77)	9.72 (5.67)

\* $p < .05$ *Efficacy of the Cultural Learning Program*

Using the Wilcoxon signed-rank test, both the cultural and control groups were assessed over time (before and after intervention for the cultural group) to determine changes in assessment scale measures. Table 5 shows that the control group did not reveal any significant changes in assessment measures across time.

The missing second-period outcomes for the 4 students were imputed using the EM (Expectation Maximization) procedure in SPSS. Simple listwise deletion provided similar results, but for clarity of exposition only the analyses with imputed values are shown here.

Table 5.

*Post-Intervention Change in Control Group \**

	Mean : Pre-	Mean : Post	Negative Sum of Ranks	Positive Sum of Ranks	Exact Sig. (1- tailed)
Subjective Happiness Scale	4.59	4.61	32.50	33.50	.494
Satisfaction With Life Scale	21.18	21.38	30.50	35.50	.425
Social Anxiety and Distress Scale	9.55	10.48	12.00	33.00	.119
Social Provisions Scale (SPS)	76.91	78.32	29.50	36.50	.390
Subscales of SPS					
Attachment	13.18	13.39	29.00	26.00	.460
Social Integration	12.18	12.74	11.50	33.50	.111
Opportunity for Nurturance	12.27	13.55	13.50	41.50	.087
Reassurance of Worth	12.55	12.64	14.00	14.00	.516
Reliable Alliance	13.36	13.54	10.00	11.00	.469
Guidance	13.36	12.67	38.50	16.50	.140
Personal Self-Efficacy	62.64	67.02	16.00	50.00	.070
Social Self-Efficacy	64.00	64.68	28.50	37.50	.359
Cultural Self-Efficacy	44.36	46.11	24.50	41.50	.239
Depression on DASS	4.00	3.30	29.00	26.00	.460
Anxiety on DASS	5.45	7.14	17.00	38.00	.155
Stress on DASS	9.73	7.21	51.50	14.50	.054

\* n = 11

In contrast, the cultural group revealed five significant differences across time for the following measures: Satisfaction With Life Scale (SWLS) ( $W = 1, Z = -2.57, p < .004$ ), Reassurance of Worth subscale of the Social Provisions Scale (SPS) ( $W = 0.00, Z = -2.23, p < .016$ ), Cultural Self-Efficacy ( $W = 3, Z = -2.11, p < .016$ ), and both the Anxiety ( $W = 2, Z = -1.80, p < .047$ ) and Stress ( $W = 1.5, Z = -2.32, p < .012$ ) subscales of the DASS.

As shown in Table 6, results indicate that students in the cultural group recorded significantly higher SWLS scores, Reassurance of Worth subscale scores and Cultural Self-Efficacy scores a fortnight following participation in the cultural learning program. In addition, students recorded lower Anxiety and Stress scores on the DASS a fortnight following participation in the cultural learning program. These findings suggest a change in psychological maintenance measures following completion of the cultural program with an increase in positive psychological functioning reflected in higher satisfaction with life scores and a decrease in negative psychological emotions such as anxiety and stress. Findings also indicated an increase in perceived cultural knowledge and skills with higher cultural self-efficacy scores following participation in the cultural program. These results indicate that cultural learning program participants recorded improvements to all three areas from which cultural competence is derived – psychological wellbeing, social relations and cultural cognitions.

Table 6. *Post-Intervention Change in Cultural Group \**

	Mean : Pre-	Mean : Post	Negative Sum of Ranks	Positive Sum of Ranks	Exact Sig. (1- tailed)
Subjective Happiness Scale	5.22	5.50	10.00	35.00	.072
Satisfaction With Life Scale**	19.33	22.44	1.00	44.00	.004
Social Anxiety and Distress Scale	8.22	7.33	12.50	2.50	.156
Social Provisions Scale (SPS)	77.56	79.11	15.00	21.00	.371
Subscales of SPS					
Attachment	13.33	13.56	6.50	8.50	.469
Social Integration	11.67	12.00	8.00	13.00	.344
Opportunity for Nurturance	13.22	13.00	14.00	7.00	.344
Reassurance of Worth**	11.67	13.22	.00	21.00	.016
Reliable Alliance	13.67	14.00	4.00	11.00	.219
Guidance	13.78	13.67	11.00	10.00	.500
Personal Self-Efficacy	67.11	66.56	16.00	12.00	.406
Social Self-Efficacy	66.33	65.67	16.00	12.00	.367
Cultural Self-Efficacy**	41.11	45.67	3.00	33.00	.016
Critical Incident Questions	1.89	2.22	16.00	20.00	.085
Depression on DASS	7.67	9.22	12.00	16.00	.406
Anxiety on DASS**	9.78	8.00	19.00	2.00	.047
Stress on DASS**	16.00	12.33	34.50	1.50	.012

\* n = 9

\*\* p < .05

#### *Interaction Effects between Time and Quasi-Experimental Groups*

Inter-group differences between both quasi-experimental groups were assessed using the Mann Whitney U test. Change scores on each outcome variable were computed for all participants. Interactions between time and group

were assessed by examining between-group differences in these change scores using the Mann-Whitney U test (See Table 7).

Table 7.

*Fortnightly Changes in Quasi-Experimental Groups*

Fortnightly Change in Assessment Scales:	Cultural Mean Change*	Control Mean Change**	U	Z	Exact Sig. 1-tailed
Subjective Happiness	0.28	0.02	38.0	0.88	.199
Satisfaction with Life	3.11	0.20	29.5	1.53	.066
Social Anxiety and Distress	-0.89	0.93	23.0	2.05	.021
Social Provisions of Support	1.56	1.41	44.0	0.42	.348
Subsets of SPS					
Attachment	0.22	0.21	41.5	0.63	.278
Social Integration	0.33	0.56	44.5	-0.38	.361
Opportunity for Nurturance	-0.22	1.28	30.5	-1.47	.077
Reassurance of Worth	1.56	0.09	23.0	2.06	.020
Reliable Alliance	0.33	0.17	44.0	0.44	.339
Guidance	-0.11	-0.70	39.0	0.80	.223
Personal Self-Efficacy	-0.56	4.38	32.5	-1.29	.104
Social Self-Efficacy	-0.67	0.68	41.5	-0.61	.282
Cultural Self-Efficacy	4.56	1.75	30.0	1.49	.072
Critical Incident Questions	0.22	-0.23	42.0	1.11	.173
Depression on DASS	1.56	-0.70	46.5	-0.23	.419
Anxiety on DASS	-1.78	1.68	27.5	1.68	.048
Stress on DASS	-3.67	-2.52	34.0	1.18	.126

\* n= 9 \*\* n=11

As depicted in Table 7, three interaction effects were identified for scores recorded a fortnight following the cultural learning program. These included significant group differences in change over time on the Social Anxiety and

Distress Scale (SAD) ( $U = 23$ ,  $Z = 2.05$ ,  $p < .021$ ), the Anxiety subscale of the DASS ( $U = 27.5$ ,  $Z = 1.68$ ,  $p < .048$ ), and the Reassurance of Worth subscale of the SPS ( $U = 23$ ,  $Z = 2.06$ ,  $p < .020$ ). A divergence was also found between experimental groups on the SAD scale, as depicted in Figure 5. Students in the control group recording an increase in their SAD scores ( $M$  change  $+0.93$ ) across time, whilst students in the cultural group demonstrated a decrease in their scores ( $M$  change  $-0.89$ ) following participation in the cultural learning program.

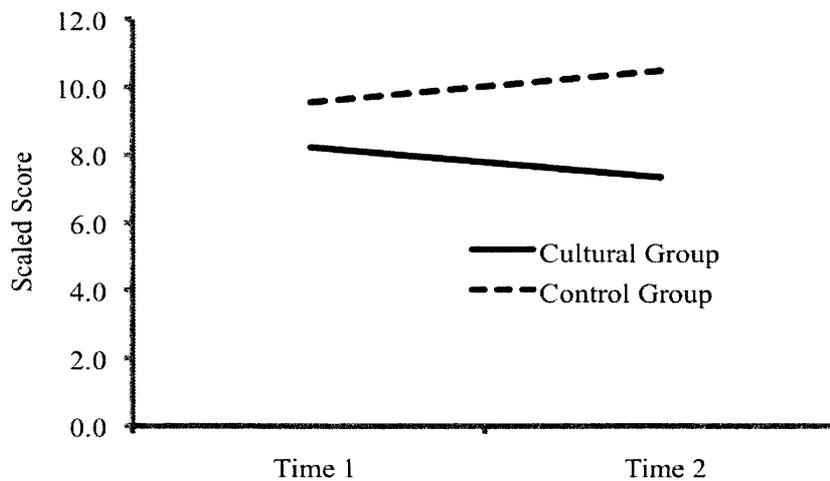


Figure 5. Social anxiety and distress scale (SAD) scores over time.

Similarly, an inverse relationship was demonstrated with Anxiety scores, where the control group recorded a Mean increase of 1.68 over testing periods in contrast to the cultural groups' decrease of -1.78 (see Figure 6). Mean anxiety levels in the cultural group reduced from moderate levels to mild levels after the intervention. Conversely, the control group changed from normal anxiety levels

to mild anxiety levels a fortnight later. Due to the baseline differences in anxiety, however, this difference is difficult to interpret with respect to the intervention.

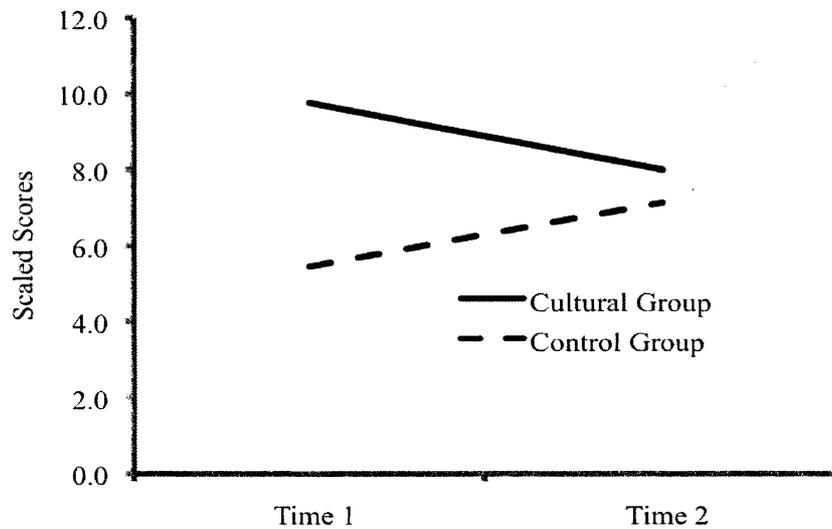


Figure 6. Anxiety scores on the DASS over time.

