Beyond Folklorama: A Mixed-Methods Phenomenological Study on the Intercultural Competence of Preservice Teachers

By

Melissa Goulbourne

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Department of Educational Administration, Foundations, and Psychology
University of Manitoba
Winnipeg

Abstract

While Manitoba has made significant inroads in educational reform, the overall design and practice of education in the Province is still largely skewed toward a Eurocentric ideal. One of the factors contributing to this situation is the unpreparedness of prospective teachers to fully recognize and embrace the diversity present in their classrooms. This study used a mixed-methods approach, comprising surveys and interviews, to determine the characteristics that underlie the intercultural competence of a subset of preservice teachers. Ten (n=10) preservice teachers, recruited from a mandatory cross-cultural education course, were surveyed and/or interviewed to determine their thoughts, behaviours, and attitudes towards people from different cultures. Data collected during the first phase was assessed to uncover features of their intercultural sensitivity. Information gathered from follow-up face-to-face phenomenological interviews illuminated details of their lived-experience of intercultural competence. Findings revealed that the preservice teachers share ten characteristics of intercultural competence: *self-esteem*, *open-mindedness*, *empathy*, *non-judgment*, *self-monitoring*, *interaction involvement*, *perception*, *self-awareness*, *curiosity*, and *self-confidence*. Data gleaned from this investigation may be used by preservice, novice, and experienced teachers, as well as faculty and administrators of teacher education to reform the design and practice of multicultural education in grade school and higher education.

Acknowledgments

Before I introduce my study, I just want to take a moment to acknowledge the “village” of people who have supported me along this intellectually and spiritually enriching journey. Over the past five years I have developed a deeper, richer understanding of myself as a person through analysis of my various strengths and weaknesses as a researcher, writer, and student. To Marlene, Yatta, and Robert, my thesis advisory committee, words cannot express how grateful I am to each of you for holding my hand and never letting me go astray. Thank you for encouraging me to think critically, to be considerate of my words, and consciously aware of my actions. To my family and friends, thank you for putting up with my various shades of grey. More importantly, thank you for accompanying me along this journey and for showering me with extraordinary love along the way. There is no time to address each of you individually by name in this brief passage, but know that you mean the world to me and that I’ll cherish you always.

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Glossary of Terms

Being-in-the-world: As referring to human existence; described as the way human beings exist, act, or are involved in the world (van Manen, 1990).

Blame the victim (victim blaming): Assigning personal fault to the person harmed or mistreated in a wrongful act.

Culture: The discrete qualities, behaviours, and perspectives of a community or social group as exhibited at a specific period.

Cultural plunge: Immersion into a culturally distinct society marked by differences in language, ethnicity, race, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, and physical abilities.

Culturally relevant or **responsive pedagogy**: Integrating the cultural knowledge, experiences, perspectives, and learning styles of ethnically diverse students into teaching and learning activities.

Cult of multiculturalism: A phrase coined by author Neil Bissoondath in his book, *Selling Illusions: The Cult of Multiculturalism in Canada*. It is used to describe the idolization of culture by mainstream media and educational and political institutions.

Cultural otherness: Evaluating a person based on markers of their cultural identity (often external) that differ from one's own.

(Critical) multicultural education: A transformative educational approach focused on equality, inclusion, and empowerment.

Descriptive phenomenology: A phenomenological approach focused on the narrative descriptions of a phenomenological experience.

Eidetic intuition: Intuitive insight into the essential nature of a phenomenon.

Epoché: The process of bracketing one's subjective thoughts and opinions on a particular phenomenon.

Ethnocentrism: A psychological disposition that often leads to a lack of acceptance of cultural diversity and general intolerance for cultural groups other than one's own (Dong, Day, and Collaco, 2008).

Ethnorelativism: An integrated or global mindset in which value and behavioural differences are perceived as cultural rather than universal.

Exoticization: Romanticizing distinct elements of a certain culture.

Global village: A term popularized by Marshall McLuhan (1964) in his book of the same name (e.g., *A Global Village),* which is used to characterize the interconnection of the world through globalization and technology.

Hermeneutic (interpretive) phenomenology: A phenomenological approach focused on the interpretation of a phenomenon.

Human condition: The essential qualities of life shared by all people.

Inclusive teaching: A distinct teaching technique used to integrate culturally relevant pedagogy within the classroom. Here *inclusion* is used to refer to a unique way of thinking and acting that allows all individuals to feel accepted, valued, and safe (MERN, 2013).

Intentionality of consciousness: The direction of one's consciousness towards an object or event.

Intercultural competence: The behaviour, attitude, and knowledge required to communicate appropriately and effectively with members of other cultures.

Interculturalism: An alternative model of cultural integration that emphasizes meaningful cross-cultural dialogue and exchange.

Institutional racism: Sets of social practices that are institutionally based, and which make reference to invidious distinctions based on physical or genetic criteria (Satzewich, 2000).

Lived-world: An individual's pre-reflective experiences of a phenomenon.

Multiculturalism: An ideology, policy, and process referring to the social reality of cultural diversity.

Phenomenological attitude: A mindset assumed by the phenomenological researcher that enables them to operate at a scientific level of analysis (Giorgi, 2009).

Phenomenological reduction: The process of reducing the objects of consciousness into meaningful units of analysis.

Pivotal interface: The point at which qualitative and quantitative data collection methods combine in a mixed-method study.

Professional development landscapes: A phrase used to refer to the interaction of teachers' lives within the classroom and their lives in other professional spaces (Schuerholz-Lehr, 2007)

Objective reality: The physical reality of objects that exist independent of our minds.

Small-scaled action research: A situationally based study that is limited in scope and specifically designed to resolve an immediate issue.

Teaching for diversity: An educational concept popularized by author Benedicta Egbo in her book, *Teaching for Diversity* (2008) advocating for greater awareness and understanding of the diversity within society, and support for the achievement of social justice for all groups and people.

Teacher self-efficacy: A teacher's inherent belief in their skills and ability to organize and execute a specific teaching task.

Vicarious learning: The process of learning through observation of the experiences of others.

Chapter 1
Introduction

Long before I could fully describe my **ethnic culture,** I knew that it was different from that of most of my friends, and I realized that my parents' customs and traditions were distinct from other families, especially those I would regularly watch on TV. While it is embarrassing to admit this as an adult, as a child I was frequently angry and ashamed of my ethnic differences, especially when they were ridiculed by my peers. I was also frequently disappointed by my teachers, particularly those who turned a blind eye to the bullying I openly endured in their classrooms and who, despite my obvious struggles with a difficult concept or idea, did not come to my immediate aid. I internalized many of these experiences as a child and secretly resented my visible cultural differences.

There were many more times, however, where I felt an immense sense of pride in my ethnic heritage, particularly during Folklorama when it was readily put on display. For those unaware, Folkloroma is a long-standing multicultural festival held in Manitoba each summer that signifies the Province's commitment to diversity. It stands as a symbol of our community's progressive political ideals and respect for ethnic diversity. To say that Folklorama is not political would be to deny its past, which is incidentally tied to the government's adoption of multiculturalism as an official federal policy (Ujimoto, 2000). Like most people in Manitoba, I was unconcerned with its politicized roots, enamoured as I was with its flurry of lights, tastes, and sounds. For me, Folklorama represented the gateway to the unknown peoples, cultures, and places of the world. At first, I was enthralled by its music and artistry, though in time my curiosity demanded much more than what soon resembled little more than a manufactured showcase of choreographed song and dance.

In hindsight, I see now that it was not so much that Folkorama had changed than it was me who had outgrown the experience. Through travel, my cultural interests broadened and matured beyond the limits of Folkorama, and once I had acquired an authentic taste of culture, nothing else could compare. However, I realize that I am probably more critical than most people and, to be fair, the intent behind Folklorama is quite noble and admirable, albeit limited. I simply struggle to move past its superficiality in order to fully appreciate the social gesture that it represents. And perhaps that is my biggest issue, that is, Folkorama should strive to represent much more than a symbolic gesture of cultural inclusivity. Given its incredibly large platform, Folklorama has the potential to effect real, sustainable change to how culture and diversity are treated and perceived in Manitoba and beyond. I only wonder why it so seldom aspires to do just that. The truth is, Folklorama and the growing **cult of multiculturalism** (Bissoondath, 1994) rarely succeed in elevating culture beyond the base appetites of the masses despite their overwhelmingly good intentions (Gorski, 2006; Gorski, 2008)

In many fundamental ways, Folklorama is not unlike the contentious practice of **multicultural education** (Banks, 2008; Buckner, 1993; Egbo, 2009; Gorski, 2006), also criticized for its tokenism or perfunctory effort towards, for example, recognizing the distinct needs of Canada's Indigenous population (Egbo, 2009; Frideres, 2008; Lawrence & Dua, 2005; Légaré, 1995). Multicultural education is also glaringly weak in its portrayal of the complexities of culture and startlingly apolitical in its tone against the institutional structures of inequality (Gorski, 2008; Fleras & Elliot, 1996), which is why as educators we must try to move beyond its traditional approach.

While revolutionary in intent, the current practice of multicultural education is caught in a state of purgatory (Locke, 2009; Hill-Jackson, 2007), beholden to a past that stymies its future

progress. In my opinion, we will only be able to move forward as a Canadian nation, as educators, and administrators by fully divesting ourselves of Folklorama-esque interpretations of multicultural education. In so doing, we will be in a position to support efforts truly inspired by fairness, understanding, and acceptance of culturally, ethnically, and linguistically diverse people (Egbo, 2009; Banks, 1995; Banks, 2001; Banks, 2008). These types of educational initiatives should be steered by an authentic desire to confront the systems in place that delimit the boundaries of marginal cultural groups and sustains the power of a select few.

Among the most unexpected outcomes of the **hidden curriculum** in schools is the bullying and discrimination that so often accompanies its supposed delivery. In my experience, there were very few teachers during my adolescence who were adequately prepared to address the cultural issues present in their classrooms, whether due to lack of experience, a general unwillingness to unlearn their implicit biases, or effective professional development. There was no immediate conduit to cultures outside the mainstream, so most individuals who grew up in my generation were blissfully unaware of the differences that are often celebrated today. Despite the changing social climate, cultural ignorance continues to inspire fear leading to the discrimination of students from marginalized cultural backgrounds.

Research Problem: Multicultural Education – Beyond Rhetoric to Practice

In advocating for greater awareness and intimacy in our cross-cultural interactions, I contend that there is a legitimate need for Canadian educators, primarily those employed in public schools, to move beyond unsophisticated portrayals of minority cultures that do more to divide the children in their classrooms than they do to unite them. For it to be effective, multicultural education must delve beyond the surface of overt manifestations of culture and probe into the forces of power that hold systemic discrimination in place (Gorski, 2008; Gorski,

2010). While this, no doubt, requires a transformation in the way that education has historically been conceived, it is also largely dependent on the teacher and their particular approach to cultural diversity.

I am less critical of the theory of multicultural education than I am its North American practice, which is not insignificantly dependent on a number of critical factors – the least of which being the intercultural skillset of teachers. While meaningful and immensely relevant, the policies and practices of multicultural education are immaterial if not fully supported by those on the frontlines of change, namely our teachers. For this reason, I have focused my analysis of teacher education on the emerging multicultural self-identity of prospective teachers (Giroux, 2004; Hoffmann, 1996; Kim, 2008; Sanderson, 2008). This identity is defined by an individual's **intercultural competence**, a confluence of skills needed to **teach for diversity** (Egbo, 2009)**.** By tackling the highly nuanced subject of intercultural competence in this study, I hope to bring awareness to its dimensionality and impact on the preparedness and efficacy of preservice teachers.

Various studies suggest that a significant number of teacher education programs in North America are comprised of student populations that are predominately Caucasian, female, and middle class (Barnes, 2006; Carr, Pluim, & Howard, 2014; Childs & Ferguson, 2013; Cho, 2010; Cho, 2014; Cho & DeCatro-Ambrosetti, 2006; Egbo, 2011; Garmon, 2004; Guo, 2015; Hill-Jackson, 2007; Locke, 2005; Lund & Car, 2011; Siwatu. 2011; Sleeter, 2001; Sleeter, 2011) despite the ever-shifting demographic profile of Canadian public schools (Manitoba Immigration Facts, 2012; MERN, 2013; Ujimoto, 2000). If current trends remain the same, better efforts must be made to ensure that this critical segment of prospective teachers possess the requisite experience and abilities to teach students from culturally diverse backgrounds.

Canadian educators should be taught to embrace change, to accommodate for difference, and to become critically aware of how agency unfolds within a variety of cultural spaces structured within unequal relations of power (Giroux, 2004). Strategies and programs should aim to build a more **inclusive teaching** force that is supportive of equity and diversity in instruction and classroom practice. Yet, this alone will not guarantee educational reform. Studies focused on the correlation between intercultural competence and effective multicultural instruction (i.e., Agee, 2004; Athanases & De Oliveira, 2008; Cho, 2010; Hermann-Wilmarth, 2010; Ladson-Billings, 2000) substantiate the notion that multicultural coursework itself is not the only determinant of an educator's ability to teach cross-culturally. While commendable, the current buffet of multicultural policy offerings is insubstantial if not fully sampled from by those for whom these policies have been designed, which is a significant public and administrative concern not easily remedied through education policy, irrespective of its intent.

This study is driven by a clear and present need in Manitoba for the adoption of a culturally sensitive pedagogical model and educators receptive and prepared to see to its successful implementation. While education is vital to social reform, it is not the sole avenue. As has been illustrated through study, in order for an individual to mature into an effective multicultural teacher they must develop and ultimately possess intercultural competence (Agee, 2004; Barnes, 2006; Dalhousie & Walker-Dalhousie, 2006; Friesen, 2012; Hill-Jackson, 2007; Olsen & Kroger, 2001; Peebles & Mendaglio, 2014; Sleeter & Owor, 2011).

Cultural competence underscores the practice of **culturally responsive teaching**, an aptitude developed through tireless adaptations to one's self, mind, and behaviour (Chen & Starosta, 1996; Chen & Starosta, 2000; Bennett M., 1993; Bennett, M., 2004; Bennett, J., 1993; Giroux, 2004; Kim, 2009; Sanderson, 2008). While a great deal has been made of intercultural

competence and its significance to multicultural education reform, not much has been said of its actual occurrence, at least not in terms that can be practically applied. This study attempts to fill this void by delineating the essential characteristics of interculturally competent teachers that should be identified and nurtured throughout teacher professional training and development.

Theoretical Orientation

My understanding of the research problem is born from my perception of multicultural education and the corresponding concept of culturally responsive teaching. In this study, I endorse a practice of multicultural education that is critical in orientation and grounded in equity, equality, and social justice (Banks, 2001; Banks, 2004; Banks, 2008). It is embodied in the teaching practices of culturally responsive teachers, who through cultural competence are able to integrate their students' unique cultural perspectives and experiences into the design and delivery of culturally appropriate instruction.

Banks' (2001) five dimensions of multicultural education foregrounds this report and serves as the theoretical base from which the concepts of culturally responsive teaching and intercultural competence are discussed and analyzed. The five dimensions of Banks' model used to conceptualize, organize, and select the literature for review in this study are: 1) Content integration; 2) Knowledge construction; 3) Prejudice reduction; 4) Equity pedagogy; and 5) Empowering school culture, and while each dimension is conceived in different terms, in reality, they are interrelated and dependent on each other.

For Banks, multicultural education progresses linearly through a series of increasingly complex stages beginning with the integration of culturally relevant content into the curriculum and ending with efforts to restructure and reform the school's culture to maximize the academic success of cultural minority students (Banks, 1995; Banks, 2008). The first dimension, *content*

integration, focuses exclusively on curriculum reform, which was the main impetus for the emergence of the multicultural education movement in the US and Canada during the late 1960s and 70s (Banks, 2004). Content integration is primarily focused on infusing ethnic and cultural content into curricula, whereas *knowledge construction* – the second stage of Banks' model – is centred on helping students deconstruct the implicit meanings and assumptions behind broadly accepted words and concepts. The *prejudice reduction* dimension of multicultural education is expressly designed to eradicate students' preconceptions and misunderstandings of race, ethnicity, and culture, as well as prepare them to advance to the next stage of their multicultural teaching practice, namely *equity pedagogy*. Equity pedagogy exists when teachers transform the way their instruction is delivered to students from marginalized cultural backgrounds, leading to greater respect and understanding of diverse cultural viewpoints, experiences, and abilities. The final dimension of Banks' model is focused entirely on *empowering the school culture* by interrogating the systems in place that delimit the academic success and mobility of cultural minority students.

The realization of all five dimensions of Banks' model leads to the adoption of culturally responsive pedagogy by teachers and academic administrators (Gay, 2000; Gay, 2002; Ladson-Billings, 1995; Ladson-Billings, 2000). Culturally responsive teaching is an expression of multicultural education and enacts the reform goals of critical multicultural education (Vavrus, 2008). The main principles underlying the practice of culturally responsive teaching (CRT) are: 1) Academic achievement; 2) Cultural competence; and, 3) Sociopolitical consciousness. This student-centred framework celebrates the 'exceptionalism' of culturally diverse students and encourages teachers to respect the strengths of the human diversity present in their contemporary classrooms. By holding all students to the same academic standards, promoting cultural

competence among all students, and inspiring students to develop a critical consciousness of their sociopolitical surroundings (Ladson-Billings, 1995), culturally responsive teachers create an atmosphere of inclusion and foster an environment where diverse ideas, values, and perspectives are recognized, welcomed, and respected.

Culturally responsive pedagogy relies on the effectiveness of the school's administration to transform the school culture by initiating changes to the curriculum, teaching materials, and the teaching and learning styles of experienced and novice teachers (Gay, 2000). Teachers must also be willing and able to tailor their teaching methods to their students' unique cultural backgrounds to ensure their success. Research suggests that teachers can improve the academic achievement of their students when they are knowledgeable about their students' cultures, are sensitive to their frames of reference and learning styles, and skilled at integrating their prior cultural experiences into the classroom (Bennett, 2012; Gay, 2000; Ladson-Billings, 1995; Ladson-Billings, 2000; Sleeter, 2001; Sleeter, 2011; Siwatu, 2011).

Culturally responsive teachers embrace a mindset to support diversity and incorporate culturally appropriate content and instructional methods into their practice. The mindset adopted by culturally responsive teachers is tied to their cultural competence, or ability to communicate appropriately and effectively with students from different cultures. Research suggests that interculturally competent teachers are more inclined to experience success and promote social engagement in their classrooms (Gay, 2000; Ladson-Billings, 1995; Ladson-Billings, 2000). While intercultural competence is a nebulous concept, various scholars agree that it is cultivated through lived intercultural experience and comprised of a set of distinct attitudes, behaviours, and opinions that allow certain individuals to interact successfully with people from different cultures (Deardorff, 2006; Bennett, 1993; Chen, 1996; Fantini, 2000; Hammer, 2012).

The conceptual model used to describe and analyze the phenomenon of intercultural competence in this study is conceived by Chen & Starosta (1996) and consists of three distinct, yet overlapping dimensions: intercultural awareness, intercultural sensitivity, and intercultural adroitness. *Intercultural awareness* represents the cognitive process of intercultural competence and is developed through the acquisition of culture-specific information and sociolinguistic awareness. *Intercultural sensitivity* relates to a person's emotional response before, during, and after intercultural interactions (Chen & Starosta, 1997), while *intercultural adroitness* – the behavioural dimension of intercultural competence – emphasizes the behaviours required to attain communication goals in intercultural interactions.

The figure below illustrates the conceptual framework of this study. It is indicative of my interpretation of the theories underpinning the practice of multicultural education within transformative school-based environments.

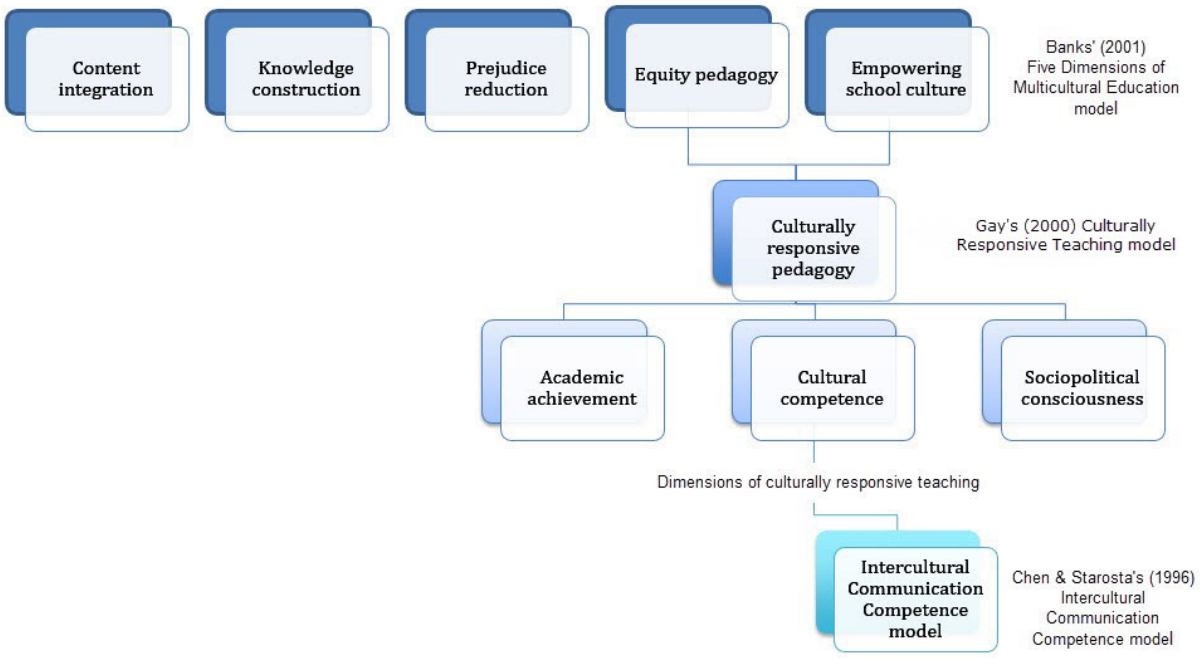

Figure 1 – Conceptual framework of multicultural education

As depicted in this illustration, within this framework are nested models that intersect in a number of key ways and are realized in the culturally responsive teaching practices of interculturally competent teachers. The next section further elaborates on the theories that underpin this study on preservice teacher attitudes and identity development.

Multicultural Education: Objectives and Failings

Education is not a neutral social zone. Institutions of learning represent the political playground of various social actors frequently interacting, debating, and deliberating on the state of multicultural education (Banks, 2008; Gay, 2002; Gorski, 2008). The result of which has been the steady presentation of a fixed menu of European heritage programs and courses that are largely incompatible with the diverse needs of minority students in Canada (Battiste, 2002). Among the many arguments raised against traditional forms of education is that it is liable for producing and reinforcing the social construct of race, therefore privileging Eurocentric teaching and learning methodologies above the educational needs of visible minority students (Banks, 2008; Egbo, 2009; Frideres, 2008; Gorski, 2010). Those critical of this approach analyze the oppressive foundations upon which education is erected and serves to maintain the status quo, often to the detriment of those marginalized due to race, ethnicity, class, gender, religion, language, ability and/or sexual orientation (Dervin, 2010; Gorski, 2008; Gorski, 2010).

Multicultural education is conceived as an antidote to Western knowledge paradigms which oppress rather than liberate, conceal rather than disclose, and veil rather than illuminate the operation of distinct power and privilege inherent in contemporary society (Egbo, 2009; Banks, 2008). It is also distinguishable from the concept of multiculturalism, in theory, practice, and process (Banks, 1993; Banks, 1995; Banks, 2001; Egbo, 2009). Multicultural education necessitates a commitment to issues of social justice, education equity, critical pedagogy, and an

unwavering dedication to the provision of educational experiences that are inclusive of all learners' needs and priorities if there is to be change (Gorski, 2008).

Multicultural education also centres on the development of one's multicultural 'self' through meaningful cross-cultural communication and curricula designed to eradicate cultural stereotypes and enlarge students' cultural perspectives (Banks, 1995; Banks, 2001; Egbo, 2009). It is a form of educational reform designed to manage and accommodate the diversity present in today's classroom (Banks, 2008; Egbo, 2009). Through effective design and implementation, multicultural education helps minority students carve out a critical niche in which to promote their cultural and ethnic differences while engaging in discourse and action to transform a wider civic culture (Banks, 2001).

This reserved third or multicultural space allows students to illuminate their unique knowledge, histories, and perspectives to liberate themselves and a new generation of learners from the oppressive influence of Western education on minority cultures. This practice also provides cultural minority students with the opportunity to introduce an alternative form of knowledge production and dissemination to their non-ethnic counterparts, potentially leading to the adoption of a more inclusive model of education (MERN, 2013). James Banks, one of the most prominent figures in the field of multicultural education, describes his educational paradigm as an enhanced model of citizenship education whereby students acquire a delicate balance of cultural, national, and global identifications that enable them to understand the unique ways in which knowledge is constructed, produced, and demonstrated in civic action to create a more humane and equitable world (Banks, 2001).

In his five-dimensional model of multicultural education described in the previous section, Banks delineates a typology designed to help practitioners identify and formulate

reforms that implement multicultural education in thoughtful, creative, and effective ways (Banks, 1995). Banks envisions multicultural education as consisting of five highly interrelated, overlapping components ranging from content integration to equity pedagogy that serve as benchmark criteria for conceptualizing, developing, and assessing theory, research, and practice in the field (Banks, 1995).

Despite its notable strengths, in Canada, multicultural education has been criticized for failing to engender the 'spirit of nationhood' through its exoticization of cultural differences and affirmation of a monocultural educational paradigm that is notably Anglo/Franco-centric in nature (Egbo, 2009; Banks, 2008; Gorski, 2006). For this reason, multicultural education is commonly viewed as ineffective and dismissive of the distinct needs and interests of Canada's Aboriginals and their right to establish and control their education according to Indigenous epistemology (Frideres, 2008; Lawrence & Dua, 2005; Légaré, 1995; Egbo, 2009). Furthermore, multicultural education has been criticized for not providing sufficient epistemological space for minority cultural groups to share their unique cultural perspectives, values, and traditions.

There is a clear and present need to move beyond the superficiality of prescriptive forms of multicultural education, which largely dismiss the social realities of minority students and prioritize the values and traditions of the mainstream. While for some the issues of social injustice, discrimination, racialized discourse, and cultural stereotyping are concepts cursorily discussed in textbooks or classroom lectures, for the vast majority of immigrant and Indigenous students these subjects represent obstacles to their social and economic development. Reform in the conception, practice, and administration of education is needed to remediate the problems experienced by minority students and to help bridge the academic achievement gap that exists

between marginalized students and those belonging to the mainstream (Gorski, 2006; Gorski, 2008).

Given the increasing numbers of culturally and linguistically diverse students in contemporary Canadian classrooms, it is no longer justifiable or humane to continue to consign their values, traditions, and customs to the dustbin of history. In this globalized age, multicultural education must evolve beyond exoticizing the realities of cultural minority students for it to be perceived as more than a special interest course or dedicated unit in cultural studies. Fortunately over the last ten years teacher education programs across the country have moved away from superficial forms of multicultural education to decidedly more critical approaches to preservice teacher preparation (Carr, Pluim & Howard, 2014; Childs & Ferguson, 2013; Guo, 2015; Joshee, Peck, Thompson, Chareka, Sears, 2016; Lund & Lee, 2015; Memon, 2013; Stegemann, 2013). Multicultural education should no longer be viewed as assimilative or incompatible with the instruction of other academic specialities.

Contemporary models of multicultural education advanced in Canada and the US are integrative, anti-racist, and critical of the nuanced ways in which power and privilege are expressed in society. For instance, Nadeem Memon (2013) outlines four inclusive educational practices that have recently been initiated across various Canadian faculties of education that are designed to broaden preservice teachers' awareness and appreciation of cultural diversity. The recent trend toward inclusive and equity-based teacher education has lead to refinements in admission standards, the infusion of Indigenous perspectives into instruction, and the integration of experiential learning opportunities into mandatory coursework for preservice teachers (Memon, 2013; Stegemann, 2013).

Culturally Responsive Teaching: Multicultural Education Redefined

In the early 1990s, author Gloria Ladson-Billings introduced a pedagogical model oriented in transformative praxis, and grounded in the fourth and fifth dimensions of Banks' model of multicultural education; respectively, an *equity pedagogy* and *empowering school culture* (Banks, 1996; Banks, 2008: Egbo, 2009) – refer to Figure 1 on page 9 for more details. Culturally responsive teaching is based on the concept of multicultural education and situates learning in the lived experiences of cultural minority students. Underlying the concept of culturally responsive teaching is the assumption that knowledge is activated and elaborated on when rooted in students' distinct lived cultural realities, underscoring its transformative potential (Gay, 2002).

Culturally responsive teaching is defined by its intent to capitalize on the cultural characteristics, experiences, and perspectives of diverse students and engage them as catalysts for more effective teaching and learning (Ladson-Billings, 2000; Gay, 2002). In this progressive educational model, culture is viewed as existing beyond race and ethnicity. Culture here is defined as a dynamic, social, and historically situated pattern of shared beliefs, values, and meanings, which inform educators about their learners and their thoughts (Kanu, 2011). The key to successfully tapping into a student's culture and engaging it as an instrument of social transformation rests in the hands of teachers. Culturally responsive teaching is as much about multiculturalizing the content as it is about employing multicultural instructional strategies (Gay, 2002; Ladson-Billings, 2000).

Canadian educators should be taught to embrace change, to accommodate difference, and to develop a critical awareness of how agency unfolds within a variety of cultural spaces structured within unequal relationships of power (Giroux, 2004). The adoption of a culturally

appropriate and integrative educational model must also involve recognition and appreciation of cultural differences; this is the only way in which to wed traditional and multicultural educational practices. However, in reality, few universities and colleges are especially eager to stray too far beyond the norm in order to embrace a progressive educational model despite the ever-present need in society to do so (Egbo, 2009; Banks, 2008).

Driven by fear and fuelled by epistemic ignorance, many educational institutions are hesitant to fully embrace a model so divergent in principle and practice (Frideres, 2008). Moreover, given the multicultural context of Canadian society, some educators express veiled resentment and resistance to the inclusion of multicultural content in the standard curriculum presented to students (Egbo, 2011; Guo, 2015; Lund & Lee, 2015;). These individuals are able to justify their sentiments by calling into fact the underlying principles supporting the concept of multiculturalism, namely the equal representation of all Canadian citizens (Ujimoto, 2000). Other educators may lack the confidence or self-efficacy to marry their practice with the theories learned and acknowledged in university or professional development multicultural programs (Siwatu, 2007; Siwatu, 2011).

Given the centrality of transformation to a critical pedagogical educational approach, educators adopting such a philosophy must ensure that the education they provide in their classrooms is student-centred, inclusive, praxis-oriented, critical, and engaging of the needs and differing perspectives of all students (Egbo, 2009). Pedagogical models must, therefore, be designed to reflect the educator's emerging insights and aptitude towards multicultural education in order to inspire the change that is so critical to the transformation of society and self (Gorski, 2010).

Various factors have been identified as being critical to the developing cultural awareness and sensitivity of teachers, several of which are dispositional in nature including: an openness to diversity, empathy, growing self-awareness/self reflectiveness, and a commitment to social justice (Deardorff, 2006; Forlin, et al., 2009; Garmon, 2004; McAlister & Irvine, 2002). The merits of integrating a cultural dimension into traditional educational models are many. Among the most commonly cited advantages of culturally responsive teaching is that it: enhances student engagement and motivation by illuminating the histories and cultural experiences of marginalized learners; facilitates the development of the skills required to effectively compete and function in today's globalized world; promotes recognition and acceptance of other cultures; and, provides an avenue for self-reflection and personal development (Banks, 2008; Egbo, 2009; Gorski, 2008; McAllister & Irvine, 2000).

Educators lacking a critical self-awareness of the prevailing assumptions of culture, self, identity, and diversity will be unable to redress issues of social inequality and discrimination in their classrooms (Friesen, 2012). Preparing teachers to become effective conduits of transformation is no small feat, and requires an infrastructure of support that actively encourages educators to cultivate an adaptable, tolerant, flexible, and impartial learning environment (Friesen, 2012; Guo et al., 2010; Sanderson, 2008). For practicing teachers, administrators must be committed to providing relevant professional development programs which bring awareness to issues commonly faced by ethnically diverse students, and which inspire them to evaluate their inherent prejudices as they seek to define 'self' in a multicultural context (Sanderson, 2008; Stegemann, 2011).

Teacher preparation or professional development programs such as those offered by universities and colleges should also be devoted to multiculturalism by offering content to

practicing or preservice teachers that inspires them to re-evaluate their thoughts on issues surrounding race, ethnicity, culture, religion and so forth (Garmon, 2004; Gorski, 2006; Gorski, 2008; McAllister & Irvine, 2000; Sleeter, 2001). Faculties of education are increasingly cultivating spaces for teacher educators and preservice students to meet and exchange ideas, attitudes, and impressions on culture and diversity (Memon, 2011). Teacher-educators should continue to restructure their courses to fit within a paradigm that promotes the development of the skills required to effectively teach for diversity (Banks, 2008; Egbo, 2009). To effectively meet the challenges present in today's multicultural classrooms, faculties of education must continue to support initiatives designed to transform the school culture and the multicultural teacher identity of existing and prospective teachers (Banks, 2008).

Conceptual Framework of Intercultural Competence

In multicultural societies such as Canada, intercultural competence is instrumental to national accord and the fair and equitable representation of the views and interests of all members (Gorski, 2006). Competence is achieved by moving beyond tolerance – or the superficial recognition of personal differences – to acceptance, adaptation, and integration of the cultural diversity that has come to define Canada's national identity (Bennett, M., 1993; Bennett & Bennett, 2004; Buckner, 1993; Fleras & Eliot, 1996). For over two decades, the concept of **interculturalism** has challenged the contentious notion of multiculturalism, a subject that has pervaded public discourse since its inception. Interculturalism represents an alternative model of cultural integration in which dialogue and exchange supplant cultural dilution and denigration, and harmony is achieved over dissent.

For teachers to exist and function as effective agents of change in culturally diverse school settings, they must possess a certain skillset; a confluence of behaviours, attitudes, and opinions that direct a person to think and act in interculturally appropriate ways (J. Bennett,

1993; M. Bennett, 1993; Bennett & Bennett, 2004; Deardorff, 2006; Hammer, Bennett & Wiseman, 2003; Paige, 1993). For the sake of simplicity, intercultural competence is presented in this study as a complex of abilities (developed affectively, behaviorally, and cognitively) required to efficiently and appropriately interact with people from divergent cultural and linguistic backgrounds (Sinicrope, Norris, & Watanabe, 2007).

Although the concept of intercultural competence is somewhat nebulous, there is a great deal of consensus on its major constituents (J. Bennett, 2009; M. Bennett, 2003; Chen & Starosta, 1996; Deardorff, 2006; Fantini, 2000; Sinicrope, Norris & Watanabe, 2007). That is, intercultural competence is most often viewed as an umbrella concept that comprises a particular set of cognitive, affective, and behavioural skills and personal characteristics that support effective and appropriate cross-cultural communication (Chen & Starosta, 2000; Bennett, 2009). While many scholars and researchers of intercultural competence agree upon three separate dimensions of intercultural competence, they are divided on their definitions and assessment (Chen & Starosta, 2000; Deardorff, 2006).

To overcome this issue and provide conceptual clarity on the dimensions of intercultural competence, this study views *intercultural sensitivity* as belonging to the affective domain, *intercultural awareness* the cognitive, and, *intercultural adroitness* as corresponding to the behavioural domain of intercultural competence (Chen & Starosta, 1996). This study is based on Chen and Starosta's model of *Intercultural Communication Competence*, hereby presented as an equilateral triangle constructed by three separate, yet interrelated dimensions of intercultural competence. The three constructs of intercultural competence carry equal weight and value, are mutually dependent, and provide a comprehensive portrait of the phenomenon (Chen & Starosta, 1996; Chen & Starosta, 2000).

As depicted in the following image (see Figure 2), five complementary abilities: (a) interaction engagement, (b) respect for cultural diversity (c) interaction confidence (d) interaction enjoyment, and (e) interaction attentiveness define intercultural competence. *Interaction engagement* is expressed by a person's willingness to participate in intercultural interactions, which is separate from their *interaction attentiveness*, or effort to understand the subtle nuances between cultures during intercultural interaction. *Respect for cultural diversity* refers to a person's orientation to different cultural opinions and values, which corresponds directly to their *interaction enjoyment*, or positive interactions with people from different cultures. Lastly, *interaction confidence* is exhibited during intercultural encounters and enhances a person's enjoyment of and respect for cultural diversity.

Each dimension of intercultural competence is composed of different characteristics, which determine how it is reflected and assessed. For instance, Chen and Starosta (1997) identify six affective traits that characterize the dimension of intercultural sensitivity, specifically *self-esteem*, *self-monitoring*, *open-mindedness*, *empathy*, *interaction involvement*, and *suspending judgment*.