The last interaction between both groups involved the Reassurance of Worth scores, which showed an increase across time for both groups (Control Mean change = .09, Cultural Mean change = 1.56). However, the increase for the cultural groups' Reassurance of Worth scores was significantly higher compared to the negligible fortnight change of the control group (See Figure 7).

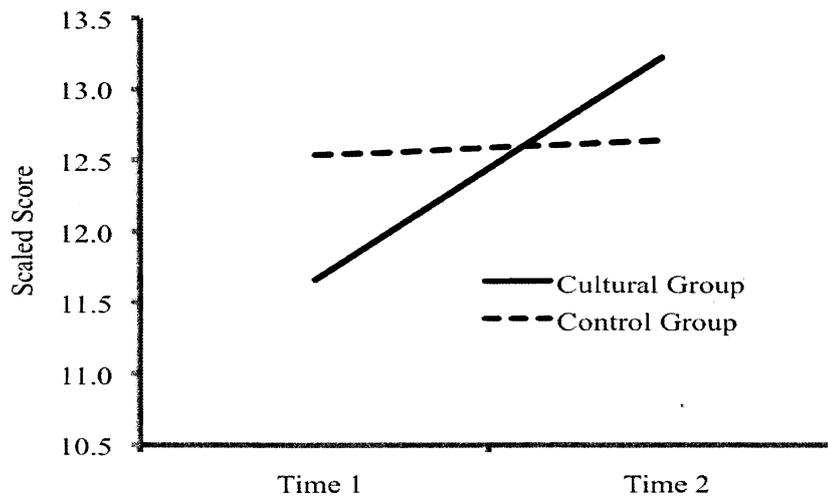


Figure 7. Reassurance of worth scores over time.

#### *Post-evaluation Feedback from Cultural Group Participants*

Following the completion of the True Blue Aussie Experience, participants were given an evaluation questionnaire to complete. Scores were recorded on a 5-point Likert-scale ranging from Strongly Disagree (SD) to Strongly Agree (SA) with Not Sure (NS) as a mid-point. Questions pertained to the enjoyment, learning benefits and usefulness of program content.

As depicted in Table 8, the majority of students strongly agreed that the learning program had been fun and enjoyable (strongly agree,  $n = 6$ , agree,  $n = 3$ ) and that it was a helpful teaching tool for learning about Australian culture (strongly agree,  $n = 8$ , agree,  $n = 1$ ). All students either agreed ( $n = 3$ ) or strongly agreed ( $n = 6$ ) that they had learnt new information about Australian culture during the day's events. Similarly, all students agreed ( $n = 4$ ) or strongly agreed ( $n = 5$ ) that they would use the information that they had learned in future interactions with Australians. Six students agreed and 3 strongly agreed that participation in the program made them feel more confident in managing new

situation in Australian culture. All students either strongly agreed ( $n = 5$ ) or agreed ( $n = 4$ ) that they would recommend the cultural learning program to other international students. Finally, all students either strongly agreed ( $n = 6$ ) or agreed ( $n = 3$ ) with the statement that such programs on Australian culture would be helpful for international students.

Table 8.

*Post-Evaluation Questionnaire*

Question topics assessing the True Blue Aussie Experience	Strongly Agree N	Agree n	Not Sure n	Disagree n	Strongly Disagree n
Fun and Enjoyable	6	3	0	0	0
Helpful teaching tool	8	1	0	0	0
Learnt new information	6	3	0	0	0
Use information in the future	5	4	0	0	0
Feel more confident	3	6	0	0	0
Recommend this program to international students	5	4	0	0	0
Cultural programs are helpful for international students	6	3	0	0	0

$n = 9$

Participants in the cultural group also frequently thanked the researcher and program helpers throughout the day, and expressed their surprise that a research study was interested in Japanese students only. The unexpected accident during the surf lifesaving activity also appeared to draw the group closer and heighten appreciation for the benefits of beach safety and general educational programs of support for international students.

## CHAPTER NINE: DISCUSSION

This study sought to create a cultural learning program that would assist Japanese students' sense of cultural competence during acculturation to Australian society. The cultural program drew upon the theoretical framework of Social Cognitive Theory and cultural training research. It was also designed to accommodate the expressed acculturation needs of Japanese university students, as determined in the findings of Study 1. The guiding research question as to whether a cultural learning program, designed to accommodate identified acculturation issues, could improve students' sense of cultural competence has been confirmed. Results suggest that students who participated in the cultural learning program experienced better psychological outcomes, improved perceptions of social relations, and an increased sense of cultural efficacy and knowledge. In contrast, Japanese students who did not receive a program of cultural support exhibited no significant improvements across time

Findings support the hypotheses of Study 2, which proposed that participants in the cultural learning program would score higher on measures of cultural competence following intervention, and in comparison to participants in the control group. Cultural competence was assessed in accordance with Mendenhall and Oddou's (1985) three categories of intercultural skills required to achieve success in another culture: (1) skills related to the maintenance of self, which include issues related to mental health, psychological wellbeing and feelings of self-confidence; (2) skills related to the fostering of relationships with host nationals such as interpersonal skills and social skills; and (3) cognitive skills

that facilitate accurate attributions and knowledge of the host culture. Naturally, not all of the assessment measures produced significant change, and the discussion focuses on results that did reveal changes. Moreover, lack of significant results for some measures does not confirm the null hypothesis of no change.

With regards to the first cultural competence category of self-maintenance, results indicate that students who participated in the cultural learning program experienced positive psychological changes. This was reflected in a significant increase in their scores on the Satisfaction With Life Scale (SWLS) a fortnight following participation in the True Blue Aussie Experience. The SWLS is a measure designed to assess satisfaction levels for one's present state of affairs (Deiner et al., 1985). The SWLS allows respondents to judge their current circumstances in accordance with their own valued criterion for life satisfaction such as in the domains of health, material wealth or successful relationships (Pavot & Deiner, 1993). Scores on the SWLS have also shared moderately strong correlations with other subjective wellbeing scales where concepts such as sociability, self-esteem and neuroticism have been measured (Deiner et al., 1985). Hence, higher scores on the SWLS indicate that the cultural learning program participants not only experienced improvements in their general life satisfaction, but may also have experienced benefits to other areas of psychological wellbeing.

This was reflected in a significant decrease in negative psychological emotions such as stress and anxiety following participation in the cultural learning program. The intervention group recorded a decrease from 'mild' to 'normal' levels of stress over testing periods. A similar decrease was exhibited for anxiety

levels with the cultural group recording 'moderate' levels of anxiety before intervention and 'mild' levels a fortnight after intervention. When compared with their control group counterparts, who demonstrated an increase in anxiety across time, the cultural program participants demonstrated significantly lower anxiety scores a fortnight following intervention. Lastly, confidence and general wellbeing were identified as important components of self-maintenance, and were measured in self-report evaluations from participants at the conclusion of the cultural learning program. Respondents unanimously agreed that they felt a greater sense of confidence for managing future cultural interactions and indicated that the program was fun, useful and engaging.

Confidence and issues relating to psychological wellbeing have been repeatedly identified as a moderating factor for acculturation outcomes. Berry and colleagues (1992) suggest that the presence of depression, anxiety and generalised stress often lead to acculturation stress, which can manifest in the adoption of undesirable acculturation strategies such as marginalisation. The presence of acculturation stress and other mental health issues is also believed to be higher in people who are older, female and recent arrivals to a new culture (6 months or less) (Berry, 1985; Furnham & Bochner, 1986; Ward & Kennedy, 1996; Ward & Rana-Deuba, 1999; Westermeyer et al., 1989; Zheng & Berry, 1991). Limited conclusions can be drawn from this study with regard to gender, due to the low numbers of Japanese males. However, the contention that people in the early stages of acculturation are more susceptible to mental health adjustment issues was supported in the results of this study.

A baseline difference in length of stay between the quasi-experimental groups indicated that the majority of participants in the intervention group had resided in Australia for 'less than 6 months' ( $n = 6$ ) compared with an even spread from 'less than 1 year' to 'exceeding 5 years' for participants in the control group. Accordingly, anxiety and stress subscales on the DASS were both above the normal range (moderate and mild levels, respectively) for the intervention group prior to the cultural learning program, which contrasted with the normal levels recorded by the control group. Indeed, another significant baseline difference between groups involved anxiety scores, with the intervention group recording moderate levels in comparison to the normal level of the control group, which is a difference of two clinical ranges. Hence, baseline data supports existing literature that associates higher rates of negative psychological emotions with the early period of transitioning to a new cultural environment.

There was also a statistically significant difference of eight years between the average age for each quasi-experimental group (cultural age  $M = 22.4$  years and control age  $M = 30.45$  years). However, findings did not support the assertion that older students would record higher levels of mental health issues. Rather, the current study found that the significantly older group of control participants recorded normal levels of depression, anxiety and stress at baseline in comparison to above average levels of anxiety and stress for younger participants in the cultural group. This may suggest that one's length of residency in a new cultural environment may be a more powerful determinant of psychological wellbeing and adjustment during acculturation than the demographic of age.

The intervention group, therefore, consisted of a population considered most vulnerable to mental health problems, who were already demonstrating heightened anxiety and stress as reflected in their above average DASS scores. Findings suggest the cultural learning program was robust enough to offer significant benefits to such a population, with an observed decrease in negative psychological emotions such as stress and anxiety, and an increase in positive psychological changes such as life satisfaction scores and self-reports of confidence. Findings also suggest that a key objective of making the cultural learning program beneficial for individuals, regardless of their length of stay in Australia, was achieved.

Positive effects for cultural learning program participants were also found in the second category of cultural competence relating to social skills and interpersonal relations. Participants recorded significantly higher Reassurance of Worth scores after completing the intervention program, and significantly higher scores than that of the control group over time. The Reassurance of Worth subscale of the SPS relates to the social recognition individuals feel from others for their own skills, competence, talents and value (Russell & Cutrona, 1984). The significantly higher scores of participants following their involvement in the True Blue Aussie Experience suggests an increased sense of social validation of their self-worth. This may in part be attributed to the research study being exclusively designed for Japanese students and not inclusive of other international students.

The students repeatedly questioned the researcher as to why a study would be dedicated to only Japanese students. This incredulity was paired with

expressed contentment, satisfaction or feeling special that they had been singled out of the often larger research categories of international or Asian students. This may also explain why both the control and intervention group exhibited an increase in Reassurance of Worth scores over time, as both groups may have felt similarly pleased that a study was designed exclusively for them. However, the increase for the control group was minor in comparison to the significant increase in the cultural learning group.

An increase in Reassurance of Worth scores may also lend support to the experimental design of the study, where the acculturation needs of Japanese students were initially explored in qualitative interviews before constructing a program of assistance. This allowed the cultural learning program to be designed according to Japanese students' expressed needs instead of the researcher's estimation of content that would be beneficial. This important two-stage design may have allowed Japanese students to feel that their own unique values, needs and opinions were incorporated into program content; thus contributing to an additional positive sense of self-importance and perceived worth to others.

Participants in the cultural learning program also scored lower on the Social Anxiety and Distress scale (SAD) a fortnight following the intervention; whilst control group participants increased on this measure over time. The SAD measures a respondents' ease of interacting socially with others and correlates with other measures of shyness and social anxiety (i.e., Social Reticence Scale) (Robinson et al., 1991). The scale also incorporates behavioural intentions relating to social situation such as, "If the chance comes to meet new people, I often take it" or "I try to avoid situations which force me to be very sociable"

(Watson & Friend, 1969). Questions relating to behavioural intentions are similar to self-efficacy appraisals of future ability. Self-efficacy is a major concept underpinning SCT, where interventions are typically designed to increase individuals' efficacy appraisals for engaging in a targeted activity. The cultural learning program focused on increasing social interactions between participants and Australian facilitators in the context of challenging tasks in unfamiliar settings. The ultimate goal was to increase participants' efficacy beliefs relating to their ability to successfully cope, engage and interact with Australians across a variety of settings and situations. Findings suggest this objective was achieved, as evidenced in the intervention groups' decreased scores on the SAD. Lower SAD scores indicate less behavioural avoidance of social situations and less negative affective experiences (e.g., distress, discomfort and fear) associated with interacting in social situations.

The importance of social connections with locals to ensure positive wellbeing in international students is a consistent global finding (Berry et al., 1992; Leung, 2001; Rosenthal et al., 2006; Ward, 2001; Ward & Kennedy, 1993). Studies have also suggested that students' perceived competence with regards to intercultural behaviour and social efficacy are significant factors associated with social avoidance, a sense of culture shock and depressive symptoms (Chapdelaine & Alexitch, 2004; Rahman & Rollock, 2004). In the current study, intervention participants exhibited a significant decrease in social avoidance and fears associated with social contact, in comparison with the control group. Participants in the cultural learning program also demonstrated an increased positive sense of worth from others, as reflected in the higher Reassurance of Worth scores

following intervention. These positive social measures also occurred within the context of participants exhibiting significant psychological gains in wellbeing, which appears consistent with existing literature associating intercultural socialisation with mental health benefits (Berry et al., 1992; Ward, 2001; Ward & Kennedy, 1993). Hence, findings support the association between psychological wellbeing and perceived social validation and social competency.

The third component of cultural competence involves cultural knowledge and understanding of the new culture. Cultural learning program participants demonstrated a significant increase in their cultural self-efficacy scores over time, whilst no difference was found for the control group. The cultural self-efficacy scale was constructed to measure participants' subjective perceptions of their cultural knowledge and capabilities. Students were asked to rate their confidence to "Learn and use Australian slang appropriately" or "Explain the cultural differences between Japanese and Australians". The intervention groups' scores on cultural self-efficacy were significantly higher than those demonstrated by the control group a fortnight after intervention. The intervention group also unanimously agreed in self-report evaluation measures that they had learned new information about Australian culture that was beneficial, and that the information they had learnt assisted both their confidence in engaging in the new culture and their perceived ability to successfully perform future social interactions.

Cultural misinterpretations resulting from the tendency to view social situations through one's cultural filter is contended to result in adjustment difficulties (Bochner, 1982). Therefore, skilling acculturating individuals in culture-specific rules and knowledge regarding social interactions is believed

essential to aid acculturation outcomes (Bochner 1982; Furnham & Bochner, 1986). The increase in cultural self-efficacy in this study suggests obvious benefits from the cultural learning program in the social skilling and cultural learning of acculturating individuals. Additionally, this area of improvement should be viewed in the context of similar positive findings for social and psychological wellbeing.

The increased benefits in the three areas of cultural competence also supports meta-analyses on the outcomes of cultural training programs, which identify positive feelings of wellbeing and self-confidence, positive estimations of one's relationship skills, and the development of appropriate perceptions relative to members of another culture (Black & Mendenhall, 1990; Deshpande & Viswesvaran, 1992). Additionally, findings of this study match reported benefits gained by other university support programs in areas such as increased self-confidence, cultural self-efficacy and social skills (see Liew, 2004, Mak et al., 1999b). However, the current study surpassed existing findings by demonstrating additional gains reflected in significant increases in psychological wellbeing measures such as life satisfaction; decreases in stress and anxiety concerns, and an increased perception of social self-worth. Specifically, the current study varied from typical cultural training or mentoring programs for university students in:

- (i) the adoption of a theoretical framework in SCT to both explore acculturation needs and then deliver training activities
- (ii) the predominant use of standardised scaled assessment measures instead of self-report or evaluation ratings
- (iii) the inclusion of psychological assessments to measure wellbeing

concepts beyond self-confidence

- (iv) the implementation of a control group to allow for comparisons
- (v) the homogenous sampling of a singular cultural group allowing the unique cultural nuances of the Japanese culture to be both investigated and supported

In general, the findings of this study support both the research hypotheses and the principle objective of the research – to create and validate a cultural learning program of support to acculturating Japanese university students.

#### Research Design and Limitations

The number of potential participants for Study 2 consisted of 25 Japanese students enrolled nation-wide at CQUniversity; 10 of which were located at the Rockhampton campus. The study successfully recruited 9 Rockhampton students and 20 students in total. Given the small sample sizes at university campuses, it was not possible to control for demographic differences between these groups of students. Furthermore, it was not possible to account for the myriad of other differences between the campuses that may have differentially affected the students' experiences. This is a natural feature of quasi experiments. Essentially, the analyses relied on pre-existing groups that were treated in different ways (i.e., an intervention and no intervention). However, it is recognised that the pre-existing groups necessarily might have other 3<sup>rd</sup> variables that differ as well (e.g., availability of support services).

The participant pool was also not large enough to allow for the use of random sampling methods, or to make adjustments for unequal group variables

such as age, length of stay in Australia and anxiety scores. Indeed, the baseline difference in anxiety scores between groups does not lend itself to an easy interpretation of post-intervention differences. It remains difficult to ascertain whether the significant decrease in anxiety levels for the intervention group was the result of the cultural learning program or a natural reversion to the norm over time. Readers will have to come to their own conclusions regarding the possible differences between the campuses and the potential for confounding variables. Findings should be viewed within the larger context of positive psychological, social and cognitive changes for the cultural group following intervention; of which, anxiety may be an included factor. Measurements of anxiety levels coupled with group variations in their length of stay in Australia did, however, provide compelling support for previous research suggesting that the most amount of distress typically occurs early in people's cultural transition (Ward & Kennedy, 1996; Ward & Rana-Deuba, 1999; Westermeyer et al., 1989; Zheng & Berry, 1991). High anxiety scores for the cultural group also served to challenge the strength of the program by testing program benefits on students with moderate anxiety levels and mild stress. This allowed the study to document the robustness of the program as a beneficial intervention for students with established higher psychological needs.

The relatively small participant size is a significant limitation of this study, as it reduces the generalisability of findings. It may also explain the scant number of studies focusing exclusively on Japanese university students in Australia, and the tendency to overlook the research needs of this ethnicity. The small sample was the major determinant in employing non-parametric assessment measures in

the analysis of research data to prevent misleading findings that may have resulted from standard parametric analyses. Non-parametric assessment also allowed for the primary focus to be on the efficacy of the cultural learning program and to find comparisons in assessment measures with the control group. This was, however, at the expense of tracking demographic variables to determine their moderating effects. Nevertheless, the small sample size still would have detracted from drawing any wide-reaching conclusions regarding variable differences in gender or age regardless of the statistical model applied.

It was also imperative to confine the intervention group to Rockhampton Japanese students and not to pursue the inclusion of Japanese students studying at other universities in Australia to increase participant numbers. The acculturation needs of Japanese students, from which program content in Study 2 was derived, came from the interview material of students attending the main CQUniversity campus of Rockhampton. The needs of Japanese students in more urban or intrastate locations are potentially different to the needs of those in the township of Rockhampton; as it would for many students in city or country areas. Hence, expanding the participant pool would have strengthened the generalisability of this study's findings at the direct expense of the internal validity of the research design. The priority of accurately reflecting and assessing the specific concepts of acculturation was paramount.

#### Implications for Future Research and Recommendations

The positive outcomes achieved by participants in the cultural learning program supports existing literature on the benefits of cultural training, and the

importance of university support programs for international students. When viewed in the larger context of acculturation and the needs of all newly arrived immigrants, it becomes apparent that support should extend beyond language classes, or housing and employment services. As evident in this study, cultural programs have the power to improve individuals' psychological wellbeing, social skills and cultural knowledge during a time often associated with great upheaval and change. Learning to live within a new cultural environment is commonly viewed as the responsibility of the newcomer, rather than the host society. Success or failure is typically measured by the traveller's adjustment to acculturation with limited consideration for the support provided within the host environment. A more balanced approach needs to be achieved where an individual's failure to acculturate should also be viewed as society's failure to provide adequate care and support.

The conventional university campus provides students with access to faculty members, fellow compatriots, international students, locals and student services. It is an ideal, safe environment from which to assess support programs for international visitors, with the view of extending beneficial findings to the needs of other acculturating immigrants within the wider community. With specific reference to the present study, the obvious next step would be to assess the reliability of the 'True Blue Aussie Experience' on a larger participant group of Japanese students. This would assist in determining whether similar positive outcomes can be achieved without engaging in the time-consuming first-stage investigation of acculturation needs. Such research would also assist in determining whether the needs of Japanese students studying in Rockhampton are

shared by Japanese students in different locations within Australia. Furthermore, the incorporation of additional longitudinal measures administered several months after program participation may also increase understanding of the extent to which intervention benefits are maintained over time. Alternatively, applying the two-stage acculturation investigation to a different and larger international student ethnicity would assist in assessing both the strength of the research design and program outcomes.