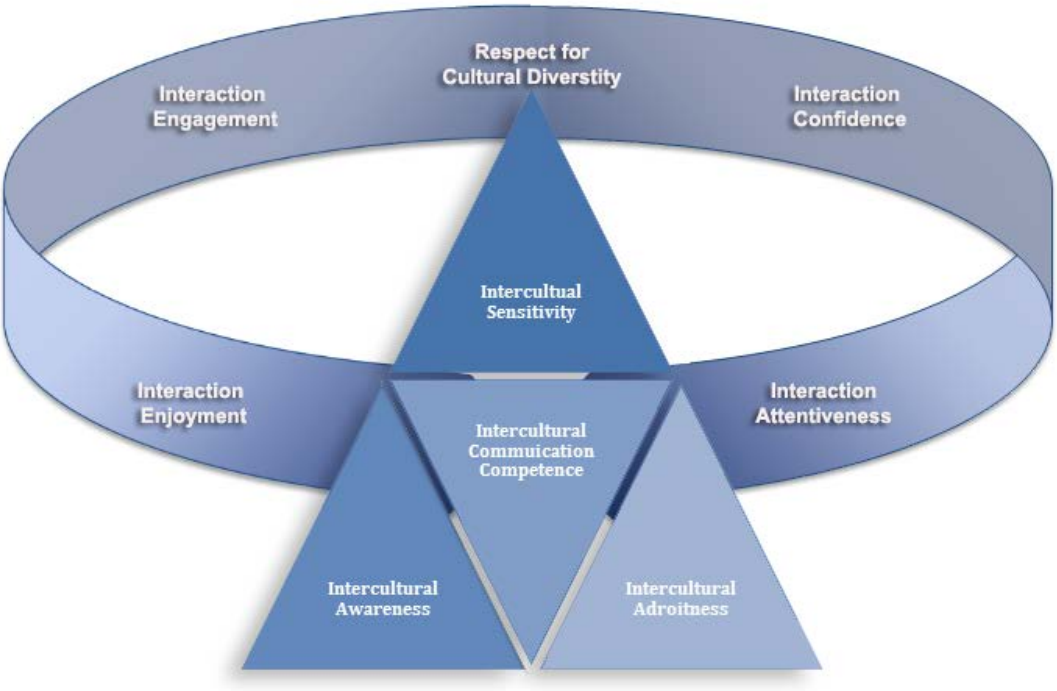

Figure 2 – Chen and Starosta's Intercultural Communication Competence Model (ICC)

Chen and Starosta's model of *Intercultural Communication Competence* is based on Milton Bennett's *Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity* (DMIS), whereby intercultural sensitivity is theorized as a six-stage developmental process occurring along a continuum of increasingly sophisticated levels of intercultural competence (Bennett J., 1993; Bennett M., 1993; Bennett M., 2004; Hammer, Bennett & Wiseman, 2003; Olsen & Kroeger, 2001; Sinicrope et al, 2007; Spitzberg et. al; 2009). The DMIS specifically identifies denial, defense, reversal, minimization, acceptance, adaptation, and integration as the primary stages through which an individual transforms their conscious awareness of other cultures.

In this widely accepted model of intercultural competence, an individual's cultural sensitivity is defined by their level of **ethnocentrism,** or belief in the superiority of one's own culture, or by their **ethnorelativism –** an integrated cultural worldview. The first three stages of Bennett's model (e.g. denial, defense, and minimization) illustrate the ethnocentric stages of

intercultural competence. Individuals oriented to one of these stages are typically reluctant to embrace alternative cultural points of view and struggle to embrace other cultures. As a person advances along Bennett's imagined continuum, they develop the ability to perceive various cultural values and accept behaviours that are observably different than their own. Those who are able to reach the highest level of intercultural competence (e.g. integration) are concerned with the construction of an intercultural identity that translates into the development of intercultural competence (Hammer, 2012).

While Chen and Starosta's model of *Intercultural Communication Competence* is informed by Bennett's representation of intercultural competence, it is not as universally recognized and accepted given its conceptual flaws (Chen et al., 2000; Fritz et al., 2002; Fritz et al., 2005; Spinthourakis et al., 2009; Tamam, 2010). For example, the literature reviewed for this study does not explicitly indicate the specific strategies that should be employed in teacher education and training contexts to ensure that a certain level of competence is achieved. Moreover, the authors of the ICC are unclear on how intercultural competence develops. That is, Chen and Starosta's model is based on the presumption that an individual's situational and environmental factors determine their orientation on the continuous spectrum of intercultural growth and development. Here an individual's progression is not evaluated by their completion of a series of predefined developmental steps, but rather by assessment of the extent to which they understand, feel, and behave towards different cultures.

Despite its conceptual flaws, Chen and Starosta's *Intercultural Communication Competence* model is unique in its observation of the dynamic between emotions, thoughts, and behaviour, and the role that each plays in the overall development of intercultural competence. Rather than to reduce intercultural competence to one's ability to think and act in interculturally

appropriate ways (Hammer, Bennett & Wiseman, 2003; Sinicrope et al., 2007), Chen and Starosta have constructed a more comprehensive approach that delves beyond the surface of observable facts (i.e., knowing and doing) to include a third dimension from which to observe competence (i.e., feeling). Those possessing an *intercultural mindset* and *skillset* (Bennett M., & Bennett, J., 2004), as envisioned by Chen and Starosta, have perfected the trinity of thought, emotion, and behaviour deemed critical to the genesis of intercultural competence. For this reason, as well as for its recognition of each dimensional aspect of intercultural competence, Chen and Starosta's model has been selected as the theoretical basis of this investigation.

Assuming that multicultural programming is not the only contributing factor of competence, what other aspects should be considered when assessing the intercultural abilities of prospective teachers? To date, research conducted on this subject reveals that intercultural exposure gained through personal experience (Schuerholz-Lehr, 2007; Peng, 2009, Garmon, 2004; Forlin, Loreman, Sharma, Earle, 2009; Locke, 2005) fieldwork and/or study abroad (Bodycott and Walker, 2000; Sample, 2012; Rundstrom Williams, 2005; Bennett, 2012) is instrumental in preparing effective cross-cultural teachers. Previous studies also suggest that the personal characteristics and backgrounds of preservice teachers significantly influence their attitudes, behaviours, and perception of cultural minority students (McAlister & Irvine, 2002; Garmon, 2004). While this undertaking contributes to a widening body of research focused on the development of intercultural competence among preservice teachers, it differs somewhat in approach from the majority of inquiries that chronicle the development of a singular aspect of competence.

Shortcomings of Current Research

Given that intercultural competence is realized through the fusion of thought, emotion, and behaviour, there is a deficiency in current literature such that it fails to adequately explore the interconnectedness of each of these three dimensions. In response to this shortcoming, I will examine the multi-dimensional characteristics of intercultural competence with the view to evaluate how the 'whole' person responds to cultural diversity, as well as the personal and behavioural adaptations conceptualized to teach linguistically and culturally diverse students in contemporary Canadian classrooms.

I have adopted a mixed-methods phenomenological approach to analyze the essential structure of intercultural competence with the goal of understanding how each of its dimensions contributes to the development of one's multicultural teaching self. In my literature review, I observed a paucity of research in which a mixed-methods approach was used to investigate the impact of intercultural competence on the design and implementation of multicultural education and culturally relevant teaching. An overwhelming number of the studies reviewed were **small-scaled action research** reports (Sleeter, 2001; Sleeter, 2012) driven exclusively by quantitative or qualitative methods.

Seldom in the studies did researchers assume a more holistic approach involving in-depth analysis of data obtained from a variety of sources (e.g. interviews, surveys, observations) despite the potential benefits of combining multiple methods within a single study. There are a number of justified reasons to mix alternative methodologies in a study such as to: strengthen the validity of data, minimize bias and inherent weaknesses, enhance findings, analyze different perspectives, and enlarge the scope of research (Mayoh & Onwuegbuzie, 2008). I have purposely employed a mixed-methods approach to this study of intercultural competence since it

compliments, substantiates, and enhances the findings obtained from the implementation of each research approach while explicating the essential qualities of the phenomenon.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this mixed-method phenomenological study was to discover the essential characteristics of intercultural competence as exhibited by a cohort of preservice teachers enrolled in a university-level multicultural course. Through phenomenological semi-structured interviews and descriptive surveys, I explored the preservice teachers' attitudes, behaviours, and thoughts towards multicultural education, interculturalism, and teacher education.

This study fits into a distinct category of teacher education research centred on preservice teacher identity development (Sleeter, 2014). It arises from a need to recruit and prepare a new wave of teachers for culturally relevant pedagogy, one of the more salient goals of **critical multicultural education**. The concept is predicated on teachers' commitment to diversity and inclusion, as well as their capacity to interact meaningfully with culturally diverse students. I argue that exceptional multicultural teachers are not born overnight, but acquire the ability to think and behave as intercultural beings through cultural experience developed over an expanse of time.

Due to the demographic reality of Canadian classrooms, it is no longer feasible to deny the existence of race or class differences in our society. Manitoba's classrooms are fantastic portraits of the reality of multiculturalism; brilliant assortments of colours and shapes representative of the diversity inherent in society (Ujimoto, 2000). It is all the more tragic that so few teachers are equipped to appropriately address the distinct and varying needs of their culturally and ethnically diverse students. As an ethnic and cultural minority and a by-product of Manitoba's public school system, I can personally attest to the pressures experienced by minority students to conform to the ideal, prevailing notion of culture espoused in political discourse and

celebrated through popular culture. I am all too familiar with feeling inferior, frustrated, and silenced by teachers and peers who elected to remain ignorant of my identity rather than to embrace it. With this, I have designed this study for all students – past and present – who are also the recipients of culturally insensitive and inappropriate educational policies and practices. It is my hope that through dialogue and further insight we will be able to redesign education and redefine the role of teachers as effective agents of social change.

This study satisfies a need for further understanding of the phenomenon of intercultural competence and the perspectives and dispositions of pre- and in-service teachers towards cultural diversity. It is predicated on the assumption that preservice teachers' exposure to critical pedagogical content focused on diversity, social justice, and transformation, as well as intercultural experience are crucial factors in the development of intercultural competence. It is largely informed by a need in Manitoba for a culturally sensitive pedagogical model and educators versed in the language and abilities to see to its implementation within public schools and other academic institutions.

Research Questions

No journey may be completed without a guide and in many significant ways research questions influence the direction and scope of an assignment. The research questions designed for this study initiated the process of inquiry and dictated how my research would proceed. The principal objectives of this investigation were two-fold: first to determine the incidence of intercultural competence (evidenced through verification of intercultural sensitivity) and, second to explore the nature of its occurrence. To achieve this end, the following questions were explored to determine how a select group of students enrolled in teacher education experience the phenomenon of intercultural competence.

1. To what extent are preservice teachers interculturally sensitive?
2. What is the essence of their lived experience of intercultural competence?

Significance of Findings

This undertaking has been specifically developed for students, faculty, and administrators of teacher education programs, as well as for future researchers in the emergent fields of intercultural competence and critical multicultural education. In determining the intercultural competence of preservice teachers, I am able to showcase the fundamental aspects of one's personality that prepares them to effectively teach in culturally diverse settings. Identification and recognition of these characteristics will allow policymakers and educational administrators to target their policies and programs to those possessing the required skills to effectively teach for diversity, and are therefore receptive to its aims. Furthermore, this investigation is useful to existing and prospective teachers such that it highlights the attributes that must be developed and supported through multicultural teacher education and teacher professional development. By understanding deficiencies in our institutional supports and ourselves we are able to demand more from our administrators regarding the quality and appropriateness of the education they provide to reinforce our personal and professional development goals.

Chapter Summary

In this chapter, I established the context in which education for diversity has emerged as a viable alternative to the Eurocentric model that has been firmly enmeshed within Canadian primary and secondary educational institutions for decades as part of a pre-multicultural citizenship policy. I opened this chapter by introducing the problem that foregrounds my research, namely the negligible impact of multicultural education on student outcomes and intergroup relations. As described in the preceding pages, traditional approaches to multicultural education have generally failed to advance its social justice aims due to their ill-conceived design

and implementation. The theoretical framework that underlies this study supports a substantially more critical approach to multicultural education that is especially suited for teachers who possess the skillset required to facilitate culturally responsive teaching.

Despite its growing popularity in the field of education, intercultural competence is a fairly nebulous concept, specifically regarding how it is defined and evaluated. To overcome this ambiguity, in this study I evaluated the essential characteristics of intercultural competence as exemplified by a select group of preservice teachers. The results of this report may be used to support further research on teacher identity development and multicultural programming for prospective and existing teachers, incidentally subjects that are addressed in the literature reviewed in the next chapter.

Chapter 2
Literature Review

Various trends are responsible for transforming our world into a **global village** (McLuhan, 1964), such as: technology development, globalization, immigration, and multiculturalism (Chen & Starosta, 1996). As societies become more diverse and individuals are better able to articulate their unique roles as global citizens and not merely residents of country 'X' or 'Y', there is a greater need to support and guide those on the frontlines of change (Bennett S., 2012). In educational settings, these key agents of reform are invariably teachers. In our globally interdependent world, it is imperative that educators are equipped with the requisite skills and abilities to work effectively and sensitively with students from cultural backgrounds dissimilar to their own. The importance of educators being conversant in intercultural issues and having the ability to introduce and implement culturally responsive teaching practices into their multi-cultural, multi-ethnic classrooms has never been more salient (Banks, 2008; Bennett S, 2012; Egbo, 2009; Friesen, 2012).

While it is true that fairness and objectivity should permeate all aspects of public service, the harrowing reality is that they often do not. Instead, the needs and priorities of minority cultures are often marginalized, their voices silenced in public discourse on issues involving their healthcare or educational needs (Frideres, 2000). Teaching for diversity is integral to human and social development in this globalized era, and has become a key item on the political and economic agendas of government and educational administrators in recent years (Banks, 2008; Egbo, 2009; Gay, 2002). Yet, despite notable advances in education reform, a number of studies reviewed in this chapter suggest that prospective teachers do not feel particularly confident in their abilities to fully implement multicultural content and teaching strategies in their diverse classrooms due to insufficient preparation and cross-cultural experience (Barnes, 2006; Bennett,

S., 2012; Egbo, Locke, 2005; Lund & Lee, 2015; Siwatu, 2011; Sleeter, 2001; Sleeter, 2011; Walker-Dalhouse & Dalhouse, 2006).

It is also revealed in a significant number of studies that candidates entering the teaching profession are hesitant, disinterested, and/or unmotivated to extend their limited understanding of cultural diversity beyond coursework, or have acquired negligible intercultural experience in their personal lives (Cho G. & DeCastro & Ambrosetti, 2005; Cho C. & Tersigni, 2014; Garmon, 2004; Hill-Jackson, 2007; Locke, 2005; Peebles & Mendaglio, 2014). These results highlight a pervasive issue with education in Canada, problems pointing to insufficient teacher preparation and a largely culturally intolerant teaching staff. Findings from such studies destabilize widespread myths that essentially **blame to the victim** (e.g. minority students) for their comparatively low academic achievement and attrition rates (Asanova, 2008; Abada, Hou, Rams, 2009; Childs & Ferguson, 2013; Dei, 2015; Gay, 2002; Hernstein & Murray, 1994; Ladson-Billings, 2000; Memon, 2013). In their reluctance and willful ignorance of cultural minority students, a substantial number of new and existing teachers unwittingly help extend the academic achievement gap between marginalized students and those belonging to the cultural 'mainstream' (Bennett, 2012; Ladson-Billings, 2000; Gay, 2002).

In recent years, growing interest in the characteristics of successful multicultural teachers has stimulated a modest rise in the number of small-scaled investigations designed to analyze the relationship between preservice teachers' personal backgrounds, dispositions, and intercultural competence. While not all teachers are born equal in character or skill, the population of most teacher education programs is remarkably uniform in age, gender, and socio-economic status despite the heterogeneous configuration of contemporary Canadian classrooms (Cho C. & Tersigni, 2014; Egbo, 2011; Guo, 2015; Joshee et al., 2016; Lund et al., 2015). Thus, there is a

definitive need to implement changes to teacher education to inspire and motivate a future generation of teachers who will embrace the tenets of critical multicultural education (Banks, 2001; Egbo, 2009; Banks, 2001). As per the research, preservice teachers require a radicalized form of multicultural education programming that includes meaningful cultural exchange, structured learning experiences, culturally literate instructors, and curricula designed to challenge preconceived notions and cultural biases (Sleeter, 2011).

To a large extent, teacher-educators are responsible for preparing preservice teachers to effectively teach for diversity such that they are responsible for ensuring that multicultural programming enhances their students' consciousness of diversity, supports experiential learning opportunities, and facilitates the development of self-efficacy for culturally responsive teaching (Siwatu, 2007; Siwatu, 2011). However, as elucidated in the research, faculty is frequently restrained in their approach to multicultural education, often only skimming the surface of contemporary sociopolitical issues in their instruction due to limitations in their own knowledge and experiences with diversity (Bodycott & Walker, 2010; Lee Olson & Kroeger, 2001; McAllister & Jordan Irvine, 2000; Rundstrom Williams, 2005) Thus, in evaluating the impact of education on the development of intercultural competence among preservice teachers, one must also address the corresponding need for culturally competent faculty to facilitate the process of change.

In this chapter I present two major themes uncovered in my review of previous research. The studies explored herein belong to a distinct category of teacher education research designed to interrogate the impact of multicultural teacher education on the intercultural sensibilities of teachers, primarily those who are preservice. My interest in the relationship between equity education and developing critical consciousness informed my selection and ensuing analysis of

previous research. Consequently, this review includes only those studies that are believed to illuminate the impact of multicultural education, cross-cultural experience, and disposition on the cultivation of culturally responsive teaching practices. Subsequent themes emerged through rigorous comparative analysis, and are categorized based on similarities observed between each study's research objective and design.

Description of Previous Research

Before I proceed to a thematic review of the literature, I feel it is necessary to pause here to briefly describe the procedure for selection, as well as to highlight general features of the research which grounds my analysis.

Search Procedures

In an effort to establish a strong foundation from which to assess intercultural competence, I examined forty research articles retrieved from over a dozen scholarly journals housed in four different online databases: Education Resources Information Centre (ERIC), EBSCO, JSTOR and ProQuest. I used the following keywords to streamline my search: *intercultural sensitivity, intercultural sensitivity and preservice teachers, intercultural competence, intercultural competence and teacher education, multicultural teacher education, culturally relevant (responsive) teaching and/or pedagogy*. Through this process I uncovered various investigations that explored the intercultural literacy of prospective, new, and existing grade school teachers. Literacy here was appraised through analysis of the effectiveness of teacher education, sociocultural background, and intercultural experience on the development of intercultural competence.

In an effort to pare down the results of my search and maintain the currency of my research, only reports published from 2000 onwards were examined. Of the thirty-six journal

articles originally selected, only sixteen were retained based on their appropriateness to this study. I then selected twenty-four additional articles by examining the reference sections of each report that was read in the previous stage. The vast majority of these articles involved preservice teachers, though there were several occasions where I intentionally chose reports focused on faculty development given the influential role teacher-educators play in the academic lives of their students. Lastly, while most reports were written for international audiences, in several key instances the studies selected were better suited for those residing in the US or Canada.

Research Designs

Ultimately the scope and methodology of each study was defined by its primary objective and research questions. On the whole, researchers were interested in evaluating teachers' receptivity towards multicultural education (or a variant thereof), their preparedness to teach cross-culturally, and their biographical predispositions towards diversity. Questions were designed to explore relationships between variables, or to interrogate the incidence of a phenomenon, specifically intercultural competence. In all cases, the locus of evaluation (i.e., teachers) and situational context (i.e., higher education) remained the same.

Quantitative research questions varied according to methodology, as well as method of investigative analysis. Studies were mainly concerned with the extent to which students' perspectives, behaviors, or attitudes towards diversity were predictive following an educational intervention such as coursework or study abroad (Chen, 2010; Cho G. & DeCastro-Ambrosetti, 2005; Dong, Day & Collaco, 2008; Forlin, Loreman, Sharma & Earle, 2009; Fritz, Graf, Hentze, Mollenberg & Chen, 2005; Hill-Jackson, 2007; Lee Olson & Kroeger, 2001; Locke, 2009; Peng, 2009; Rundstrom Williams, 2005; Siwatu, 2007; Sleeter, 2001; Sleeter & Owuor, 2011; Sleeter, 2014; Spinthourakis, Karatzia-Stavlioti & Roussakis, 2009; Walker-Dalhouse & Dalhouse,

2006). Findings were based on numerical data, which were statistically analyzed and employed to substantiate the existence and measurability of intercultural competence as an outcome of multicultural teacher education. Unfortunately, studies of this nature seldom explored more than one aspect of intercultural competence, ultimately diminishing the concept's utility and depth.

Conversely, the qualitative studies reviewed (Agee, 2004; Athanases & De Oliveira, 2008; Barnes, 2006; Bennett S., 2012; Bodycott & Walker, 2000; Carr et al., 2014; Childs et al., 2013; Cho C., 2010; Cho C. & Tesigni, 2014; Friesen, 2012; Garmon, 2004; Guo, 2015; Hermann-Wilmarth, 2010; Locke, 2005; Lund et al., 2015; McAllister & Jordan Irvine, 2002; McNeal, 2005; Memon, 2013; Peebles & Mendaglio, 2014; Schuerholz-Lehr, 2007; Solomon, Portelli, Daniel, & Campbell, 2005; Stegemann, 2013) probed beyond the measured sensitivities of prospective teachers, exploring additional features of intercultural competence through investigation of the behavior and opinions expressed by prospective teachers towards multicultural education or diversity. To determine the impact of previous education, personal experience, and demographic background on the intercultural competence of preservice teachers, researchers employed qualitative research methods such as interviews and focus groups to uncover participants' sensibilities towards cultural diversity. While studies utilizing a qualitative approach were more holistic and comprehensive in nature, the addition of a quantitative method of analysis would have enhanced their generalizability to larger populations and contexts.

Of the forty reports retained for this analysis, only three utilized a blended (mixed-methods) approach to investigate the emergence of intercultural competence (Barnes, 2006; Sample, 2012; Siwatu, 2011). In these instances, data was collected through administration of pre- and post-tests, classroom observations, and interviews, as well as through assessment of coursework provided to preservice teachers, consisting of narratives, presentations, and journal

entries. Though limited in application, mixed-methods studies combine quantitative and qualitative techniques to fully capture the essence of cultural competence.

It is unfortunate that there is a paucity of research of this class in the field of intercultural competence; a fact not taken lightly by those who argue against the proliferation of far less robust and credible investigative methods (Deardorff, 2006). Following my extensive review of the literature, I agree that multiple investigative methods should be used in all instances, since it is through this enlarged lens that the phenomenon of intercultural competence is best observed and analyzed. For this reason I have employed both quantitative and qualitative techniques in my research to fully gauge the extent to which preservice teachers' possess the characteristics to effectively teach in multicultural classrooms.

The remainder of this chapter is devoted to a discussion of the major themes identified in my review of previous research. These themes, when integrated, showcase the dynamism and complexity of intercultural competence as a theoretical concept, perceptive reality, and emergent skillset shared among pre- and in-service teachers.

Studies Focusing on the Efficacy of Teacher Education

Canadian public schools are in the midst of an ideological and administrative crisis unbeknownst to most consumers who have come to expect certain assurances from education. Disproportionate numbers of children from ethnically and culturally diverse backgrounds are regularly marginalized in classrooms designed for inclusion, as illuminated in the research. In contemporary society, students from minority socio-cultural backgrounds are derided by low academic achievement rates for which they are often directly blamed. Several studies report that preservice teachers hold negative perceptions and low expectations for the academic performance of marginalized students even after successful completion of multicultural

coursework (Cho C. & Tesigni, 2014; Barnes, 2006; Hill-Jackson, 2007; Locke, 2005; Peebles & Mendaglio, 2014; Solomon et al., 2005). The findings described in existing research also overwhelmingly point to deficiencies within teacher education, emanating from the administrative level and trickling down to faculty and students alike (Friesen, 2012; Sleeter, 2001).

The literature reviewed in this section is primarily focused on preservice teachers' preparedness to teach in multi-cultural, multi-ethnic classroom settings. A prominent issue highlighted in the research concerns the conception of multicultural education in teacher education, and its superficial integration within the program's traditional structure (Cho, 2010; Egbo, 2011; Sample, 2013; Sleeter, 2001; Sleeter & Owuor, 2011; Walker-Dalhouse & Dalhouse, 2006). For instance, in her meta-analysis of preservice teacher education strategies, Christine Sleeter suggested that in the majority of cases, multicultural education was insufficiently infused throughout the program's breadth (Sleeter, 2001). In fact, multicultural education is often delivered as a compulsory course in cultural studies, rather than as a progressive, inclusive educational model developed to elevate students' multicultural awareness and classroom teaching skills (Walker-Dalhouse & Dalhouse, 2006). Most reports associate the failure of multicultural education to appropriately resonate with students with its inability to disrupt their perceptions of the social constructs of race and ethnicity that delimit minority student development (Barnes, 2006; Ladson-Billings, 2000; Sleeter & Owuor, 2011). In the absence of a model that can effectively challenge the prevailing ideals and practices of Eurocentricism will undoubtedly continue to proliferate given its large-scaled adoption by a predominately Caucasian teaching staff.

In teacher education research, multicultural education is commonly portrayed as monocultural in emphasis and passive in tone (Barnes, 2006; Carr et al., 2014; Cho C. & Tersigni, 2014; Cho C., 2014; Egbo, 2011; Hill-Jackson, 2007; McAllister & Irvine, 2002; Sleeter, 2001; Sleeter & Owuor, 2011; Walker-Dalhouse & Dalhouse, 2006). Many scholars attribute this passivity to the disparate number of Caucasian, female, middle-class students enrolled in educational programs across the North American landscape (Barnes, 2006; Cho, 2010; Guo, 2015; Hill-Jackson, 2007; Memon, 2013; Sleeter, 2001; Sleeter & Owuor, 2011; Walker-Dalhouse & Dalhouse, 2006), which is a trend that is forecast to continue into the foreseeable future (McAlister & Irvine, 2002). Accordingly, there is a general plea to reform the conceptualization and practice of multicultural education to ensure that it provokes cultural dissonance and self-reflection among preservice teachers (Bennett, 2012; Sample, 2012). Furthermore, there is a greater need for instructional design that compels prospective teachers to reconsider the nature of their privilege and the institutions that constrain equality and social justice for marginalized students (Banks; 2008; Egbo, 2009; Gay, 2002; Ladson-Billings, 2000).

The purpose and goal of multicultural education in Canada should be revolutionary and comprehensive, showcasing the needs of individuals across the entire spectrum of human diversity so as to stimulate the sensibilities required to effectively serve minority and under-privileged students (Bennett, 2012; Hermann-Wilmarth, 2010; Sleeter & Owuor, 2011). Yet, despite the mandatory diversity requirements of most teacher education programs across the country, the vast majority of preservice teachers are ignorant of the myriad ways in which racism is embedded within Western knowledge paradigms, and how this action perpetuates disparities in the distribution of educational resources (Sleeter & Owuor, 2011; Solomon et al., 2005).

Most researchers agree that a singular course in multicultural education is simply not enough to reverse the social order, or to create a sustainable impact on preservice teachers' cognitive or behavioral predilections, particularly if these beliefs are entrenched (Bennett, 2012; Ladson-Billings, 2000; Sleeter, 2001; Walker-Dalhouse & Dalhouse, 2006). In fact, the majority of research that I investigated suggests that teacher education programs should include several courses that address issues such as discrimination, racism, or oppression so as to expand students' professional and personal perceptions, and to cultivate their culturally responsive teaching self-efficacy beliefs (Siwatu, 2006).

In his mixed-methods investigation of the self-efficacy beliefs of preservice teachers, Siwatu utilized the *culturally responsive teaching self-efficacy scale* (Siwatu, 2006) to uncover their beliefs towards teaching in cross-cultural settings. This information was later used to explore the situational learning experiences that had the greatest impact on their culturally responsive teaching skills (Siwatu, 2011). Based on the results of his study, Siwatu concluded that when self-efficacy building activities are firmly enmeshed within teacher education, preservice teachers are far more likely to develop a multicultural mindset and embrace culturally responsive teaching opportunities.

Failure to suitably integrate multicultural education into teacher education creates certain cognitive and behavioral deficiencies that prevent preservice teachers from responding appropriately to their students' diverse learning needs. A significant number of students enrolled in teacher education hold biased, stereotypical opinions that must be remediated through tactfully designed curricular interventions (Bennett, 2012; Dalhouse & Dalhouse, 2006; Sample, 2013). However, when implemented haphazardly or without care, multicultural education fails to significantly alter their appreciation of diversity (Bennett, 2012; McNeal, 2005; Sample, 2013;

Sleeter & Owuor, 2011). Moreover, in several instances, multicultural education may actually strengthen inherent prejudices and discriminatory behavior if the progress of preservice teachers is left unattended, or not monitored regularly by supervising instructors (Barnes, 2006; Bennett, 2012; McAllister & Irvine, 2001).

McAllister and Irvine (2001) found this to be the case in their analysis on empathy among student teachers. In their research, they uncovered the harmful consequences of improperly designed multicultural instruction. In this example, a poorly executed cultural immersion program engendered feelings of anxiety and frustration among students, and was largely experienced as a **cultural plunge** which reinforced stereotypes rather than providing an opportunity to break or shift them. In their report, McAllister and Irvine highlight the need to fashion and deliver multicultural education with great care and incredible prudence as education of this type often represents the only source of hope for a crucial segment of children from diverse cultural backgrounds.

In recent years, several scholars have come to embrace the concept of culturally responsive pedagogy, viewing it as a viable means of educational reform realized through transformation of ‘self’ and institutional structure. A number of reports examined in this literature review support the adoption of culturally responsive teaching practices by novice and seasoned teachers (Barnes, 2006; Bennett, 2013; Sample, 2013; Siwatu, 2007; Siwatu, 2011). In the study that launched the advent of culturally relevant teaching, Gloria Ladson-Billings (2000) suggested three common beliefs and practices shared by successful teachers of African-American students: academic achievement, cultural competence, and sociopolitical critique. Culturally relevant teaching is a developing pedagogy of hope, predicated on the precepts of

social justice (Gay, 2002), and structured by concepts and theories designed to elevate teachers' awareness and appreciation of diversity.

While culturally relevant teaching presents a compelling alternative to traditional pedagogical practice, for it to be effective, it must extend beyond theory to practice. Culturally relevant teaching is ambitious, inspirational, and sorely required in today's globalized environment, and yet a number of preservice teachers dilute its impact by viewing it solely as an abstract, theoretical process (Barnes, 2006). Short of meaningful, educative real-life experiences to shift their cultural frames of reference, many of these preservice teachers will never come to fully appreciate the potential of culturally responsive pedagogy. As a consequence, several researchers advocate for a significantly less theoretical approach to multicultural teacher education (Sleeter, 2011). For instance Siwatu (2011) contends that mastery and **vicarious learning** opportunities are instrumental in the development of **teacher self-efficacy** and should therefore be embedded within multicultural instruction for preservice teachers.

Research indicates that preservice teachers are often ambivalent about their ability to teach minority students, and their feelings of efficacy tend to decline in-service once faced with external pressure from the school, parents, and educational administrators (Agee, 2004; Sleeter, 2001). Structured fieldwork and study abroad provide considerable opportunities for prospective teachers to craft rich, textured cultural experiences that stimulate their sense of compassion and empathy for the defined social class positions of minority students (Lund et al., 2015). What is more, research suggests that due to its pragmatism, cultural immersion is far more effective in raising the cultural consciousness of preservice teachers than formal education is (Bennett, 2012; Sample, 2013; Sleeter & Owuor, 2011).

In their field assignments, preservice teachers represent key agents of change given their direct contact with students and the impact of this contact on their students' academic performance (Barnes, 2006). When armed with an enlightened mindset and the requisite skills to mobilize educational reform, preservice teachers can irrevocably alter the lives of their students, particularly those emanating from minority cultural and/or ethnic backgrounds. Field experience is proven to be the most effective avenue through which preservice teachers' behaviors and attitudes can successfully be transformed (Barnes, 2006; Bennett, 2012; Sample, 2012; Siwatu, 2006; Sleeter, 2001; Sleeter & Owuor, 2011; Walker-Dalhouse & Dalhouse, 2006; Williams, 2005).

Field experiences and cultural immersion are instrumental in dismantling the barriers that insulate preservice teachers from fully appreciating the struggles faced by minority students, particularly when delivered for longer than one semester (Peng, 2006; Rundstrom Williams, 2005). Through frequent cross-cultural contact preservice teachers come to identify the situational factors that undermine students' development and from this understanding are able to scaffold and individualize instruction to meet their needs (Bennett S., 2012). Bennett (2012) analyzed specific components of field experience that support the development of cultural responsiveness. In her qualitative investigation of eight preservice teachers' understandings of culturally responsive pedagogy, she discovered effective and ineffective facets of fieldwork that either enable or prevent students from acquiring a heightened sense of culture. Bennett also found that one-on-one student-teacher interactions and scaffolding critical reflection through questions and conversations contribute greatly to the development of preservice teachers' cultural competence. Understandably, limited student engagement and lack of explicit instruction

to tie theory to practice and/or guide students along the continuum of change are recognized as significant deterrents to the developmental process of preservice teachers.

Teacher-educators are instrumental in facilitating this process by acting as 'guides on the sides' who employ instruction and formative assessment to scaffold students' critical reflections on society and self. Faculty members adopting this approach serve as catalysts for preservice teachers' development by inspiring them to think and act with critical cultural consciousness and respect for diversity (Bennett S., 2012). This strategy is particularly useful when employed to capitalize on the benefits of fieldwork. Barnes' (2012) analysis of the culturally responsive teaching abilities of preservice teachers exemplifies the significance of multicultural education that adopts a self-reflective approach and uses structured fieldwork to enhance the teaching abilities of preservice teachers.

Barnes (2012) assessed the culturally responsive teaching abilities of 24 preservice teachers through analysis of coursework and field experience. The objective of fieldwork was based on the three critical dimensions of culturally responsive teaching: *academic achievement*, *cultural competence*, and *sociopolitical consciousness*. Findings from his study were positive, and revealed that preservice teachers had transformed their perspectives and expectations of minority students following fieldwork. Barnes study exemplifies the currency of multicultural education when theory is successfully wed to practice and preservice teachers exhibit the capacity to synchronize the various cultural styles of minority students so as to accommodate for their diverse learning needs (Walker-Dalhouse & Dalhouse, 2006).

Working and living in cross-cultural contexts is a process whereby personal growth is achieved through the tension between one's understanding of 'self' in relation to a culturally distinct 'other'. In the course of engaging with students from divergent cultures, preservice

teachers come to realize how certain facets of their identity have been shaped by their personal backgrounds and experiences, as well as by the normalizing ideals of Western culture (Bennett S., 2012). When placed outside the comforts of their natal home and forced to function in a culture whose language and ideals differ sharply from their own, most student-teachers are thwarted into an another realm of their existence. It is at this pivotal juncture that their cultural competence begins to emerge, as observed by Rundstrom-Williams (2005) in her study on the impact of overseas study on intercultural sensitivity. In her report, Rundstrom-Williams reveals that students enrolled in study abroad often display increases in their global mindset and intercultural communication skills when immersed in another culture for an extended period of time.

As they proceed through immersive cultural experiences, student-teachers should receive ample guidance on how to ameliorate their feelings of disjunction in order to prevent them from regressing to earlier states of indifference or cultural unconsciousness (Walker-Dalhouse & Dalhouse, 2006). Faculty is instrumental in preservice teachers' academic success and personal growth. Through artful instruction and mediated learning opportunities, teacher-educators are able to guide preservice teachers through the developmental process by offering them encouragement and feedback along the way. Just as with preservice teachers, faculty members succeed or fail based on the skills they bring to the classroom. To be successful conduits of multicultural education, faculty must also be knowledgeable on the content, open and empathetic to cultural differences, and committed to the delivery of instruction to culturally and linguistically diverse students.

As the internationalization efforts of universities and colleges across Canada continue to flourish and greater numbers of students relocate to work and live overseas, there is an increased

need for faculty to be cognizant of the varying cultural demands, perspectives, and abilities of domestic and international students. This is most true in education where faculty members are presented with the additional challenge of having to cultivate the cultural competencies of their students for instruction in their own international, multi-cultural, multi-ethnic classrooms. It is not uncommon when discussing the intercultural competence of faculty to acknowledge the efforts and receptivity of these individuals towards internationalization (Bodycott & Walker, 2010; Friesen, 2012; Lee Olson & Kroeger, 2001). Understanding the synchronicity and importance of intercultural and global competence to education, Lee Olson & Kroeger (2001) surveyed 52 university faculty members to assess the dynamic between international experience, global competency, and intercultural sensitivity. Findings from their study reveal that inclusive, globally-minded educators are those who are well travelled, proficient in another language, and versed in the skills and abilities to provide responsive, culturally appropriate education to their students. The problem is finding a way to provide these experiences to students enrolled in teacher education.

Faculty is instrumental to the internationalization process, as highlighted in Rhonda Freisen's study (2012) on the engagement of educators in the internationalization efforts of Canadian universities. Though differing from this study in conceptual focus and aim, Friesen's analysis shines a light on key areas of consideration for scholars in the field of multicultural education, particularly as relating to the role of faculty as agents of change within higher education. As Friesen astutely emphasizes throughout the text, faculty engagement is strongest when institutional and individual rationales collide. Administrators in the field of education would do well to focus on this fact when conceptualizing diversity requirements and

implementing strategies intended to assist teaching education faculty in valuing the importance of culturally responsive teaching practices and beliefs (Siwatu, 2011).

Studies Focusing on Preservice Teachers' Personal Backgrounds and Attitudes Towards Diversity

Despite the prevalence of research on the effectiveness of teacher education to prepare preservice teachers to teach in cross-cultural settings, education is not the sole determinant of one's ability. While it is true that education, to a certain extent, shapes one's identity, the currency of lived experience and personal background can never truly be diminished. This point is crystallized in Schuerholz-Lehr's (2007) study of the intricacies of biography, global awareness, and intercultural sensitivity on teacher development. This study represents a sharp movement away from those largely viewing education as the primary fulcrum of development. Here teachers are treated as 'historic beings' with definitive backgrounds and varied moral, social, intellectual, and emotional depth. Through exploration of these unique facets of human identity, educational researchers will be able to ascertain the cultural frames donned by educators within their **professional knowledge landscapes** and use this information to customize professional development initiatives for educators.