Findings suggest that the two-stage approach to the construction of interventions may increase participants' sense of perceived social self-worth in recognising one's culture as unique and deserving of its own program of support. Hence, central issues involving the provision of adequate respect for the unique cultural values of each ethnicity and the established importance of tailoring programs to meet the needs of the program audience warrant further discussion. Whilst a one-size-fits-all program of cultural training seems appealing, few studies have attempted to measure whether program content is truly relevant and transferrable across all cultural group members. Take for example the acculturation needs of an Indian and a Japanese student who would each be placed in the larger category of Asian students. It is difficult to argue that these students would be starting from the same acculturation point as each other. India was a British ruled nation for almost 90 years (1858 – 1947) and English remains an official national language. In addition, India is a Commonwealth nation where many aspects of colonial influence continue in the presence of such things as British gardens and establishments that serve 'High Tea'. The advantages of the Indian student acculturating to Australia – an English-speaking nation with

enduring ties to Britain, are obvious. How do we then compare this to the uniquely monocultural and historically isolated nation of Japan, and the acculturating needs of the Japanese student?

It may be safe to assume that the fluent English speaking Indian student, who enjoys a modicum knowledge of British social etiquette, would be in need of different cultural training content than that of the Japanese student. Yet, even if our assumptions are inaccurate and the Indian students possess limited English language proficiency or relevant cultural knowledge, the two-stage process of identifying common individual needs and then providing a program of support would be most beneficial. Essentially, researchers and program designers would be better advised to construct cultural programs based on the needs of participants, rather than being singularly guided by assigned theories or assigning program content according to previous literature - yielded from a broad range of ethnicities. For instance, it is but common sense to recognise the value of advocating such theories as the 'social skills' approach (Furnham & Bochner, 1982) to provide international students with social skills training. However, what form such training takes should very much depend upon the original culture of the students involved, and the relevant needs of the group at the current time and occurring at that specific location.

The current research findings also suggest that positive social gains were achieved following one day of participant interaction with Australian facilitators and the researcher. Participants' increased perceptions in social self-worth combined with less social anxiety and socially avoidant behaviours were achieved without the use of specific social skilling content – social scenarios and role-plays

relating to conflict resolution or friendship initiation. Rather, program content involved novel activities such as a BBQ cook-off competition and first-aid activities, where Australian facilitators provided assistance and guidance on the periphery of the task. Additionally, cultural knowledge was shared informally and through incidental conversations transpiring throughout the day such as over lunch while sampling teams BBQ dishes.

This finding challenges the conception of typical social skills programs that employ workbooks, homework task sheets, role-plays, instructors and assessment tasks as necessary educational tools. Perhaps, simply providing opportunities to interact with locals during fun and informative activities is sufficient for social benefits to be achieved. This approach would utilise considerably fewer resources than existing social skills programs, which often require participant commitment for 4 – 6 weeks in duration. This is an exciting area of potential investigation where the comparative benefits of social and cultural knowledge skilling programs could be assessed in relation to experiential programs combining local and international students in mutually unfamiliar and novel activities. Alternatively, a more basic level of investigation could involve the inclusion of local students into the existing research program to determine whether other improvements in participants' social domain can be achieved.

Finally, the considerable changes in psychological wellbeing demonstrated in this study emphasise the significance of injecting concepts such as 'novelty' and 'fun' into cultural learning programs. The current program offered a significant departure from typical classroom based methods of instruction towards experiential, engaging and motivational methods of education. International

students, like all university students, have a significant workload of subjects and book learning with which to contend. Classes on intercultural skills or social skilling may merely add to this workload and contribute to stress levels associated with academic life. Finding new approaches to attract international students to important learning opportunities, such as cultural training programs, is almost as important as the efficacy of the program itself. If students are uninspired to take on additional study related to cultural competence skilling, or if drop-out rates from participants in continuing programs exist, the efficacy of the program as a suitable support method should be in doubt. It is worth noting that the “True Blue Aussie Experience” attracted a high volunteer rate ( $n = 9$  of 10 eligible students, with the tenth student sleeping in and missing the bus) from Japanese students. Participating in a full-day of visiting beautiful local attractions, engaging in fun activities, winning prizes and learning new information was obviously viewed as a desirable opportunity. The significant benefits evidenced in psychological, social and cultural knowledge domains also suggest that fun and learning need not be mutually exclusive concepts related to cultural learning programs.

### Conclusion

This research explored the acculturating experiences of Japanese university students and incorporated those findings into the design of a cultural learning program, which aimed to promote a positive sense of cultural competence. Participants in the cultural program recorded improvements in the areas of psychological and social wellbeing and increased cultural self-efficacy; whilst the control group showed no significant change across time.

Findings were consistent with previous research on the benefits of cross-cultural training programs, and studies identifying higher psychological needs associated with newly arrived migrants. Further exploration was recommended into the social benefits for international students by including local students into the program activities. Replication of the study with a larger participant group of Japanese students, and the implementation of the research design with a different ethnic group, were also advocated. Additionally, the benefits of moving beyond classroom education methods and embracing experiential, novel and brief program designs were discussed.

What a difference a day makes? The current study has demonstrated that enjoyment and learning can be combined in a one-day program of cultural support to benefit Japanese students in key areas of psychological wellbeing; social validation, anxiety and avoidance; and cultural knowledge. It is an exciting prospect to consider the implications of this research in providing an innovative, brief, cost-effective, attractive and most importantly efficacious program of cultural support to international students.

For all university students there is a great deal of education that occurs outside of the classroom and embodies what many refer to as life experiences. International students in particular are exposed to steep learning curves on issues beyond academic requirements during their acculturation into a new environment. As Australia enjoys the significant economic revenue that international students provide, questions must be raised about a duty of care to provide effective support measures beyond the provision of accredited academic programs. The issue of acculturation is one of societal and institutional care and support to international

guests, in addition to an individual's journey of cultural transition. Providing evidence-based programs of cultural support should be viewed as an essential component to the meaningful stewardship of acculturating individuals.

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Appendix A

Interview Guide for Study 1

Demographic/Personal:

How old are you?

How long have you been in Australia? How long will you stay?

Did you come to Australia alone?

Why did you decide to come to Australia?

Had you travelled before?

Tell me what you find most difficult about living in Australia?

Have you ever studied Australian culture or history?

Would you describe yourself as someone who likes to socialise, go to new places and try new things in Australia?

Tell me what causes you the most stress about living in Australia?

What advice would you give Japanese students who are preparing to come to Australia?

Do you think you have a good understanding of Australians and their way of life?

What have you enjoyed the most about Australia since you have arrived and what do you do to feel good?

What are the main differences between Australians and Japanese people?

What would make your life easier in Australia?

How confident do you feel to cope with everyday tasks such as going to the grocery store, going to the bank, going to the post office, paying bills?

How would you rate your English ability compared with Japanese peers?

Environmental:

How easily have you made friends since arriving?

Where are the majority of your friends from – Australia, Japan other nations?

Do you think you learn more about Australians when you hang out with them?

How often do you talk to your family in Japan?

How often do you see your family in Japan?

Do you belong to any clubs or organisations in Australia?

Tell me about the help you've received from Australians since your arrival?

Can you tell me about any bad experiences you have had with Australians?

Behavioural:

How often do you speak English each day?

When you need some advice about things in Australia who do you ask?

How much time do you spend with Australian friends?

How have you increased your understanding of Australians and the way they live?

How do you improve your English skills?

What are the best ways to learn more about Australians and Australia?

If you find yourself in a new situation do you tend to ask for help or watch what people do, or do you just have a go?

Appendix B

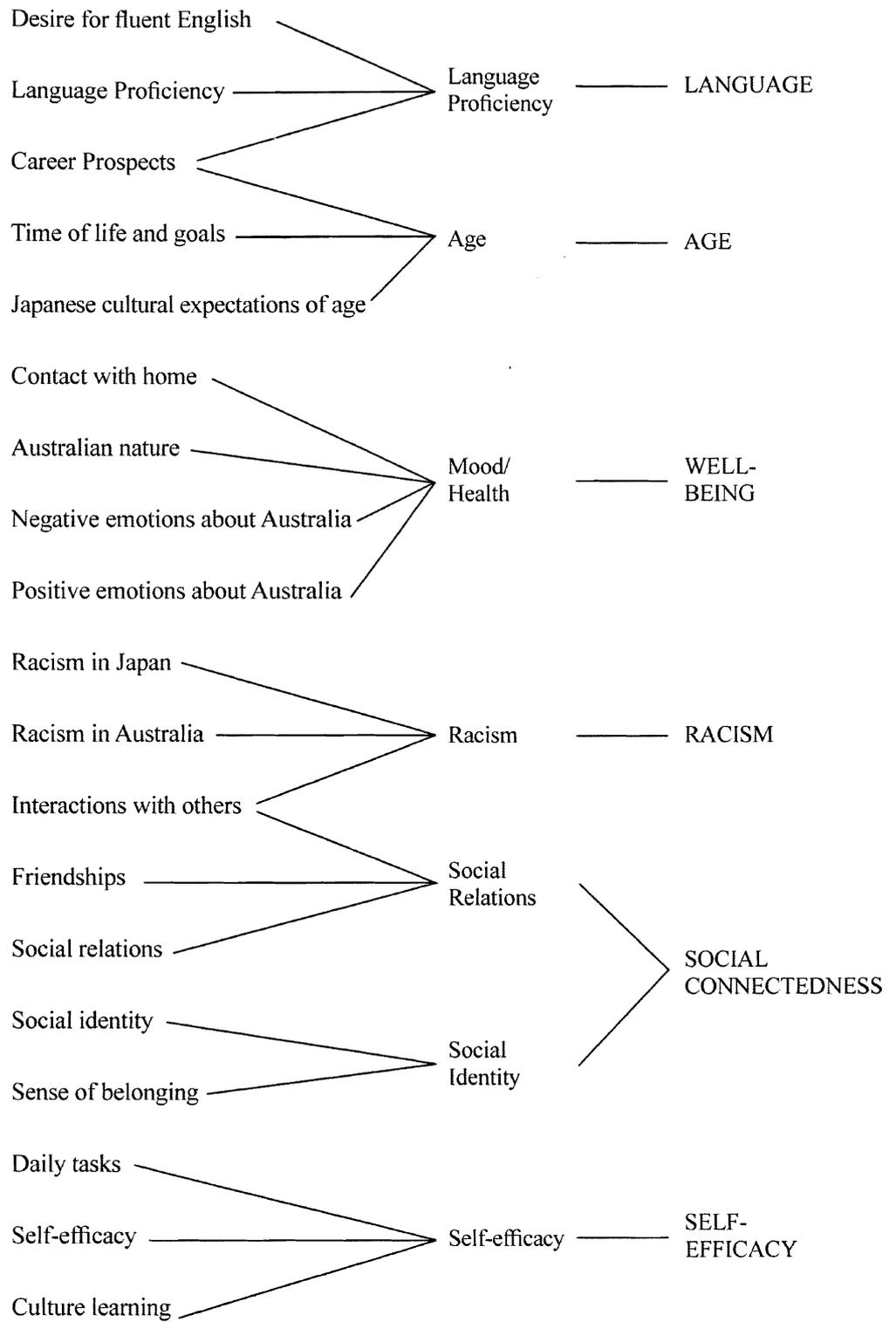
Initial Codes produced in first round of analysis for Study 1

Language	Career prospects and age
Purpose in Australia	Desire for fluent English
More pressure to achieve when older	Avoidance of daily tasks
Negative interactions with Australians	Romance and age
Friendships and English ability	Australian slang
Poor English results in prejudice	Racism
English language training in Japan	Age
Difficulty with Australian accent	Australia is easy to live in
Frustrated by language barrier	Living arrangements
Limiting interactions with locals	Social avoidance
Career opportunities and English	Social identity
English with Australian friends	Self-efficacy
Downtime away from using English	Racism in Japan
Limiting interactions outside of university	Frustrated by poor English
Japanese societal expectations of age	Less pressure when young
Easier to learn things when young	Romantic relationships
Challenges during acculturation	Academic workload
Daily tasks	Using mobiles
Sociocognitive learning mode	Guidance and asking for help
Negative emotions about perceived racism	Banking and finances
Easier to change behaviour when young	Aussie Nature
University support	Travelling back to Japan
Gender and sociocognitive learning mode	Language and self-efficacy
Happiness	Weather
BBQs in parks	Social isolation
Downtime activities	Japanese food availability
Differences between Australians and Japanese	Paying bills
Loneliness	Friendship with Japanese
Contact with family	Stress
National parks	Homesickness
Friendships	Caravanning
Travelling in Australia	Social withdrawal

Communication mediums and contact with Japanese family and friends	
Sense of belonging	Interactions with locals
Length of stay	Australia is a safe place
Personality traits	Social relations
Interactions with international students	Previous travel history
Culture learning	Confidence with daily tasks
Nature and mood	Initiating friendships
Club membership	Descriptors of Aussies
Duration of daily English speaking	Australian friendships
Time spent with Aussie friends	Visa issues
Notions of success	Future stay in Australia
Study skills	Cooking
Advice for fellow Japanese students	Transportation issues
Scary spiders	Time of life and goals
Positive emotions about Australia	Social etiquette
Cultural expectations and age	“Australia is easy to live”
Expectations from family	Social interests
Positive interactions with Australians	Career goals
Status before and after sojourn	Identity issues

## Appendix C

### Hierarchical Structure of Coding Analysis



Appendix D  
Assessment Measures for Study 2  
English Version

DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

1. What is your sex (male or female)? \_\_\_\_\_
2. What is your age? \_\_\_\_\_ years
3. How would you describe your current marital status? **(circle one)**

1. Single, never married	5. Widowed
2. Married	6. 'Live-in' relationship (de facto)
3. Separated	7. Other (please specify): _____
4. Divorced	
4. How long have you been living in Australia? **(circle one)**

1. Less than 6 months	4. Less than three years
2. Less than one year	5. Less than four years
3. Less than two years	6. Less than five years
7. Over five years	8. Over ten years
5. In which country were you born?  
Please specify: \_\_\_\_\_
6. Have you ever lived overseas before? **(circle one)**
  1. No
  2. Yes If you answered "yes", please complete the next two questions.
    - 2 a) What country or countries did you live in? \_\_\_\_\_
    - 2 b) How long did you live there? \_\_\_\_\_
7. What is the highest level of **higher** education you have **completed**?  
*Example: trade certificate, bachelor's degree, none.*  
\_\_\_\_\_ **(fill-in)**
8. Please describe the subject of your current university degree program.  
*Example: Science degree, Business degree, Masters in Education.*  
\_\_\_\_\_ **(fill-in)**
9. If you are currently enrolled in an undergraduate university degree program, what is your current class year (if unsure – please give your best estimate)? **(circle one)**

1. 1 <sup>st</sup> year	2. 2 <sup>nd</sup> year
3. 3 <sup>rd</sup> year	4. 4 <sup>th</sup> year
5. I'm not currently enrolled as an undergraduate student.	

## SUBJECTIVE HAPPINESS SCALE

For each of the following statements and/or questions, please circle the point on the scale that you feel is most appropriate in describing you.

1. In general, I consider myself:

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
not a very happy person						a very happy person

2. Compared to most of my peers, I consider myself:

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
less happy						more happy

3. Some people are generally very happy. They enjoy life regardless of what is going on, getting the most out of everything. To what extent does this characterization describe you?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
not at all						a great deal

4. Some people are generally not very happy. Although they are not depressed, they never seem as happy as they might be. To what extent does this characterization describe you?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
not at all						a great deal

SATISFACTION WITH LIFE SCALE

Below are five statements with which you may agree or disagree. Using the 1-7 scale below, indicate your **agreement** with each item by placing the appropriate number in the line preceding that item. Please be open and honest in your responding.

- 1 = Strongly Disagree
- 2 = Disagree
- 3 = Slightly Disagree
- 4 = Neither Agree or Disagree
- 5 = Slightly Agree
- 6 = Agree
- 7 = Strongly Agree

\_\_\_\_\_ 1. In most ways my life is close to my ideal.

\_\_\_\_\_ 2. The conditions of my life are excellent.

\_\_\_\_\_ 3. I am satisfied with life.

\_\_\_\_\_ 4. So far I have gotten the important things I want in life.

\_\_\_\_\_ 5. If I could live my life over, I would change almost nothing.

## SOCIAL ANXIETY AND DISTRESS SCALE

For the following statements, please answer each in terms of whether it is true or false for you. Circle T for true and F for false.

- |   |   |     |                                                                                        |
|---|---|-----|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| T | F | 1.  | I feel relaxed even in unfamiliar social situations.                                   |
| T | F | 2.  | I try to avoid situations which force me to be very sociable.                          |
| T | F | 3.  | It is easy for me to relax when I am with strangers.                                   |
| T | F | 4.  | I have no particular desire to avoid people.                                           |
| T | F | 5.  | I often find social occasions upsetting.                                               |
| T | F | 6.  | I usually feel calm and comfortable at social occasions.                               |
| T | F | 7.  | I am usually at ease when talking to someone of the opposite sex.                      |
| T | F | 8.  | I try to avoid talking to people unless I know them well.                              |
| T | F | 9.  | If the chance comes to meet new people, I often take it.                               |
| T | F | 10. | I often feel nervous or tense in casual get-togethers in which both sexes are present. |
| T | F | 11. | I am usually nervous with people unless I know them well.                              |
| T | F | 12. | I usually feel relaxed when I am with a group of people.                               |
| T | F | 13. | I often want to get away from people.                                                  |
| T | F | 14. | I usually feel uncomfortable when I am in a group of people I don't know.              |
| T | F | 15. | I usually feel relaxed when I meet someone for the first time.                         |
| T | F | 16. | Being introduced to people makes me tense and nervous.                                 |
| T | F | 17. | Even though a room is full of strangers, I may enter it anyway.                        |
| T | F | 18. | I would avoid walking up and joining a large group of people.                          |
| T | F | 19. | When my superiors want to talk with me, I talk willingly.                              |
| T | F | 20. | I often feel on edge when I am with a group of people.                                 |
| T | F | 21. | I tend to withdraw from people.                                                        |
| T | F | 22. | I don't mind talking to people at parties or social gatherings.                        |
| T | F | 23. | I am seldom at ease in a large group of people.                                        |
| T | F | 24. | I often think up excuses in order to avoid social engagements.                         |
| T | F | 25. | I sometimes take the responsibility for introducing people to each other.              |
| T | F | 26. | I try to avoid formal social occasions.                                                |
| T | F | 27. | I usually go to whatever social engagement I have.                                     |
| T | F | 28. | I find it easy to relax with other people.                                             |

## SOCIAL PROVISIONS OF SUPPORT SCALE

In answering the following questions, think about your current relationship with friends, family members, co-workers, community members, and so on. Please indicate to what extent each statement describes your current relationships with other people. Use the following scale to indicate your opinion:

1	2	3	4
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree

For example, if you feel a statement is very true of your current relationships, you would respond with a 4 (strongly agree). If you feel a statement clearly does not describe your relationships, you would respond with a 1 (strongly disagree).

- \_\_\_ 1. There are people I can depend on to help me if I really need it.
- \_\_\_ 2. I feel that I do not have close personal relationships with other people.
- \_\_\_ 3. There is no one I can turn to for guidance in times of stress.
- \_\_\_ 4. There are people who depend on me for help.
- \_\_\_ 5. There are people who enjoy the same social activities I do.
- \_\_\_ 6. Other people do not view me as competent.
- \_\_\_ 7. I feel personally responsible for the well-being of another person.
- \_\_\_ 8. I feel part of a group of people who share my attitudes and beliefs.
- \_\_\_ 9. I do not think other people respect my skills and abilities.
- \_\_\_ 10. If something went wrong, no one would come to my assistance.
- \_\_\_ 11. I have close relationships that provide me with a sense of emotional security and well-being.
- \_\_\_ 12. There is someone I could talk to about important decisions in my life.
- \_\_\_ 13. I have relationships where my competence and skill are recognized.
- \_\_\_ 14. There is no one who shares my interests and concerns.
- \_\_\_ 15. There is no one who really relies on me for their well-being.
- \_\_\_ 16. There is a trustworthy person I could turn to for advice if I were having problems.
- \_\_\_ 17. I feel a strong emotional bond with at least one other person.
- \_\_\_ 18. There is no one I can depend on for aid if I really need it.
- \_\_\_ 19. There is no one I feel comfortable talking about problems with.
- \_\_\_ 20. There are people who admire my talents and abilities.
- \_\_\_ 21. I lack a feeling of intimacy with another person.
- \_\_\_ 22. There is no one who likes to do the things I do.
- \_\_\_ 23. There are people I can count on in an emergency.
- \_\_\_ 24. No one needs me to care for them.