Education is the lifeblood of individual and social transformation, and formal learning can never truly displace knowledge attained through life experience. It is through the images, sounds, customs, traditions, and values rendered through life and its multitude of experiences that one's perception and disposition are genuinely shaped. Informal education is thus as great an influencer on human behavior and development as is formal learning. In his study on the perspectives of preservice teachers towards multicultural education, Locke (2005) argues that the backgrounds of student-teachers are more significant on their behaviors, attitudes, and perspectives than coursework or other formalized interventions. Findings from his study indicate

that preservice teachers' perspectives are coloured by their social and educational histories and critically informed by popular culture, specifically its portrayal of minority cultures in the media. Thus, students entering the venerable ivory tower do not do so as blank slates (Locke, 2005). Most preservice teachers possess a wealth of experiences formed throughout the trajectories of their lives. These incidents inevitably come to define their perspectives and behaviours towards all facets of human diversity.

As highlighted in the research, classroom exposure to the plight of minority students helps to hone the cultural awareness and sensitivities of preservice teachers, causing them to be more sympathetic and responsive to the diverse needs of their students (Chen, 2010; Cho G. & DeCastro-Ambrosetti, 2005; Fritz, Graf, Hentze & Mollenberg, 2005; Peng, 2006; Spinthourakis, Karatzia-Stavlioti & Roussakis, 2009). However, several studies report that a considerable proportion of preservice students are far more reluctant (post-training) to transform their initial attitudes and behaviours towards culturally diverse students, and therefore remain unresponsive or indifferent to multicultural education and culturally responsive teaching practices (Cho C. & Tersigni, 2014; Locke, 2005; Peebles & Mendaglio, 2014).

Given the significant number of Caucasian preservice teachers in education programs across the country, a tremendous amount of attention has been paid to their initial cultural attitudes and receptivity towards multicultural education. Several studies portray the majority of Caucasian preservice teachers as being culturally 'unconscious' and 'anesthetized' in their worldviews and perceptions towards diversity (Barnes, 2006; Hill-Jackson, 2007; Locke, 2005; McAllister & Jordan Irvine, 2002; Sample, 2013; Walker-Dalhouse & Dalhouse, 2006). Hill-Jackson (2007) traces the overt discriminatory attitudes and perspectives of preservice teachers to particular ideological entrenchments developed through education and personal experience. In

her study on the development of consciousness among preservice teachers, Hill-Jackson found that less than 1% of all student-teachers will be naturally drawn to elevated states of critical consciousness, and thus students in both the responsive and conscious multicultural perception stages represent our best hope for educational change and reform.

If it is true that education invokes the behavioral and cognitive aspects of intercultural competence, then empathy stimulates its affective domain. Empathy is a powerful human emotion that helps break down cultural barriers, thereby humanizing people across cultural barriers. While necessary, empathy is not a requirement of culturally responsive teaching, though it may very well be its most significant feature. Unsurprisingly, empathy is one of the most discussed traits of culturally competent and culturally relevant teachers. For instance, in their study on the role of empathy among teachers, McAllister and Jordan Irvine (2002) uncovered, through analysis of thirty-four practicing teachers, that empathy leads to greater interactions between minority students and their teachers, more supportive and collaborative classroom environments, and increased student-centred practices. Findings suggest that teacher education and professional development programs should be retrofit with new content, and instructional strategies should foster empathy, awareness, and support for students with diverse needs.

While empathy may represent the basis of intercultural sensitivity, fear represents its greatest obstacle. So much has been said about the cultural unresponsiveness and resistance of White preservice teachers towards diversity that the legitimate fears they face when teaching in multi-cultural, multi-ethnic contexts tends to be overlooked in research and discussions. Fear is a potent human emotion that obscures reality and disrupts personal development. Cho and Tersigni (2014) address the fear experienced by student-teachers in their examination of the reflections of preservice teachers following diversity coursework.

In this study, teacher candidates were presented with an assignment to teach one 40-minute anti-oppression lesson to elementary students where topics ranged from racism to homophobia. Fieldwork was completed in a predominately White setting, and the majority of preservice teachers expressed fear and discomfort in presenting material that could potentially disturb the delicate mindsets of their grade school students. The authors reveal that preservice teachers were notably worried about parental and institutional backlash that could threaten their placement and treatment within their programs. They were also impacted by their own positionality as some preservice teachers experienced a fair amount of guilt and shame when asked to examine their cultural competence and complicity in the mistreatment of minority cultures by the mainstream.

Preservice teachers' cultural awareness and sensitivities are grounded in their biographies, which play an instrumental role in their disposition towards the cultural diversity of their students. The dynamic relationship between experience and disposition is elucidated in Garmon's (2004) qualitative analysis of one preservice teacher's attitude and beliefs about diversity. In his study Garmon uncovered several dispositional and experiential factors proposed as crucial to the positive multicultural development of preservice teachers. Experiences gained through intercultural contact, education, or group interactions were especially pivotal to one's development, as were the personal characteristics of openness, self-awareness, self-reflectiveness and discipline. As proposed by Garmon and several of his contemporaries, administrators and faculty are responsible for developing programming wherein multicultural coursework is infused throughout various disciplines (Garmon, 2004; Sleeter & Owuor, 2011); is differentiated in tone and emphasis (Forlin, Loreman, Sharma & Earle, 2009; Peebles & Mendaglio, 2014); and, is targeted to the particular intercultural developmental stage of its students (Locke, 2005).

There is strong supporting evidence to suggest that certain demographic factors have a stronger influence than others on the attitudes and sensitivities of preservice teachers towards diversity, such as: race, age, and socioeconomic class. For instance, Forlin, Loreman, Sharma & Earle (2009) utilized an international dataset of 603 preservice teachers to uncover the impact of certain demographic variables on changes detected in their attitudes, sentiments, and concerns about inclusive education and its impact. The researchers found that the factors most influential in students' attitudes towards diversity were existing levels of qualifications, previous training, and teaching experience. These results are consistent with the findings of Spinthourakis, Karatzi-Stavlioti and Roussakis (2009) who note in their analysis that one's education attainment level and the adequacy of previous training strongly impacts their attitude towards diversity issues. A less direct relationship has been found to exist between the age, gender, and social class positions of preservice teachers and their attitudes towards cultural diversity and inclusiveness (Forlin, Loreman, Sharma & Earle, 2009; Schuerholz-Lehr, 2007; Spinthourakis, Karatzi-Stavlioti & Roussakis, 2009).

In addition to issues surrounding race and ethnicity, studies illustrate preservice teachers' resistance to discuss topics surrounding disability (Forlin, Loreman, Sharma & Earle, 2009), sexual orientation (Hermann-Wilmarth, 2010), and class (Cho & Tersigni, 2014). Researchers have proposed numerous strategies to reform the educational experience of prospective teachers so as to solidify their culturally responsive teaching practices and beliefs. However, education alone does not a good teacher make. For instance, in her examination of the shifting consciousness of preservice teachers, Hill-Jackson (2007) contends that not all teachers deserve a certificate, reasoning that blatant disregard for equity is tantamount to student neglect. Garmon (2004) extends this dialogue by pointing to the fact that students predisposed to negative cultural

and racial perceptions tend to be strengthened in their resolve against diversity following participation in multicultural education.

To ensure that the teaching force is staffed by individuals committed to accommodating the diverse needs of students from minority backgrounds, several authors propose changes to the recruitment and selection of teacher candidates (Cho 2010; Garmon, 2004; Sleeter, 2001). Two strategies have been specifically offered by researchers to alter the mix of who qualifies to become teachers. The first strategy involves admitting only those students displaying the experience, knowledge, and dispositions that will ensure their successful employment as culturally responsive teachers. The second strategy relates to the selection of students of colour due to their personal experience with discrimination (Cho C., 2010; Garmon, 2004).

Coincidentally, in recent years, faculties of education across Canada have increased the admission of students from culturally diverse backgrounds. For instance, the University of Manitoba's Faculty of Education has recently responded to the lack of diversity in the teaching profession by devising a new diversity admission policy that aims to admit up to 45% of students from five diversity categories (Janzen & Cranston, 2016). Correspondingly, Christine Cho (2010) reports on the 'record number' of immigrant teacher candidates currently enrolled in teacher education in a number of Ontario colleges and universities. In this particular example, immigrant students' distinct ideological and epistemic challenges were highlighted and discussed within the context of their cultural backgrounds and linguistic abilities.

Strengths and Limitations of Research

Strengths of Previous Research

In the teacher education research reviewed in this chapter intercultural competence is characterized as a veritable landmine of small-scaled research assignments focused on the impact

of university coursework and field level experience on the development of intercultural competence among preservice teachers (Chen, 1996). When viewed as a whole, the researchers paint a revealing portrait of teacher education, unearthing its frailties and contradictions through emphasis on its ability to remediate issues of human diversity. The majority of reports focus on cultural and ethnic differences, though much can be said of the preparedness of prospective teachers to work effectively with children of varied class, linguistic, sexual, and religious orientations. Researchers expertly capture and articulate strategies to meet the policy expectations of governmental and educational administrators. In fact, in one study the research is explicitly based on the policy guidelines of Ontario's Ministry of Education *Equity and Inclusive Education Strategy* (Cho, 2014).

Among the most prolific recommendations advanced by researchers is the infusion of multicultural content and instruction throughout the entire breadth of teacher education. This is generally viewed as a sustainable alternative to multicultural coursework, generally characterized as inefficient or tangential to improving student outcomes. In addition to classroom instruction, structured cultural immersion experiences are recognized as pivotal to the developing intercultural beliefs and practices of preservice teachers, especially those occurring over one academic term (Barnes, 2006; McAllister & Jordan Irvine, 2002; Peebles & Mendaglio, 2014). Despite the established impact of formal education on the intellectual competence of student-teachers, the research illuminates the equal significance of informal learning – achieved through life experience – on the embryonic and somewhat malleable cultural consciousness of preservice teachers. In these instances, solutions are offered to improve the quality of teacher education through targeted interventions and more discerning recruitment and selection processes.

Limitations of Previous Research

As should be evident from the above, the strengths of previous studies are numerous. Nonetheless, the research reviewed in this chapter highlight several inherent weaknesses in the literature, the most substantial being the relatively short timeframe in which most studies were designed. As per Sleeter (2001) research on preparing culturally competent and responsive teachers is disproportionately skewed towards small-scaled action research projects whose results are a) not easily generalizable to large academic audiences, and b) produce a somewhat disjointed and repetitious knowledge base (Sleeter, 2001). While I agree that the research continues to be predominated by studies that are narrow in scope and limited in time frame, I disagree that, as a whole, the literature presents a fragmented or incomplete portrait of multicultural teacher education. Despite their smaller scale, the studies reviewed in this chapter provide certain insights into the dispositional and situational factors that prevent a significant number of preservice teachers from feeling sufficiently prepared to teach in multicultural classrooms. Furthermore, studies of this nature contribute to a growing knowledge base on preservice teacher attitudes and identity development; a fact often downgraded or overlooked by critics.

Most scholars of multicultural education agree that teacher education research should be populated by large-scaled research assignments that follow graduates into the classroom, consistently monitoring their culturally responsive teaching skills and beliefs as they navigate the first few tumultuous years of practice (Agee, 2004; Athanases & De Oliveira, 2008; McNeal, 2005). It is also difficult to validate the sustaining impact of multicultural education in the absence of evidence that substantially links the cultural competence of faculty and teachers to their practice (Schuerholz-Lehr, 2007). Moreover, continued focus on the impact of limited

coursework and field-based experiences on preservice teachers' preparedness essentially stymies rather than accelerates further progress in the field. Long-term impact studies on the culturally responsive teaching practices of new teachers illuminates strategies for future practice and may be our greatest hope for educational reform. Ironically, while the research illuminates the 21st century need for culturally responsive teachers, it does not provide a validated repository of strategies and activities that may be successfully employed by new and existing teachers in their culturally diverse classrooms (Barnes, 2006; Sleeter & Owuor, 2011).

Incidentally, some of the problems reported above are also apparent in my analysis, and thus my assessment suffers from the same methodological concerns. For one, my study is small-scaled and restricts its investigative gaze to a local policy and practical social concern. Therefore, my findings may not be widely applicable to other jurisdictional contexts. Another issue is the relatively small timeframe in which my study was conducted given the need for more exhaustive analyses of the impact of teacher education on teaching practice and student learning (Sleeter, 2014). Nevertheless, if in my attempt I am able to inspire further critique or dialogue on the contemporary issues explored in my research I will be satisfied in knowing that it has stimulated discussion on a legitimate and pressing concern presently affecting the quality of education in Manitoba.

Lastly, there is a dearth of mixed-methods analyses on the intercultural competencies of preservice teachers despite the significance of these reports on our understanding of the skills required to successfully teach in multicultural classrooms. While the results of qualitative studies are generally viewed more favorably than findings obtained solely through quantitative measures owing to its depth and complexity, a combination of each research method is the most celebrated and agreed upon option. As reported earlier only three mixed-methods studies were uncovered in

my review, revealing shortcomings in the literature, as well as in the intercultural competence field. This has consequently prevented researchers from effectively capturing all dimensional aspects of intercultural competence, thereby diminishing our understanding of its essential features. Future researchers must take great care in developing a schema whereby the conceptual interpretation of intercultural competence may be successfully transformed into effective culturally responsive practice across large populations.

Chapter Summary

When viewed as a whole, a literature review is very much an anthology of texts written by academics from various intellectual disciplines. These texts showcase different facets of an emerging contemporary issue. In this particular example, the problem is housed within the field of education and primarily concerns the preparedness and suitability of prospective teachers to effectively teach for diversity. The research paints a troublesome picture of education in Canada, specifically as pertaining to inclusive and multicultural education. In this portrait, teachers – primarily characterized as Caucasian, middle-class and female – feel generally unprepared to teach minority students due to inadequate training or myriad inherited prejudices. While this study emphasizes ethnic and racial disparities, research indicates that the problems explored in this review extend to many more aspects of human diversity. In the next chapter, I examine the methodological approach used to analyze intercultural competence as justification for my ensuing assessment of the impact of education and intercultural experience on its development among preservice teachers.

Chapter 3
Methodology and Method

Few studies begin without a blueprint, a detailed outline of the process through which research will unfold, the principal subjects of investigation, and the data collection and analysis methods used to explore a contemporary research issue. This step is indispensable to a study and is largely grounded in a researcher's interpretation of reality as revealed in the design and execution of their investigation. A researcher's worldview is very much imprinted on their study as apparent in its general tone, structure, and mode of inquiry and analysis, which raises questions about the objectivity and neutrality of research.

While some assert that it is quite possible for a researcher to transcend their own subjectivities, others maintain that this is impossible given their personal motives for conducting a study in the first place (Mayoh & Onwuegbuzie, 2015). Often a researcher's thoughts are seamlessly integrated within the pages of reports through which their data and ideas converge. In this respect, you may view this study as the story of a phenomenon conceived in terms of the concept of intercultural competence. Logically, like any story, this narrative says as much about me as it does those who are studied. In myriad ways, this study is representative of my perspective on intercultural competence, and my personal understanding of the **human condition**, viewed here as the essential qualities and experiences that unite us all.

In this chapter, I present the methodology and methods used to describe the occurrence of intercultural competence as represented by the preservice teachers participating in this study. The selection of these individuals was based on their perceived awareness of other cultures due to their enrollment within a multicultural education course, as well as their residence within a cosmopolitan city. A mixed-methods phenomenological approach, comprising descriptive surveys and phenomenological interviews was used to uncover the essential characteristics of

intercultural competence through evaluation of the intercultural sensitivities and experiences of a subset of preservice teachers. In addition to detailing the methods used to examine their intercultural competence, I provide a brief introduction to the preservice teachers, outline the strategies used to validate the research findings, and describe the ethical issues that were considered when designing and conducting this investigation.

Intercultural sensitivity mediates which emotions invariably give way to our thoughts and behaviour towards our culturally distinct counterparts. Consequently, to determine the sentiments underlying their cultural sensitivities, Chen and Starosta's *Intercultural Sensitivity Scale* (ISS) was administered to the preservice teachers. The 24-item ISS was specifically designed by Chen and Starosta (2000) to capture an individual's "ability to develop a positive emotion towards understanding and appreciating cultural differences that promotes appropriate and effective behaviour in intercultural communication" (p. 4). The ISS is based on the authors' conceptualization of intercultural competence, particularly the dimension of intercultural sensitivity, which incorporates six characteristics believed to affect one's feelings towards cultural diversity: *self-esteem*, *self-monitoring*, *empathy*, *open-mindedness*, *non-judgment*, and *interaction involvement*. The results of this survey – employed to illuminate the preservice teachers' sensitivities to people from different cultures – bolstered the data collected from subsequent phenomenological interviews. Due to the semi-structured nature of interviews, I was able to extend the results of the survey through exploration of the preservice teachers' intercultural experiences and individual perspectives on cultural diversity.

Although it is reasonable to characterize this study as mixed-methods research, it is qualitatively driven insofar as its design and singular focus on the phenomenological aspects of intercultural competence. Appropriately, this chapter begins with an overview of the interpretive

framework used to ground the methodology and methods employed in this analysis of intercultural competence. Following this discussion, I will describe the mixed-methods approach used to gather, synthesize, and analyze data collected through surveys and interviews with the preservice teachers.

Overview of the Theory and Practice of Phenomenology

Canadian worldviews represent a confluence of the values, beliefs, and assumptions that underlie perceptions of reality, conceptions of self, and in many discrete ways, ensuing academic and professional aspirations. Take for example a researcher whose 'lifework' or academic expertise is inextricably bound to their core values. Such a person's perspectives and inherited assumptions undoubtedly inspire the choice of research questions that frame their study, or may influence the process through which their investigations unfold. Fundamentally, the theoretical framework used to situate a study and validate its results may reveal much about a researcher's interpretive bias, a perspective that has been cultivated throughout the course of their education and/or life.

Logically, what follows is a brief discussion of phenomenology as a research tradition and as a method adopted to explore and analyze the occurrence of a phenomenon. To distinguish between phenomenology as a philosophy and practice, I will begin the next section with an overview of its philosophical roots before describing its more recent research application. It is expected that this approach will make intelligible the somewhat perplexing subject of phenomenology.

The Historical and Philosophical Foundations of Phenomenology

Phenomenology is the study of experiences articulating as objects of human consciousness, where experience is presented as the fundamental source of human knowledge

(Creswell, 2013; Downing, 2005; Mayoh & Onwuegbuzie, 2015). Though generalized as a pre-science, phenomenology is taken up in various forms in positivist, post-positivist, interpretative, and constructivist philosophy (Dowling, 2007). As suggested by its name, phenomenology centres on phenomena or the object through which one achieves consciousness (Moustakas, 1994).

Phenomenology may be traced back to the 18th century and the seminal writings of Edmund Husserl whom many recognize as the forefather of the tradition (Creswell, 2013; Dowling, 2007; Mayoh & Onwuegbuzie, 2015). Husserl was primarily concerned with the 'whatness' of a thing that which is intuitively and logically experienced (Simon, 2011). He argued for the existence of a subjective reality – an alternate realm in which to experience the world. According to Husserl's ontological reasoning, life consists of dual states of consciousness whereby an objective reality is realized through suspension of our subjective opinions and beliefs. Although his scholarly writings are prominent in the field, the phenomenology of Husserl has been questioned by a few of his contemporaries, most notably Martin Heidegger – a fellow German philosopher – who reasoned that the essential structure of a phenomenon should be interpreted rather than described as pure cerebral consciousness (Downing, 2005). For Heidegger, an individual's natural orientation to a particular phenomenon cannot solely be described since description itself is a form of interpretation that evolves from an individual's prior engagement with a particular phenomenon (Mayoh et al., 2015).

Intentionality of consciousness or the notion that consciousness is always directed toward an object (Creswell, 2013) is mainly associated with *Husserlian* logic. It is a concept used to understand and classify conscious acts and experiential mental practices (Dowling, 2007). Intentionality of consciousness is a central feature of phenomenology that legitimizes the

use of **phenomenological reduction** as a means of obtaining objectivity in research. The term *reduction,* here, represents the ability of an individual to minimize the world to that of pure consciousness as experienced in its primeval form (Dowling, 2007).

Phenomenological reduction requires a person to transcend an experience in order to perceive it as for the first time. This particular skill is made possible through bracketing or **epoché** – a practice through which an individual consciously sets aside their preconceptions and prejudgments in order to gain further perspective on an experience (Creswell, 2013; Dowling, 2007). Epoché is as much a method for obtaining objectivity in research as it is a value-free attitude assumed by phenomenological researchers that prevents them from valuating and judging a phenomenon based on their prior experience with it (Balaban, 2002). While a great deal of skepticism surrounds the concept of epoché, particularly since judgment is a natural attitude of the mind, I believe that it is possible for an individual to take a fresh perspective on a phenomenon by reflecting on their conscious experience of it before reorienting their focus to how the experience presents in the consciousness' of others. That is, once an individual is able to truly reflect on their interpretations of a phenomenon by interrogating their thoughts and presumptions towards it they will be mentally prepared to cast those perspectives aside so as to experience the phenomenon anew. At the same time, I recognize that the main impetus of phenomenological research is not only to describe, but also to interpret the structure of a lived-experience in order to fully understand it.

Husserl's phenomenology is descriptive in nature and engenders greater understanding of a particular phenomenon, as viewed through the consciousness of the experiencer (Mayoh et al., 2015). **Descriptive phenomenology** offers detailed descriptions of the lived experience of certain individuals around a phenomenon for the purpose of uncovering its universal essence

(Creswell, 2013). For Husserl, the goal of phenomenology is to provide a scientific description of a human phenomenon as free as possible from judgment or cultural context (Simon, 2011). Incidentally, it is because of this heightened acuity that phenomenology is generally recognized as a viable approach to the science of human nature.

Husserl's original work has spawned countless rebirths, leading to the rise of various schools of phenomenology. Despite their many similarities, these branches differ fundamentally in form and approach. Aside from its descriptive counterpart, **hermeneutic (interpretive) phenomenology** remains the most widely used variety in the behavioural and social sciences (Dowling, 2007). In contrast to Husserl's descriptive form, *hermeneutic phenomenologists* maintain that it is impossible to truly separate oneself from the natural world due to the researcher's innate preconceptions (Dowling, 2007; Simon, 2011). Hermeneutic phenomenology, as originated by Martin Heidegger (1962) and reimagined by Max Van Manen (1990) argues against the potential for objectivity in research. This unique brand of phenomenology signals a sharp movement away from the more traditional notion of **lived-world** to the contemporary concept of **being-in-the-world** to refer to the way human beings exist, act, and are generally enmeshed within human society (Dowling, 2007; Simon, 2011, van Manen, 1990).

Hermeneutic phenomenologists view description as a form of interpretation since it presupposes one's prior engagement with a phenomenon (Mayoh et al., 2015). Hermeneutic phenomenologists also place stronger emphasis on orientation, or one's prior exposure to a phenomenon since this is believed to help maximize the potential for research (Mayoh et al., 2015). While orientation allows the researcher to illustrate the true nature of a phenomenon from an objective standpoint, it also allows them to portray the object in its fullest richness and greatest depth (Van Manen, 1990). In so doing, hermeneutic phenomenology highlights the

jointly constructed interpretations of an individual's lifeworld and their natural orientation to the phenomena.

Phenomenology as Qualitative Research Method

The boundaries may be blurred between phenomenology as a philosophy and as a research method despite clear evidence of the distinctions. From a philosophical standpoint, phenomenology represents the study of that which is captured by the senses of the mind and body. Phenomenology, however, is also used to denote a contemporary methodological approach that, not unlike its namesake, explicates the essence of a phenomenon through analysis of how it is narratively described (Simon, 2011). Phenomenological research involves research methods that aid in the development of a universal structure of lived experience obtained from detailed personal descriptions and/or co-constructed accounts of a phenomenon (Mayoh & Onwuegbuzie, 2015). When viewed from within a phenomenological framework, the complex and multi-dimensional nature of intercultural competence is seemingly less obscure and ambiguous.

Phenomenology can fuse dueling philosophical traditions (positivism and constructivism) into a singular paradigm grounded in intuition and logic (Simon, 2011), making it the ideal method from which to uncover the meaning structure of intercultural competence. Husserl's descriptive phenomenology demonstrates certain epistemological and axiological parallels with post-positivist inquiry as demonstrated by the researcher's objective stance towards a subjective phenomenological experience, and their attempt to remain value free through assessment of their own personal values and biases (Mayoh et al., 2015). However, phenomenology does not sufficiently acknowledge the situational context in which the lived-experience of a particular phenomenon is observed and assessed given its singular focus on the object of one's consciousness. Furthermore, the findings of phenomenology cannot be used to make

generalizations beyond the scope of the study in which it is employed due to their basis in the conscious experiences of a limited group of people at a particular time and place (Mayoh and Onwuegbuzie, 2015).

Although imperfect, phenomenology is the ideal method from which to develop clarity on the characteristics and dimensionality of intercultural competence. In this study, I employed a modified version of the Husserlian approach to analyze the interview data since it satisfies my goal to glean the essence of the phenomenon in its pre-reflective descriptive state (Downing, 2007). The *descriptive phenomenological psychological* method used to analyze the raw descriptive interview data was advanced by Amedeo Giorgi (Giorgi, 2003; Giorgi, 2009; Giorgi, 2012), and is strongly influenced by Husserl's philosophy on the lived world of human experiences. Giorgi's background in experimental psychology makes him particularly qualified to explore the intricacies of human consciousness (see Giorgi, 2003; Giorgi, 2009). For instance, Giorgi's descriptive phenomenological method encourages researchers to bracket their preconceptions of a phenomenon by suspending judgment about its real existence before evaluating how it appears to others (Creswell, 2013). Furthermore, Giorgi's method proceeds through a series of definitive steps that illustrate that qualitative analyses are not alien to scientific psychological practices (Giorgi, 2009).

This study was designed to capture an unrefined account of intercultural competence and to interpret its essential meaning. By employing the descriptive phenomenological approach in this study I was able to retain the integrity of the preservice teachers' lived-experience of intercultural competence. Even so, my understanding of the phenomenon ultimately derives from my interpretation of it. Once analyzed, I interpreted the research findings through a theoretical

lens, which allowed me to conceptualize the perceptual experience of the phenomenon as articulated by the preservice teachers.

My interpretation of the data is based on my comprehension of Chen & Starosta's (1996) model of intercultural competence. The author's concept of intercultural competence provides the framework through which data is interpreted. In addition to describing the essence of intercultural competence, I interpreted the data uncovered through descriptive surveys and phenomenological interviews through a theoretical lens. Chen and Starosta's concept of intercultural competence represents the organizing structure from which the phenomenon of intercultural competence is ultimately viewed and understood in this study.

While this thesis is primarily phenomenological in design and intent, quantitative data gathered through descriptive surveys were used to situate the preservice teachers' intercultural sensitivity by highlighting the feelings projected in their intercultural interactions. The following section traces the origins of Chen and Starosta's (2000) *Intercultural Sensitivity Scale* before describing its construction and validation.

Overview of Chen & Starosta's *Intercultural Sensitivity Scale*

The *Intercultural Sensitivity Scale* (ISS) was developed amidst a climate of uncertainty about the fundamental aspects of intercultural competence (Chen et al., 2000). Intercultural competence is generally conceived as "the ability to communicate effectively and appropriately in intercultural situations based on one's intercultural knowledge, skills, and attitudes" (Deardorff, 2006, p. 247). While most intercultural scholars agree that intercultural competence is developed cognitively, affectively, and behaviourally, the convergence of these three constructs is what ultimately impacts a person's ability to engage in effective and appropriate intercultural interactions.

Conceptualization of Intercultural Sensitivity

Chen and Starosta's (1997) conceptualization of intercultural sensitivity was inspired by Milton Bennett's (2004) developmental model of intercultural sensitivity, which presents intercultural competence as a developmental process occurring along a continuum of increasing cultural awareness, sensitivity, and behavioural adjustment. Although Bennett's depiction of intercultural competence is widely accepted in the field of intercultural and cross-cultural communication research, it fails to clearly distinguish the thoughts, feelings, and behaviours expressed at a particular developmental stage.

Conversely, Chen and Starosta's model of intercultural competence is an umbrella concept that subsumes the cognitive, affective, and behavioural dimensions of the phenomenon and distinguishes the definitive characteristics of each domain (Peng, 2006). Arguing that current theoretical approaches fail to sufficiently distinguish between the aspects of intercultural competence, Chen and Starosta developed a multi-dimensional model in which one's feelings, thoughts, and behaviours are housed in three separate, yet interrelated conceptual domains (e.g., *intercultural sensitivity*, *intercultural awareness*, and *intercultural adroitness*). That is, each dimension of intercultural competence comprises a distinct set of personal traits exhibited in successful intercultural interactions.

Chen and Starosta characterize intercultural sensitivity as the emotive dimension of intercultural competence that is made up of six affective qualities that together fuel a person's desire to understand, appreciate, and accept differences among different cultures, and to produce a positive outcome from these intercultural interactions (Chen et al., 1997). For Chen and Starosta, intercultural sensitivity consists of *self-esteem, self-monitoring, open-mindedness, empathy, interaction involvement*, and *non-judgment* (Chen et al., 1997; Fritz et al., 2005), which

underscore a person's emotional response to an intercultural situation and/or event. The following paragraphs outlines each of the six characteristics that shape the dimension of intercultural sensitivity as depicted in Chen and Starosta's model.

Self-esteem. Self-esteem is defined as a sense of self-value and self-worth that enhances a person's positive emotions towards recognizing and respecting cultural differences (Chen et al., 1997). Individuals with low self-esteem tend to feel more anxious in culturally diverse social environments and therefore struggle to interact with and relate well to people from different cultural backgrounds. Individuals with low self-esteem may appear cold or standoffish, which prevents them from establishing meaningful connections with people from different cultures (Chen, 2010). Alternatively, people with high self-esteem are optimistic about their intercultural interactions and are receptive to situations that present them with an opportunity to cultivate meaningful and enriching relationships.

Self-monitoring. Self-monitoring refers to a person's ability to regulate their emotional response in a variety of social contexts. People with high self-monitoring are attuned to their thoughts and emotions, which allows them to remain objective about their social behaviours and self-presentation when engaging in cross-cultural communication (Chen et al, 1997). According to Spitzberg and Cupach (1981), people with self-monitoring tendencies are adaptable, other-oriented, and considerate, as well as inclined to behave intelligently and appropriately in intercultural interactions.

Empathy. Empathy is arguably the most significant feature of intercultural sensitivity and is defined by a person's ability to not only sense another person's feelings but to also visualize what they might be thinking (Deardorff, 2009). Empathetic people are able to take on the perspective of another culture and are generally recognized for their selflessness and genuine

concern for others. Furthermore, empathetic people demonstrate reciprocity and active listening during intercultural communication, which enhances the level of mutual respect experienced in their interactions with others (Chen et al., 1997).

Open-mindedness. Open-mindedness refers to an individual's receptiveness to cultural differences. It implies a certain willingness to risk and move beyond one's comfort zone in order to appreciate different interpretations of reality or alternative cultural points of view (Deardorff, 2006). Open-minded people possess an internalized and broadened conception of their natural environment (Chen et al., 2000) and recognize that an idea may be rendered in multiple ways depending on one's social environment or personal history (Chen et al., 1997). Open-minded people accept different life patterns and are adaptive to opinions and experiences that are fundamentally different than their own.

Non-judgment. Non-judgment is defined as an attitude of acceptance, or the ability to suspend one's preconceived thoughts or feelings about another person or cultural group. Non-judgmental people are able to withhold their personal prejudices by listening sincerely to others during intercultural communication (Chen et al., 1996). Incidentally, attentiveness lies at the heart of non-judgment and is exhibited through active listening, which leads to a sentiment of enjoyment of other cultural values, beliefs, and traditions (Chen et al., 1997).

Interaction involvement. Interaction involvement refers to the ability to interpret and process verbal and non-verbal messages, take appropriate turns in conversation, and successfully initiate and end an intercultural interaction (Chen et al., 1997). People who are highly involved in intercultural interactions know how to handle the procedural aspects of structuring and maintaining a conversation (Spitzberg & Cupach, 1981). These individuals are also remarkably responsive to their counterpart's attitudes and mannerisms, attentive to their feelings of security

or anxiety, and perceptive of the subtle cultural cues that direct a conversation or specific social interaction (Chen et al., 1996).

To summarize, Chen and Starosta maintain that interculturally sensitive people possess six fundamental attitudes that support and reinforce their feelings towards understanding and appreciating cultural differences. These discrete traits are common among interculturally sensitive teachers who are generally recognized for their commitment to their students' academic success and for adopting culturally appropriate teaching strategies (Ladson-Billings, 2000). Interculturally sensitive teachers tend to be more attentive and able to perceive subtle cultural differences, they are also remarkably confident in their cross-cultural communication skills, are empathetic to their students' socio-cultural backgrounds, and are open-minded to their students' distinct learning styles and educational needs. Given their dedication to education equity, interculturally sensitive teachers treat all students with dignity and respect, and act as cultural brokers in their classrooms by mediating discussions between their culturally diverse students for the purpose of reducing cultural misunderstandings and furthering social change (Gay, 2002).

The Construction and Validation of the ISS

Believing that each dimension of intercultural competence should be evaluated separately, Chen and Starosta developed the *Intercultural Sensitivity Scale* (2000) to address the perceived lack of valid and reliable measures with which to evaluate the effectiveness of intercultural sensitivity. The instrument was developed and validated in three stages, which included a pre-study, an exploratory factor analysis, and a concurrent validity test. The final version of the ISS is based on the author's conceptualization of intercultural sensitivity and includes 24 survey items that represent empirical indicators of the six components of

intercultural sensitivity (Chen et al., 2000). The instrument boasts a high Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficient of .88 (α = .88) suggesting that it is internally reliable.

In the pre-study a 73-item version of the ISS was administered to 168 American college freshmen enrolled in basic courses of communication studies (Chen et al., 2000; Wolfgang, Möllenberg, Chen, 2002). The first study was specifically designed to confirm and reduce the number of items used to measure intercultural sensitivity. Ultimately 44 items with > .50 factor loadings were used to construct the scale selected for the second study. The 44-item version of the ISS was administered to 414 college students to determine the factor structure of the scale. Through principal axis factor analysis followed by oblique rotation (Chen et al., 2000; Wolfgang et al., 2002), five factors formed from 24 survey items with eigenvalues of 1.00 or higher were extracted from the analysis. These five factors: *interaction engagement*, *respect for cultural diversity*, *interaction confidence*, *interaction enjoyment*, and *interaction attentiveness*, explained a total of 37.3% of the variance.

Interaction engagement, the first factor, accounted for 22.8% of the common variance and reported an eigenvalue of 10.03. The second factor, *respect for cultural diversity*, represented 5.2% of the common variance and had an eigenvalue of 2.30. *Interaction confidence*, the third factor, explained 3.9% of the common variance and retained an eigenvalue of 1.73. The fourth factor, *interaction enjoyment,* accounted for 3.0 of the common variance and had an eigenvalue of 1.33. Lastly, *interactional attentiveness* represented 2.3 of the common variance and produced an eigenvalue of 1.00.

The third and final study was designed to evaluate the concurrent validity of the ISS with seven related measures, namely the: *Interactive Attentiveness Scale* (Cegala, 1981), *Impression Rewarding Scale* (Wheeless & Duran, 1982) *Self-Esteem Scale* (Rosenberg, 1965), *Self-*

Monitoring Scale (Lennox & Wolfe, 1984), *Perspective Taking Scale* (Davis, 1996), *Intercultural Effectiveness Scale* (Hammer, Gudykunst, & Wiseman, 1978), and *Intercultural Communication Attitude Scale* (Chen, 1993). The results of this analysis were satisfactory due to the moderate correlations that could be drawn between the ISS and other related measures of intercultural sensitivity (Chen et al., 2000).

When selecting an instrument to administer for this study, it was imperative for me to be cognizant of the merits and shortcomings of each measure. The ISS, while demonstrating significant construct reliability and predictive validity, has been minimally utilized by researchers in their academic pursuits. It is therefore unclear how generalizable the results are to populations outside the Western world. For instance, the results are also far less consistent when the tool is applied to multiracial collectivist societies (Tamam, 2010), suggesting that while the ISS may be effective in measuring intercultural sensitivity, the five-factor model envisioned by the authors is neither as generic nor culture-free as originally conceived (Tamam, 2010).

While the five factors delineated by the ISS are useful in determining the extent and nature of an individual's sensitivities, the authors do not specifically address the attendant behaviors and cognitive abilities that are assumed to enhance one's intercultural sensitivity, and in turn influence the development of their intercultural competence (Chen & Starosta, 1996; Chen & Starosta, 1997; Chen, 2010; Fritz et al., 2002). As a consequence, the implications of what a high-score in any one of the factors of interaction engagement, respect for cultural differences, interaction confidence, interaction enjoyment, and interaction attentiveness in fact 'means' or how it relates to one's actions or thoughts is never fully explicated by the authors.

In order to overcome the conceptual shortcomings of Chen & Starosta's scale, additional instruments can be used to assess the other dimensions of intercultural competence (e.g.,

intercultural adroitness and intercultural awareness), which would allow for a more holistic picture of the phenomenon to be rendered. For instance, the *Intercultural Effectiveness Scale* (Portalla & Chen, 2010) is a validated measure of the behavioural aspect of intercultural competence and refers to a person's ability to attain communication goals in intercultural interactions. This assessment is also based on Chen and Starosta's conceptualization of intercultural competence and is complementary to the ISS.

Unfortunately a similar concept-based assessment has yet to be developed for intercultural awareness, or the cognitive perspective of intercultural competence that enables people to identify the attitudes, opinions, and biases embedded in their own culture (Chen & Starosta, 1997). Until the time that such an assessment of intercultural awareness is created, other reliable measures of the construct can be used to assess the dimension of intercultural competence like, for instance, the *Global Perspective Inventory* (GPI) questionnaire (Braskamp, Carter Merrill, Braskamp, and Engberg, 2010). Even so, it is unclear on how well this particular instrument would align with Chen & Starosta's model given the authors' explicit focus on the discrete aspects of intercultural competence, which they maintain should be assessed separately.