## CULTURAL EFFICACY SCALE

A number of situations are described below that involve daily actions you may participate in while living in Australia. Please rate in each of the blanks in the column **how certain you are that you can do each of the things described below** by writing the appropriate number.

*Rate your degree of confidence by recording a number from 0 to 100 using the scale given below:*

0	10	20	30	40	50	60	70	80	90	100
Cannot do at all					Moderately can do					Highly certain can do

**Confidence** **(0-100)**

1. Do things I enjoy everyday \_\_\_\_\_
2. Achieve success during my time in Australia \_\_\_\_\_
3. Cope with the daily demands of living in Australia \_\_\_\_\_
4. Find ways to relax after a difficult day \_\_\_\_\_
5. Achieve my goals for living in Australia \_\_\_\_\_
6. Keep trying after I have tried my best and failed \_\_\_\_\_
7. Use my English language skills in unfamiliar situations \_\_\_\_\_
8. Keep my spirits up when I suffer hardships \_\_\_\_\_
9. Participate in activities or situations that are new and unfamiliar \_\_\_\_\_
10. Make and keep Australian friends \_\_\_\_\_
11. Ask for help from Australians when I have social problems \_\_\_\_\_
12. Work well in a group of people I don't know \_\_\_\_\_
13. Begin conversations with new people \_\_\_\_\_
14. Feel accepted within the Australian community \_\_\_\_\_
15. Make and keep friends of the opposite sex \_\_\_\_\_
16. Share positive relationships with community members outside of  
the university \_\_\_\_\_
17. Stand up for myself when I feel I am being treated unfairly \_\_\_\_\_
18. Get involved in social activities outside of class (e.g., sports, music) \_\_\_\_\_
19. Fit in easily to Australian society \_\_\_\_\_
20. Study more about Australian culture \_\_\_\_\_
21. Learn and use Australian slang appropriately \_\_\_\_\_
22. Explain the cultural differences between Japanese and Australians \_\_\_\_\_
23. Understand why Australians act in certain ways \_\_\_\_\_
24. Anticipate potential cultural misunderstandings and either explain  
these or change my behaviour \_\_\_\_\_

## DEPRESSION, ANXIETY AND STRESS SCALE

Please read each statement and circle a number 0, 1, 2, or 3, which indicates how much the statement applied to you over the past week. There are no right or wrong answers. Do not spend too much time on any statement.

The rating scale is as follows:

- 0 Did not apply to me at all
- 1 Applied to me to some degree, or some of the time
- 2 Applied to me a considerable degree, or a good part of the time
- 3 Applied to me very much or most of the time

1. I found myself getting upset by quite trivial things	0	1	2	3
2. I was aware of dryness in my mouth	0	1	2	3
3. I couldn't seem to experience any positive feeling at all	0	1	2	3
4. I experienced breathing difficulty in the absence of physical exertion	0	1	2	3
5. I just couldn't seem to get going	0	1	2	3
6. I tended to over-react to situations	0	1	2	3
7. I had a feeling of shakiness (eg, legs going to give way)	0	1	2	3
8. I found it difficult to relax	0	1	2	3
9. I found myself in situations which made me so anxious I was most relieved when they ended	0	1	2	3
10. I felt that I had nothing to look forward to	0	1	2	3
11. I found myself getting upset rather easily	0	1	2	3
12. I felt that I was using a lot of nervous energy	0	1	2	3
13. I felt sad and depressed	0	1	2	3
14. I found myself getting impatient when I was delayed by others (e.g. being kept waiting, traffic lights etc)	0	1	2	3
15. I had a feeling of faintness	0	1	2	3
16. I felt that I had lost interest in just about everything	0	1	2	3
17. I felt I wasn't worth much as a person	0	1	2	3
18. I felt that I was rather touchy	0	1	2	3
19. I perspired noticeably (eg, hands sweaty) in the absence of high temperatures or physical exertion	0	1	2	3

20. I felt scared without good reason	0	1	2	3
21. I felt that life wasn't worthwhile	0	1	2	3
22. I found it hard to wind down	0	1	2	3
23. I had difficulty in swallowing	0	1	2	3
24. I couldn't seem to get any enjoyment out of the things I did	0	1	2	3
25. I was aware of the action of my heart in the absence of physical exertion (eg, sense of heart rate increase, heart missing a beat)	0	1	2	3
26. I felt down-hearted and blue	0	1	2	3
27. I found that I was very irritable	0	1	2	3
28. I felt I was close to panic	0	1	2	3
29. I found it hard to calm down after something upset me	0	1	2	3
30. I feared that I would be "thrown" by some trivial but unfamiliar task	0	1	2	3
31. I was unable to become enthusiastic about anything	0	1	2	3
32. I found it difficult to tolerate interruptions to what I was doing	0	1	2	3
33. I was in a state of nervous tension	0	1	2	3
34. I felt I was pretty worthless	0	1	2	3
35. I was intolerant of anything that kept me from getting on with what I was doing	0	1	2	3
36. I felt terrified	0	1	2	3
37. I could see nothing in the future to be hopeful about	0	1	2	3
38. I felt that life was meaningless	0	1	2	3
39. I found myself getting agitated	0	1	2	3
40. I was worried about situations in which I might panic and make a fool of myself	0	1	2	3
41. I experienced trembling (eg, in the hands)	0	1	2	3
42. I found it difficult to work up the initiative to do things	0	1	2	3

POST-EVALUATION QUESTIONNAIRE

Thank you for participating in the *True Blue Aussie Experience*! Please assist us in evaluating today's activities by answering the following questions. Please indicate the degree to which you **agree** or **disagree** with the following statements below by circling the appropriate response from the options provided. All responses will remain confidential and you do not need to identify yourself by name.

1. I had fun and enjoyed the *True Blue Aussie Experience*.

**Strongly Disagree    Disagree    Not Sure    Agree    Strongly Agree**

2. I found today's activities to be helpful in teaching me about Australian culture.

**Strongly Disagree    Disagree    Not Sure    Agree    Strongly Agree**

3. I learnt new information about Australian culture during today's events.

**Strongly Disagree    Disagree    Not Sure    Agree    Strongly Agree**

4. I will be able to use information that I learnt today when socialising with Australians.

**Strongly Disagree    Disagree    Not Sure    Agree    Strongly Agree**

5. I feel more confident to manage new situations after participating in the *True Blue Aussie Experience*.

**Strongly Disagree    Disagree    Not Sure    Agree    Strongly Agree**

6. I would recommend the *True Blue Aussie Experience* to fellow international students.

**Strongly Disagree    Disagree    Not Sure    Agree    Strongly Agree**

7. I believe that cultural programs, such as the *True Blue Aussie Experience*, are helpful for international students.

**Strongly Disagree    Disagree    Not Sure    Agree    Strongly Agree**

**Thanks again for your participation!**

Please read the following scenarios and **circle** the most appropriate answer.

1. Mariko was a recently arrived student from Japan at a large US university. Although at first apprehensive, she was now accustomed to the different routines and lifestyle and was doing quite well in her courses. She had become quite good friends with one of her classmates, Linda, and they often had lunch together. One afternoon the professor in their class asked for two volunteers to come in early the next morning to help code some research data. Linda volunteered and suggested Mariko might also be willing. Mariko replied hesitantly that she did not think her English was good enough to do it and that it would be better to ask someone else. Linda said that she would be quite capable and told the professor they would do it. The next day Mariko failed to turn up and Linda was obliged to do all the work herself. The next time she saw Mariko she asked her rather coldly what had happened to her. Mariko apologised and said that she'd had to work for an exam that day and she didn't really feel capable of doing the work. Linda exasperatedly asked her why she had not said so clearly in the class at the time. Mariko just looked down and said nothing.

Why is Linda upset with Mariko?

- (1) Linda feels that Mariko is lazy and slept in rather than coming to class and helping her with the research data.
  - (2) Linda is angry because Mariko made her look bad in front of their Professor.
  - (3) Linda is frustrated that Mariko did not speak her mind and let her know that she was too busy with studying for an exam to assist with the data entry.
  - (4) Linda thinks that Mariko may not understand English as well as she originally thought and feels disappointed by this.
2. Robyn is an Australian currently working as an English teacher in Portugal. One of her students is a young doctor named Antonio, whom she finds very open and interesting, and she enjoys her lessons with him. Eventually Antonio invites her to dinner at his place and to meet his family. After she arrives she is introduced to Antonio's wife, briefly meets the two young children, then is taken through to the dining room to commence dinner. She is surprised to find that the meal is not brought out by Antonio's wife but a maid. Robyn comments that she didn't think they would need a maid in an apartment that to her seems quite small. As the maid is serving her, Robyn, to be pleasant, asks her questions about her family and how long she's been working here. The maid, however, seems reluctant to reply and becomes nervous. When a little later she accidentally drips some sauce on Robyn, Antonio yells at her sharply and tells her to stay in the kitchen and his wife will serve the food. The rest of the meal is eaten in a strained atmosphere.

What is the cause of the tension between Robyn and her hosts?

- (1) She should not have commented on the small size of the apartment.
- (2) The hosts were upset and embarrassed because the maid had spilled sauce on Robyn.
- (3) Robyn shouldn't have asked the maid questions about how long she'd been working there because employment tenure is such a sensitive issue.
- (4) The hosts thought it very inappropriate for Robyn to converse socially with the maid.

3. Jim is the Head of the Psychology department at an Australian university. In addition to 5 years of previous work experience in Japan, Jim has been actively involved in providing intercultural communication training workshops for university faculty to assist them in working with international students. One day Jim called Keiko, a Japanese graduate student, to come in for an evaluation meeting. Keiko commenced courses in the Psychology department two semesters ago and was not performing well. Lecturers felt that she lacked initiative because she refused to take any classes that required active participation and counselling experience. Although they understood that her English was minimal, they felt that it would not improve unless she made an effort. Also attending the meeting was a bilingual Japanese student, whom Jim asked to serve as the interpreter.

**Jim:** Thank you for taking time out of your busy schedules today. As I told you beforehand, today we are here to decide whether it would be wiser for Keiko to stay or whether it would be better for her to choose a different career path. (to the interpreter) I'm not sure if she understands what is going on so could you please explain that to her?

**Interpreter:** Sure (explains in Japanese) she says she was perfectly aware of this

**Jim:** Oh really! I guess she understands more English than I gave her credit for! Well...could you ask her what she thinks?

**Interpreter:** Sure (explains in Japanese)...

**Keiko:** (breathes in, looks down, and appears to be thinking)

**Jim:** Yes???

**Interpreter:** She's still thinking...

**Jim:** But what is there to think about?! Didn't she think about all this before she came in?

**Keiko:** (slowly and haltingly) I would like to stay and give it a try...

**Jim:** (jumps in) Okay, Keiko, you can but you're going to either have to take one of the counselling practice classes or take an intensive English course, all right?

**Keiko:** (looks down, has a small frown on her face and appears to be thinking)

**Jim:** You know that all of your lecturers have been trying their hardest to accommodate to you, don't you? We've let you audit classes for the past two semesters, but unless you start taking them for credit you will be wasting everyone's time, including your own...

**Keiko:** (is still looking down, takes a deep breath and opens her mouth...)

**Jim:** Will you please say something? This silence is driving me nuts! It's been half an hour already and we haven't accomplished anything! (to the interpreter) Are you sure she understands what I've been saying to her?!

Which is the most appropriate explanation for this situation?

- (1) Jim is angry with the interpreter for not communicating the information appropriately to Keiko. Jim feels that neither the interpreter nor Keiko are taking this meeting seriously.
- (2) Jim suspects that Keiko does not want to continue studying Psychology and is interpreting her silence as avoidance in communicating this directly to him.
- (3) Jim is frustrated by Keiko's silence and wants her to participate in the discussion more so they can make a decision on her future study.
- (4) Jim dislikes Japanese people and would prefer to offer a graduate placement to an Australian student.

Appendix E  
Assessment Measures for Study 2  
Japanese version

1. 性別をお聞かせください(男または女)。\_\_\_
2. お年をお聞かせください。\_才
3. ご自分の現在の婚姻状況はどれですか。(いずれかを丸で囲んでください)
 

1. 独身、結婚歴無し	5. 未亡人
2. 既婚	6. 他の同居関係(実質的に)
3. 別居	7. その他(具体的にお願いします)
4. 離婚	
4. オーストラリアに居住して何年になりますか。(いずれかを丸で囲んでください)
 

1. 6カ月未満	4. 3年未満
2. 1年未満	5. 4年未満
3. 2年未満	6. 5年未満
7. 5年超	8. 10年超
5. 出生国はどこですか。  
 具体的にお書きください。\_\_\_\_\_
6. 以前海外に住んだことはありますか。(いずれかを丸で囲んでください)
  1. いいえ
  2. はい 「はい」の場合は、以下の2つ質問にご回答ください。
    - 2 a) どの国(1つまたは複数)にお住まいでしたか。\_\_\_\_\_
    - 2 b) \_\_\_\_\_ 居住期間はどの程度ですか。\_\_\_\_\_
7. 修了した最も高いレベルの高等教育は何ですか。  
 例: 技能資格、修士号、なし。  
 \_\_\_\_\_ (記入してください)
8. 現在の大学の学士課程の科目は何ですか。  
 例: 科学学位、ビジネス学位、教育修士  
 \_\_\_\_\_ (記入してください)
9. 学部の学位課程を受講している場合、現在何年目ですか(よくわからない場合は、できる限り正確な推定をお願いします)。(いずれかを丸で囲んでください)
 

1. 1年目	2. 2年目
3. 3年目	4. 4年目
5. 現在学部生ではない	

以下の文章と質問について、ご自分は1～7のスケールのどこに当てはまるとお思いますか。丸で囲んでください。

1. 大まかに言って、ご自分はどのような人間だと思えますか。
- |           |   |   |   |   |   |          |
|-----------|---|---|---|---|---|----------|
| 1         | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7        |
| あまり幸せではない |   |   |   |   |   | とても幸せである |
2. 同僚達と比べて、ご自分はどのような人間だと思えますか。
- |          |   |   |   |   |   |         |
|----------|---|---|---|---|---|---------|
| 1        | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7       |
| あまり幸せでない |   |   |   |   |   | より幸せである |
3. 中には大変幸せな人もいます。何があっても生活をエンジョイし、何でも大いに楽しんでます。これはご自分にどの程度当てはまりますか。
- |             |   |   |   |   |   |          |
|-------------|---|---|---|---|---|----------|
| 1           | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7        |
| まったく当てはまらない |   |   |   |   |   | 大いに当てはまる |
4. 中にはあまり幸せでない人もいます。落ち込んではいなくても、決して実際ほど幸せには見えません。これはご自分にどの程度当てはまりますか。
- |             |   |   |   |   |   |          |
|-------------|---|---|---|---|---|----------|
| 1           | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7        |
| まったく当てはまらない |   |   |   |   |   | 大いに当てはまる |

以下に5つの文章があります。人それぞれに思いは違えます。以下の1～7のスケールで、どの程度そう思うかを、各文の前の下線上に数字で示してください。率直に正直にご回答お願いいたします。

- 1 = まったくそうは思わない  
 2 = そうは思わない  
 3 = どちらかと言えばそうは思わない  
 4 = どちらとも言えない  
 5 = どちらかと言えばそう思う  
 6 = そう思う  
 7 = 強くそう思う

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. ほとんどの場合、自分の人生は理想に近い。  
 \_\_\_\_\_ 2. 自分の人生を取り巻く条件は素晴らしい。  
 \_\_\_\_\_ 3. 人生に満足している。  
 \_\_\_\_\_ 4. 今までのところ、人生で欲しい重要なものは手に入れた。  
 \_\_\_\_\_ 5. 人生がもう一度あるとしたら、自分は何も変えない。

以下の文章について、自分にとって正しいか誤りかを回答してください。正しい場合は正を、誤りの場合は誤を丸で囲んでください。

- |   |   |     |                                 |
|---|---|-----|---------------------------------|
| 正 | 誤 | 1.  | 馴染みのない人が集まる場でもリラックスできる。         |
| 正 | 誤 | 2.  | 大いに社交的にならざるを得ない状況はいつも避けようとしている。 |
| 正 | 誤 | 3.  | 知らない人と一緒でもリラックスするのは簡単である。       |
| 正 | 誤 | 4.  | 特に人を避けたいという気持はない。               |
| 正 | 誤 | 5.  | 人が集まる場では気まずいことが多い。              |
| 正 | 誤 | 6.  | 人が集まる場でも冷静に気楽でいられることが普通である。     |
| 正 | 誤 | 7.  | 普段は異性と話すときでも気楽である。              |
| 正 | 誤 | 8.  | よく知らない人と話すのは避けようとしている。          |
| 正 | 誤 | 9.  | 新しい人達と会う機会があれば、それを活かすことが多い。     |
| 正 | 誤 | 10. | 男女の気楽な集まりでは落ち着かないか、緊張することが多い。   |
| 正 | 誤 | 11. | よく知らない人達と一緒にいると落ち着かないことが多い。     |
| 正 | 誤 | 12. | 人のグループと一緒にいるとリラックスできるのが普通である。   |
| 正 | 誤 | 13. | 人から逃げることが多い。                    |
| 正 | 誤 | 14. | 知らない人のグループと一緒にだと居心地が良くないことが多い。  |
| 正 | 誤 | 15. | 人と初めて会うときでもリラックスできるのが普通である。     |
| 正 | 誤 | 16. | 人に紹介されると緊張して落ち着かなくなる。           |
| 正 | 誤 | 17. | 部屋が知らない人がいっぱいでも、とにかく入る。         |
| 正 | 誤 | 18. | 人の大きなグループに近づいて加わることは避ける。        |
| 正 | 誤 | 19. | 上司が話があると言えば、進んで話す。              |
| 正 | 誤 | 20. | 人のグループと一緒にいるといらいらすることが多い。       |
| 正 | 誤 | 21. | 人から離れがちである。                     |
| 正 | 誤 | 22. | パーティや集まりで人と話すのは気にならない。          |
| 正 | 誤 | 23. | 人の大きなグループの中にいるとほとんど落ち着けない。      |
| 正 | 誤 | 24. | 会合を避けるために言い訳を考えていることが多い。        |
| 正 | 誤 | 25. | 人を互いに紹介する役割をはたすことがときどきある。       |
| 正 | 誤 | 26. | 公式の集まりの場は避けようとしている。             |
| 正 | 誤 | 27. | どのような会合でも普通は行く。                 |
| 正 | 誤 | 28. | 他の人達と一緒にでもリラックスすることは簡単である。      |

友人、家族、職場の同僚、コミュニティーの人達などの現在の関係を考えて、以下の質問に回答してください。各文が自分と他の人達との現在の関係をどの程度表しているか示してください。次の1~4のスケールの中から選択してください。

1	2	3	4
まったくそうは思わない	そうは思わない	そう思う	強くそう思う

たとえば、文章が自分の現在の関係に良く当てはまる場合は、4(強くそう思う)と回答します。文章が自分の関係を述べていないことが明らかな場合は、1(まったくそうは思わない)と回答します。

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. 助けが本当に必要なときに頼れる人がいる。
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. 他人と親しい個人的関係がない気がする。
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. 重圧を感じているときに助言を求められる人がいない。
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. 助けを求めて自分を頼ってくれる人がいる。
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. 自分と同じ社会活動を楽しんでいる人がいる。
- \_\_\_\_\_ 6. 他の人達は自分に能力があると見なしていない。
- \_\_\_\_\_ 7. 別の人ができるかどうか個人に責任を感じる。
- \_\_\_\_\_ 8. 自分が、同じ態度と信念を持つ人達のグループの一員だと感じる。
- \_\_\_\_\_ 9. 他人が自分の技術と能力を認めてくれていると思わない。
- \_\_\_\_\_ 10. うまいかないことがあっても、誰も手助けに来ようとしない。
- \_\_\_\_\_ 11. 安心感と快適さを与えてくれる親密な関係がある。
- \_\_\_\_\_ 12. 自分の人生での重要な決断について話せる人がいる。
- \_\_\_\_\_ 13. 自分の能力と技術が認められている関係がある。
- \_\_\_\_\_ 14. 自分の関心や心配事を共有する人がいない。
- \_\_\_\_\_ 15. 安らぎを求めて自分を頼りにしてくる人がいない。
- \_\_\_\_\_ 16. 問題を抱えたときに助言を求められる信頼できる人がいる。
- \_\_\_\_\_ 17. 強い精神的な絆を感じる人が少なくとも一人いる。
- \_\_\_\_\_ 18. 助けが本当に必要なときに頼れる人がいない。
- \_\_\_\_\_ 19. 悩みを心置きなく話せる人がいない。
- \_\_\_\_\_ 20. 自分の才能と能力に感心してくれる人がいる。
- \_\_\_\_\_ 21. 他の人との親密感がない。
- \_\_\_\_\_ 22. 自分がやっていることを好んでくれる人がいない。
- \_\_\_\_\_ 23. まさかのときに頼れる人がいる。
- \_\_\_\_\_ 24. 自分の気遣いを必要としている人がいない。