Although tenuous, the ISS does represent a starting point for understanding the dimension of intercultural sensitivity beyond a purely conceptual level. That is, the empirical evidence gathered through administration of the ISS confirms that intercultural sensitivity is a measurable dimension of intercultural competence developed through sustained intercultural interaction. While it is true that more guidance is needed on how to interpret the results of the survey, the ISS is the only instrument designed thus far to specifically assess intercultural sensitivity as a separate dimension of intercultural competence. Furthermore, a fundamental requirement of instrument selection is that the tool directly corresponds to the definition devised

for its model (Deardorff, 2006). Given that this study is predicated on Chen & Starosta's model of *Intercultural Communication Competence* (in which intercultural sensitivity is a core construct), it is only fitting that the tool employed to measure the affective dimension of intercultural competence is a derivative of the concept.

The remaining sections of this chapter highlight the evolution of this study, from its early beginnings to its execution and subsequent analysis. As you read through this chapter, remember that it is meant to illustrate my journey towards an enlightened understanding of the phenomenon of intercultural competence as uncovered through the methods described below.

Research Design: Mixed-Methods Phenomenological Research

Phenomenology is a source of qualitative evidence (Mayoh et al., 2015) that exists on a spectrum between quantitative and qualitative research (Creswell, 2013). Its mere existence calls into question the validity of the *incompatibility thesis* (Howe, 1988); a position long held by those who argue against the union between the two competing methods (Guba & Lincoln, 1994; Howe, 1988; Mayoh & Onwuegbuzie, 2015). Phenomenology demonstrates that qualitative and quantitative methods may not be incommensurate (Mayoh et. al, 2015), and thus reality may be construed from two differing perspectives: post-positivism and constructivism. In truth, it is because of their axiological and methodological parallels that the combination of quantitative and phenomenological methods is justified in studies framed within a singular paradigm (Mayoh et. al, 2015).

Mixed-methods phenomenological research is an evolving approach that integrates empirical knowledge of a phenomenon with evidential proof of its existence as rendered through one's consciousness (Mayoh et. al, 2015). Though this particular approach to mixed methods research has yet to be formally conceptualized, it offers a unique and novel way of viewing

reality in a theoretical ‘third dimension’ in which one’s attitudes, thoughts, and behaviours are quantified and dialogically explored. In this study, a mixed-methods phenomenological research approach is used to verify and reveal the core characteristics of individuals deemed to be interculturally competent.

Sequencing, Weighting, and Integration

The conventional sequence of most mixed methods research moves from the predominant qualitative stage to the complementary quantitative stage to allow for theory generation through inductive qualitative research tested using deductive quantitative measures (Mayoh et al., 2015). However, in this study the reverse sequence (quan → PHEN) was used to provide orientation to the preservice teachers’ intercultural sensitivity prior to it being examined through phenomenological inquiry alongside their intercultural awareness and adroitness. Quantitative findings were also used to identify participants willing to provide information rich experiential accounts of their intercultural experiences during the phenomenological second phase. Thus the implementation sequence of quantitative and qualitative data employed in this investigation was used to: (a) determine the intercultural sensitivities of the preservice teachers as assessed by a validated survey instrument, and (b) identify participants for subsequent phenomenological interviews.

The first phase of this study was designed to focus the phenomenological responses of the second phase, as well as recruit participants for subsequent interviews. Quantitative data were collected through descriptive surveys using a Likert-type scale and situated the preservice teachers’ intercultural sensitivity, providing a baseline for subsequent phenomenological interviews. Although each of these distinct phases were designed to answer one of this study’s

two central questions, greater emphasis was placed on the phenomenological portion of this report.

Research Questions

The following research questions directed the course of this investigation and centralized its focus on intercultural competence. Since phenomenology refers to the study of lived experience, it is fitting that the following questions, which frame the design of this report, were specifically crafted to uncover the fundamental characteristics of the lived-experience of intercultural competence:

1. To what extent are preservice teachers interculturally sensitive?
2. What is the essence of their lived experience of intercultural competence?

Here the possession of any degree of intercultural sensitivity implies a certain level of intercultural competence, a quality explored through dialogue with a selection of preservice teachers about their significant intercultural experiences.

Population Selection and Sampling Strategies

Study Participants and Research Site

This study centres on the intercultural experiences of a sample of preservice teachers enrolled in a compulsory cross-cultural education course. The course was developed to satisfy Manitoba's 'diversity requirement' component, a condition of the preservice teachers' graduation. As per this provision, in order to be eligible for certification students entering one of the Province's five Bachelor of Education (B.Ed.) programs must complete at least three credit hours in special education/diversity coursework, in addition to three credits in Aboriginal education (*The Education Administration Act*, 2015). In the end, this requirement has been interpreted and translated by the faculties themselves, and has been fully integrated within the education program for students enrolled in years 1 or 2 since the fall of 2008.

Cross-cultural education course. The preservice teachers who participated in this study were recruited from a university-level cross-cultural education course whose content is grounded in the principals of critical multicultural education (Banks, 2001) and the paradigm of culturally responsive teaching (Egbo, 2009; Egbo, 2011; Dei, 2000; James, 2010; Ladson-Billings, 2000; Ladson-Billings, 2001). This course was designed to have the preservice teachers explore their personal understanding of culture, as well as the theoretical and practical aspects of human diversity and equity that impact education for cultural minority students (Bolivar, 2015).

Classroom lectures and evaluated assignments were structured around two required textbooks – *Seeing Ourselves* by Carl James (2010) and *Crossing Over to Canaan* by Gloria Ladson-Billings (2001), which encouraged the preservice teachers to interrogate the meaning of the concepts of ethnicity, race, and culture, and to reflect on their personal understandings of multicultural education, diversity, and citizenship in Canada. While differing in focus and intent, the textbooks were constructed as a series of interwoven personal narratives conveyed by culturally diverse students and novice teachers whose 'insider' perspectives on the socio-cultural and professional realties of living, learning, and teaching within a multicultural society supplied each text with its core substance.

Throughout the course of the semester the preservice teachers were introduced to culturally responsive teaching techniques, recommendations for curricular modifications, and academic policies developed to reform the culture of contemporary educational institutions, as well as cultivate a more equitable and inclusive educational space for culturally diverse students (Atleo, 2014; Bolivar, 2015; Dvorak, 2015; Fitznor, 2015). They were also urged to participate in a number of collaborative learning activities to elevate their understanding of the distinct sociological issues faced by cultural, ethnic, and/or linguistic minority students.

In sum, the cross-cultural education course from which the preservice teachers were recruited was intended to increase their multicultural teaching self-efficacy, enhance their cultural self-awareness and respect for cultural diversity, facilitate their intercultural understanding through experiential learning opportunities, encourage them to develop the skills necessary to engage and interact with culturally diverse students, and introduce them to customizable teaching strategies to help them improve student performance and academic success.

Various academics with specialized knowledge in the fields of theology, peace and conflict studies, Aboriginal education, cross-cultural education, and public policy contributed to the design and delivery of this course. The course was divided into several modules that addressed diversity in education, reconstructing contemporary multicultural classrooms, Aboriginal perspectives, and building inclusive curriculum and classroom experiences (Bolivar, 2015; Dvorak, 2015; Fitznor, 2015). Course assignments provided students with an opportunity to reflect upon their cultural identities and the distinctiveness of their culturally diverse counterparts; examine their pre-existing knowledge and experience with cultural diversity; evaluate the external factors that influence their cultural misconceptions and biases; and, envision their future teaching practice. As a final test of their emergent cross-cultural teaching abilities the preservice teachers were asked to synthesize their understanding of cross-cultural education by developing instructional content and teaching strategies for diverse student classrooms.

Recruitment and Selection. Purposive sampling (also known as *selective sampling*) was used to identify and recruit a contingent of student-teachers from the cross-cultural education course described above. This sampling technique is common in exploratory qualitative research

due to its ability to capture information-rich data with limited time and money (Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2009). Purposive sampling allows researchers to evaluate specific characteristics of a population of interest, which aids in meeting research goals and addressing central research questions. My intent for using this method was to access a sample of preservice teachers to help me better understand key aspects of their personalities that are relevant to their developing intercultural competence. My recruitment strategy was based on the preservice teachers' availability and willingness to participate in surveys and/or interviews. The only requirement for participation in this study was active enrolment in either one of the winter or spring sessions of the cross-cultural education course.

At the start of the recruitment process my approach was quite simple, however, I was only able to recruit two survey participants from a potential pool of thirty-five students. My initial recruitment strategy included a brief presentation to students enrolled in one of the semesters-long sections of the cross-cultural education course. As per the design of my recruitment strategy, I delivered a ten-minute presentation to the class at the start of one of the final lectures before the preservice teachers' student practicums were scheduled to begin. During the presentation I highlighted my intentions and expectations for the study, along with my approach to evaluating the phenomenon of intercultural competence. While I anticipated a certain amount of hesitation, skepticism, and scrutiny among the students, I was surprised by the number of individuals who appeared disinterested or unwilling to participate in a discussion on cultural diversity. The preservice teachers' general apathy was especially alarming given the nature of the course in which they were enrolled.

Despite most students' lukewarm reception to my presentation, I remained optimistic that in time I would be able to secure a sample large enough to allow me to execute my study as

designed and within the timeframe proposed. However, upon realizing that this would not be the case, I settled on a new approach that included incentivizing students for their participation in the study after failing to attain a sufficient number of study participants during the initial recruitment stage. I obtained funding that allowed me to offer the preservice teachers gift certificates for their participation in surveys, interviews, or both phases of the data collection process. This strategy proved to be much more successful than my previous efforts, and I was ultimately able to attract eight more preservice teachers, five of whom agreed to participate in subsequent interviews. It is important to note that because of the relatively small sample used in this study I am unable to generalize my findings beyond the scope of this report due to the high potential for selection bias or errors arising from the unrepresentativeness of the population from which this sample is drawn.

Despite playing a supplemental role within the overall design, the quantitative phase of this study oriented me to the convergent experience of intercultural competence prior to the delivery of phenomenological interviews; the primary source of data used in this investigation. It is important to note that I embarked on this study not to generalize my findings or to make broad inferences about the intercultural skillsets of preservice teachers, but to identify common characteristics held by a selection of preservice teachers in order to gain further perspective on the essential features of intercultural competence.

Study participants. An addendum was added to the end of the ISS to capture details of the preservice teachers' demographic backgrounds in terms of their age, gender, and ethnicity and/or culture. To maintain their anonymity, I furnished each participant with a unique identification number and a pseudonym that, while representing their genders, bore no actual resemblance to their names. The preservice teachers who were selected to participate in this

study were not a homogenous group with respect to their cultural identities or experience with diversity, however they had generally obtained the same level of formal teacher education and had roughly acquired the same number of years of teaching experience (e.g., 1 or 2 years). The majority of survey participants were female, although these individuals differed in sociocultural background (e.g., Caucasian, First Nations, West-Indian, White-Pakistani) and age (23-50 yrs.). The remaining preservice teachers that were surveyed in this study were Caucasian, male, and aged 22 to 25 years old.

Phenomenological interviews added an additional layer of depth to the preservice teachers' portrayal within this study as they allowed me to capture rich, descriptive data about the preservice teachers' behaviours, attitudes, and perceptions towards other cultures. It should also be mentioned that I am only able to offer context for the experiences of those who participated in interviews; little else is known about the backgrounds of the preservice teachers who participated solely in surveys (e.g. Peyton, Betty, Michael, Graham, and Brett).

The following participant profiles have been developed for Jeremy, Ivy, Monica, Rose, and Daisy, and summarize details of their personal backgrounds and experiences with cultural diversity.

Jeremy. Jeremy is 25 years old and is an avid and vocal supporter of cultural diversity. Jeremy grew up mostly insulated from other cultures since he was raised in an overwhelmingly monocultural suburban community. At an early age Jeremy developed a genuine interest and appreciation for other cultures having been first introduced to cultural diversity through Japanese art and food. As a young adult, Jeremy traveled to South Korea to teach English and to acquire a genuine, authentic cultural experience. Jeremy's experience in South Korea has been

instrumental to his growing awareness and appreciation of other cultures, and has taught him to adapt to different cultural values, traditions, and beliefs.

Monica. Monica is a 33-year-old student, homestay parent, and educational assistant. Like Jeremy, she grew up in a suburban community among people who were mostly Caucasian and middle-class. During her formative years Monica struggled with her cultural identity and was encouraged by her parents to overlook her ethnicity in order to be fully accepted by dominant members of Canadian society. As she matured into adulthood, Monica grew into her Trinidadian heritage and became more receptive to all aspects of her cultural diversity, which she now regularly celebrates in her daily interactions with students, friends, and peers.

Daisy. Daisy is a 28-year-old single parent who moved across Canada to attend university in Manitoba to secure a future for her young family. Daisy's motivation to succeed both as a student and as a teacher is based on her experiences with prejudice and discrimination. From an early age Daisy was frequently disparaged and ridiculed on account of her Indigenous culture and ethnic background. As one of the only members of her community to attend post-secondary education Daisy admits to having faced a tremendous amount of pressure from her family and backlash from other members of her community who fear that she has become 'whitewashed' by mainstream culture. Despite her family's fears, Daisy remains mostly positive about her experiences in the education program and has cultivated a number of meaningful friendships with students from a variety of cultural backgrounds.

Ivy. Ivy is a 23-year-old student from a rural southern community. She was raised in a homogenous town made up of individuals with the same cultural background, traditions, and values as her Mennonite family. When she was 10 years old, Ivy and her parents travelled to Japan for an extended family vacation. It was during this period that Ivy was first exposed to

cultural diversity, which forced her to evaluate distinct aspects of her appearance and personality that were otherwise shielded from her consciousness. Ivy's experience is Japan inspired her to relocate to Guatemala for over a year following high-school graduation and motivated her to pursue a career in education.

Rose. Rose is 25 years old and is of mixed heritage. Her awareness and acceptance of cultural diversity largely stems from her cultural background and her intercultural experiences with friends and family. Growing up Rose was fully accepted and embraced by her Pakistani and British relatives and taught to accept different cultural values and traditions, even if and when they collided with her own. As a teacher Rose hopes to inspire her students to fulfill their academic potential and actively strive towards their personal goals. She is committed to building an inclusive classroom environment in which all of her students feel respected, supported, and appreciated for their unique personal and cultural differences.

Data Collection Procedures

Quantitative Phase: The Intercultural Sensitivity Scale

Data collection for this study was carried out in two distinct, yet complementary phases. The quantitative phase – executed through surveys – and the qualitative phase completed through phenomenological interviews. In the first phase, Chen and Starosta's (2000) *Intercultural Sensitivity Scale* (see *Appendix A* on page 223 for details) was administered to ten (10) preservice teachers to determine their sensitivities towards diverse cultures. The survey enabled me to chart the positionality of their cultural values and perspectives, as well as secure a pool of participants for the qualitative second phase of this investigation.

The ISS allows for the calculation of an overall intercultural sensitivity score, as well as scores for the factors of *interaction confidence, interaction attentiveness, interaction*

engagement, interaction enjoyment, and respect for cultural differences (Chen & Starosta, 2000; Fritz et al., 2002; Fritz et al., 2005; Spinthourakis et al., 2009; Tamam, 2010) – see Figure 3 for details. Taken together these five factors represent an interlocking set of empirically tested indicators of intercultural competence that describe the core attitudes that underline a person's intercultural sensitivity (Chen & Starosta, 2000).

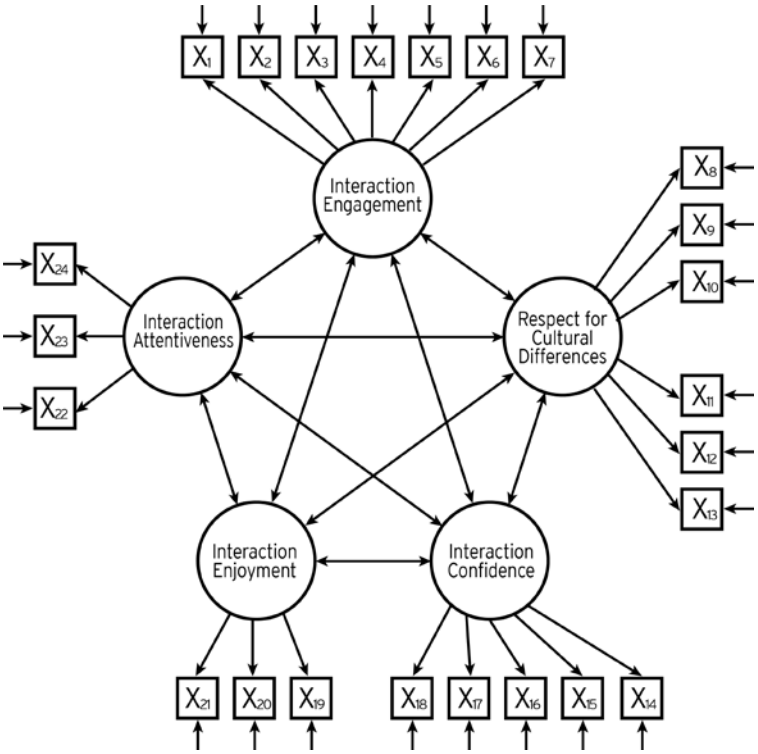

Figure 3 – Chen and Starosta's *Five-Factor Model of Intercultural Sensitivity*. Adapted from "Measuring Intercultural Sensitivity in Different Cultural Context" by W. Fritz, A. Mollenberg, & G. Chen, *Intercultural Communication Studies*, p. 6. Copyright 2002 by the International Association for Intercultural Communication Studies. Used with permission.

To recap, Chen and Starosta's (2000) 24-item version of the ISS is based on their concept of intercultural sensitivity, which is defined by six affective characteristics: self-esteem, self-monitoring, interaction involvement, open-mindedness, empathy, and/or non-judgment. Survey questions represent the empirical indicators of these characteristics and are specifically designed to assess one's sentiments towards cultural diversity. Nine negatively-keyed survey items

(questions 2, 4, 7, 9, 12, 15, 18, 20, 22) were reverse scored to ensure that all positive responses were graded consistently whether or not a question was positively or negatively worded. The preservice teachers' individual survey responses were recorded on a five-point Likert scale before their scores were added together to provide an aggregate of their intercultural sensitivity, as well as a mark for each related factor: interaction engagement, respect for cultural diversity, interaction confidence, interaction enjoyment, and interaction attentiveness.

One of the most obvious shortcomings of the ISS is that it fails to provide researchers with sufficient guidance on how to interpret its numerical results. That is, the authors do not expressly state how scores recorded on the ISS are comparable to existing benchmarks or may be contrasted with similarly designed assessment measures. To account for the survey's limitations, I interpreted the numerical outcomes of the ISS with respect to the affective characteristics that underscore each question. To establish a link between the characteristics of intercultural sensitivity and the ISS I deductively analyzed the survey's 24 items, screening for significant words and phrases associated with particular features of intercultural sensitivity (see pages 63-65 for details). The table below illustrates the relationship between the factors and characteristics of intercultural sensitivity and each of the survey's 24 items.

Table 1:
Distribution of characteristics across five factors of intercultural sensitivity

Factor	Survey Item	Characteristic
Interaction Engagement	1. I enjoy interacting with people from different cultures.	Self-esteem Open-mindedness Non-judgment
	11. I tend to wait before forming an impression of culturally-distinct counterparts.	Non-judgment Open-mindedness Self-monitoring
	13. I am open-minded to people from different cultures	Open-mindedness Non-judgment
	21. I often give positive responses to my culturally different counterpart during our interaction.	Interaction involvement Self-monitoring

	22. I avoid those situations where I will have to deal with culturally-distinct persons. *	Self-esteem Open-mindedness Non-judgment
	23. I often show my culturally-distinct counterpart my understanding through verbal or non-verbal cues.	Self-monitoring Interaction involvement
	24. I have a feeling of enjoyment towards different cultures.	Self-esteem Open-mindedness Interaction involvement Non-judgment
Respect for Cultural Diversity	2. I think people from other cultures are narrow-minded. *	Open-mindedness Non-judgment Empathy
	7. I don't like to be with people from different cultures. *	Non-judgment Open-mindedness Self-esteem
	8. I respect the values of people from different cultures*	Open-mindedness Empathy
	16. I respect the ways people from different cultures behave.	Open-mindedness Empathy
	18. I would not accept the opinions of people from different cultures. *	Open-mindedness Empathy Non-judgment
	20. I think my culture is better than other cultures. *	Open-mindedness Non-judgment
Interaction Confidence	3. I am pretty sure of myself in interacting with people from different culture.	Self-esteem Self-monitoring
	4. I find it very hard to talk in front of people from different cultures. *	Self-esteem Self-monitoring
	5. I always know what to say when interacting with people from different cultures.	Self-esteem Self-monitoring
	6. I can be as sociable as I want to be when interacting with people from different cultures.	Self-esteem Self-monitoring Interaction involvement
	10. I feel confident when interacting with people from different cultures.	Self-esteem
Interaction Enjoyment	9. I get upset easily when interacting with people from different cultures. *	Open-mindedness Self-monitoring Empathy Non-judgment

	12. I often get discouraged when I am with people from different cultures. *	Self-esteem
	15. I often feel useless when interacting with people from different cultures. *	Self-esteem
Interaction Attentiveness	14. I am very observant when interacting with people from different cultures.	Interaction involvement
	17. I try to obtain as much information as I can when interacting with people from different cultures.	Open-mindedness Non-judgment Interaction involvement
	19. I am sensitive to my culturally-distinct counterparts' subtle meanings during our interaction.	Interaction involvement Empathy Self-monitoring

*Questions marked with an asterisk are reverse-coded when scored.

The first factor, *interaction engagement*, consists of questions 1, 11, 13, 21, 22, 23, and 24, and captures one's open-mindedness, empathy, non-judgment, self-monitoring, interaction involvement, and self-esteem as expressed by their thoughts and behaviour towards other cultures. The second factor, *respect for cultural diversity*, comprises questions 2, 7, 8, 16, and 20 and evaluates an individual's open-mindedness, self-esteem, non-judgment, and empathy as expressed by their orientation or tolerance to different cultural traditions, values, and/or beliefs. The third factor, *intercultural confidence*, includes questions 3, 4, 5, 6, and 10, and gauges a person's self-esteem, self-monitoring, and interaction involvement as expressed by their feelings of self-assurance in unfamiliar intercultural settings. The fourth factor, *interaction enjoyment*, includes questions 9, 12, and 15 and reveals the extent to which an individual is open-minded, self-monitoring, empathetic, and non-judgmental, which is reflected by their positive or negative reaction to intercultural contact. The fifth and final factor, *interaction attentiveness*, consists of questions 14, 17, and 19 and examines one's open-mindedness, non-judgment, self-monitoring, interaction involvement, and empathy, as demonstrated by their effort to understand the

subtleties of intercultural interactions and the social rules that may or may not be immediately observed.

Qualitative Phase: Semi-Structured Interviews

While practical, surveys are only partially revealing of the multifaceted and complex nature of intercultural competence. In truth, the phenomenon is far more layered and nuanced than how it is portrayed in surveys. Intercultural competence may be understood beyond its objective reality by examining the myriad ways that its meaning is negotiated by personal experience. In order to fully grasp the elusive nature of intercultural competence research must delve beyond the surface of its occurrence to its essential structure through analysis of the narratives of those who have undergone the experience.

To identify the essence of intercultural competence, phenomenological interviews were conducted with a smaller contingent of the original research sample. In the addendum added to the end of the ISS the preservice teachers were asked to indicate their receptiveness to follow-up interview. Five (n=5) preservice teachers responded “yes” to this question and were subsequently recruited for the second phase of this study. Interviews were approximately one-hour in length and were digitally recorded before I transcribed them verbatim. Participants were presented with their interview transcripts to ensure that their words were accurately represented in the data supporting my analysis.

The preservice teachers were asked to respond to a series of open-ended questions designed to capture their experiences rather than their opinions on cultural diversity, the latter having been assessed through surveys. Interview questions were based on the factors of intercultural sensitivity and were specifically developed to bridge the information obtained through phenomenological interviews with the data gathered from administration of the ISS.

When designing the interview questions used in this study, I carefully scrutinized each survey question to uncover their implicit intent before crafting my own set of exploratory questions – see *Appendix A* on page 223 for the full list of interview questions used in this study.

Phenomenological interview questions. The interview is by far the most prevailing method for collecting data in phenomenological research. This approach helps researchers uncover the essence of a phenomenon by allowing them to examine it through the unfiltered lens of those whose experiences are observed (Bevan, 2014). The approach used to construct the interview questions employed in this investigation is based on an adapted version of Amadeo Giorgi's (1997) phenomenological interview method. According to Giorgi (1997), interviews serve the purpose of exploring and gathering experiential narrative material, stories, and anecdotes used as resources for developing a deeper, richer understanding of a human phenomenon.

The structure of phenomenological interviews held in this investigation is based on Giorgi's two-tiered interview approach, which progresses from open-ended questions focused on one's personal history to questions that elicit concrete details of a particular phenomenological experience. In this phase of my study, the preservice teachers were asked to respond to eight (8) interview questions related to distinct features of their intercultural sensitivity uncovered by the ISS (e.g.. interaction engagement, interaction enjoyment, interaction attentiveness, interaction confidence, and respect for cultural diversity). The factoral outcomes of the ISS were transformed into a series of thought-provoking questions that prompted the preservice teachers' to share their opinions on cultural diversity and to reflect on their intercultural relationships and interactions with family, friends, acquaintances, peers, teachers, and students.

Questions in the interview protocol were purposely broad and open-ended, and designed to stimulate discussion on a wide variety of subjects such as culture, intercultural relations, and multicultural education. The first two interview questions were contextual and invited the preservice teachers' to reflect on their cultural backgrounds and prior intercultural experiences, which allowed me to grasp their natural attitudes towards cultural diversity and establish a baseline for further phenomenological inquiry. The next six interview questions examined the different modes or ways in which the preservice teachers' intercultural competence manifests in intercultural interactions.

Interview questions were specifically designed to evoke the survey experience and prompt the preservice teachers to narrate their significant intercultural experiences. Several of the questions in the original interview set were opinion-based and invited the preservice teachers to share their expertise, rather than their experiences of cultural diversity. Other interview questions were wordy or included jargon that confused participants and prevented them from answering questions clearly. Follow-up questions were therefore required, and were specifically asked to clarify a response or to dig deeper into the details of a particular phenomenological experience.

Experiential questions were asked at the end of a sequence of questions beginning with originating questions followed by clarifying and/or probing interview questions asked to reduce ambiguity and elicit the preservice teachers' intercultural experiences. In sum, experiential questions synthesized the progression of interview questions and were employed to apprehend specific details of the preservice teachers' lived-experience of cultural diversity. The following table highlights the relationship between follow-up clarifying and probing interview questions,

Giorgi's phenomenological interview method, and Chen & Starosta's *Intercultural Sensitivity Scale*.

Table 2:
Structure of phenomenological interview questions

Interview Questions	Type of Phenomenological Interview Question	Purpose of Interview Questions
1. Tell me about your cultural background?	Descriptive/Contextual	• To put participants' lived intercultural experiences into context.
2. Describe your experiences with people from different cultures?	Descriptive/Contextual	• To put participants' lived intercultural experiences into context.
3. How do you learn about different cultures?	Focused/Structural	• To apprehend details of participants' engagement and attentiveness towards people from different cultures.
4. How do you build relationships with people from different cultures?	Focused/Structural	• To apprehend details of participants' engagement and attentiveness towards people from different cultures. • To explore participants' feelings of respect for cultural diversity and their confidence in intercultural interactions.
5. Describe your feelings when interacting with people from different cultures.	Focused/Structural	• To apprehend details of participants' enjoyment of other cultures.
6. Can you describe a situation and/or event when you felt uncertain about how to interact with people from other cultures?	Focused/Structural	• To apprehend details of participants' engagement with other cultures and their confidence during intercultural interactions.
7. How do you demonstrate your appreciation of cultural diversity?	Focused/Structural	• To apprehend details of participants' respect for other cultures.
8. How do you remain engaged when interacting with people from different cultures?	Focused/Structural	• To apprehend details of participants' engagement, involvement, and enjoyment of other cultures.

To summarize, I was able to add depth to the attitudinal data gathered by the ISS through application of Giorgi's phenomenological interview approach. Giorgi's interview method allowed me to uncover the situational and environmental contexts in which the preservice teachers' self-reported opinions and attitudes towards cultural diversity were developed. This approach also enabled me to discover details of their significant intercultural experiences. My interpretation of Chen and Starosta's (1996) model of intercultural competence guided the progression of phenomenological interviews insomuch that my understanding of the concept inspired the probing questions that I asked to solicit details of the preservice teachers' intercultural experiences and/or clarify their opinions and feelings towards cultural diversity. While it was important for me to bracket my existant understanding of intercultural competence during the data analysis phase, this technique was not appropriate and unnecessary during the interview stage where my orientation to the phenomenon helped me advance the sequence of interview questions.

In addition to validating and reinforcing the characteristics of the preservice teachers' intercultural sensitivity (as captured and measured by Chen & Starosta's scale), Giorgi's phenomenological interview method provided me with the structure to discover and analyze additional dimensions of the preservice teachers' intercultural competence, such as their intercultural awareness and adroitness. Arguably, the strength of this study may be traced to its comprehensiveness and the integration of its data analysis techniques. At this study's **pivotal interface** (Morse & Niehaus, 2009) the preservice teachers' subjective attitudes towards cultural diversity were contextualized and evaluated alongside their expressed thoughts and behaviours towards people from different cultures.

Data Analysis Procedures

This study employed a mixed methods phenomenological approach comprising descriptive surveys and phenomenological interviews to investigate the occurrence of intercultural competence. Quantitative data were gathered to refine the focus of the phenomenological second phase, as well as to locate interview subjects with specific lived intercultural experience. In line with the narrative tone and structure of this assignment, a descriptive method was used to summarize basic features of the data collected through surveys. Each preservice teacher's intercultural sensitivity score was tabulated in Excel and presented on separate worksheets that were organized into six columns that illustrated their overall intercultural sensitivity scores (column 1), as well as their scores for each factor of intercultural sensitivity: interaction engagement (column 2); respect for cultural differences (column 3); interaction confidence (column 4); interaction enjoyment (column 5); and, interaction attentiveness (column 6).

The ISS is an additive measure of an individual's intercultural sensitivity that assesses the magnitude of one's feelings towards cultural diversity, as represented by an overall score for intercultural sensitivity and an aggregate mark for each of its five factors. Each factor is comprised of a series of questions informed by a specific trait or feature of intercultural sensitivity. The survey items carry equal weight and are therefore equally significant to the composite score derived from each recorded survey response. While reflective of an individual's ability to interact with other cultures, the factors reveal little about the nature of one's sensitivity with regards to the personal qualities expressed in intercultural interactions. To overcome this limitation, I established a link between the preservice teachers' responses to each survey item and the characteristics underlying the construction of each question (e.g., self-esteem, open-

mindedness, interaction involvement, non-judgment, and self-monitoring). Thus, individuals who report a high score on any one of the survey's 24 items are assumed to strongly exhibit characteristics associated with these questions.

Following my analysis of the quantitative data collected from the ISS, I employed a descriptive phenomenological method to examine data gathered in the qualitative phase of this investigation. After familiarizing myself with the preservice teachers' intercultural narratives, I carefully combed through their interview transcripts for significant statements, sentences, or quotes before arranging them into themes and organizing them into a holistic structure of intercultural competence. The procedure used to analyze the data gathered through phenomenological interviews is based on Giorgi's *descriptive phenomenological psychological* model, conceived in three interlocking stages of data analysis and transformation (Camic et. al, 2003; Giorgi, 2009; Giorgi, 2012).

On a fundamental level, Giorgi's model is like most other qualitative analysis methods in terms of process and intent. For example, it begins with the researcher surveying participants' naïve descriptions of a phenomenon to attain a generic sense of the whole before uncovering emergent themes and uniting them into a coherent structure of its essence (Creswell, 2013). What differs in Giorgi's case is not the goal of his description, but the manner in which it is implemented to meet its perceived end (Giorgi, 2009). The other key distinction between Giorgi's method and other qualitative approaches is what Husserl refers to as *psychological phenomenological reduction* (Giorgi, 2003). Giorgi envisioned a rigorous and objective process of data analysis based on the phenomenological attitude of the researcher. This posture requires the researcher to suspend his or her prior experience or conscious understanding of a

phenomenon in order to view it in a different perspective as rendered through an unbiased and unfiltered lens (Giorgi, 2003; Giorgi, 2009).

Application of Giorgi's Phenomenological Method

What follows from this brief description of Girogi's phenomenological method is a discussion on how it was practically implemented within this study. Here I will delineate the process used to analyze the data gathered from phenomenological interviews held with the preservice teachers who participated in the second phase of this study.

Step one: Acquiring a sense of the whole. In the first step of my data analysis approach I listened to each audio recording several times before transcribing them into verbatim text. Interviews were recorded for at least one hour and produced roughly ten pages of written text. Transcripts were read and re-read on four separate occasions to attain a general understanding of the phenomenon. With each passing, I gained further clarity on the myriad ways in which culture is perceived and experienced by each prospective teacher. This period in my investigation was marked by exploration of the most salient aspects of the preservice teachers' intercultural experiences as entrenched in their memories and revealed through discussion. Documents were filled with rich personal insights and experiential accounts of their diverse cultural experiences. My goal here was to preserve the integrity of their phenomenological intercultural experiences by remaining objective throughout the interview process and later analysis phase.

The initial step of Giorgi's phenomenological psychological method was predicated on me attaining a sense of the whole structure of the phenomenon. This was accomplished through an immersive process in which I dwelled with the raw, descriptive interview data for a prolonged period of time before evaluating it in subsequent steps (Giorgi, 2003; Giorgi, 2009; Giorgi, 2012). While difficult, I was able to refrain from positing the existence of intercultural

competence by recording my presumptions (e.g. thoughts, feelings, and beliefs) in a journal. This process allowed me to suspend my biases and opinions on intercultural competence by establishing a boundary between my active role as a researcher and my identity as an impartial observer of a phenomenon. The act of bracketing is far more complicated and nuanced a process than can ever truly be encapsulated in writing. Bracketing (or *epoché*) requires a certain state of transcendence on the part of the researcher whereby they abandon their encoded thoughts on a phenomenon so as to evaluate it in its natural, unadulterated state.

Step two: Determination of meaning units. In the second stage of my analysis each meaning unit was demarcated by a forward slash at the cleavage of two distinguishable thoughts or ideas, which were signaled by a slight change in an interviewee's tone or expression. I completed this exercise for all five transcripts before constructing a table to organize each statement and assign it a unique ID number to distinguish each separate unit of meaning. In many significant ways, this stage of my research hastened my understanding of the phenomenon as I was made to dwell with the rich, textual data for an extended period of time. This phase of my analysis was akin to the second stage of Giorgi's process whereby the researcher extracts meaning from the naïve descriptions of a given phenomenon (Giorgi, 2009; Giorgi, 2012).

Step three: Transformation of meaning units into psychologically sensitive expressions. In this, the most critical step of my analysis, I delved into the psychological implications of each meaning statement. I was able to consciously observe the phenomenon of intercultural competence by assuming the *attitude of phenomenological reduction* (Giorgi, 2009; Giorgi, 2012), accomplished by bracketing and withholding my existential knowledge of intercultural competence so as to view it in epoch. In so doing, the essential characteristics of the

phenomenon emerged not by what was said, but by the meaning behind the preservice teachers' expressions.

After carefully delineating various units of meaning in step 2, I began to comb through each statement to uncover the implications of the participants' intercultural experiences. In order to transform these statements into third-party expressions of psychological meaning, I assumed the necessary phenomenological psychological attitude. This perspective precipitated my understanding of the psychological significance of each preservice teacher's lived experience of intercultural competence. Using Giorgi's technique of **free imaginative variation** (Giorgi, 2003; Giorgi, 2009; Giorgi, 2012), I reimagined each meaning statement by contorting and stretching it to its maximum allowable limits by adding or omitting details, or by envisioning an opposite expression of meaning. Thus, in order to ascertain a more complex understanding of intercultural competence, I had to explore the psychological meanings contained in each of the preservice teachers' raw descriptions of the phenomenon. Armed with a psychological mindset, I was then able to attain an inter-subjective sense of their lived experience of cultural diversity, laying the groundwork for the next data analysis stage.

Transforming the delineated meaning units into psychologically sensitive statements is at the core of this particular brand of research and is easily its most taxing stage to implement. While most qualitative research proceeds from the previous step to the clustering of significant statements of data (Creswell, 2013), Giorgi's method differs in how psychological meaning is extracted and analyzed from the naïve descriptions of participants. This stage of Giorgi's method requires the researcher to delve into the psychological implications of each statement to uncover how a phenomenon is truly experienced and conceived by those observed. It requires a synthesis of the psychological and **phenomenological attitudes** whereby a common everyday experience,

such as intercultural competence, is enhanced by the researcher's heightened sense of critical awareness.

Giorgi (2009) represents the process of free imaginative variation as a transformative sequence in which a signifying act (e.g. intercultural competence) is consciously perceived and successfully identified by the researcher (e.g. *signifying acts → precise fulfilling act → act of identification*). This step is complex and time consuming, and deeply transcendent in nature since it involves unrestrained intuition and a boundless imagination to be able to fully grasp the elusive essence of a phenomenon.