以下の文章を読み、ここ1週間の自分にどの程度当てはまるかを示す数字0、1、2、または3を丸で囲んでください。正しい回答も間違った回答もありません。どの文章でもあまり時間をかけないでください。

0～3のスケールは以下の通りです。

- 0 まったく自分に当てはまらない
- 1 ある程度、またはある時間自分に当てはまる
- 2 かなりの程度、またはかなりの時間自分に当てはまる
- 3 大いに、またはほとんどの時間自分に当てはまる

1.	ささいなことでいらいらしていた	0	1	2	3
2.	口が渇いていることに気が付いた	0	1	2	3
3.	前向きな感情をまったく経験できそうになかった	0	1	2	3
4.	運動した訳ではないのに、息をするのが難しい状態を経験した	0	1	2	3
5.	とても前に進めそうになかった	0	1	2	3
6.	状況に過剰に反応しがちだった	0	1	2	3
7.	不安感があった	0	1	2	3
8.	リラックスするのが難しかった	0	1	2	3
9.	とても心配な状況にあって、それが終わったときには本当に安心した	0	1	2	3
10.	期待できることがないと感じた	0	1	2	3
11.	すぐにいらいらしていることに気づいた	0	1	2	3
12.	かなり神経を使っていると感じた	0	1	2	3
13.	悲しく、落ち込んでいた	0	1	2	3
14.	何かで遅れがある(待たされる、信号など)と我慢できなくなっていた	0	1	2	3
15.	気力がなくなる感じがあった	0	1	2	3
16.	何にも興味を持てなくなったと感じた	0	1	2	3
17.	自分に人としての価値がないと感じた	0	1	2	3
18.	少し神経質になっていると感じた	0	1	2	3
19.	運動をして体温が上がったわけではないのに、ひどく汗をかいていた	0	1	2	3
20.	ささいなことでいらいらしていた	0	1	2	3
21.	口が渇いていることに気が付いた	0	1	2	3
22.	前向きな感情をまったく経験できそうになかった	0	1	2	3
23.	運動した訳ではないのに、息をするのが難しい状態を経験した	0	1	2	3
24.	とても前に進めそうになかった	0	1	2	3
25.	状況に過剰に反応しがちだった	0	1	2	3
26.	不安感があった	0	1	2	3
27.	リラックスするのが難しかった	0	1	2	3
28.	とても心配な状況にあって、それが終わったときには本当に安心した	0	1	2	3
29.	期待できることがないと感じた	0	1	2	3
30.	すぐにいらいらしていることに気づいた	0	1	2	3
31.	かなり神経を使っていると感じた	0	1	2	3
32.	悲しく、落ち込んでいた	0	1	2	3
33.	何かで遅れがある(待たされる、信号など)と我慢できなくなっていた	0	1	2	3
34.	気力がなくなる感じがあった	0	1	2	3
35.	何にも興味を持てなくなったと感じた	0	1	2	3
36.	自分に人としての価値がないと感じた	0	1	2	3
37.	少し神経質になっていると感じた	0	1	2	3
38.	運動をして体温が上がったわけではないのに、ひどく汗をかいていた	0	1	2	3
39.	ささいなことでいらいらしていた	0	1	2	3
40.	口が渇いていることに気が付いた	0	1	2	3
41.	前向きな感情をまったく経験できそうになかった	0	1	2	3
42.	運動した訳ではないのに、息をするのが難しい状態を経験した	0	1	2	3

以下のシナリオを呼んで、最も適切な回答を丸で囲んでください。

1. マリコは、オーストラリアの大きな大学に最近日本からやってきた学生です。最初は不安だったものの、今では異なる日課やライフスタイルに慣れて、受講している課程でも非常に良くやっていました。マリコは、クラスメートのリンダと親友になり、よく一緒に昼食を食べていました。ある日の午後、彼らの授業の教授が、研究データのプログラミングをボランティアで手伝ってくれる学生が二人いないかと言いました。リンダがやりますと手を挙げ、マリコも進んで手伝うと思うと言いました。マリコは、自分はそれができるほど英語がうまくないので、別の人に頼んだ方が良いのではないかとためらいながら答えました。リンダはマリコには充分やれる力があると言い、教授に自分とマリコが手伝うと伝えました。翌日マリコは姿を見せず、リンダがすべての作業を自分で行うはめになりました。次にマリコに会ったとき、リンダは少し冷たい口調で何があったのと尋ねました。マリコは謝り、その日は試験のために勉強しなければならなかったし、自分がその作業をできるとは思わないと言いました。リンダは憤慨して、それなら、なぜあのときクラスではっきりと言わなかったのと尋ねました。マリコは下を向いたまま、何も言いませんでした。

リンダは、なぜマリコに対して怒ったのでしょうか？

- (1) リンダは、マリコは怠け者で、授業に出て研究データの処理を手伝うのではなく眠っていたと思っている。
- (2) リンダは、マリコが教授の前で自分の顔をつぶしたので怒っている。
- (3) リンダは、マリコが自分の思っていることを話さず、試験勉強で忙しくデータの入力を手伝えなかったと言わないのでいらいらしている。
- (4) リンダは、マリコが自分が思ったほど英語を理解していないのではと考え、そのために望んでいる。

2. ロビンは、現在ポルトガルで英語教師として働いているオーストラリア人です。生徒の中にアントニオという医者が出て、とても気さくで面白く、ロビンは彼とのレッスンを楽しんでいました。そのうち、アントニオはロビンを自宅での夕食に誘い、自分の家族に会わせました。到着すると、ロビンはアントニオの奥さんに紹介され、二人のまだ小さい子供と短い時間ながら会った後、ダイニングルームに通されて夕食が始まりました。ロビンは、食事を出すのがアントニオの奥さんではなくメイドであることに驚きました。ロビンは、自分にはとても狭いと思えるアパートメントに、メイドは必要ないと思うと言いました。ロビンは、メイドが食事を出してくれるときに、感じを良くするために彼女の家族やどのくらいここで働いているのか尋ねました。しかし、メイドは答えたくない様子で、そわそわしました。そのすぐ後、メイドがロビンの服に何かのスープを間違えてこぼすと、アントニオはきつく怒鳴りつけて、彼の奥さんが食事を出すからキッチンから出るなど言いました。残りの食事中は緊張した雰囲気でした。ロビンと招待したアントニオの間の緊張の原因は何ですか？

- (1) ロビンは、アパートメントが狭いことを言うべきではなかった。
- (2) アントニオは、メイドがソースをロビンの服にこぼしたので怒り、恥ずかしく思った。
- (3) 雇用期間は非常にデリケートなことなので、ロビンはメイドにどれくらい働いているのか尋ねるべきではなかった。
- (4) アントニオは、ロビンがメイドと気軽に話すのは非常に不適切だと思った。

3. ジムは、オーストラリアの大学の心理学部長です。日本での5年の勤務経験に加え、ジムは大学教職員向けの異文化間コミュニケーションのトレーニング研修会の提供にも積極的に関わり、海外の学生とのやりとりを支援してきました。ある日、ジムは日本人の大学院生ケイコを呼んで、評価ミーティングに来るように言いました。ケイコは2期前に心理学部の課程の受講を始めましたが、成績は良くありません。講師達は、積極的な参加とカウンセリングの経験が必要な授業を受けようとしていないので、ケイコには主体性が欠けていると感じていました。講師達は、ケイコの英語が最低限のレベルであることを理解していましたが、自分で努力しなければ上達しないと感じていました。ミーティングには、ジムが通訳として頼んだ日本人のバイリンガルの学生も出席しました。

ジム:

今日は忙しいスケジュールの中、時間を取ってくれてありがとう。先に話したように、今日私達が集まったのは、ケイコはこのまま心理学部にいる方が良いのか、別のキャリアパスを選択するほうが賢明なのか決めるためだよ。(通訳に向かって)ケイコが何をやっているか理解しているかどうか分からないので、彼女に説明してくれるかい。

通訳: はい(日本語で説明し)、このことはすべて完璧に分かっていたと言ってます。

ジム:

本当かい。ケイコは、私が評価した以上に英語を理解できるようだね。それじゃあ、どう思うか聞いてくれる。<sup>9</sup>

通訳: はい(日本語で説明)...

ケイコ: (息を吸って、うつむき、考えている様子)

ジム: それで?

通訳: まだ考えています...

ジム: でも何を考えているんだ。ここに来る前にすべて考えたんじゃないのかい。

ケイコ: (ゆっくりと、ためらいながら)残って、やってみたいです...

ジム:

(急に割り込み)分かったよ、ケイコ、そうすればいい。でもカウンセリングの練習クラスか集中英語コースのどちらかを受けるんだよ。分かった?

ケイコ: (またうつむき、すこし渋い顔をして、考えている様子)。

ジム:

君の講師達は皆、君に対応するために全力を尽くしてきたんだよ、分かっているね。ここまでの2期、授業を聴講してもらったけれど、単位を取り始めないと、君を含めて皆の時間が無駄になるんだよ。

ケイコ: (まだうつむいて、深く息をし、口を開く...)

ジム: 何か言ってくれるかい。こんなに黙ったままじゃ気が変になりそうだ!

もう30分経つのに、何も成果もない!

(通訳に向かって)私が話していることをケイコは本当に理解していると思うかね。

この状況の最も適切な説明はどれですか。

(1) ジムは、情報を適切にケイコに伝えていないことに対して通訳に怒っている。ジムは、

訳もケイコもこのミーティングのことを真剣に考えていないと感じている。

(2) ジムは、ケイコは心理学の勉強を続けたくないのではないかと考え、何も話さないのはそ

を直接自分に伝えることを避けるためだと解釈している。

(3) ジムはケイコが何も話さないことにいら立ち、彼女の将来の勉学について決められるよう

に、もっと話し合いに参加してほしいと思っている。

(4) ジムは日本人が好きではなく、オーストラリアの学生に卒業後の仕事を紹介する方を好

でいる。