Step four: Construct a psychological structure of the essence of a phenomenon. After demarcating and numbering each meaning statement deemed essential to the structure of intercultural competence, I clustered them into five categories (e.g. theme clusters) corresponding to each factor of the phenomenon (e.g. interaction confidence, interaction enjoyment, interaction attentiveness, interaction engagement, and respect for cultural diversity). Data were organized within a grid style configuration of formulated meaning statements, factor-based theme clusters, and emergent themes revealing of the psychologically dense characteristics of intercultural competence found among the preservice teachers.

According to Giorgi, in the final step of the research process the researcher develops the invariant structure of a phenomenon through identification of its key constituents. This stage is exhaustive, yet revelatory of the core features of a particular phenomenological experience. I initially approached this challenge with trepidation based on my relative inexperience as a researcher; however my fears subsided as the structure began to unfold through careful examination of each transformed meaning statements whereby those no longer deemed necessary to intercultural competence were discarded and removed from my analysis.

Giorgi (2009) maintains that the essential constituents of a phenomenon are withdrawn from the data through free imaginative variation. In this elevated psychological state, the researcher visualizes the different aspects of the phenomenon as described in the rich, textual data. To achieve a higher state of understanding of the essence of the preservice teachers' intercultural experience I examined each constituent as one would a *Jenga* puzzle, whereby the removal of a central piece initiates the collapse of the whole structure. My intuitive insight into the phenomenon, or what Husserl refers to as **eidetic intuition,** allowed me to perceive the most invariant constituents of intercultural competence and in the end retain only those characteristics believed to reinforce the essential structure of the phenomenon.

Following my analysis of the rich descriptive data obtained from phenomenological interviews, I identified and analyzed the essential structure of intercultural competence by drawing on my understanding of the concept to explicate the meaning of the data by interpreting it. Before moving ahead, I want to take a moment to acknowledge my subjectivities and role in interpreting the meaning structure of intercultural competence. While I was able abstract myself from the data analysis process, as mentioned previously, my orientation to the phenomenon impacted the way questions were sequenced and data was eventually explained. My perception of intercultural competence also informed my interpretation of the data once analyzed and described through Giorgi's phenomenological approach.

Strategies for Validating Findings

I employed a three-step triangulation method to increase the validity and reliability of my findings. Triangulation is an effective technique used by researchers to strengthen their results and confirm the inferences drawn in their analyses by employing multiple data sources, investigators, and theories to corroborate the evidence produced from their investigations

(Creswell, 2013). The following sections describe the validation techniques used to reinforce and validate my findings.

Mixed-Methods Design

Triangulation combines several research methods to overcome the weaknesses or biases that may arise from the employment of a single method within a study. In this study I blended data collected from surveys and interviews to acquire a broader, richer account of intercultural competence captured from different perspectives. Triangulating my data enabled me to draw parallels between my findings at discrete points in which the facts and figures generated from my analysis overlapped, coincided, or conflicted. It was at these pivotal points of intersection that I was able elevate my understanding of the phenomenon by drawing on information from either data set to strengthen, clarify, and validate the results of the other, thereby creating harmony in my research.

Member Checking

Interviews were audio recorded, transcribed, and sent to the preservice teachers for their final review and approval. The five preservice teachers who participated in the interview stage of this study were asked to carefully read through their transcripts to confirm or refute their representation within the data. This technique is arguably the most critical for establishing credibility in qualitative research since it provides participants with an opportunity to correct errors and challenge misinterpretations before their words and statements are shared with others.

Peer and/or Committee Review

I also collaborated with novice and experienced qualitative researchers to reduce any biases or the assumptions appearing in my research that would negatively impact its validity. Additionally, this strategy shed additional insights on the themes uncovered in my analysis and

the conceptual frameworks used to ground my study. Drafts of my thesis were sent to my advisory committee for their review and feedback, which was enriched by their specialized backgrounds in teacher education, phenomenology, Aboriginal education, and equity and diversity education. I also consulted with a PhD student completing a degree in Educational Administration who has also adopted a qualitative approach to examine higher education. The hard questions these individuals raised throughout our discussions on my methods, meanings, and interpretations kept me honest and inspired me to think critically about how I have formulated and presented my data.

Clarifying Researcher Bias

In addition to employing the triangulation strategies mentioned above, from the outset I bracketed myself from the investigation by assuming the phenomenological attitude or *epoché* accomplished through the process of journaling. My reflective journal helped me hold my preconceived assumptions of intercultural competence in abeyance (Downing, 2007) through critical personal reflection and intuitive understanding of my presumptions towards the phenomenon.

Ethical Considerations

Recruiting the preservice teachers was more challenging than I had originally anticipated, in fact, new obstacles presented after each step (or misstep) taken once my thesis proposal was defended and approved by my advisory committee. My initial ethics application was fairly comprehensive and fulfilled the general requirements of ENREB. The first page of my application package included a project summary that described my research objectives and main questions, data collection methods, study participants, procedures for obtaining consent, and, strategies for protecting the preservice teachers' confidentiality and anonymity. The remaining

pages of the document included my sample research protocol – including consent forms, interview questions, recruitment emails, and a copy of the *Intercultural Sensitivity Scale*.

After formally reviewing my research application the ethics review board questioned the significance of the cross-cultural education course to my study and requested further information on my recruitment process and the strategies proposed to minimize my participants' risk of harm. Once I had successfully satisfied the Board's requirements and answered their questions with further information I was permitted access to the preservice teachers.

Chapter Summary

This chapter highlights the methodology and methods used in this study to uncover the essential characteristics of intercultural competence present among a group of preservice teachers enrolled in a required cross-cultural education course. A mixed-methods research approach was employed to capture different dimensions of the phenomenon of intercultural competence and to reinforce the validity of the data obtained from descriptive surveys. Ten individuals participated in the first phase, which involved the administration of surveys to capture their intercultural sensitivity. A smaller selection of five preservice teachers was interviewed in the second phase of this study.

As described in this chapter, research was conducted in two distinct phases. In the first stage Chen and Starosta's *Intercultural Sensitivity Scale* was administered to ten preservice teachers to capture their emotional response to cultural diversity as manifested by six affective characteristics: open-mindedness, empathy, non-judgment, self-monitoring, interaction involvement, and self-esteem. The second stage of this assignment was executed through interviews held with a sample of five preservice teachers, and was specifically designed to explore the nature of their lived-experience of intercultural competence. Survey results were

descriptively analyzed and combined with the findings obtained through descriptive phenomenological analysis of the interview data. The following chapter presents the results obtained from administration of each method and the fusion of these two distinct, yet complementary data sets.

Chapter 4
Presentation of Data

In the previous chapter, I described the design of this report along with the methods used to explore and validate the phenomenological experience of intercultural competence. I used a mixed-methods approach to examine the intercultural skillsets of ten (10) preservice teachers enrolled in a mandatory cross-cultural education course as part of their B.Ed. program requirements. In this chapter, I present the findings from my inquiry. First, the preservice teachers' demographic backgrounds are described with respect to their age, gender, culture and/or ethnicity. This information was captured by their responses to the addendum of the survey and helped me personalize their results. Second, the preservice teachers' responses to the ISS are described with reference to the factoral outcomes of the scale: *interaction engagement*, *respect for cultural diversity*, *interaction confidence*, *interaction enjoyment*, and *interaction attentiveness*, and the relationship of these factors to the affective characteristics of their intercultural sensitivity. Lastly, the data obtained from interviews held with five (n=5) preservice teachers are described with respect to their responses to eight (8) phenomenological interview questions modelled after each factor of their intercultural sensitivity. While conceptually based, surveys allowed me to gauge the magnitude of the preservice teachers' feelings towards people from different cultures. Interviews, however, were based on their subjective intercultural experiences and were employed to deepen my understanding of the characteristics of their intercultural competence.

Reporting Considerations

My investigation into the preservice teachers' intercultural competence unfolded in two distinct yet interrelated stages. Ten preservice teachers (n=10) enrolled in consecutive terms of a mandatory cross-cultural education course completed the ISS during the initial data collection

stage. A sub-section of five preservice teachers (n=5) recruited from the survey volunteered to take part in interviews plumbing their more phenomenological impressions. Interviews provided me with greater insight on their intercultural experiences and ensuing attitudes, thoughts, and behaviours towards cultural diversity.

The preservice teachers' intercultural sensitivity was captured by their survey responses and is manifested by six personal qualities exhibited in their interactions with people from different cultures. Intercultural sensitivity is presented here as a separate dimension of intercultural competence distinguished by one's self-esteem, open-mindedness, interaction involvement, self-monitoring, non-judgment, and empathy (Chen et al., 2000). These characteristics are exclusive to this domain and therefore absent from the other two conceptual dimensions of intercultural competence: *intercultural awareness* and *intercultural adroitness*.

While useful to my understanding of intercultural competence, the ISS skims the surface of the preservice teachers' intercultural sensitivity since it fails to delve into the nature of their intercultural experiences. Furthermore, the survey provides a one-dimensional account of their experience of intercultural competence thus simplifying its essence. To overcome the limitations of the survey, I conducted interviews with a subset of 5 (n=5) preservice teachers to elaborate my understanding of their intercultural sensitivity, as well as uncover the shared characteristics of other dimensions of their intercultural competence.

With interviews, I was able to explore the preservice teachers' intercultural narratives and develop insight on the situational and environmental contexts in which their experiences were acquired. Discussions were structured around eight (8) interview questions based on the five factors of the intercultural sensitivity measure (Chen & Starosta, 2000). These factors provide descriptive evidence of the intercultural sensitivity of the 10 participants and were used to bridge

the survey and interview findings. While the outcomes reported in this study are supported by verifiable evidence, the results generated from this investigation are exploratory and not generalizable due to the qualitative nature of the design. Therefore the results should be viewed solely within the context of this study and compared only to findings that are similar in design and intent (Dong, et al, 2008; Garmon, 2004; Locke, 2009; Siwatu, 2011; Sleeter, 2009; Spinthourakis et al, 2009; Walker-Dalhouse et al, 2006).

Description of Preservice Teachers' Demographic Backgrounds

The demographic data identifies the age, gender, cultural, and/or self-identified ethnic backgrounds of the preservice teachers. Each preservice teacher's name has been anonymized as per the ethics process to comply with the research requirements of the university in which these individuals were enrolled. The demographic data provides structural information that anchors their survey responses to the answers they provided during phenomenological interviews. Of the ten individuals (n=10) who completed the ISS, 60% (n=6) were female, the other 40% (n=4) identified as male. The preservice teachers ranged in age from 22 to 50 years old. Betty, at age 50, was the oldest person surveyed in this study while Michael, at age 22, was the youngest – see Table 3 for details.

The preservice teachers' sociocultural and ethnic backgrounds are diverse. Although 6/10 of the preservice teachers are Caucasian, they hold varying perspectives on their racial, cultural, and/or ethnic identities. For instance, Jeremy (Caucasian/Anglo Saxon) and Michael (Caucasian/Canadian) define their identities in terms of their race and/or ethnicity, however Peyton (Caucasian) and Brett (White) identify exclusively with their race. In contrast, Ivy and Graham distinguish themselves as members of an ethno-religious Mennonite group, although Ivy most closely identifies as Canadian.

Daisy, Rose, and Monica's sociocultural and ethnic backgrounds are even more distinct. For instance, Daisy identifies as First Nations or more specifically Ojibwe – an Annishiaabeg group of Indigenous people, whereas both Monica (West Indian-Canadian) and Rose (Canadian-Pakistani) connect their bicultural identities to their nationality and ethnicity. Note that Betty did not disclose details on her sociocultural background in her survey responses and so her culture and/or ethnicity are not described in this report.

In addition to their participation in the ISS, Jeremy, Monica, Rose, Daisy, and Ivy were interviewed in the second phase of this study. This sub-section of preservice teachers is closer in age, predominately female, and more culturally/ethnically diverse than the larger sample from which they were selected. Interviewees ranged in age from 23-33 years old, and 4/5 of the preservice teachers' (e.g. 80%) were female. Jeremy and Ivy were the only Caucasian students interviewed in this study; the sociocultural and ethnic backgrounds of their counterparts, specifically Daisy (Ojibwe), Monica (West Indian-Canadian), and Rose (Canadian-White-Pakistani) were notably less homogenous.

The following table summarizes the preservice teachers' demographic backgrounds as described by their gender, culture and/or ethnicity, and age. Note once again that the names appearing in this report are pseudonyms created to protect the anonymity of those surveyed and/or interviewed.

Table 3:
Demographic backgrounds of preservice teachers

Gender/Sociocultural Background		**Participants**	**Age**
Female		**6**	
Ivy	Canadian (of Russian Mennonite and Icelandic descent)	1	23
Peyton	Caucasian	1	23
Daisy	First Nation (Ojibwe)	1	28
Monica	West Indian-Canadian	1	33
Rose	Canadian-White-Pakistani	1	25
Betty	(Blank)	1	50
Male		**4**	
Michael	Caucasian / Canadian	1	22
Jeremy	Caucasian / Anglo Saxon	1	25
Graham	Mennonite	1	25
Brett	White	1	23

Presentation of Survey Results

The following section describes the preservice teachers' survey results with respect to the factors and characteristics of their intercultural sensitivity. The following information is presented in increasing levels of granularity whereby the most sophisticated description of their intercultural sensitivity is provided by their survey responses. To begin, I present the preservice teachers' cumulative intercultural sensitivity scores along with their results for the factors of *interaction engagement, respect for cultural diversity, interaction confidence, interaction enjoyment,* and *interaction attentiveness*, which are described in relation to six characteristics of intercultural sensitivity. Lastly, I present the preservice teachers' answers to 24 survey questions to provide an additional layer of depth and complexity to their results.

Overview of Preservice Teacher Intercultural Sensitivity

Michael and Daisy reported the highest overall scores for intercultural sensitivity among those who were surveyed. Out of a maximum score of 120, Michael received 107 points while Daisy received 102. With a score range of 80-88, Ivy, Monica, Betty, and Jeremy articulated the

least sensitive opinions on cultural diversity as compared to the sentiments shared by their counterparts. Incidentally, Peyton, Brett, Graham, and Rose's respective scores of 90, 92, 93, and 97 were juxtaposed between the highest and lowest marks reported by all survey respondents.

While revealing the magnitude of their feelings towards cultural diversity, the preservice teachers' cumulative ISS scores offer little more than a generic, nondescript account of their emotional response to sustained intercultural contact and interaction. For instance, their ISS scores do not clearly explicate the dimensions of their intercultural sensitivity nor do they define its features. To attain insight on the structural features and shared characteristics of their intercultural sensitivity, I evaluated the distribution of their survey scores across all factors of their intercultural sensitivity. The table below displays the preservice teachers' overall score for intercultural sensitivity, as well as their scores for each of its constituent factors.

As illustrated in Table 4, the preservice teachers' cumulative intercultural sensitivity scores are composed of their results for the factors of: interaction engagement, respect for cultural diversity, interaction confidence, interaction enjoyment, and interaction attentiveness. While their scores are weighted differently, in several instances the point difference between their cumulative ISS scores was no greater than 1 or 2 marks – see Table 4 for further details on Monica, Betty, Jeremy, Peyton, Brett, and Graham's survey results.

Table 4
Preservice teachers' intercultural sensitivity scores distributed across five factors

Name	ISS Score	Interaction Engagement	Respect for Cultural Diversity	Interaction Confidence	Interaction Enjoyment	Interaction Attentiveness
Ivy	80	26	22	12	10	10
Monica	84	26	21	13	12	12
Betty	86	24	23	17	12	10
Jeremy	88	25	24	17	12	10
Peyton	90	26	22	20	14	8
Brett	92	29	22	19	12	10
Graham	93	27	27	15	15	9
Rose	97	27	26	20	12	12

Daisy	102	27	25	22	15	14
Michael	107	35	29	18	15	10

For instance, the ISS scores recorded for Brett (92/120) and Graham (93/120) are nearly identical even though their intercultural sensitivity is composed differently. Whereas Brett's scores for interaction engagement (29/35), interaction confidence (19/25), and interaction attentiveness (10/15) are higher than Graham's, Graham received five more points (+5) for respect for cultural diversity (27/35) and three additional points (+3) for interaction enjoyment than Brett received for these two factors. On the other hand, both Ivy (80/120) and Michael (107/120) reported ISS scores on each end of the scoring spectrum, even though their results for interaction attentiveness (10/15) are the same.

While the preservice teachers' ISS scores showcase the intensity of their emotional response to cultural diversity, the factors of their intercultural sensitivity delineate the parameters of their feelings and offer significantly more clarity on how their sensitivity manifests in intercultural interaction.

Description of Each Factor of Preservice Teacher Intercultural Sensitivity

In this section, I describe the individual factors of the preservice teachers' intercultural sensitivity with respect to how they are structured and exhibited in intercultural interaction. Each of the five factors represents an empirical indicator of intercultural sensitivity as defined by several key features captured and measured by the ISS.

Interaction engagement. Interaction engagement refers to one's feelings or willingness to participate in intercultural situations and/or events. This factor represents 29% of the preservice teachers' overall survey results and is believed to have the greatest impact on their intercultural sensitivity scores. Their interaction engagement is exhibited by all six affective

characteristics captured by their responses to survey questions 1, 11, 13, 21, 22, 23, & 24 – see Table 5 for further details.

Table 5
Questions and characteristics related to interaction engagement

Survey questions	**Characteristics of intercultural sensitivity**
#1: I enjoy interacting with people from different cultures.	Self-esteem, open-mindedness, non-judgment
#11: I tend to wait before forming an impression of culturally distinct counterparts.	Non-judgment, open-mindedness, self-monitoring
#13: I am open-minded to people from different cultures.	Open-mindedness, non-judgment
#21: I often give positive responses to my culturally different counterpart during our interaction.	Interaction involvement, self-monitoring, self-esteem
#22: I avoid those situations where I will have to deal with culturally distinct persons.	Self-esteem, open-mindedness, non-judgment
#23:I often show my culturally distinct counterpart my understanding through verbal or non-verbal cues.	Self-monitoring, interaction involvement, empathy
#24: I have a feeling of enjoyment towards differences between my culturally distinct counterpart and me.	Self-esteem, open-mindedness, non-judgment

Apart from Daisy, 9/10 of the preservice teachers revealed that they either enjoy or strongly enjoy interacting with other cultures.

Respect for cultural diversity. Respect for cultural diversity refers to a person's ability to accept alternative cultural perspectives and values. This factor is comprised of six survey questions (2, 7, 8, 16, 18, and 20) and constitutes 25% of the preservice teachers' overall survey score – refer to Table 6 for additional information.

The preservice teachers' survey responses illuminate several fundamental features of their intercultural sensitivity, such as their open-mindedness, non-judgment, and empathy. As reported by their results, Michael (29/30) and Monica (21/30) record the highest and lowest respective scores for respect for cultural diversity while the remaining preservice teachers' survey scores were distributed within the range of 22-27 points.

Table 6
Questions and characteristics related to respect for cultural diversity

Survey questions	Characteristics of intercultural sensitivity
#2: I think people from other cultures are narrow-minded.	Open-mindedness, non-judgment, empathy
#7: I don't like to be with people from different cultures.	Non-judgment, open-mindedness, self-esteem
#8: I respect the values of people from different cultures.	Open-mindedness, empathy
#16: I respect the ways people from different cultures behave.	Open-mindedness, empathy
#18: I would not accept the opinions of people from different cultures.	Open-mindedness, empathy, non-judgment
#20:I think my cultures I better than other cultures.	Open-mindedness, non-judgment

Interaction confidence. Interaction confidence refers to a person's ability to remain poised in various intercultural situations. The preservice teachers' interaction confidence is exhibited by their self-esteem, self-monitoring, and interaction involvement, and is captured by their responses to survey questions 3, 4, 5, 6, and 10 (see Table 7 for details).

Table 7
Questions and characteristics related to interaction confidence

Survey questions	Characteristics of intercultural sensitivity
#3: I am pretty sure of myself in interaction with people from different cultures.	Self-esteem, self-monitoring
#4: I find it very hard to talk in front of people from different cultures,	Self-esteem, self-monitoring
#5: I always know what to say when interacting with people from different cultures.	Self-esteem, self-monitoring
#6: I can be as sociable as I want to be when interacting with people from different cultures.	Self-esteem, self-monitoring, interaction involvement
#10: I feel confident when interacting with people from different cultures.	Self-esteem

Scores recorded for the factor of interaction confidence were more varied than those reported for the previous two factors. The preservice teachers' scores for interaction confidence ranged between 12 to 22 marks, and Daisy, Peyton, and Rose reported the highest scores among all 10 preservice teachers described in this report.

Interaction enjoyment. Interaction enjoyment refers to a person's ability to convey delight in their interactions with people from different cultures. This factor makes up 13% of

each preservice teacher's survey score and is characterized by their open-mindedness, self-monitoring, empathy, and self-esteem, which are measured by their responses to questions 3, 12, & 15 – see Table 8 for details. Results for interaction enjoyment were consistent among all individuals such that 9/10 of the preservice teachers received scores within the range of 12-15 points; note that Ivy was the only individual to receive a score outside this range (e.g., 10/15).

Table 8
Questions and characteristics related to interaction enjoyment

Survey questions	**Characteristics of intercultural sensitivity**
#3: I get upset easily when interacting with people from different cultures.	Open-mindedness, self-monitoring, empathy, non-judgment
#12: I often get discouraged when I am with people from different cultures.	Self-esteem
#15: I often feel useless when interacting with people from different cultures.	Self-esteem

Interaction attentiveness: Scores tabulated for interaction attentiveness, a factor equal in weighted value, were generally lower among all preservice teachers. Here the phrase *interaction attentiveness* is used to refer to the intimacy of a person's cultural observations and interactions as displayed by their interaction involvement, open-mindedness, non-judgment, self-monitoring, and self-esteem. The preservice teachers' interaction attentiveness is captured by their responses to survey questions 14, 17, & 19 – see Table 9 for details. Peyton and Graham received the lowest overall scores for this indicator (8 and 9 points, respectively) whereas Daisy received the highest score (e.g., 14/15). Rose and Monica each scored 12 marks for this factor while the remaining 5 (n=5) preservice teachers each received 10 marks.

Table 9
Questions and characteristics related to interaction attentiveness

Survey questions	**Characteristics of intercultural sensitivity**
#14: I am very observant when interacting with people from different cultures.	Interaction involvement
#17: I try to obtain as much information as I can when interacting with people from different cultures.	Open-mindedness, non-judgment, interaction involvement
#19: I am sensitive to my culturally distinct counterparts subtle meaning during our interaction.	Interaction involvement, empathy, self-monitoring

Description of Preservice Teachers Survey Responses

In the previous section of this chapter, I described the structure and features of the preservice teachers' intercultural sensitivity. Here I offer a refined description of their intercultural sensitivity as exemplified by their individual survey responses. The following information was gleaned from the preservice teachers' answers to 24 questions clustered within the factors of interaction engagement, respect for cultural diversity, interaction confidence, interaction engagement, and interaction attentiveness.

Interaction engagement. The preservice teachers' responses to questions 1, 11, 21, 22, 23, and 24 reveal the extent to which they are willing to participate in intercultural interactions – see Figure 4 for additional details.

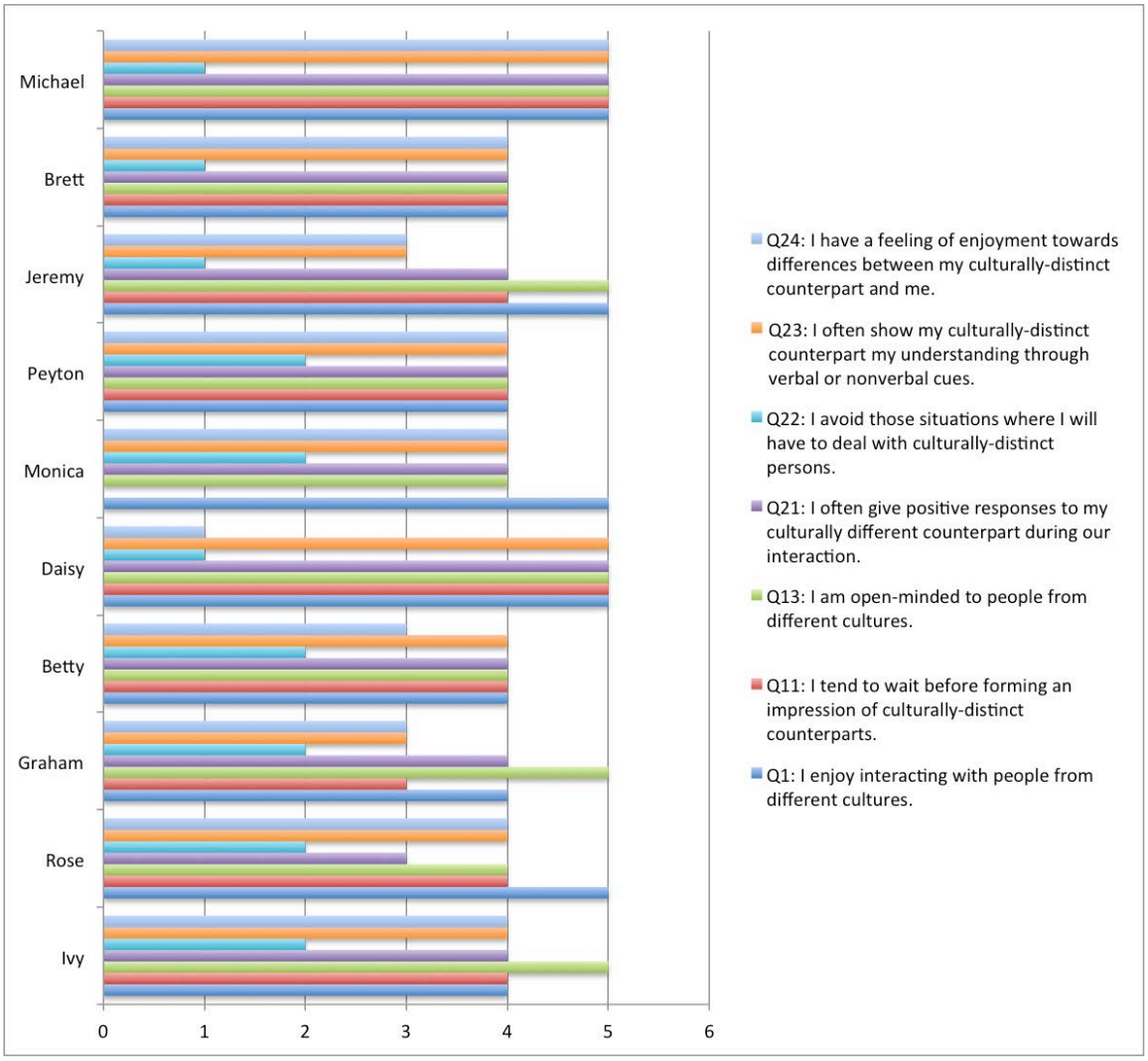

Figure 4 – Survey questions and answers related to Interaction Engagement

Generally speaking, the preservice teachers share similar perspectives on their willingness to participate in intercultural relations as evident from their survey responses. Yet there are a few notable exceptions where their answers were vague. For instance, 4/10 preservice teachers expressed uncertainty in their answers to three survey questions related to their interaction engagement. Specifically, Graham, Rose, Jeremy, and Betty are unsure of their ability to keep a consistent open-mind towards people from different cultures (Graham – see response to question 11); respond positively to intercultural situations (Rose – see response to question 21)); convey understanding in their intercultural interactions (Jeremy & Graham – see responses to

question 23); and, enjoy the intercultural experiences and/or events in which they participate (Jeremy, Graham, & Betty – see their responses to question 24).

While Jeremy, Graham, Betty, and Rose are unsure about their feelings towards particular statements, Daisy responds confidently to each question, even when expressing unpopular opinions. For instance, when asked to respond to question 24 Daisy is the only preservice teacher to strongly disagree with the statement – *I have a feeling of enjoyment towards differences between my culturally distinct counterpart and me*.

Respect for cultural diversity. The preservice teachers' answers to questions associated with their respect for cultural diversity were consistent. Precisely 7/10 survey respondents expressed strong feelings of appreciation towards cultural diversity by either agreeing or disagreeing with a particular statement. While Peyton and Brett's responses are comparable to their counterparts, they are somewhat hesitant to fully embrace every experience of cultural diversity as per their answers to question 16 – see Figure 5 for details.

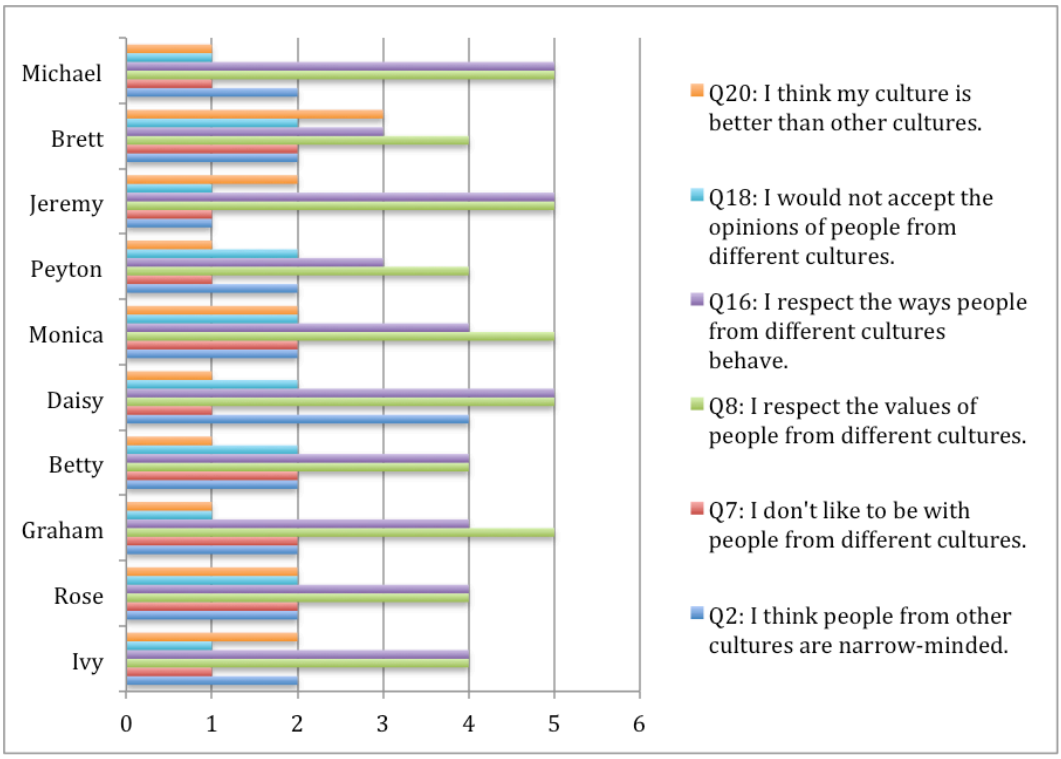

Figure 5 –Survey questions and answers related to Respect for Cultural Diversity

While 9/10 the preservice teachers disagree with question 20 – *I think that my culture is better than others*, Brett is undecided on whether or not he agrees with the statement. And even though Daisy receives the fourth highest score for this factor (e.g. 25/30) she unexpectedly feels that people from different cultures are narrow-minded based on her response to question 2.

Interaction confidence. The preservice teachers' answers to questions 3, 4, 5, 6, & 10 are considerably more variable than their answers to questions associated with their interaction engagement and respect for cultural diversity. Rose, Peyton, and Brett were the only individuals who did not convey uncertainty in at least one of their survey responses. Even so, Peyton is not always confident in her ability to interact with people from different cultures (see Peyton's response to question 3) nor is she always sure of what to say in culturally diverse social environments (see answer to question 5) – refer to Figure 6 for more details on the preservice teachers' survey responses.

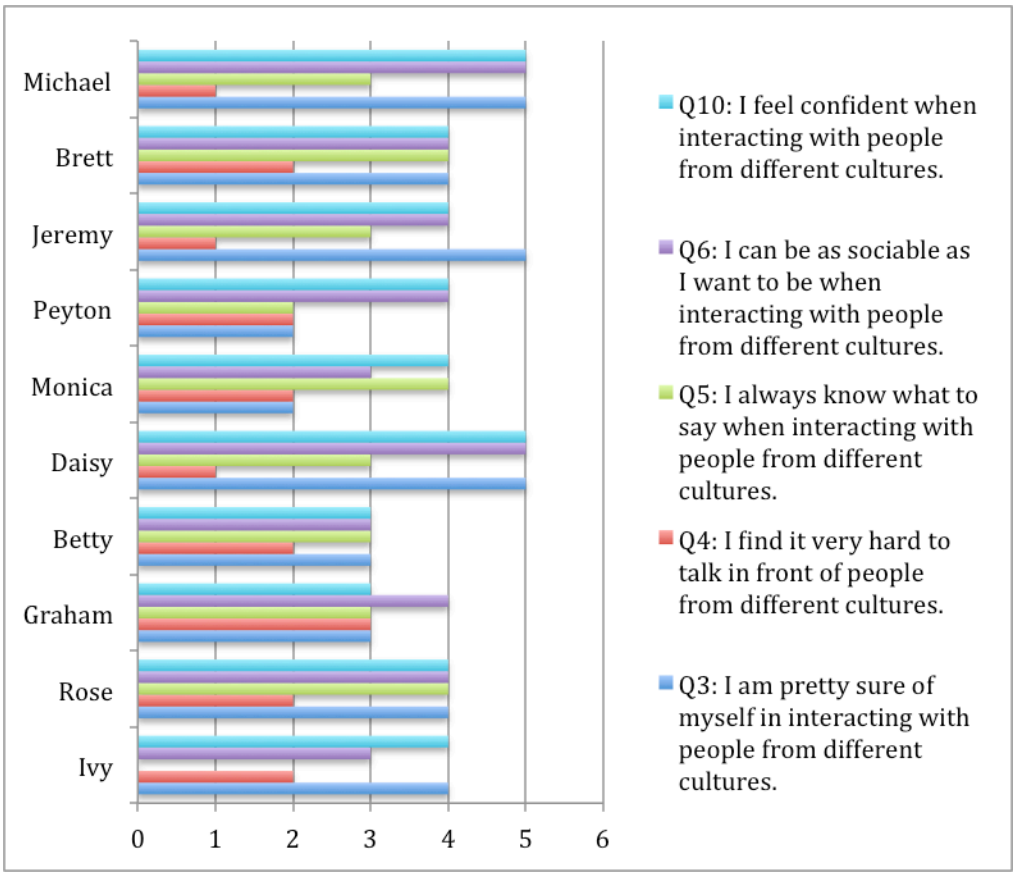

Figure 6 –Survey questions and answers related to Interaction Confidence

Likewise, Graham and Betty are notably insecure in their intercultural communication skills as evident from their responses to 4/5 of the questions clustered within this factor. Question 5 – *I always know what to say when interacting with people from different cultures* – was especially polarizing and yielded the widest range of responses from survey respondents. For instance, Rose, Monica, and Brett agree with question 5 whereas Peyton disagrees with how it depicts her interaction confidence. Apart from Ivy, who did not respond to this question, the remaining five preservice teachers (5/10) expressed uncertainty in their ability to confidently speak to people from different cultures.

Interaction enjoyment. As a whole, the preservice teachers disagree with all three statements about their enjoyment of cultural diversity. It is important to note that one's

disagreement with each negatively keyed survey item produces a relatively high score for this factor. While 9/10 preservice teachers' disagree with all statements made in questions 9, 12, and 15 (see Figure 7 for more details), Rose is not sure if she always feels encouraged to interact with people from different cultures as per her response to question 12.

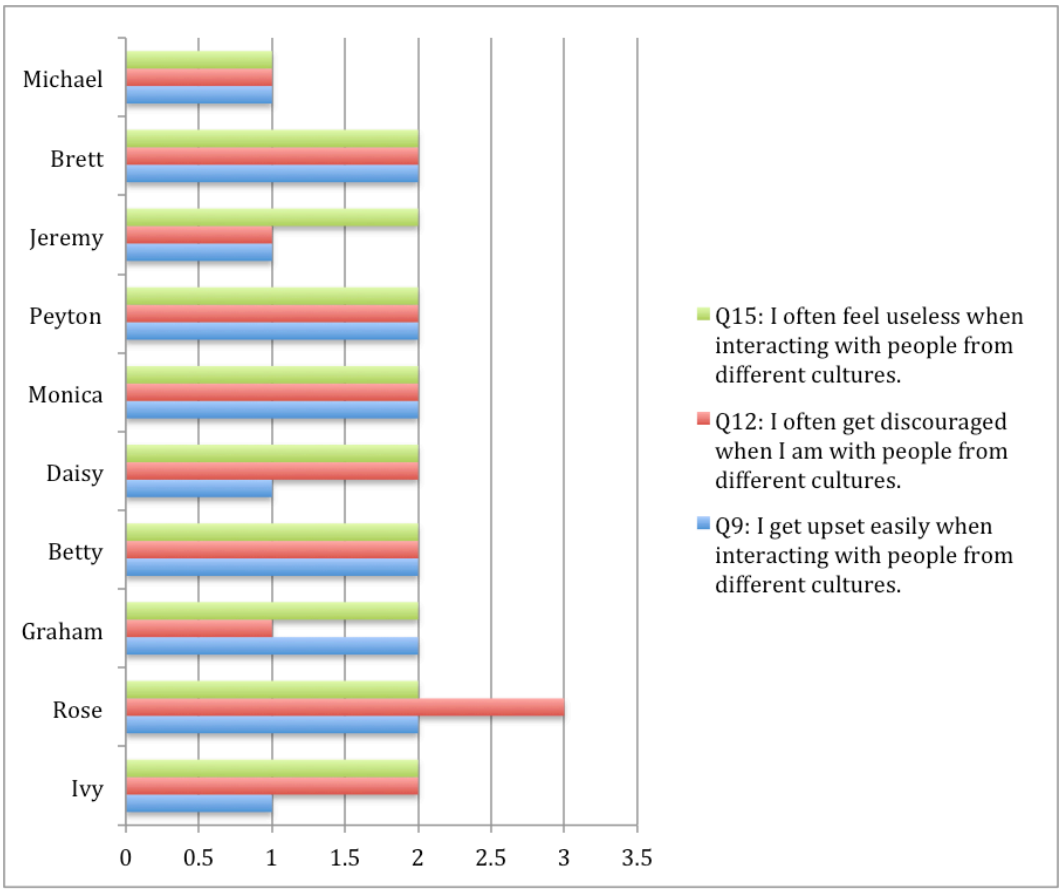

Figure 7 – Survey questions and answers related to Interaction Enjoyment

Interaction attentiveness. Collectively, the preservice teachers' are uncertain about how well they attend to observable differences between themselves and people from different cultures. Exactly 7/10 of the preservice teachers were undecided on their responsiveness and consideration towards people from different cultures as indicated by their answers to questions 14, 17, and 19 – see Figure 8 for more details. Notably, Graham, Jeremy, Betty, and Michael are

incredibly uncertain about their attentiveness as evident from their responses to two or more questions associated with this factor.

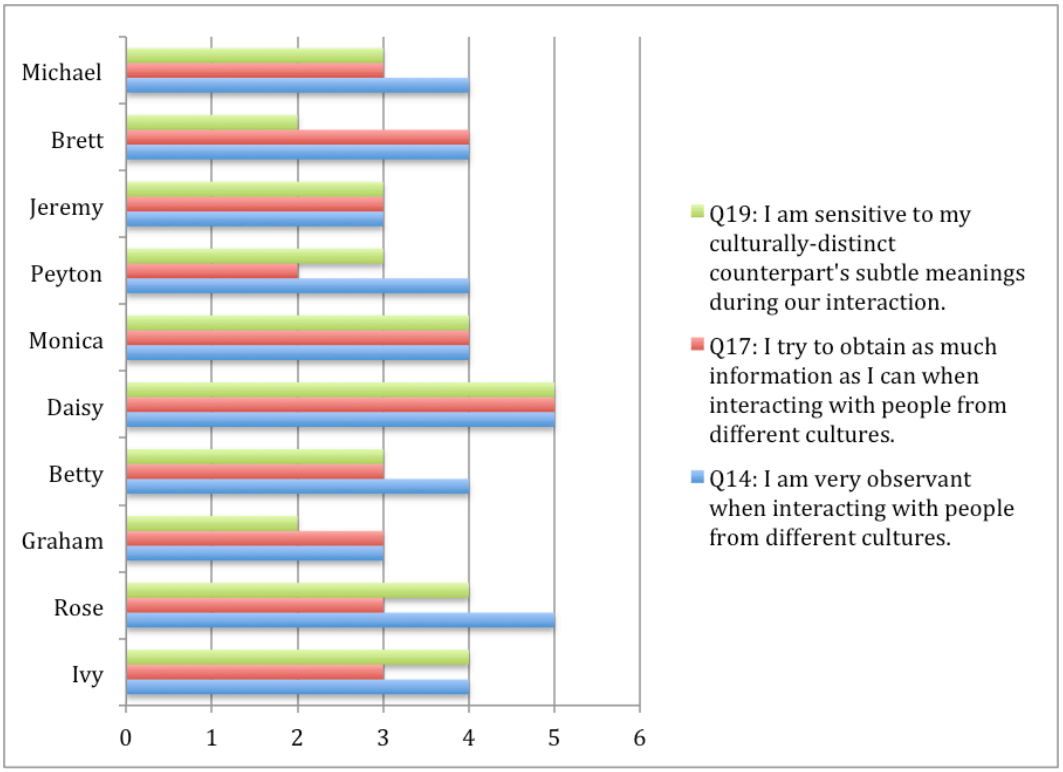

Figure 8 – Survey questions and answers related to Interaction Attentiveness

While 8/10 preservice teachers either agree with or are uncertain of their feelings towards a particular statement, Graham and Brett do not feel they are sensitive enough to their culturally distinct counterpart's subtle meanings as per their response to question 19.

Summary of Survey Results

Although the preservice teachers differ in sociocultural background and cross-cultural experience, they are remarkably sensitive to other cultures as demonstrated by their open-mindedness, empathy, non-judgment, self-monitoring, interaction involvement, and self-esteem. These characteristics underline their ability to project and receive positive emotional responses during and after their interactions with people from different cultures. Nonetheless, their responses to questions related to their interaction confidence and attentiveness reveal that they

are somewhat insecure about their feelings towards cultural diversity and slightly unconscious of the differences that present in their intercultural interactions.

While the ISS revealed the general features and characteristics of the preservice teachers' intercultural sensitivity, their survey scores do not describe how these characteristics appear in their intercultural interactions. Moreover, given the myriad ways in which their intercultural sensitivity is displayed in their intercultural relationships, it is not always detected in the same manner. For instance, even though Daisy receives the second highest intercultural sensitivity score (102/120), when placed in certain intercultural contexts she may appear cold and ill-mannered, as evident from her responses to questions related to her interaction engagement (question #24) and respect for cultural diversity (question #2). Likewise, while Brett receives an overall score of 92/120 on the ISS and generally appears engaged, respectful, confident, and enthusiastic in intercultural encounters, he inwardly struggles to remain attentive to the differences that present in these social situations.

For these reasons, I employed phenomenological interviews to contextualize and apprehend additional details of the preservice teachers' intercultural sensitivity. Their intercultural narratives crystallized my understanding of their intercultural sensitivity (as previously described by the ISS) and illuminated features of other dimensions of their intercultural competence (e.g. *intercultural awareness* and *adroitness*). In other words, phenomenological interviews allowed me to explore the preservice teachers' intercultural competence from within the context of their subjective intercultural experiences.

In the remaining paragraphs of this chapter, I describe the themes obtained from my analysis of the preservice teachers' lived-experience of intercultural competence. This information was gathered from phenomenological interviews held with five of the ten preservice

teachers' surveyed in the first phase of this study. Ivy, Jeremy, Daisy, Monica, and Rose were recruited from the survey to participate in a series of discussions focused on their intercultural experiences. These experiences were later parsed and analyzed to determine the characteristics of each dimension of their intercultural competence.

Presentation of Preservice Teachers' Interview Results

Data gathered from phenomenological interviews were used to structure and describe the essential features of the preservice teachers' intercultural competence. To recap, interviews were based on eight (8) questions modelled after the five factors of intercultural sensitivity captured and assessed by the ISS. These questions were specifically used to bridge the survey and interview data, as well as contextualize the intercultural experiences that have impacted the preservice teachers' feelings, thoughts, and behaviours towards people from different cultural and/or ethnic backgrounds.

In Chapters 1 and 3 I identified and described the conceptual model that frames my understanding of intercultural competence, namely Chen and Starosta's (1996) *Intercultural Communication Competence* model. Intercultural competence is developed by a variety of thoughts, feelings, and behaviours expressed by different personal domains. For instance, intercultural sensitivity corresponds to the affective dimension of intercultural competence, which is structured by the factors of *interaction engagement*, *respect for cultural diversity*, *interaction confidence*, *interaction enjoyment*, and *interaction attentiveness* (Fritz et al., 2002). Six personal traits, namely *self-esteem*, *self-monitoring*, *empathy*, *open-mindedness*, *non-judgment*, and *interaction involvement* underscore each factor and imbue it with certain qualities.

While the ISS provides a sufficient description of the preservice teachers' intercultural sensitivity, it does not address the other features and dimensions of their intercultural

competence, specifically their *intercultural awareness* and *adroitness.* To remediate this issue, I held phenomenological interviews with Jeremy, Rose, Ivy, Daisy, and Monica to develop a comprehensive understanding of their intercultural competence. Through application of Giorgi's descriptive phenomenological method, I uncovered seven (7) characteristics of their intercultural competence, specifically: *self-esteem, empathy, and open-mindedness* (intercultural sensitivity); *perception* and *self-awareness* (intercultural awareness); and, *curiosity* and self-*confidence* (intercultural adroitness). Note that three of these traits (e.g. self-esteem, empathy, and open-mindedness) were uncovered in my analysis of the preservice teachers' survey data. Here these characteristics are described with respect to the situational and/or environmental contexts in which they appear in intercultural interaction.

Before I present the results obtained from my interviews with Monica, Daisy, Rose, Jeremy, and Ivy, I will pause here for a moment to re-introduce the questions that allowed me to explore their intercultural experiences (see Table 10 for details).

Table 10
Phenomenological interview questions and relationship to factors of intercultural sensitivity

Interview questions	**Factors of intercultural sensitivity**
Question 1: *Tell me about your cultural background?*	Contextual
Question 2: *Describe your experiences with people from different cultures?*	Contextual
Question 3: *How do you learn about different cultures?*	Interaction Engagement
Question 4: *How do you build relationships with people from different cultures?*	Interaction Engagement
Question 5: *Describe your feelings when interacting with people from different cultures?*	Interaction Enjoyment
Question 6: *Can you describe a situation and/or event when you felt uncertain about how to interact with people from other cultures?*	Interaction Confidence
Question 7: *How do you demonstrate your appreciation of cultural diversity?*	Respect for Cultural Diversity
Question 8: *How do you remain engaged when interacting with people from different cultures?*	Interaction Attentiveness

The first two questions allowed me to explore the situational or environmental context of the preservice teachers' cross-cultural experiences. The next six interview questions (questions 3-8) captured concrete details of the experiences that define their feelings, thoughts, and behaviours toward people from different cultures. Questions 3 & 4 are based on the factor of *interaction engagement* and assessed the preservice teachers' willingness to engage in intercultural interactions (see *Appendix A* on page 223 for the entire list of interview questions used in this investigation). Question 5 corresponds to the factor of *interaction enjoyment* and captured the preservice teachers' positive or negative reactions to intercultural communication. Question 6 is related to the factor of *interaction confidence* and evaluates the preservice teachers' confidence in their interactions with other cultures. Question 7 is based on the factor of *respect for cultural diversity* and examined their appreciation for cultural diversity. The eighth, and final interview question, gauged the preservice teachers' *interaction attentiveness* to determine their responsiveness to the cultural nuances present in their intercultural interactions.

The following paragraphs describe the data obtained from phenomenological interviews held with Monica, Daisy, Jeremy, Rose, and Ivy. This information offers further insight into the nature of their intercultural sensitivity, as well as the context for the cognitive and behavioural qualities exhibited in their intercultural interactions.

Phenomenological Description of Preservice Teacher Intercultural Sensitivity

Despite notable differences in their sociocultural backgrounds and personal experiences with cultural diversity, Jeremy, Ivy, Monica, Daisy, and Rose share three characteristics that correspond to their intercultural sensitivity: *self-esteem*, *open-mindedness*, and *empathy*. These traits (e.g. themes) were uncovered through analysis of their interview transcripts and are presented in further detail below.

Self-esteem. The preservice teachers' self-esteem was revealed by their willingness to engage in intercultural relationships, experiences, and/or events (i.e., interaction engagement) and their optimism and confidence in these interactions (i.e., interaction enjoyment and confidence). In response to interview questions 3 & 4, five of the preservice teachers (n=5) indicated that they typically learn about and build relationships with people from different cultures through travel, work, school, and volunteer opportunities. Daisy, Jeremy, and Ivy have all lived within another culture for an extended period, which has bolstered their cultural awareness and confidence in their abilities to withstand the alienation, frustration, and stress that often accompanies intercultural contact.

Following his return from a year-long sojourn in South Korea, Jeremy reveals that he grew more enthusiastic about his relationships with people from different cultures, which he maintains is "the only way in which to build intercultural skills, just by surrounding yourself with an authentic version of that culture and developing a sense of how things are from there." (Jeremy, personal interview, June 11, 2015). When asked to describe his feelings towards interacting with people from different cultures (refer to interview question #5), Jeremy shares that he enjoys communicating with people from culturally distinct backgrounds and relating to them on a basic human level. Due to his self-esteem, Jeremy generally thinks well of others and maintains that despite our varied cultural backgrounds, "people are just people with the same morals and standards" (Jeremy, person interview, June 11, 2015).

Ivy's travel experiences most closely resemble Jeremy's. Ivy's visit to Guatemala, while at first exhilarating, was also emotionally daunting and she admits to initially struggling to acclimate herself to her new cultural surroundings. In response to question 4 - *How do you build relationships with people from different cultures*? Ivy revealed that she was ultimately able to

mediate her relationships with those around her and gain acceptance "by figuring out how to communicate and get from place to place with very basic language ability" (Ivy personal interview, June 26, 2015), which is evidence of her optimism and self-esteem.

Ivy's willingness to adapt to Guatemalan culture is mirrored by Rose's enthusiasm about working in a multicultural classroom environment. Rose's answer to question 6 – *Can you describe a situation and/or event when you felt uncertain about how to interact with people from other cultures*? showcases her feelings of unpreparedness. Even though Rose feels optimistic about differentiating her teaching style to accommodate the diverse needs and realities of her students she also understands that "every single child, every single case is going to be different and unique" (Rose, person interview, June 12, 2015).

While Rose is only able to anticipate her role as a multicultural teacher, Monica has steadily gained teaching experience as an educational assistant and international homestay parent. When asked to reveal her strategies for building relationships with people from different cultures (e.g. interview question #4), Monica admits that while both intercultural experiences have been psychologically stressful, she has been able to overcome these challenges by establishing positive and mutually enriching relationships with her domestic and international students due to the value she feels she brings to these relationships.

Daisy, who has overcome a spate of racist incidents since her arrival in Winnipeg, is undaunted by her past and maintains an optimistic outlook that instils confidence in her intercultural interactions. When asked to explain how she learns about different cultures (e.g. interview question #3), Daisy reveals that she attributes her cultural awareness to school and travel, which has not always been easy given the racism and discrimination she has regularly endured both inside and outside the classroom. In response to interview question 6, Daisy

described being involved in a blatantly racist incident on a bus in which she was openly denigrated by other passengers and caustically referred to as “another native mom” (Daisy, personal interview, June 26, 2015).

Rather than remaining silent Daisy chose to defend herself against her critics and, in so doing, exhibited her self-esteem and feelings of self-worth. Daisy reveals that she is admired by many of her professors and fellow students in the education program due to her background and presumed expertise on various Aboriginal issues. However, she does not feel entirely comfortable with this distinction since it can be “kind of intimidating at first when you have 90% of the [classroom] looking at you.”(Daisy, personal interview: June 26, 2015).

Empathy. Each preservice teacher recalled an experience that revealed his or her ability to relate to another person by viewing a particular situation or problem from his or her perspective. Empathy is related to the factors of *respect for cultural diversity*, *intercultural engagement*, and *intercultural enjoyment*, and was captured by the preservice teachers’ responses to interview questions 3, 4, 5, & 7. In our discussions about their past intercultural experiences with friends and family, Jeremy, Rose, Daisy, Ivy, and Monica displayed an ability to project themselves into another person’s experience so as to develop an awareness of their feelings, thoughts, or behaviours. For Ivy, assuming the perspective of colleagues whose religious background prohibits them from consuming pork. Ivy demonstrates her ability to shift her cultural perspective and assume the lens of the person with whom she is interacting by consciously preparing meals without pork for her co-workers.

Daisy’s empathy was uncovered through our discussions on her feelings of respect for other cultures (e.g. interview question #7). When asked to describe how she demonstrates appreciation for cultural diversity, Daisy asserts that she has learned to accept that her friends,

many of whom are Caucasian, are intolerant of certain aspects of her culture due to inherited and learned behaviours passed down from their parents. For this reason, Daisy does not fault them for misunderstanding and misrepresenting her culture since she feels it is "not their fault that their parents didn't go the extra mile to teach them about diversity, and other people, and other cultures" (Daisy, personal interview, June 26, 2015).

Ironically, Daisy's experience with her friends is parallel to Jeremy's relationship with his parents who he characterizes as narrow-minded and bigoted. Despite having been raised in a predominately Caucasian community, or what he mockingly refers to as 'white suburbia', Jeremy is incredibly intuitive and sensitive towards other cultures. In response to question #4, Jeremy discloses that his mother's fondness for Japanese cuisine did not translate into an appreciation for other cultures and that she and his father were remarkably insular towards people who were culturally and/or ethnically distinct. Jeremy concedes that he challenged his parents' "obvious prejudice" and xenophobia on several occasions, although he does not blame them for their ignorance "since everything in their lives has been [structured] around their own culture" (Jeremy, personal interview, June 11, 2015).

In much the same way that Jeremy was able to extend compassion towards his parents for their deep-seated ignorance, Rose, who was discriminated against by one of her friends' parents, responded to their intolerance with civility and a great deal of understanding, as captured in our conversation about her intercultural relationship building skills (interview question #4). Rose recalls being vilified and referred to as "white trash" by her friend's Indian parents due to her fair skin, a result of her mixed ethnic heritage. Despite their offensive behaviour towards her Rose is diplomatic and incredibly understanding of their prejudice given her family's history with racism and discrimination. She also expresses empathetic concern for her friend given her familiarity

with his contentious relationship with his parents who, she reveals, placed an inordinate amount of pressure on him "to hang out with people of the same culture, the same religion, and the same skin colour" (Rose, personal interview, June 12, 2015).

In her response to question 5 – *Describe your feelings when interacting with people from different cultures?* – Monica reveals that she sometimes finds it difficult to interact with several of the teachers in her school who stereotype her because she is 'brown'. She is also troubled by the fact that many of these individuals are ill-equipped to tackle the diversity in their classrooms given their inability or general unwillingness to effectively engage with their culturally diverse students on a personal level. Monica sees herself as an advocate for many of the students who "don't have anyone on staff who knows how to address their issues" (Monica, personal interview, June 08, 2015). In our discussion on multicultural education she frequently refers to the "large gay and lesbian population, the refugee students, and the Aboriginal students" who are without a voice, a reality she is able to empathize with as a cultural minority who has gone through many of the same experiences.

Open-mindedness. The preservice teachers are remarkably open-minded and accepting of cultural differences, as demonstrated by their intercultural narratives and as exhibited by their *respect for cultural diversity*, *interaction engagement*, *enjoyment*, and *attentiveness*. Interview questions 3, 4, 5, and 7 specifically capture Monica, Rose, Jeremy, Rose, and Daisy's open-mindedness, which is attributed to the extensive intercultural experiences they have acquired living among different cultures for prolonged periods of time. These experiences have broadened their cultural perspectives and prepared them to successfully co-exist with other cultures. In their narrative accounts of their varied intercultural experiences, the preservice teachers reveal a

willingness to discover new ways of life, learn different languages, and establish meaningful intercultural relationships.

Incidentally, acquiring a new language was an incredibly effective strategy for expanding the cultural consciousness of Monica and Ivy since it allowed them to interact more effectively with other cultures and introduced them to alternative worldviews. For instance, Monica learned to cope with the psychological demands of living with students from a number of different countries by learning German and French. When describing how she learned to overcome the challenges she faced as a homestay parent, Monica refers to her efforts to "try different things" and learn different languages, suggesting that it opened the door for her to explore the unique cultural worlds of her international students.

Learning Spanish prompted Ivy to engage more frequently and effectively with the locals in Guatemala during her brief residency in the country. She recalls feeling displaced and alienated from Guatemalan society due to language barriers and the striking dissimilarities that existed between her "home" culture and the culture of those born and raised in Guatemala. Despite its initial toll on her emotional wellbeing, Ivy learned to navigate a new system of values and beliefs, which led her to adopt the distinct culture and language of her cultural hosts. Her willingness to immerse herself in Guatemalan society ultimately alleviated her anxiety and encouraged her to engage more frequently and effectively with others. While she admits that she "couldn't do future tense very well and struggled to conjugate verbs" (Ivy, personal interview, June 26, 2015), Ivy's willingness to expand her cultural perspectives and outlook on the world is indicative of her resilience and open-mind.

Jeremy also struggled to acclimate to the unfamiliar sights and sounds of South Korea. He recalls experiencing "culture shock" and feeling disconnected from reality during his first

few weeks in the country. However, in time, Jeremy reveals that he grew more comfortable with his new surroundings and developed several relationships with the locals. His growing ease with South Korean culture inspired him to move beyond his comfort zone and discover new practices and traditions. Jeremy's open-mind is put on display in his description of his experience at a 'jjimjibang' – a South Korean spa house. Although he describes feeling intimidated by the "gigantic room filled with a bunch of baths and naked dudes" (Jeremy, personal interview, June 11, 2015), he was able to suspend his judgment and eventually acquiesce to the normalcy of the local custom. Jeremy credits his ability to remain "open to these experiences" (Jeremy, personal interview, June 11, 2015) with being able to meld within the culture over time.

Rose also praises her open-mind for her tendency "to talk to people and engage in conversations that are in no way, shape, or form insulting to the person [she] is communicating with " (Rose, personal interview, June 12, 2015). When asked to expand on her personal understanding of "open-mindedness", Rose reasons that open-minded people "make less assumptions and do not close their minds to certain aspects of things that may or may not have been previously heard." (Rose, personal interview, June 12, 2015). She reveals that she exhibited these behaviours in her interactions with the culturally diverse students she taught in her practicum, as well as in her communications with her culturally diverse friends.

Daisy's open-mindedness is demonstrated by her ability to develop meaningful friendships with people outside her dominant culture and/or ethnicity. When describing the nature of her intercultural interactions, Daisy shares that one of her closest friendships is with Suzy, a Nigerian student she met during a Christian fellowship. Even though Daisy is not Christian and is from a different culture, she and Suzy established a deep bond over their shared cultural histories and personal experiences with discrimination. Daisy's relationship with Suzy

reflects her ability to broaden her concept of the world through exposure and intimate contact with those she is visibly and culturally different from.

Phenomenological Description of Preservice Teacher Intercultural Awareness

Intercultural awareness represents the cognitive dimension of intercultural competence and is defined by a person's ability to distinguish between cultures and reduce the level of situational ambiguity and uncertainty in intercultural interactions (Chen & Starosta, 1997; Fritz et al., 2002). Monica, Jeremy, Daisy, Rose, and Ivy's intercultural awareness is exhibited by their self-awareness and perception as discovered through analysis of a few of their most significant intercultural experiences.

Self-awareness. The preservice teachers' self-awareness is demonstrated by their consciousness of self, or implicit understanding of their personal strengths and weaknesses, as well as their intimate thoughts, feelings, and behaviours towards self and others. Jeremy, Monica, Daisy, Ivy and Rose's self-awareness is revealed by their ability to: engage with different cultures (interview questions #3 & #4), express feelings of enjoyment when interacting with people from different cultures (interview question #5), and overcome ambiguous intercultural situations (interview question #6).

Jeremy's self-awareness was illuminated during our conversation about his experiences in South Korea. He recalls feeling displaced and disoriented, but also increasingly aware of his cultural identity, which he describes as "Canadian". Jeremy associates the awakening of his self-awareness in South Korea with "reverse cultural shock", which he characterizes as an existential process that forced him to examine discrete aspects of his racial identity. In the following excerpt Jeremy shares his impression on how he feels he was generally viewed and treated by South Koreans:

"*It was like reverse culture shock a little bit. It was like when I was there, they, first off, they love white people. Secondly, they love tall white men, so I was like golden there. I had a year of going out and essentially getting idolized and pampered.*" (Jeremy, personal interview, 2015).

While he admits to having been previously unaware of his race and social privilege, his newfound understanding of his status within society did not change how Jeremy viewed himself or how he expected to be treated by others. His self-awareness is evident from his capacity for introspection and his conscious awareness of his self-identity.

In much the same way Ivy also felt compelled to examine her self-awareness during her one-month visit to Japan. During her brief stay in the country at age 10, Ivy developed a heightened awareness of her self-identity by evaluating how she was recognized and treated by others. Ivy recalls feeling a distinct sense of **cultural otherness** throughout her entire experience in Japan, which led her to examine her cultural identity. Ivy reveals that she had never experienced feeling displaced before, or even marginalized given the predominance of her race and culture back home. However, in Japan, she and her sibling were often singled out since they were "the blonde kids [who] every once and awhile someone would come up to and say 'wow, look at your hair '[laughs]." (Ivy, personal interview, June 26, 2015). Ivy's experiences in Japan refined her perspective on her cultural identity and forced her to reflect on her pronounced physical and cultural differences, and the social value placed on the unique aspects of her cultural identity.

Whereas Ivy and Jeremy were renowned for their outward appearances, the opposite experience was true for Daisy whose ethnic background was regularly the source of tension and personal despair throughout her childhood. Daisy shares that she has experienced a distinct sense of otherness since living in Winnipeg to attend university. Daisy discloses that in grade school she was constantly made to feel inferior by her teachers and peers, which compelled her to

examine her value and place within society. Throughout her life, Daisy has cultivated a distinct sense of her cultural identity, which she is apt to defend against her most vocal critics – including her friends, family, community. While she is proud of her cultural heritage and "the beliefs, morals, and values passed on through generations" (Daisy, personal interview, June 26, 2017), Daisy is not ashamed of her education and the knowledge she has obtained from being exposed to other cultures, even though she has been accused of being "whitewashed" by some members of her cultural community.

The preservice teachers' self-awareness is not a predetermined aspect of their personalities but is rather a necessary outcome of their varied life experiences. For instance, Monica's self-awareness is connected to her developing ethnocultural identity, which she admits she has only recently come to accept as an adult. She describes feeling disconnected from her Trinidadian culture as a child mainly due to her family's discouragement since they "never wanted her to acknowledge her [cultural] distinctions" (Monica, personal interview, June 8, 2015). She also recalls feeling discriminated against by her extended family in Trinidad, causing her to retreat further away from her ethnic culture. After many years of deep and sustained consideration of her ethnicity and the origins of her previous denouncement of it, Monica reveals that she has recently arrived at a place in her life where she is able to fully embrace her ethnic heritage and feel comfortable with her discernable cultural differences.

While Monica wrestled with her cultural identity, Rose has always felt secure with her ethnicity. She concedes that she is often mistaken for being white due to her fair complexion, even though this is not how she sees or defines herself. Rose self-identifies as "half-Pakistani / half-British", and maintains that her culture is "westernized with Pakistani elements" (Rose, personal interview, June 12, 2015). Throughout our conversations about her family's history,

Rose displayed a clear understanding of self that is supported by her extended Pakistani family. In her interview responses she describes growing up among relatives who never treated her differently despite the fact that everyone on her mother's side "is very brown and [she] is like a ghost in comparison" (Rose, personal interview, June 12, 2015). As described in her narrative, Rose's self-awareness is derived from her ability to reconcile the discrete, yet complementary aspects of her cultural identity.

Perception. The preservice teachers' perception is demonstrated by their ability to detect cultural distinctions and nuances in their interactions with and/or observations of people from different cultures. In this study, perception refers to the preservice teachers' cognitive awareness of subtle cultural differences. This ability was captured by their responses to interview questions 3, 4, and 8, which were specifically designed to evaluate their *interaction engagement* and *attentiveness*.

When describing the intercultural experiences they acquired in the classroom or through travel, Jeremy, Rose, Ivy, Daisy, and Monica recall vivid details of the settings in which their intercultural interactions took place and the idiosyncratic behaviour of their cultural hosts, students, or in some cases, their students' parents. In Jeremy's colourful description of South Korea, he portrays society as congenial and welcoming, though somewhat unproductive and routinized. He marvels at the fact that "everything in South Korea is centralized around working and schooling, and leisure time is minimized" (Jeremy, personal interview, June 11, 2015). Jeremy's assertions are based on his immersive cultural experiences, which he feels "is the only way in which to gain any experience in intercultural relations [as opposed to] Folklorama or things like that."(Jeremy, personal interview, June 11, 2015).

Like Jeremy, Ivy also deepened her appreciation of culture by immersing herself in a different environment. Her experience in Guatemala elevated her cultural awareness beyond a superficial level and inspired her to reflect on her cultural values. When asked how she engaged with the locals in Guatemala Ivy describes her daily observations of their lifestyles and traditions, which provided her with tremendous insight on their distinct needs and values. In the following excerpt Ivy shares an experience she acquired in Guatemala that forced her to reflect on her cultural values and interpretation of wealth:

"*I remember the first time that I stayed at the place of my homestay like I walked in and there was a pretty big garden, and there were these rooms that were attached to a roof, but they didn't have walls, which was very interesting to me. Yeah, so I was like 'is this house finished?' I didn't understand that this was just the architectural design.*" (Ivy, personal interview, June 26, 2015).

Eventually, Ivy came to realize that the family she was staying with was in fact quite wealthy, though not to standards she is normally accustomed to at home. Her recognition of the lower value placed on wealth and material comfort in Guatemala broadened her perspective on the simplistic beauty of the culture.

As revealed by Monica, Rose, and Daisy's depictions of their student practicums, cultural perception can also be developed and refined through immersive multicultural classroom teaching experience. Rose describes her experience teaching in a Canadian classroom where 95% of the student population was Filipino. While the learning curve was admittedly steep, she learned how to navigate the school's culture and interact with parents with limited English language skills. She reveals that she often had to "use simple language" and "praise the child as a person" to avoid having the parents "come down too hard on the student."(Rose, personal interview, June 12, 2015). Rose's ability to distinguish the subtle patterns of cultural behaviour exhibited by her students' parents is indicative of her perception.

Daisy's cultural perception is evident from her willingness to observe her culturally diverse students. In our discussion about her practicum experience, she indicates that she "spent two weeks in [her] first block just observing" her students, and acknowledges that "it helped [her] understand the children more because when you observe you don't have to teach, you don't have to talk, you just look and your eyes can be everywhere."(Daisy, personal interview, June 26, 2015). Daisy deepened her cultural awareness and perception by consciously observing the differences in her students' behaviour and their specific responses to instruction.

Monica is perceptive of the way that minority students are generally treated and ignored in the school where she works as an educational assistant (EA). In observing her students' relationships with their teachers and the principal Monica has concluded that:

"*More support for students is needed. It's not just the teacher or the principal, but the whole school division needs to be reformed. Teachers need to realize that their classroom is changing, and they need to change the way that things are done because standardization, you know, it's not working*." (Monica, personal interview, June 08, 2015).

Monica, like Daisy and Rose, has perceived the challenges of multicultural education and are motivated to help reform the way that education is developed and delivered to cultural minority students.

Phenomenological Description of Preservice Teachers Intercultural Adroitness

Intercultural adroitness represents the behavioural dimension of intercultural competence and is reflected by a person's ability to act appropriately in intercultural interactions (Chen et al., 1996; Chen et al., 1997; Chen et al., 2000). The preservice teachers' intercultural adroitness is characterized by their *self-confidence* and *curiosity* and is displayed by their ability to successfully engage in open and direct discussions with people from diverse cultural backgrounds.

Self-confidence. Self-confidence is hereby defined by the preservice teachers' ability to trust their instincts, judgment, and beliefs about a particular issue or behaviour. Their self-confidence was especially evident from their responses to interview questions 2, 3, 5, and 6, which were designed to apprehend their *interaction engagement*, *enjoyment*, and *confidence*. Throughout our discussions on their past experiences with cultural diversity and their future aspirations as multicultural teachers, Jeremy, Ivy, Rose, Daisy, and Monica exhibit an immense sense of confidence in their interactions with people from different cultures, specifically as demonstrated by their willingness to seize once in a lifetime opportunities and/or their willingness to resolve any conflicts that arise in their interactions with people from different cultures.

Rose's confidence is expressed by her opinions on the current practice of multicultural education. She characterizes most teachers as passive agents of change who are generally unwilling or ill-prepared to address the diversity present in their classrooms. She stresses that she feels strongly about her views on the efficacy of multicultural education, specifically as currently designed and practiced in her program. She contends that the existing curriculum offered to preservice teachers in her cohort is implicitly biased towards one or two cultural groups. As a consequence, she argues that a more inclusive educational paradigm should be implemented in her program, a model comprised of speciality units that prepare preservice teachers "to work with students coming from China, Australia, Africa, Europe, or South America" (Rose, personal interview, June 12, 2015). She believes that instruction of this sort is more representative of the current demographic of society and is, therefore, more inclusive of the cultural realities of her potential students. Rose is confident that as a teacher she will be able to "establish good enough relationships with [her culturally diverse students] that they will feel comfortable enough

[coming up to her] to say 'I don't feel comfortable with the way you addressed that' [in class] " (Rose, personal interview, June 12, 2015). Rose feels that this two-way dialogue was missing from many of the student-teacher interactions she observed during her practicum and is confident in her ability to address this need once she becomes a certified teacher.

Monica's self-confidence is connected to her increasing feelings of security about her ethnic identity, which she now feels excited to share with others. While initially reluctant to embrace her Trinidadian heritage, Monica's confidence in the distinct aspects of her identity has grown, especially now that it is more socially acceptable to be culturally 'different'. She reveals that she has started to "turn her [culture] off less" and is more comfortable with introducing her culture to friends, since "it's now OK to say 'yeah, I eat roti [laughs]" (Monica, personal interview, June 8, 2015).

As her self-confidence has developed, Monica has also become more liberated in her views about the effectiveness of multicultural education. For over 9 years Monica has "worked as an EA in an alternative school where 80% of the students are Aboriginal, and every single one of [the] staff members are visibly white, except [her]" (Monica, personal interview, 2015). She argues that many cultural minority students in her school struggle to experience a sense of belonging due to the disproportionate number of Caucasian, middle-class female teachers on staff who fail to acknowledge their students' diverse cultural values and traditions. In her opinion, "there needs to be more diversity in the classroom with teachers, and they need to be educated not just by taking a course at the university on cultural diversity, but also by being exposed to other cultures. It's not just one course, and we're done" (Monica, personal interview, 2015). In her estimation, she will be able to fill a gap in her school owing to her ability to

connect with culturally diverse students on an emotional and personal level due to her ethnic background and experiences as a cultural minority student.

Jeremy's self-confidence is also revealed by his convictions and the fearlessness with which he acts on his beliefs. From an early age, Jeremy has demonstrated that he is not afraid to challenge authority and that he is willing to fight for what he believes is morally right and fair. When describing how he builds relationships with people from different cultures (interview question #3) he recalls an experience from his childhood where he challenged his parents' prejudice against an Aboriginal friend. The following passage illustrates Jeremy's resolve to defend his friendship against his parents' fears:

> "*One my best friends [during grade school] was of Aboriginal descent. He liked Dragon Ball Z; I liked Dragon Ball Z, whatever. I remember whenever I went over to his house my parents were like, 'are you sure you don't want to come home?' And, I was like 'I'm going over there', and they couldn't say anything right because they were obviously prejudiced against this child and his family."* (Jeremy, personal interview, June 11, 2015).

Jeremy's defiance against his parents' "obvious prejudice" showcases the confidence he places in his ability to make his own decisions, forge his own path, and define his own rules and values. Similarly, Daisy experienced a great deal of pressure from her family to adopt their beliefs and attitudes about engaging with other cultures. She describes being derided by certain members of her family and community who feel that she is "being whitewashed for leaving [home] to better [herself] and to make a life for [her] son."(Daisy, personal interview, June 26, 2016). Although her choice to pursue a career in education has attracted widespread criticism from various members of her community, she remains confident in her decision and "her right to go to school", believing it is the best way for her to progress socially and financially, and ultimately be in the position to "give back to [her] community."(Daisy, personal interview, June 26, 2016).

Ivy's self-confidence is evident from her opinions on how cultural diversity should be viewed and respected by society. Despite the fact that she was raised in a monocultural rural community and has only been minimally exposed to other cultures, Ivy has relied on her instincts to guide her decision to travel and volunteer in South America. She reveals that her prior experience in Japan instilled her with the confidence to travel to Guatemala and acquire an authentic experience of another culture. Given her travel experiences, Ivy is dismayed by people who readily appropriate the visible aspects of a different culture without trying to comprehend its less tangible aspects, like for instance its fundamental values, attitudes, and beliefs. In the following passage she expresses her frustration with what she views as an alarming social trend towards exoticizing the experience of culture:

"*I can't imagine anyone thinking it is OK to go to a restaurant and try food from a different culture and not acknowledge the fact that it comes from a different place than where they are from.*"(Ivy, personal interview, June 26, 2015).

Since Ivy has experienced culture authentically, she is especially critical of those who do not try to understand culture beyond its superficial features. While she is open to entertaining different cultural perspectives, Ivy is confident that her judgment of those who willfully exploit another person's culture is justified based on the intercultural experiences she has acquired through travel.

Curiosity. The preservice teachers' curiosity is expressed by their genuine desire to learn about cultural differences and their willingness to move beyond their ignorance. Their curiosity is specifically captured by their responses to interview questions 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, and 8, which are related to their *interaction engagement*, *enjoyment*, *confidence*, and *attentiveness*. Jeremy, for instance, views travel as an opportunity to discover different lifestyles, examine different cultural values, and to reflect on his personal strengths and weaknesses. When describing his visit to

South Korea he compares his willingness to "get his hands dirty" to his observations of various members of the military who were reluctant to venture outside the base, preferring to stay inside to "eat Kraft dinner and watch Netflix" (Jeremy, personal interview, June 11, 2015). Jeremy's curiosity led him to discover an entirely new existence, an experience he had been interested in acquiring since he was a child. When specifically asked to describe what precipitated his decision to travel to the country, Jeremy traces his trip to South Korea to his childhood fascination with Japan:

> "*It's kind of a funny story because way back, like in grade 4, I had to pick a country that we had to do a report on and you had to know the history of it, the culture, whatever, so I picked Japan. For whatever reason, I was fascinated with Japan. Maybe it was Dragon Ball Z or something like that. I just knew that I needed to go live in Japan. I just wanted to do it for so long*." (Jeremy, personal interview, June 11, 2015)

While Jeremy's interest in Japanese culture was primarily inspired by his attraction to its aesthetic beauty, Ivy's desire to volunteer in Guatemala was fueled by her previous intercultural experiences and a yearning "to do something independent and learn how to live in a different country for a while" (Ivy, personal interview, June 26, 2015). Ivy's curiosity is also revealed by her willingness to explore cultural differences through meaningful intercultural interaction. For instance, she shares an experience in which she uncovered several parallels between her friend's Jewish culture and her Mennonite background by engaging in a lengthy discussion on their cultural histories and traditions. Ivy reveals that the conversation was both "quite interesting" and revelatory of what Jewish people "went through to bring [them] to the place [they] are now" (Ivy, personal interview, June 26, 2015).

Daisy shared a similar intercultural experience with her friend Suzy during a conversation in which they bonded over their family's shared colonial history. Daisy confesses that she "didn't know that there were so many striking similarities between [her] culture and [Suzy's]

culture until they started talking about colonization and colonialism, and how people in Nigeria experienced colonization from the British too" (Daisy, personal interview, June 26, 2015). Her interest in exploring these shared aspects of their cultural backgrounds reveals her ability to facilitate a curious conversation, punctuated by open and direct questions that broadened her perspective on the cultural history she shares with her friend.

Rose's curiosity is exhibited by her awareness of her ignorance and her genuine desire to overcome her cultural biases or prejudices. Rose reveals that before moving to Winnipeg she had very little personal contact with Aboriginal people and was not entirely comfortable with "some of the stigmas and negative connotations attached to their culture" (Rose, personal interview, June 12, 2015). However after moving to the Winnipeg and engaging with a number of Aboriginal people she is learning how to "push many of those stigmas and negative connotations aside" (Rose, personal interview, June 12, 2015). Rose insists that "when it comes to being culturally sensitive, for the first 10 years of [her] career she is going to do a lot of things wrong and [she's] comfortable with that because it's going to be a long learning process" (Rose, personal interview, June 12, 2015). She is prepared to challenge her cultural assumptions and misconceptions by asking honest and direct questions in open conversations with people from different cultures.

Monica's curiosity is also exemplified by her willingness to accept her limitations and move beyond her ignorance of her students' diverse cultural backgrounds. When discussing her preparedness to teach in multicultural classrooms, Monica reveals that she "doesn't have all the information or all of the knowledge" (Monica, personal interview, June 8, 2015) to effectively engage with her potential students. However, her fear of failing to meet her students' specific educational needs and expectations has motivated her to search for information about their

cultural backgrounds outside the Internet since she understands "that it isn't good enough to get a country's profile on Google" (Monica, personal interview, June 8, 2015). In her decision to seek out intercultural interactions that allow her to elevate her understanding of cultural diversity, Monica demonstrates her genuine appreciation of cultural diversity.

Summary of Phenomenological Interview Results

Despite differences in their cultural backgrounds and perspectives, Rose, Jeremy, Ivy, Daisy, Monica, and Rose share several personal qualities that define their intercultural competence. For instance, three characteristics of their intercultural sensitivity – *self-esteem*, *empathy*, and *open-mindedness* – were uncovered through analysis of the descriptive narrative accounts of some of their most impactful intercultural experiences. Coincidentally, these features of their personality directly correspond to the characteristics validated and measured by the ISS.

On the other hand, the preservice teachers' intercultural awareness is demonstrated by their *self-awareness* and *perception* – or their ability to perceive cultural differences in their interactions with and observations of people from different cultures. As described by Jeremy, Monica, Rose, Ivy, and Daisy, self-awareness and perception are developed through sustained intercultural engagement, which allows a person to develop specific insights into their personalities, as well as the attitudes, thoughts, behaviours of others. These features of their intercultural awareness are compatible with the characteristics of their intercultural sensitivity and are highlighted by the qualities of their intercultural adroitness.

The preservice teachers' intercultural adroitness is exhibited by their *curiosity* and *self-confidence* as demonstrated by their frank and direct assertions on cultural diversity and the current practice of multicultural education; their beliefs on the social value of their ethnic culture; and by their fearless pursuit of their personal goals and values. Their curiosity is defined

by their willingness to explore cultural differences through travel or by engaging in meaningful intercultural interactions that broaden their cultural perspectives and deepen their appreciation of alternative cultural norms and values. Together the traits associated with their intercultural sensitivity, awareness, and adroitness, strengthen their ability to communicate effectively and appropriately with people from culturally distinct backgrounds.

Chapter Summary

In this chapter, I presented the results of my investigation into the intercultural competence of a select group of preservice teachers. This study was executed in two data-gathering stages that revealed the thoughts, feelings, and behaviours that define the features of their intercultural competence. To begin, I administered the *Intercultural Sensitivity Scale* to ten (10) preservice teachers to assess their sensitivity to cultural diversity, a significant dimension of their intercultural competence. As per their survey results, each preservice teacher possesses an exceptional amount of intercultural sensitivity as measured by five interrelated factors: *intercultural engagement*, *respect for cultural diversity*, *interaction confidence*, *interaction enjoyment*, and i*nteraction attentiveness*. By and large, the preservice teachers demonstrate a great deal of sensitivity in their intercultural interactions, which enables them to appreciate and respect alternative cultural worldviews. They are also open-minded and engaged when communicating cross-culturally, though they are surprisingly timid when interacting with large groups of culturally distinct people. They are also generally inattentive to the subtle cultural differences that exist between themselves and those they are interacting with.

The information obtained from surveys informed the interview questions and therefore the data collected in this study's qualitative phase. Phenomenological interviews were held with five (5) individuals recruited from the original research sample and were specifically designed to

identify the defining features of their intercultural competence. In my assessment of the interview data, I identified the influence of family on their perception and awareness of cultural diversity, the impact of education on their emergent intercultural communication skills and multicultural teaching self-efficacy, and the significance of their intercultural experiences on their cultural frames of reference. In the end, I uncovered seven (7) themes that define the essence of their intercultural competence, namely their *empathy*, *self-esteem*, *open-mindedness*, *self-awareness*, *perception*, *self-confidence*, and *curiosity*. In the next chapter, I analyze the results generated from each data collection method with respect to their relationship to each other and prevailing research in the field of intercultural competence.

Chapter 5
Discussion of Findings

In the previous chapter, I described the structure and features of the preservice teachers' intercultural competence as revealed by their survey and interview responses. Surveys gauged the preservice teachers' intercultural sensitivity or the extent to which they project positive emotions in their interactions with people from culturally diverse backgrounds. Conversely, phenomenological interviews explored the distinct, yet related dimensions of their intercultural competence. After taking all of the numerical and textual data into account by analyzing the information collected from descriptive surveys and phenomenological interviews, I discovered ten (10) essential characteristics that define their ability to communicate effectively and appropriately in intercultural environments. These traits directly correspond to the intercultural knowledge, skills, and attitudes that the preservice teachers demonstrate in their intercultural interactions.

In the following sections of this chapter, I take a closer look at my findings with regards to their significance to the central questions that frame this study. Results are interpreted with respect to Chen and Starosta's concept of intercultural competence, and within the context of similar research on intercultural competence and preservice teachers' attitudes and multicultural teaching self-efficacy. I begin by answering the first question – *To what extent are the preservice teachers' interculturally sensitive* – by interrogating the significance of the attitudinal data collected from administration of Chen and Starosta's *Intercultural Sensitivity Scale*. After which I address the second question – *What is the essence of their lived-experience of intercultural competence* – by examining the significance of the narrative data collected from phenomenological interviews.

It should be noted that the information that follows specifically pertains to the preservice teachers who were surveyed and interviewed in this study, and is by no means exhaustive or definitive of all of the personal qualities that may be held by interculturally competent people. At most, the information analyzed on the next few pages highlight the distinctive patterns of behaviour, feelings, and thoughts that characterize the preservice teacher's intercultural competence. The following paragraphs answer the two research questions that shaped and directed my study. This information is presented through discussion of the preservice teachers' survey and interview results, which are combined to provide a more detailed and thoughtful representation of their intercultural competence.

Question 1: To What Extent Are Preservice Teachers Interculturally Sensitive?

Within the context of Chen and Starosta's model of intercultural competence (1996), intercultural sensitivity represents the affective domain of an individual's emotions or feelings towards other cultures. The *Intercultural Sensitivity Scale* is based on Chen and Starosta's conceptualization of intercultural sensitivity whereby intercultural sensitivity is delineated by five factors: *interaction engagement*, *respect for cultural diversity*, *interaction confidence*, *interaction enjoyment*, and *interaction attentiveness*.

The results obtained from administering the ISS to the preservice teachers suggest that they are remarkably sensitive to cultural diversity as evidenced by their cumulative average score of 91.9 out of a maximum score of 120. Judging from the mean calculated for each measured factor of their intercultural sensitivity: *interaction engagement* (27.2/35); *respect for cultural diversity* (24.1/30); and *interaction enjoyment* (12.9/15), the preservice teachers are exceptionally engaged intercultural communicators who possess a great deal of respect for cultural diversity and generally enjoy interacting with people different cultures. However, they

do not always feel confident in intercultural social settings (*interaction confidence* – 17.3/25) and often struggle to remain attentive to the differences that present between themselves and their culturally distinct counterparts, particularly when these differences are subtle (*interaction attentiveness* – 10.5/15).

While useful, these results reveal little about the nature of the preservice teachers' intercultural experiences or the people and/or events that shape their emotional response to cultural diversity. For instance, by solely focusing on his ISS score (107/120), it is reasonable to infer that Michael is extremely sensitive to cultural diversity since he received the highest cumulative score for intercultural sensitivity among those surveyed in this report. His sensitivity is also distinguishable from the other preservice teachers with respect to his marks for *interaction engagement* (35), *respect for cultural diversity* (29), and *interaction enjoyment* (15). Yet, the problem with assessing Michael's intercultural sensitivity based solely on his survey scores is that his sensitivity is represented by a number vis-à-vis its observable features.

To better understand the characteristics of Michael's intercultural sensitivity, it was important for me to evaluate his individual survey responses. Based on his answers to questions related to the factors of interaction engagement, respect for cultural diversity, interaction confidence, and interaction enjoyment, Michael displays a tremendous amount of self-esteem, open-mindedness, empathy, and non-judgment in his intercultural interactions. However, like many of the preservice teachers surveyed in this report, Michael is insecure in his interaction attentiveness and struggles to remain involved (e.g. interaction involvement) and observant (e.g. self-monitoring) in his relationships with people from different cultures as per his answers to survey questions 17 & 19.

Unfortunately, nothing more can be said of Michael's intercultural sensitivity since he did not participate in the interview portion of this study. For this reason, I am unable to comment on the specific context in which his feelings and perceptions were shaped or establish a connection between his expressed sensitivity and the situational or environmental contexts that influenced his behaviour. I am also unable to validate the presence of particular features of his intercultural sensitivity, such as his open-mindedness, without knowledge of the circumstances under which it was developed or manifests in his intercultural interactions. Simply put, the *why*, *when*, and *where* of his intercultural sensitivity cannot reasonably be deduced from his survey scores alone.

This issue also emerged during my analysis of Peyton, Brett, Betty, and Graham's survey results. Consequently, the research findings discussed and analyzed in this chapter were generated from data gathered from surveys and interviews held with Rose, Jeremy, Daisy, Monica, and Ivy. In addition to substantiating the affective characteristics of their intercultural sensitivity – self-esteem, self-monitoring, open-mindedness, empathy, interaction involvement, non-judgment – phenomenological interviews illuminated the personal characteristics exhibited by the other two dimensions of their intercultural competence (e.g. intercultural awareness and intercultural adroitness), as highlighted in the remaining paragraphs of this chapter.

Interaction Engagement

Interaction engagement is primarily concerned with an individual's assessment of their participation in intercultural relations. Jeremy, Monica, Rose, Daisy, and Ivy received an average score of 26.2 for this factor, which suggests that they possess high self-esteem; are remarkably self-monitoring, empathetic, open-minded, and non-judgmental; and, are actively involved in their interactions with people from different cultures. The preservice teachers' scores for the six

questions grouped within this factor (e.g., 1, 11, 21, 22, 23, & 24) were equally distributed, save for a few exceptions. For example, Rose reported the lowest score for question 21 (e.g., *I often give positive responses to my culturally different counterpart during our interaction*), which is surprising given her impressive overall score of 27/35 for this factor. Through analysis of her intercultural experiences it is evident that Rose is slightly more negative and rigid in her thoughts and feelings towards Aboriginal people than she is in her opinions towards other cultures. She also admits that she is not entirely comfortable engaging with Aboriginal people since she lacks sufficient exposure to their culture and has been influenced by the "negative connotations and stigmas" that surround their lifestyles and traditions.

Despite her discomfort, Rose has engaged in a number of meaningful interactions with Aboriginal people that have broadened her perspective on their lived-realities by introducing her to unknown facets of their culture. Communication is incredibly vital to the development of cultural competence since it produces a space in which to freely interact and connect with others (Martin & Nakayama, 2013), which has been instrumental to Rose's growing awareness of Indigenous culture. Successful interactions, such as those depicted in Rose's narrative, are difficult to master due to the commonalities that tend to diminish between individuals as differences in their culture, language, and worldview increase (Fantini, 2000).

This point is clear from Jeremy's description of his initial intercultural interactions in South Korea. Judging from his indecisive responses to survey questions 23 & 24 (e.g. *I often show my culturally-distinct counterpart my understanding through verbal and non-verbal cues / I have a feeling of enjoyment towards differences between my culturally-distinct counterpart and me*), Jeremy feels that his interaction engagement could be improved. These feelings resurface in

our conversation about his intercultural experiences in South Korea, which he admits were initially challenging:

> "*I met a Korean guy who was riding their bike on a path that I was on and I was like 'where am I going?' I just ended up running alongside him for about an hour. He didn't speak a lick of English and I didn't speak Korean, but he was just like talking to me and I was trying to talk to him, and it was very funny*." (Jeremy, personal interview, June 11, 2015).

While this narrative exemplifies Jeremy's openness and willingness to engage with other cultures, it also reveals his inability to convey his thoughts and ideas effectively when communicating in a foreign culture. Jeremy's experience is not uncommon among sojourners who also struggle to communicate clearly and unambiguously in cultural contexts in which they are unable to rely on their primary language to convey their thoughts and feelings effectively (Lee Olson & Kroeger, 2001; Rundstrom Williams, 2005).

Like Jeremy, Ivy was also challenged at first by her inability to communicate in Spanish, although she eventually learned to speak the language, and in so doing elevated her appreciation of the culture through her sustained engagement with it. Ivy's ability to engage with people from different cultures is confirmed by her score of 26/35 for the factor of intercultural engagement. Ivy is remarkably open-minded and enthusiastic about cultural diversity, which is surprising given her minimal exposure to cultural diversity until her volunteer excursion to Guatemala. Ivy's immersion within Guatemalan society instigated a refined awareness of her privileged social class position and perceptions on family, community, and wealth. When surrounded as she was by the opposite of her culture she experienced a shift in perspective through which she grew more flexible and sensitive to her new cultural environment, as highlighted in the excerpt below:

> "*I would say it was just realizing what we think of as having a lot and what they think of as having a lot, or what they think of as enough and what we think of as having enough are completely different*." (Ivy, personal interview, June 26, 2015).

Ivy's transformed cultural perspective is analogous to what author Valerie Hill-Jackson (2007) describes as *critical consciousness*, more widely known as *cultural dissonance* through which an individual undergoes a perceptual change when in the midst of another cultural environment. As Hill-Jackson argues, in order to arrive at this elevated state of consciousness a person must have acquired a meaningful and authentic intercultural experience. Here intercultural experience is defined as direct personal engagement with an individual from a cultural group other than one's own (Garmon, 2004).

Interaction engagement is demonstrated by all six affective characteristics of intercultural sensitivity, and is especially reflective of a person's open-mindedness as per the questions clustered within this factor. Open-mindedness is also one of three themes uncovered through analysis of the preservice teachers' intercultural narratives. Whether through cultural immersion (Ivy, Daisy, and Jeremy), family (Rose), work or friends (Monica), each preservice teacher demonstrated an ability to remain open-minded and engaged when interacting with people from different cultures. Chen and Starosta (1997) identify open-mindedness as a central component of intercultural sensitivity, as depicted by an individual's willingness to openly and appropriately communicate with other cultures.

Incidentally, willingness is one of the most common obstacles to culturally responsive teaching due to the conservative resistance and rejection of multicultural content by several prospective and practicing teachers (Cho et al., 2005; Garmon, 2004; Gay, 2002; Hill-Jackson, 2007; Locke, 2005; Peebles et al., 2014; Sleeter, 2001; Sleeter, 2011; Walker-Dalhouse et al., 2006). Numerous authors locate the source of these individuals' cultural prejudice and discrimination in their privileged sociocultural positions, which allows them to remain colourblind and impervious to cultural differences (Sleeter, 2001; Hill-Jackson, 2007; Walker-

Dalhouse et al., 2006). Some teachers also genuinely "lack experience with discussing critical issues such as race, gender, sexuality, and nationality, among other socio-cultural topics."(Cho et al., 2014), and are thus fearful of expressing the wrong opinions or upsetting the impressionable mindsets of their students (Hermann-Wilmarth, 2010).

As a cultural and ethnic minority, Daisy is all too familiar with the hidden power and privilege accorded to certain members of society and is unafraid to tackle difficult conversations about these controversial social issues. Throughout our lengthy discussion, Daisy shared several experiences in which she had been insulted, ridiculed, and publically shamed due to her culture, ethnicity, and gender. And, while her integration within mainstream society has increased since her arrival in Winnipeg, she continues to be marginalized and constrained by a number of social factors that somewhat hinder her mobility within society. Despite the social issues and contradictions that permeate her existence as a female, visible minority, and single parent, Daisy continues to engage with people from a variety of cultural backgrounds, which is reflected by her cumulative score for interaction engagement (e.g. 27/35).

Ironically, while Daisy received one of the highest marks for this factor, she also recorded the lowest score for question 24 (e.g., *I have a feeling of enjoyment towards different cultures*), Given the contentious nature of many of her intercultural experiences it is reasonable that Daisy feels a certain sense of unease around people from other cultures and sometimes struggles to freely engage with people outside her ancestral culture. For instance, she admits to being unable to connect on a personal level with "the Sri Lankan girl or the Chinese girl, or the Métis girl [who were part of her cohort because] they were all people from different cultures."(Daisy, personal interview, June 26, 2015).

Contrary to Daisy, Monica possesses strong feelings of enjoyment towards other cultures as revealed by her score for question 24 (e.g. 4/5), as well as her intimate personal relationships with people from different cultural backgrounds. Monica discloses that her boyfriend is from a different culture and that she was fully embraced by her teachers and friends in the "predominately white schools" (Monica, personal interview, June 8, 2015) she attended throughout her childhood. Monica and Daisy's narratives exemplify that an individual's willingness to engage with other cultures is invariably connected to their prior intercultural experiences. That is, when previous intercultural experiences are generally positive, as in Monica's example, an individual will experience more enjoyment interacting with people from different cultural backgrounds opposed to when the experiences are viewed negatively and remembered as a source of personal distress or despair, as in Daisy's case.

Respect for Cultural Diversity. Respect for cultural diversity relates to an individual's orientation or acceptance of cultural differences, and is the second highest weighted factor of intercultural sensitivity measured by the ISS. Seven questions (e.g., 2, 7, 8, 16, 18, and 20) are grouped within this factor, which is reflected by four characteristics: non-judgment, self-esteem, open-mindedness, and empathy. All five preservice teachers surveyed and interviewed in this study exhibited a tremendous amount of respect for cultural diversity, as highlighted by their average score of 24.1/30 for this factor. The intercultural experiences they shared during our interviews are also telling of their level of respect and appreciation of cultural diversity.

Interestingly, Daisy's response to question 2 – *I think people from other cultures are narrow-minded* – warranted my immediate attention given her otherwise positive responses to the questions grouped within this factor. It should be mentioned that Daisy received the second highest score for respect for cultural diversity among all five preservice teachers surveyed and

interviewed in this report, suggesting that she is more tolerant and respectful of other cultures than is reflected by her answer to this question. When analyzed alongside the results of her interview, it is clear that Daisy is slightly resentful of other cultures based on the negative intercultural experiences she has encountered in the past. In holding on to these feelings Daisy admits to not always being respectful or tolerant of alternative cultural points of view, particularly when they collide with her own values, opinions, and beliefs.

Conversely, Jeremy is able to extend compassion towards his parents in spite of his opposition to their bigoted worldviews. He reveals that he does not hold his parents' accountable for their intolerance towards cultural diversity since their ignorance is rooted in their lack of understanding and exposure to other cultures. Like his parents, Jeremy also grew up in a monocultural environment surrounded by all white friends and neighbours, which makes it easier for him to understand their position and rationalize their fears, as illustrated in the following rhetorical question he posed during our conversation:

"*Why would they assume to accept diversity when everything in their lives have been centred around their own culture, right*?" (Jeremy, personal interview, June 11, 2015).

Discussions surrounding race and ethnicity are difficult, particularly for those lacking the skills to engage in respectful intercultural interactions given their limited cross-cultural knowledge and experience (Locke, 2005). In the following excerpt Rose, who received the highest score for this factor (e.g. 26/30) as compared among those who were interviewed, offers the following guidelines for people seeking to learn more about another culture:

"I think that the first thing they would need to do is understand that somebody is coming from a different culture. I don't think that someone can be sensitive unless they are able to pinpoint what that culture is." (Rose, personal interview, June 12, 2015)

Rose asserts that intercultural relations are most effective when the experience is mutual and willingly entered into by both parties. Yet, research indicates that several preservice

teachers, typified as Caucasian and female, take for granted the receptiveness of their culturally distinct counterparts to engage in discussions of this nature due to their own anxieties and innate fears (Cho et al, 2005; Gay, 2002; Sleeter et al, 2011). Part of the problem associated with being socially privileged is that it prevents certain people from behaving empathetically towards other cultures (Locke, 2007), which is a desired internal outcome of intercultural competence (Deardorff, 2006).

Chen and Starosta (1997) specifically locate empathy within the affective dimension of intercultural competence. In their conceptual model empathy is recognized as the process through which an individual projects his or herself into another person's point of view so as to momentarily think and feel the same (Chen & Starosta, 1997). Empathy is a central characteristic of the preservice teachers' respect for cultural diversity and is highlighted in their responses to survey questions 2, 8, 16, and 18. Empathy was also uncovered through exploration of the data collected from phenomenological interviews held with five of the original sample of preservice teachers surveyed in this report.

Given their average score for respect for cultural diversity, it is obvious that Jeremy, Monica, Rose, Daisy, and Ivy are able to absorb the emotions and thoughts of another person so as to gain perspective on their experience. However, according to their results for this factor, Ivy (22/30) and Monica (21/30) are slightly less accepting and impartial to cultural differences as compared to Daisy, Jeremy, and Rose. Yet, their survey scores reveal little of their capacity to assume the perspectives of their culturally diverse students or their ability to share the religious views of a co-worker.

For instance, Monica's empathy is displayed by her ability to relate to the challenges experienced by her international and domestic students. As a cultural minority, she is able to

project herself into her students' experiences with culturally insensitive teachers and identify with their feelings of exclusion and anxiety. Likewise, Ivy also possesses an incredible ability to understand and share other people's feelings, as illustrated by her consciousness of the foods she prepares for her co-workers and her ability to relate to certain aspects of Jewish culture.

In their study of the role of empathy in culturally responsive teaching, McAllister and Jordan Irvine (2002) maintain that empathy is a desirable trait for teachers working in diverse school settings as it allows them to relate to their students by assuming their cultural perspective and thus behaving in a nonjudgmental, respectful manner. Based on their computed average score for this factor, along with their opinions on and experiences with cultural diversity, it is evident that the preservice teachers possess an empathic disposition towards other cultures that underlines their general respect for cultural diversity.

Interaction Confidence

Monica, Rose, Jeremy, Ivy, and Daisy received an average score of 16.2/25 for the factor of intercultural competence, which suggests that their interaction confidence is above average and that they are fairly responsive and appropriate in their interactions with people from different cultures. Interaction confidence consists of five questions (e.g., 3, 4, 5, 6, and 10) based on three characteristics of intercultural sensitivity: self-esteem, self-monitoring, and interaction involvement. As per their results on the ISS, Monica and Ivy seemingly struggle the most with their confidence, though Ivy's interaction confidence could not be fully determined from her survey scores since she did not respond to one of the five questions related to this factor (e.g. question 5 – *I always know what to say when interacting with people from different cultures*). Conversely Monica's survey responses are more definitive and are corroborated by qualitative evidence obtained from our discussion on her emergent multicultural teaching skills:

"*As much as I rant about not having, you know, these white teachers not having all the information, I don't have all the information or all of the knowledge either and that scares me*." (Monica, personal interview, June 8, 2015)

Although Monica is critical of the intercultural sensitivities of the white pre- and in-service teachers she has encountered in her program and at work, she is consciously aware of her own limitations, leading her to question her ability to effectively teach in multicultural classrooms. Coincidentally, Ivy expresses the same doubts in her ability to remediate any issues that may arise between her culturally diverse students, as evident in the passage below:

"*I think if I were faced with a situation that was relational (student-to-student), I don't know if I would feel prepared for that yet because that's a totally different issue*." (Ivy, personal interview, June 26)

Even though Ivy can identify a number of issues with the current practice of multicultural education (Gorski, 2008), she is critical of her own ability to resolve them given her limited intercultural experience. Based on their assessment of their teaching skills, it can be argued that both Monica and Ivy lack confidence in their intercultural communication skills, which in turn has impacted their culturally responsive teaching self-efficacy (Siwatu, 2011), which is defined as an individual's confidence in his or her capabilities to execute the practices associated with effective multicultural teaching (Gay, 2002).

Research suggests that preservice teachers who feel more confident in their ability to effect meaningful change in the lives of their diverse students are nurtured in the development of these skills throughout the length of their education and their subsequent professional careers (Cho at al., 2005; Sleeter, 2001; Sleeter et al., 2011). Daisy, Monica, and Rose observe this as a shortcoming in their current program. For instance, Rose believes that the teacher education program in which she is currently enrolled should be made more inclusive of all cultures, while Daisy believes the "program should be extended by at least two more years or four years max"

(Daisy, personal interview, June 26, 2015) to better prepare preservice teachers for their roles in the classroom.

Rose, Daisy, and Jeremy exhibit slightly more confidence in their multicultural teaching skills than Monica and Ivy do. For example, Jeremy, who scored 17 on this factor, is eager to impart his critical thinking skills onto his students, which he feels is "the innate best type of knowledge that a person can have" (Jeremy, personal interview, June 11, 2015). On the other hand, Rose, who scored 20/25 for interaction confidence, expresses a tremendous amount confidence in her ability to successfully bridge the student-teacher divide by cultivating a mutually engaging, supportive classroom environment. Daisy also displays confidence in the skills she brings with her to the teaching profession given her personal background and experience with Aboriginal issues. As a teacher, Daisy hopes to educate her students on the history of Aboriginal people so as to engender greater support and awareness of the realities and the contradictions underlying their present social condition:

> "*You need people who know the history and are willing to…[laughing]…you need people who are passionate to teach the content, and you need people who are not just going to focus on Aboriginal issues, like at the same time, mention other cultures*." (Daisy, personal interview, June 26, 2015).

Daisy's self-confidence in her teaching abilities is directly related to the experiences she encountered as one of the only ethnic minority students enrolled in an otherwise white high school. As a frequent target of racism, Daisy is especially sensitive to the prejudice and discrimination that culturally diverse students often experience in traditional classroom environments, and is therefore confident and emotionally prepared to address their varied needs and abilities. Given her expressed confidence in her cross-cultural teaching skills it is unsurprising that Daisy received the highest score for interaction confidence (e.g. 22/25) among all the preservice teachers who were surveyed and interviewed.

Self-esteem is a critical component of the preservice teachers' interaction confidence, as revealed by their scores on the ISS and discovered through analysis of their interview data. For instance, Jeremy displays a high degree of self-esteem in his interactions with people from different cultures and is notably confident in his ability to withstand the challenges of cultural immersion. In fact, Jeremy relishes the opportunity to "get lost" in a new culture and "get to know [himself] and the kind of boundaries [he has] as a person" (Jeremy, personal interview, June 11, 2015). Jeremy's self-esteem imbues him with a strong sense of purpose and a greater desire to pursue his personal goals.

Chen and Starosta (1997) contend that one of the hallmarks of self-esteem is the ability to overcome the psychological stresses that accompany intercultural encounters. Ivy admits that the biggest challenge she experienced in Guatemala "was just learning the language and finding, figuring out how to communicate and get from place to place with very basic language ability."(Ivy, personal interview, June 26, 2015). In a situation where many others would have failed to move past their own insecurities and fears, Ivy flourished due to her positive self-esteem. During her first few challenging weeks in Guatemala Ivy relied on her optimism and positive feelings towards 'self' and 'others' to get her through the loneliness and frustration she experienced as a visitor. Ultimately, Ivy learned how to successfully navigate within a foreign culture and acquire the language of her hosts due to her opinions on her self-value or personal worth.

On the whole, Monica, Jeremy, Rose, Daisy, and Ivy are demonstrably confident intercultural communicators, although their confidence is felt and expressed in varying degrees given the nature of the situation. While the preservice teachers are generally optimistic about their prospective teaching roles, they feel slightly unprepared to teach in culturally diverse

classrooms either due to lack of sufficient cultural exposure or cross-cultural teaching experience.

Interaction Enjoyment

The preservice teacher' interaction enjoyment was determined by their responses to survey questions 9, 12, and 15. Interaction enjoyment is reflected by an individual's open-mindedness, self-esteem, self-monitoring, empathy, and non-judgment. Based on their cumulative average score for this factor (e.g. 12.2/15), supported by their qualitative interview results, the preservice teachers enjoy interacting with other cultures and often explore opportunities that will allow them to freely engage with individual's whose cultural experiences differ from their own.

Ivy is remarkably positive about her intercultural experiences in Guatemala in spite of the psychological insecurity she felt upon entering a new cultural environment. She describes establishing friendships with the locals at a distribution centre and accompanying "little kids to the zoo". When asked to share what she missed most about the country upon returning home to Canada she reveals that:

"*There were certain things I did miss, like the small town Guatemalan vibe where you would walk to school and literally every person you saw would say 'hello'. I did miss stuff like that*."(Ivy, personal interview, June 26, 2015).

Owing to the 'laid back Guatemalan vibe" Ivy developed an appreciation for life's simple pleasures and the distinctive ways in which culture is expressed and celebrated by people living in other regions of the world. She also acquired a sentiment of enjoyment by becoming conversant in Spanish, which allowed her to improve her interactions and working relationships with Guatemalan people.

Chen and Starosta (1996) contend that positive social interactions often lead to feelings of enjoyment that motivate people to further their consciousness and appreciation of other cultures through sustained exposure to individuals whose cultural backgrounds differ from their own. For instance, Jeremy's "euphoric" experience in South Korea inspired him to participate in similar intercultural experiences at home, and while he would prefer to teach in a culturally diverse classroom, he admits that the harsh reality of Manitoba's job market for new teachers will likely prevent him from pursuing this route once he graduates from his program:

> *"I'm outweighing my job to get, of course, I'm not going to be completely immersed in that inner-city experience, I'm not going to live in the inner-city; I'm going to teach there. I'm going to do a student practicum, right. I'm going to have a lot more interactions with [cultural diversity] than if I chose my job outside the city. It's just that I need to think about my future and stuff like that now. I'm kind of torn, I'm kind of torn."* (Jeremy, personal interview, June 11, 2015).

Jeremy's dilemma over his professional aspirations to teach in an inner-city school vis-à-vis his practical needs stems from a genuine enjoyment of other cultures and a desire to engage in meaningful intercultural experiences. During the first few minutes of our conversation, Jeremy disclosed that he is unimpressed by superficial intercultural experiences and representations of culture. Jeremy values authenticity and substance in his intercultural relationships since it is through these encounters that he feels he is able to expand and refine his intercultural competence. In the absence of these experiences Jeremy feels constrained by his inability to acquire genuine intercultural experience and feels dismayed by potentially having to rely on textbooks and anecdotes to advance his cultural awareness and appreciation.

Monica also genuinely enjoys interacting with students from different cultural backgrounds, evidenced by her willingness to participate in an international homestay program. As a home stay parent Monica is intimately familiar with the issues experienced by international

students when they immigrate to Canada. In the following example, Monica describes the cultural shock experienced by many of her students upon their arrival in Winnipeg:

> *"They don't know what's happening. I mean, they can't eat the food because the water is different, they're missing their families, they're missing their friends, umm, you know their way of life. It's hard."* (Monica, personal interview, June 8, 2015).

Monica's ability to empathize with her international students was developed through sustained intercultural exposure and deep, meaningful interaction. Research has shown that teachers who possess empathy participate in more positive interactions with culturally diverse students, build more inclusive learning environments, and foster a more supportive student-centred teaching practice (McAllister et al., 2002). The preservice teachers interviewed in this assignment demonstrated a notable amount of empathy towards other cultures born from the cultural experiences they acquired through travel (Jeremy and Ivy), education (Daisy), intercultural friendships (Monica), family (Rose), or any combination of the above. These relationships were developed throughout various stages of their lives and have been enriched by mutual understanding and shared cultural enjoyment.

In addition to her empathy Daisy is also highly self-monitoring and therefore able to modify her behaviour in response to social cues and situational constraints. Whereas in the past Daisy admits to confronting outright expressions of racism with anger and resistance, she is now more conscientious of how she presents herself through the values and opinions she expresses in intercultural relations. Daisy credits her education and prospective career for her growing consciousness of self and others, and for teaching her how to express her emotions more appropriately in intercultural interactions, even when they are confrontational in tone. In the following excerpt she describes how see presently responds to blatant acts of racism directed towards herself or her son:

"*Now that I'm in the education profession I have to watch the way that I react to certain people and situations. I'm very diligent. I'm very aware of how I react to things like that*." (Daisy, personal interview, June 26, 2015).

Rose, like Daisy, has been victimized by prejudice and racism due to her skin colour and ethnic background, and has also learned how to circumvent her anger by remaining open-minded and non-judgmental. In our discussions on her intercultural friendships she describes an incident where she was forced to "duck and hide in a car" in fear of being discovered by her friend's obscenely racist parents. While Rose would have been justified in resenting these individuals for their baseless accusations and unwarranted fears, she chose to extend compassion and understanding towards them, and in so doing exercised a great deal of objectivity and self-control. Her actions are also illustrative of her self-esteem, which remained intact despite the accusations and personal insults hurled against her due to her race and ethnicity. Rose's self-esteem is also expressed by her positive approach and attitude towards cultural diversity, which inspires her confidence and stimulates her enjoyment of other cultures.

Interaction Attentiveness

The preservice teachers' interaction attentiveness is represented by their results for survey questions 14, 17, and 19, and is demonstrated by four characteristics of their intercultural sensitivity: interaction involvement, open-mindedness, non-judgment, and empathy. Just as with their confidence, the preservice teachers generally struggle with their attention to subtle cultural differences, as observed by their average score of 11.6 out of a potential mark of 15. Incidentally, Monica, Jeremy, Ivy, Daisy, and Rose's mean score for this factor is slightly higher than the entire research sample's (e.g. 10.5/15), which speaks to their elevated observation skills.

Daisy, who received the highest score for this factor (e.g., 14/15), is especially attentive to the differences that exist between herself and people from different cultures. She admits that

she is disheartened that most of the preservice teachers that she observed during her practicum spent too little time monitoring the diverse student culture in the classrooms where they were assigned to teach. For instance, in the following passage Daisy describes the benefits of quiet, focused student observation:

> "*I spent a good two weeks in my first block just observing, and I think that really contributed to me being more aware and it actually helped me understand children more, because when you observe you don't have to teach, you don't have to talk, you just look and your eyes can be here, they can be there, you can even turn around and see what's going on back there, and not have to do anything but watch and observe really, really helped*." (Daisy, personal interview, June 26, 2015).

While Daisy does not discredit the importance of obtaining meaningful experience through practice, she views observation as being equally significant to developing the skills required to effectively teach in culturally diverse classrooms. In Daisy's opinion, observation is critical to good teaching since it presents teachers with an opportunity to acquire intimate knowledge about their students' through sustained focus on their interactions with peers, their response to instruction, and their personal management skills. Research suggests that preservice teachers formulate ideas about their teaching abilities by observing the classroom dynamic and detecting behaviours that they will either emulate and/or avoid in their own practice (Siwatu, 2011). Daisy reveals that she was able to avoid the teaching pitfalls she witnessed during the first few weeks of her practicum by wading instead of jumping in to student teaching.

Like Daisy, Rose spent a considerable amount of time in her practicum observing her students before interacting with them on a personal basis. By doing so, she was able to distinguish their personalities, uncover their goals, and identify the distinct cultural values that influence their academic performance. In the following passage she describes her observation of one of her grade 9 students whose personal aspirations conflicted with her parents' cultural views on professional success:

"I had a grade 9 student who was doing amazing. She wants to be an actuarial scientist; they are mathematicians that complete a six-year math degree. So [she] wanted to do this but because she was not aspiring to be a lawyer, doctor, or scientist [her parents] didn't want her do to it. She was in grade 9 doing grade 10 work, she was teaching it to herself and she'd maybe come to me with a question once a week, so rarely because she could do it herself, no problem, but her parents came down on her. She wasn't doing well enough, you know 97 wasn't a good enough GPA." (Rose, personal interview, June 12, 2015).

Notice how Rose's understanding of her student's relationship with her family and the pressure she experiences from her parents extends beyond a superficial sense of awareness. Through prolonged attention to her student and recognition of the influence of her cultural background on her performance, Rose is able to unpack the deep psychological meanings inherent in her behaviour and aspirational goals. Rose's significant attention to the subtle cultural differences existing between herself and people from different cultures is also exhibited by her score for this factor of her intercultural sensitivity (e.g. *interaction attentiveness* = 12/15).

Based solely on his interaction attentiveness scores (e.g. 10/15), it can be inferred that Jeremy is only moderately attentive to cultural differences. However, through discussion of his travel experience, it is obvious that he is incredibly observant of cultural nuances and ethnic differences. For instance, he was able to detect the behavioural differences within the expatriate culture living in South Korea:

"*There are two types of people that I saw, two types of foreigners that I saw in Korea. The ones that would go out, they would have a good time, they would converse with the locals, they would take a subway to some stop that we never heard of, get off, get, lost, and see if they could find their way back. There were people like that, totally outgoing, totally about that, and then there were the other people that would stay in their apartment and watch Netflix."* (Jeremy, personal interview, June 11, 2015)

Jeremy's observation of the distinctions between various cultural groups living within South Korea is indicative of his keen perception and observance of cultural differences. Ivy, like Jeremy, developed her interaction attentiveness by immersing herself in a foreign culture. Although Ivy's score was among the lowest reported for this factor (e.g., 10/15), the results of

her interview suggest that she is remarkably attentive to her social environment and is discerning of discrete cultural differences. For instance, during her stay in Guatemala Ivy learned to distinguish cultural patterns of behaviour, particularly those that were strikingly different from the traditions she practices at home. For instance, she recalls watching school children "hang out and play with a bouncy ball all night" (Ivy, personal interview, June 26, 2015), and observing households where chickens were kept as pets. Ivy admits that she was initially captivated by these experiences given their peculiarity when viewed from her cultural perspective. However, once she was able to shift her cultural lens she learned to appreciate the normalcy of these customs and the values they represent.

The perspective shift that Ivy describes in her narrative is common among individuals who have adapted to another culture, and have therefore modified their behaviour in culturally appropriate and authentic ways (Hammer, 2012). While cultural adaptation is accelerated by cultural immersion, it is also developed through sustained contact with people from different cultures. For instance, Monica has learned to adapt to her international students by engaging with them in deep and meaningful ways while consciously developing strategies to interact with them more effectively, such as learning different languages. Monica is intimately involved in her students' lives and is attentive to issues that impact their ability to acclimate to their new cultural environment. In our discussion she reveals that she has observed her students struggle to be understood in the classroom and/or receive instruction that is appropriate to their needs, as she describes in the following excerpt:

"*One of my students took an ESL course where they were teaching him things like 'table', 'chair', and 'book'. He knew these words, but they were just unable to do math questions*." (Monica, personal interview, June 8, 2015)

What is clear from Monica's narrative is that teachers who are unobservant of their students' backgrounds and learning needs create roadblocks that are difficult for some students to overcome, particularly those whose language and/or culture prevents them from communicating clearly and effectively. Monica is especially critical of cookie cutter approaches to teaching culturally diverse students, believing that instructional strategies of this nature tend to exacerbate problems in the classroom instead of alleviating them. Monica has spent a considerable amount of time cultivating relationships with each of her international students and in the process has uncovered their strengths and weaknesses, goals, fears, and anxieties. It should be mentioned that Monica received a score of 12/15 for interaction attentiveness, suggesting that she is highly vigilant and responsive in her interactions with people from distinct cultural backgrounds; a fact confirmed by her narrative descriptions of her significant intercultural exchanges with her students, family, and friends.

Daisy, Ivy, Monica, Jeremy, and Rose's intercultural sensitivity was captured through analysis of their survey and interview responses. Their cumulative average scores for each measured factor of intercultural sensitivity – interaction engagement, respect for cultural diversity, interaction confidence, interaction enjoyment, and interaction attentiveness – indicate that they are highly sensitive and attentive to differences exhibited in their intercultural interactions. These results are corroborated by the information gathered from our discussions on their cultural background and the intercultural experiences they have acquired through travel, school, and work. The preservice teachers are generally enthusiastic about engaging in conversations with people from different cultures since they view these exchanges as opportunities to discover the values, beliefs, and traditions held by other cultural groups.

Daisy, Ivy, Monica, Jeremy, and Rose's understanding and appreciation of cultural diversity is strengthened by their ability to suspend their judgment and remain open to behaviours, attitudes, and opinions that differ from their own. They are also generally attentive to social cues and subtle and/or pronounced cultural nuances. Moreover, by modifying their behaviour and shifting their cultural perspectives during their intercultural interaction they are able to relate quite easily to their culturally distinct counterparts.

Question 2: What is the Essence of Their Teachers' Lived Experience of Intercultural Competence?

In the next few paragraphs, I reveal the essence of the preservice teachers' intercultural competence through a discussion of the attitudes, feelings, and behaviours observed in descriptive surveys and phenomenological interviews. In Chapter 3 I outlined the research approach used to uncover the essence of the preservice teachers' intercultural competence. Through application of Giorgi's descriptive phenomenological psychological method I identified seven (7) specific attitudes, thoughts, and behaviours that underline the preservice teachers' intercultural competence, specifically: *open-mindedness*, *perception*, *self-esteem*, *empathy*, *self-confidence*, *self-awareness*, and *curiosity*. Incidentally, three of these personal qualities – open-mindedness, self-esteem, and empathy – along with *self-monitoring*, *interaction involvement*, and *non-judgment* were captured and measured by the ISS in the first phase of this study (Chen et al., 1997).

In the following paragraphs I outline the essential features of the preservice teachers' intercultural sensitivity with respect to the affective characteristics of their intercultural competence. I also describe and analyze the features of their intercultural awareness (e.g. *perception* and *self-awareness*) and intercultural adroitness (e.g. *self-confidence* and *curiosity*)

before concluding this chapter with a synthesized description of the fundamental features of their intercultural competence.

Characteristics of the Preservice Teachers' Intercultural Sensitivity

Intercultural sensitivity represents the affective dimension of intercultural competence, and is the storehouse of an individual's feelings towards other cultures. Chen and Starosta's conceptual model of intercultural sensitivity is based on six characteristics that determine a person's emotional response towards understanding and appreciating cultural differences (Tamam, 2010). In the previous chapter I described how the following traits were reflected in the results generated from Jeremy, Monica, Daisy, Ivy, and Rose's surveys, as well as in the data obtained from phenomenological interviews. In the next few sections I interpret each essential component of their intercultural sensitivity, beginning with their self-esteem.

Self-esteem. In the broadest sense of the word, self-esteem refers to a person's self-worth or self-value (Chen et al., 1997). Monica, Jeremy, Daisy, Rose, and Ivy's self-esteem is represented by the value they feel they bring to their intercultural relationships and their perceived value by others. The preservice teachers' self-esteem is enhanced by their optimism, resilience, enthusiasm, and sincerity. Taken together these qualities underline the positive emotions they exude in their intercultural interactions. The preservice teachers' self-esteem is reflected by their ability: to engage in meaningful relations with people from different cultural backgrounds; to display confidence in their intercultural interactions irrespective of the sociocultural context in which they take place; and, to express genuine pleasure in their interactions with people from different cultures.

Ivy and Jeremy's self-esteem matured during their immersive experiences abroad. Their narratives about their "euphoric" travel experiences in Guatemala and South Korea showcase

their strength and flexibility, as well as their ability to assume control over their lives without fear of being rejected or ostracized by the local culture. Although they were both raised in predominately Caucasian communities, neither Jeremy nor Ivy ever indicated in their interviews that they were hesitant or uncertain to leave home, in fact the very opposite was true. For instance, they approached these experiences with excitement and hopefulness, reasoning that travelling overseas would allow them to explore a different existence, and in the process provide them with an opportunity to examine their independence and ability to "get to know {themselves] and the kind of boundaries [they] have as {people]." (Jeremy, personal interview, June 11, 2015).

Both Jeremy and Ivy relished the opportunity to acquire an authentic experience of a new culture and admitted to being taken aback by how valuable they were perceived by others. For instance, during a childhood visit to Japan Ivy recalls being stopped and admired for her blonde hair and Jeremy recounts being "idolized and pampered" in South Korea for being a statuesque white man. Jeremy describes experiencing "reverse cultural shock", a feeling that may be likened to author Kalvero Oberg's (1960) metaphor of a "fish out of water" through which an individual becomes perceptibly aware of their social value and worth when exposed to a different cultural environment.

Significantly, Daisy, whose culturally immersive experience in Winnipeg has been less positive and complementary than either Jeremy or Ivy's, confesses to experiencing "cultural shock" (Daisy, personal interview, June 26, 2015) upon moving to a urban environment. Daisy shares that she felt compelled to take a "step back" and re-evaluate her social circumstances in Winnipeg due to a spate of racially motivated incidents in which she has been involved since moving to the City from a northern community.

Even though several people victimized Daisy throughout her life she does not feel or behave like a victim and strongly resents being made to feel so. While these experiences have tainted her ability to fully trust or feel comfortable engaging with people from different cultures as evidenced by her responses to survey questions 2 and 24, they have not diminished her belief in the value she feels she brings to society, her family, and her community. Daisy appreciates that she is in a unique position to effect change in her community by serving as a role model for other Aboriginal women. She is also distinctly aware that her experiences and perspectives on First Nations' history, culture, traditions, and language is highly valued within her program. Even so, sometimes feels exploited and stereotyped by her professors and peers in the program due to their overzealousness interest in her life history and cultural background.

Rose is also cognizant of the skills she brings to the classroom, particularly her ability to establish positive relationships with people from diverse cultural backgrounds and her willingness to make mistakes and grow from them. Rose approaches her prospective role as teacher with a number of legitimate fears, although she is mostly optimistic about the relationships she will establish with her culturally diverse students. Likewise, Monica is excited to work with students from different cultures, primarily because of her own experiences as a cultural minority and international home stay parent. As a child, Monica reveals that she wrestled with feelings of belongingness, which impacted her ability to accept her ethnic identity. Today Monica has grown and matured into a proud West Indian-Canadian woman who recognizes the importance of her diversity in the classroom and its special place in society.

Self-monitoring. Self-monitoring is defined as a person's ability to regulate their emotional response in a variety of social contexts. Chen & Starosta (1997) depict people with high self-monitoring skills as those who are successfully able to adapt their behaviours to

different social situations so as to communicate more competently with other cultures. Monica, Jeremy, Ivy, Rose, and Daisy's self-monitoring is reflected by their willingness to engage with people from different cultures, and displaying confidence, enjoyment, and attentiveness during these intercultural experiences.

In Ivy and Jeremy's recollections of their culturally immersive experiences in Guatemala and South Korea they describe a period of cultural adjustment swiftly followed by a heightened sense of cultural awareness and a growing sense of respect for the differences that surrounded them. These feelings were engendered once they adjusted to their new environment and cast aside their presumptions and fears. Jeremy describes being startled by a group of naked men socializing in a traditional Korean bathhouse known as a *jjimjibang*. Jeremy's 'shock and awe' was largely inspired by his socially conditioned beliefs about acceptable masculine behaviour, which once perceived inspired him to re-evaluate his culturally biased perceptions and values. During his stay in South Korea, Jeremy deepened his appreciation of cultural diversity by partaking in a number of social experiences that broadened his perspective and encouraged to adopt different behaviours and values. Ultimately Jeremy was able to fit into his new cultural environment by re-adjusting his cultural lens and monitoring his social behaviour.

In our conversation, Ivy reveals that she was able to adapt to Guatemala by learning to speak Spanish and modifying her mannerisms to mirror the habits of the local culture by, for instance, saying "hello" to strangers on the street or adjusting to what she jokingly refers to as 'Guatemalan time' (Ivy, personal interview, June 26). In contrast, Monica and Daisy cultivated greater control over their emotions by triumphing over experiences of racism and discrimination with humility and grace. Daisy reveals that she has become more diligent in her reactions to certain people and social situations she would have reacted negatively to in the past. Monica

retains her professionalism by performing effectively and appropriately within a school culture where she and visible minority students are routinely stereotyped by an overwhelmingly narrow-minded and culturally insensitive teaching staff.

Rose demonstrates her ability to regulate her behaviour by engaging in conversations about cultural diversity only with those who are receptive. Rose feels it is imperative to gain consent before proceeding to inquire about a person's cultural background, including her own. She reasons that "there are some people who want to have that conversation with you and to correct you, and there are those who will take it the wrong way" (Rose, personal interview, June 12, 2015); Rose's self-monitoring is exhibited by her ability to know the difference. It is also highlighted by her ability to respond to subtle social cues and to communicate in culturally appropriate ways.

Open-mindedness. According to Chen & Starosta (1997) open-mindedness pertains to a person's willingness to accept multiple cultural realities and points of view. Monica, Jeremy, Ivy, Rose, and Daisy's open-mindedness is demonstrated by their open and honest interactions with their culturally distinct counterparts, and their acceptance of the differences that arise in their intercultural encounters. The preservice teachers' open-mindedness is a prominent feature of their intercultural sensitivity and is manifested by their ability to: engage in candid discussions on culture and race; acknowledge and respect diverse cultural practices and worldviews; express their personal opinions and values with confidence; foster positive intercultural relationships; and, discover new cultural insights through communication and inquiry.

Monica, Daisy, Jeremy, Ivy, and Rose's open minds were displayed throughout our lengthy discussions on the highly sensitive topics of race, culture, diversity, and class. When asked to define their perceptions of culture each preservice teacher's answer was surprisingly the

same. That is, culture was broadly viewed as a dynamic, ever-changing collection of values, opinions, and beliefs held by distinct groups of people during a given period of time. The preservice teachers' unique interpretations of culture were cultivated by many inspiring intercultural experiences, such as those acquired abroad, through serendipitous conversations with friends and peers, and through inherited cultural traditions and values.

Daisy views culture "as a set of learned and predetermined behaviours, morals, and standards passed down to generations through teachings"(Daisy, personal interview, June 26, 2015). Given the stereotypes and misconceptions surrounding her culture, Daisy has struggled to share her background with those around her since she is aware that "it may make people who don't want to hear about [it] feel uncomfortable"(Daisy, personal interview, June 26, 2015). However with Suzy, Daisy feels free to engage in mutually enriching conversations distinguished by openness and honesty, key ingredients that fortify trust and acceptance in any relationship of meaning.

Rose reveals that for a long period of time she avoided interacting with Indigenous people, however after moving to Winnipeg and being exposed to individuals from various Aboriginal communities she has been able to push these "negative connotations and stigmas aside", becoming more understanding of the social issues that impact their status within society.

According to Adler (1977) an open-minded individual is one who is willing and able to accept different psychological and social realities, and thus varying patterns of life. The mindset generally adopted by open-minded individuals most closely resembles what Hammer (2012) describes as 'acceptance orientation', or the stage in which an individual is able to recognize and appreciate patterns of cultural difference and commonality. Jeremy's acceptance of the distinctive cultural patterns of behaviour he observed in South Korea is illustrative of his open-

mindedness. Jeremy views culture as an endless sea of possibilities that you "drop yourself into and let the waves ripple out [from]" (Jeremy, personal interview, June 11, 2015). For Jeremy, culture is not bound to Folkloroma or superficial events of this nature. Rather he perceives culture as complex and interrelated, and subject to different manifestations.

Through varied social circumstances and experiences the preservice teachers have developed an enlarged understanding and appreciation of cultural diversity, a fact confirmed by their survey and interview results. One of the ways that the preservice teachers were able to broaden their perspective of culture was by acquiring a different language. For Ivy and Monica, learning a new language signified more than becoming familiar with grammar and syntax; it involved developing an appreciation for the distinct behaviours and customs of the individuals with whom they frequently engage.

According to Byram (1997) the acquisition of a foreign language elevates an individual's consciousness of the commonalities and differences shared between cultures, equipping them with the skills required to participate in meaningful intercultural interactions. Both Ivy and Monica's intercultural communication competence was enhanced by their attainment of a foreign language. While Ivy was able to elevate her awareness of Guatemalan culture by learning Spanish, developing competency in German and French allowed Monica to participate in reciprocal relationships with her international students based on mutual understanding, openness, and respect.

What surprised me most about my interactions with the preservice teachers was their candor and willingness to disclose details about their personal backgrounds and experiences with cultural diversity. Incidentally, Chen & Starosta (1996) contend that effective message skills are tempered by self-disclosure or an ability to reveal information about oneself openly and

appropriately during intercultural interaction. On a whole, I engaged in frank and direct discussions with Jeremy, Ivy, Monica, Rose, and Daisy on a variety of subjects ranging from race relations to school-based education reform. In all instances they remained willing and eager to contribute their depth of knowledge and understanding of cultural diversity to the study at hand.

Empathy. Empathy is one of the most significant characteristics of the preservice teachers' intercultural sensitivity, which is expressed by their intuitive awareness of the feelings and thoughts of the people with whom they interact. Jeremy, Monica, Daisy, Rose, and Ivy's empathy is emphasized by their flexibility, selflessness, and consideration, qualities which enhance their ability to establish significant connections with their culturally diverse counterparts. Empathy also supports the preservice teachers' appreciation and respect for different cultural perspectives and behaviours.

Empathy extends beyond merely 'feeling with' an individual to encompass the thoughts and behaviours that generally promote the development of intercultural competence (McAllister et al., 2002). Jeremy's is remarkably empathetic towards people from minority cultural backgrounds despite his privileged social status and sheltered upbringing. While he avidly supports diverse cultural expressions and values, he is also able to empathize with those who do not support his views, as for instance his parents. When describing his parents' misgivings about an Aboriginal friend, Jeremy expresses compassion and empathy towards his parents for their ignorance despite personally disagreeing with their opinions.

Daisy and Rose have been on the receiving end of the prejudice depicted in Jeremy's description of his parents' sociopolitical values, opinions, and behaviours. Despite having been bullied and ostracized due to their ethnic and cultural backgrounds, both Daisy and Rose are

selfless and expressive in their concern for other people, particularly those from different cultural backgrounds. Daisy, for example, has been able to rationalize her Caucasian friends' fears about her culture by sympathizing with their ignorance and naivety. Likewise, Rose was able to extend empathy towards her friend's racially intolerant parents by drawing on her own family's history with racism and discrimination in order to understand their culturally insensitive feelings and behaviour towards her.

Ivy, like Jeremy, grew up in predominately monocultural society and developed a significant amount of intercultural sensitivity through intercultural exposure. Ivy's empathy is demonstrated by her ability to take other people's feelings into consideration and to respect religious diversity by, for instance, refusing to prepare meals with pork for her co-workers' from different ethno-religious backgrounds. Yet, as implied by Monica, empathy is not inherent quality found among all practicing and/or prospective teachers. For instance, Monica suggests that her co-workers' lack of intercultural experience prevents them from communicating effectively with their ethnically diverse students beyond a superficial, impersonal level. Conversely, since she is able to relate to her students' personal anxieties and educational issues due to her own experiences she does not replicate this behaviour in her empathic conversations with her domestic and international students. Monica's attention to and analysis of her students' subtle social cues and overt cultural expressions enables her to relate to them on a deeply personal level achieved through introspection and awareness of cultures other than one's own (Chen et al., 2005).

Interaction involvement. Interaction involvement is defined here as an individual's responsiveness, perceptiveness, and attentiveness to other cultures (Spitzberg & Cupach, 1984). This characteristic is represented by Jeremy, Ivy, Rose, Daisy, and Monica's ability to

effectively engage with and observe different cultures. The preservice teachers' average interaction attentiveness score (e.g., 10.5/15) suggests that they sometimes struggle to focus on perceptible cultural differences, which limits the development of their intercultural sensitivity. Ironically, attentiveness is a feeling that both Daisy and Rose felt was lacking from most of the interactions they observed between their cooperating teachers (CTs) and the culturally diverse students in their practicum classrooms.

Daisy's attentiveness is distinguished by her willingness to understand distinctions between each child present in the classroom. For instance, Daisy spent several weeks during her practicum "just watching and observing what was going on [in the classroom]" in an effort to better understand the unique learning styles, expectations, and needs of her students. Similarly, Rose spent a significant amount of time interacting with her students' parents and relatives, as well as observing the family dynamic. The following passage illustrates Rose's intimate understanding of the parental and cultural expectations that influence the academic performance of the culturally diverse students in her classroom:

> *"So it was a struggle to explain to these parents that, yes, their kids are doing the right thing. It's just going to keep coming if the child stays on the right track. But, you know, to the parents, that was not good enough…One of the things that I learned that I always had to do was, otherwise the parents would come down on these kids much too hard, was I always needed to start praising the child as a person, saying that the student is a very good student. So, that level of toughness that I guess these parents have on their children, it was very different for me*."(Rose, personal interview, June 12, 2015).

Through increased exposure and understanding of her students' cultural backgrounds, Rose was able to exercise a great deal of sensitivity and care in her daily interactions and experiences with them. Rose's behaviour is not uncommon among other culturally responsive teachers who view caring as a moral imperative, a social responsibility, and pedagogical necessity for all teaching professionals (Gay, 2002). However, as suggested by Monica's

characterization of the teachers with whom she works as an EA, few teachers are emotionally and/or cognitively prepared to address the increasingly diverse needs of the students in their multicultural classroom. In contrast to the teaching staff employed at her school, Monica is committed to responding to the unique demands of her students by "establishing wellness groups or trying to get different organizations to come in so [her] students will have other people available to teach them about the issues they personally identify with" (Monica, personal interview, June 8, 2015).

In South Korea, Jeremy demonstrated his interaction involvement by willingly participating in intercultural interactions and social activities with local residents. Jeremy was especially critical of foreigners who separated themselves from the national culture by staying inside to "watch Netflix" or not straying too far outside the expatriate community. Conversely, Jeremy felt inspired to "take a hike and get lost in the literal sense."(Jeremy, personal interview, June 11, 2015). Ivy was also greatly involved within Guatemalan society, revealing that she "felt a lot more comfortable once [she] figured out how to navigate in the system"(Ivy, personal interview, June 26, 2015). Highly involved people, such as the individuals interviewed in this study, direct their consciousness towards the evolving reality of self and other, and are viewed by other people as generally competent interpersonal communicators (Cegala, Savage, Brunner, and Conrad, 1982).

Non-judgment. The preservice teachers' ability to suspend their personal opinions on alternative cultural traditions, values, and beliefs is indicative of their non-judgment. Despite their social conditioning, Monica, Jeremy, Rose, Daisy, and Ivy display a remarkable ability to engage in and respect different cultural perspectives and values. They demonstrate a willingness to overcome their cultural biases through sustained exposure and interaction with people whose

cultural backgrounds are unique from their own. They also share a sentiment of enjoyment toward intercultural encounters that rouse their attention to the differences and commonalities that present during these interactions.

While sometimes confused with open-mindedness, non-judgment refers to an attitude that allows a person to suspend judgment while interacting with people from different cultures (Chen et al., 1997). In doing so, they are able to experience that culture authentically. For instance, Jeremy's willingness to suspend his Western beliefs and values while living in South Korea allowed him to fully engage in the culture and develop a sense of enjoyment for his diverse social environment. Incidentally, interaction enjoyment is an essential feature of intercultural sensitivity that leads to mutually satisfying intercultural experiences where both parties feel psychologically happy that they been listened to without judgment (Chen et al., 1996; Chen et al., 1997). Both Daisy and Ivy recounted intercultural experiences where active listening played a central role in their elevated understanding of their friends' cultural backgrounds and perceptions. By remaining attentive and neutral in these interactions, both Daisy and Ivy uncovered details of the cultural histories they share with their friends, which ultimately enriched their relationships.

Given Ivy's authentic enjoyment and openness towards cultural diversity she is disdainful of individuals who appropriate aspects of another culture while holding onto stereotypical and/or narrow-minded points of view about its individual members. Interculturally competent people, like Ivy, Daisy, Monica, Rose, and Jeremy realize that culture extends beyond elemental features like food, art, and dance, and that it represents the totality of the values, practices, and beliefs held by a given community that should be viewed sincerely and non-judgmentally.

For instance, Monica's relationship with her international students is grounded in mutual understanding and respect, which inspires them to share with her their feelings of displacement, their perceptions on Canadian society, and their experiences with teachers and students in the classroom. Monica reveals that many of her students struggle to connect with their peers and teachers due to their culture and/or language differences, and "then on top of that, they're dealing with all of the teenager things" (Monica, personal interview, June 8, 2015). Monica admits to often acting as a sounding board for her international students, helping them grow by intently listening to them and offering them advice and guidance.

While many teachers shy away from establishing personal relationships with their students, Rose shares that she is "willing to learn about the children [she] is working with because every single child, every single case is going to be different and unique" (Rose, personal interview, June 12, 2015). When describing her experience with one of her grade 9 students whose parents disapprove of her goal to become an actuarial scientist, Rose demonstrates her ability to actively listen without judging her students' parents' for pressuring their child to yield to culturally based expectations. In so doing, Rose is able to convey an attitude of acceptance and regard for her students' diverse cultural backgrounds, irrespective of her own values, opinions, and beliefs.

To summarize, the preservice teachers' intercultural sensitivity motivates them to engage in positive and inspiring intercultural interactions that enhance their understanding and appreciation of cultural diversity. Throughout the course of their storied lives, Rose, Daisy, Monica, Ivy, and Jeremy have cultivated meaningful intercultural experiences and relationships by projecting positive emotions reflected by their open-mindedness, empathy, self-esteem, self-monitoring, interaction involvement, and non-judgment. These six personal attributes inform

their intercultural sensitivity and are expressed by their acceptance, understanding, and appreciation of cultural diversity.

Characteristics of Intercultural Awareness

In their model of intercultural communication competence, Chen and Starosta (1996) describe the phenomenon of intercultural competence as the confluence of specific behaviours, thoughts, and emotions generally held by communicatively competent people. Intercultural awareness represents the cognitive domain of intercultural competence that reduces the level of situational ambiguity and uncertainty present in intercultural interactions (Chen & Starosta, 1997). Intercultural awareness is foundational to the preservice teachers' intercultural competence and stimulates their display of appropriate and effective intercultural behaviour. In the previous section I identified six affective characteristics of Daisy, Ivy, Monica, Jeremy, and Rose's intercultural sensitivity. Here I add two cognitive traits to my description of their intercultural competence (e.g. *self-awareness* and *perception*), which are believed to rouse their awareness of cultural diversity and enable them to discern multiple cultural realities.

Self-awareness. Broadly speaking, self-awareness refers to a person's conscious awareness of his- or herself. Mindfulness is key to an individual's recognition and understanding of their character, feelings, thoughts, motivations, and desires. As per Chen and Starosta (1996), the execution of conversationally competent behaviour requires self-awareness, or an ability to closely observe and evaluate one's mannerisms in social interaction. Despite being housed in separate dimensions of their intercultural competence, the preservice teachers' self-awareness is closely related to their self-monitoring – an affective feature of their intercultural sensitivity. Each trait requires the preservice teachers to remain fully attentive to 'self' and the expressions and self-presentation of others.

The preservice teachers' self-awareness is expressed by their insights on their culturally determined identity, their concern for the appropriateness of their social behaviour, and their cognizance of how they are perceived by others. The preservice teachers generally view themselves as multi-dimensional, multi-lingual beings whose cultural identities extend beyond their race, even though these biological traits remain significant to society. Jeremy developed his consciousness of his racial identity through his interactions with South Koreans. Jeremy reveals that he was generally respected and revered by members of the local culture due to his physical appearance that conferred him with special status and influence in South Korea. While he concedes that he was not entirely comfortable with being "pampered and idolized" by various members of society, his experience in the country illuminated his social privilege and compelled him to evaluate the significance of his race and gender.

Prior to his visit to South Korea Jeremy was unconscious of his social entitlements and had often viewed himself as the "lowest common denominator" (Jeremy, personal interview, June 11, 2015). However, in South Korea he gained tremendous perspective on his social value as a "tall white man" by remaining attentive to how this distinction impacted his treatment within society. While he is inclined to view himself differently than others, in South Korea Jeremy was confronted with his image and forced to evaluate the weighted value of his physical distinctions. As is evident from Jeremy's description of his experience overseas, privilege often goes unnoticed by those with ready access to power and resources largely unavailable to individuals from marginalized cultural and/or ethnic communities. Often these recipients of unearned social advantages and benefits tend to believe that social privilege is a condition of the daily experiences that everyone is entitled to (Lund et al., 2010). While Jeremy may have been unconscious of his social positioning prior to arriving in South Korea, his experience in the

country opened his eyes to the power conferred to him due to his sociocultural background and distinguishing features.

Likewise, Ivy was unaware of the social value placed on her physical appearance until her visit to Japan. Ivy recalls being stopped, ogled, and praised for the colour of her hair, which she admits was initially unsettling and overwhelming. However, with time, Ivy learned to appreciate her transcendent experience in Japan and the social feedback that enhanced her consciousness of self. Having been raised in a monocultural environment Ivy was oblivious to stereotypical perceptions of her race and ethnicity before traveling to and living within a foreign culture. However, in navigating the unfamiliar social universe of Japan Ivy slowly began to cultivate her self-awareness and refine her perspective on cultural diversity, leading her to adapt to her culturally diverse social environment.

Daisy's intercultural experiences in Winnipeg, though equally significant, have been remarkably less positive. Unlike Ivy and Jeremy, Daisy describes being verbally abused and periodically degraded by numerous members of her adopted culture. As an Aboriginal woman, Daisy has fought long and hard to be treated equally and respectfully by other members of society who often discount her personal worth and value on account of her cultural and ethnic differences. However, as Daisy has developed her self-awareness she has consciously redefined her interpretations of her self-image, which has influenced her perception of others. She describes becoming more diligent in her reactions to overt displays of racism since entering the teaching profession and becoming a mother. She reveals that she is now conscious of her reaction to overt displays of racism and discrimination, and hopes to teach her son to be reflective of the appropriateness of his social behaviour since "people are going do these things, and they are going to look at [him] and say things that are not always nice."(Daisy, personal

interview, June 26, 2015). By paying attention to her thoughts and emotions, Daisy has learned to exercise control over them when interacting with people from different cultures.

Rose's profound understanding of her personal history and cultural background has prompted her to accept and adapt to different cultures. For instance, her burgeoning self-awareness has altered her views on Aboriginal culture and shifted the emotional tenor of her relationships with members of the Indigenous community from fear to acceptance. Similarly, Monica's growing awareness of her cultural identity has lead her to abandon her fears of being rejected and/or marginalized due to her ethnic background. Monica admits to having struggled throughout her adolescence with her ethnicity but is now comfortable introducing her culture to her friends since she is no longer embarrassed by her cultural differences. Monica's previous anxiety over her father's thick Trinidadian accent and her mother's ethnic cuisine may be viewed as her innate response to the threat of being excluded by mainstream society. However since coming to terms with her cultural identity, Monica has a clearer perception of her personality, greater appreciation for her personal beliefs and values, and an enlarged perspective on cultural diversity.

Perception. Perception refers to the preservice teachers' cognitive awareness of the commonalities and differences that appear in their interactions with people from different cultures. Daisy, Monica, Rose, Ivy, and Jeremy's cultural awareness extends beyond a superficial recognition and appreciation of the cultural artifacts, music, and food specific to a particular human society. As a whole, the preservice teachers' value authentic experiences that satiate their cultural appetites and inspire them to dig down deep, divest themselves of their innate fears, meld into an alternate reality, and consequently experience life anew. Monica, Daisy, Ivy, Rose, and Jeremy's cultural awareness is exemplified by their ability to detect

nuanced differences in their interactions and observations of people from diverse cultural backgrounds. Their perception is refined through sustained exposure to different cultures and prolonged attention to observable differences manifested through the language, traditions, and values held by their culturally distinct counterparts.

The preservice teachers' perception is demonstrated by their ability to analyze the similarities and differences that exist between their cultural patterns of behaviour and those distinguished in their intercultural interactions. Monica, Daisy, Rose, Jeremy, and Ivy have elevated their consciousness of cultural diversity by monitoring their self-presentation and the behaviours of those with whom they engage. For instance, through mindful observation of the lifestyles and customs of Guatemalan people, Ivy was able to discern their distinct cultural values. She recalls being transfixed by images of children carelessly running around with bouncy balls or doting on chickens treated as household pets. Ivy admits that she could not help but compare these experiences to her own life in North America where wealth and happiness are valuated in wholly different terms.

As per Chen and Starosta (1996) the process of becoming culturally aware engenders appreciation for cultural variability and positive feelings toward multicultural co-existence. According to Bennett (2004), in order to clearly discern multiple cultural realities an individual must adopt an ethnorelative mindset by constructing a self-reflexive perspective that enables them to experience one's own culture in the context of other cultures. Incidentally Jeremy believes that the only way in which to acquire an authentic cultural experience is by immersing oneself in the lived-reality of a different culture and becoming fluent in its habits and traditions. Jeremy's adaptation to South Korea was eased by his *intercultural communication flexibility*

(Ting-Toomey & Chung, 2012), a mindset that enabled him to detect subtle differences in the communication styles and cultural frames of reference held by his counterparts in South Korea.

In her intercultural competence model, Darla Deardorff (2009) describes flexibility as a desired internal outcome of intercultural competence that allows a person to select and adopt appropriate communication styles and behaviours when engaging in cross-cultural settings. For instance, acquiring new languages deepened Monica's relationships with several of her international students by providing a common ground from which to exchange their thoughts, feelings, and perspectives on their personal realities. Monica has developed remarkable insight on her students' strengths, weaknesses, doubts, and fears by engaging in intimate discussions with them on their schoolwork, personal relationships, and cultural backgrounds. These encounters have reframed her perspective of self through exploration of the commonalities and differences that exist between her students' cultures and her own.

Daisy and Rose have similarly honed their perception of cultural awareness through direct interaction and observation of their culturally diverse students. Both Daisy and Rose reveal that they have spent a considerable amount of time monitoring the mannerisms of their students during their practicums to develop a better sense of who they are as individuals, as well as to distinguish the impact of their culture on their discernible behaviours. Daisy understands that non-evaluative observation allows teachers to acquire a greater sense of their students' personalities and the classroom culture by monitoring the varying attitudes, thoughts, and behaviours exhibited by their students.

Rose's cultural awareness is distinguished by her perspective-taking and her consideration for the multiple cultural realities held by her students and their parents. For instance, in her description of her relationships with her students' parents she demonstrates her

broadening perspective on culture and its impact on academic performance. As revealed in her narrative of her classroom experiences, Rose appreciates the significance of culture and upbringing on her students' personal ambitions and achievements in the classroom. Rose has refined her cultural awareness by specifically attending to the subtle and overt cultural differences that appear in her interactions with her Filipino students and their parents. She shares that she regularly compares her own educational background with the students in her classroom, and has determined that "the level of toughness that these parents have on these children is very different for [her] because [she] came from an environment where every child had intrinsic motivation and wanted to do well" (Rose, personal interview, June 12, 2015). Rose's interactions and observations of her culturally diverse students has enlarged her perspective on the underlying cultural values and beliefs that inspire certain students to succeed and/or struggle in multicultural classrooms.

In brief, Monica, Rose, Daisy, Jeremy, and Ivy's intercultural awareness is exhibited by their self-awareness and perception, which allows them to discern and appreciate the various ways that reality is rendered and perceived by different human societies. The preservice teachers' self-awareness is cultivated by their reflections on their past and current selves, and by their consciousness of their personal distinctions. Self-awareness is the baseline of the preservice teachers' intercultural competence such that it represents the foundation from which they are able to understand the cultural realities of those with whom they interact. Through active listening and mindful observation of their culturally distinct counterparts, Monica, Ivy, Daisy, Jeremy, and Rose have enhanced their cultural intelligence and respect for diversity. Moreover their cultural awareness is kindled by their perceptual acuity, which enables them to appreciate

other people's feelings and detect the subtle differences that appear in their interactions with people from different cultures.

Characteristics of Intercultural Adroitness

Intercultural adroitness signifies a person's ability to behave effectively and appropriately in intercultural interactions (Chen et al., 1996). Intercultural adroitness is an external outcome of intercultural competence (Deardorff, 2006) based on one's intercultural knowledge, skills, and attitudes. Intercultural adroitness is housed within the behavioural dimension of Chen & Starosta's (1996) model of intercultural competence and corresponds specifically to the communication skills exhibited by interculturally competent people. The preservice teachers' intercultural adroitness is displayed by their *self-confidence* and *curiosity*, which enriches their intercultural interactions and fortifies their relationships with people from different cultures.

Self-confidence. Self-confidence is defined by an individual's assessment of their personal abilities, capacities, judgments, and beliefs (Lenny, 1977). The preservice teachers' self-confidence is exhibited by their frank and open opinions on a variety of social and political topics, their candid appraisals of self and others, their charisma and enthusiasm towards cultural diversity, and their determination and belief in their abilities, convictions, and ideals. Monica, Jeremy, Rose, Daisy, and Ivy exude immense confidence in their intercultural communication skills and have proved their ability to rise to new challenges, seize once in a lifetime of opportunities, and resolve the difficult challenges that present in their lives and/or classrooms.

Though easily mistaken with one another, self-confidence and self-esteem – an affective characteristic of intercultural competence – do not necessarily go hand-in-hand. As demonstrated by Monica's description of her previous anxiety over her ethnic identity, it is easier to outwardly display confidence than to internally build self-esteem. While Monica is remarkably sociable and

charismatic, in our conversation she shared experiences in her past in which she was conflicted about her ethnicity and feared being rejected by her predominately white group of friends. For a significant period of her adolescence she successfully concealed her insecurities, and in so doing masked all markers of her ethnic identity. However as Monica matured into adulthood she grew to accept the other dimensions of her self-identity and credits the changing sociopolitical climate for helping her outgrow her insecurities. That is, as society has become more progressive and therefore responsive to cultural diversity, Monica grew to embrace her culture and feel more comfortable sharing her penchant for “roti” and “curry chicken” with close friends and colleagues.

In a similar vein, Daisy is confident in her ethnic identity despite the racial abuse she sustained throughout her childhood from peers, teachers, and distant strangers. Daisy’s self-confidence is exemplified by her self-conception of her abilities and capabilities as an Aboriginal woman. Daisy’s belief in herself energizes her passions and inspires her to accomplish her goals, even when they collide with presiding social opinions of the culture and ethnicity in which she belongs. Her self-confidence is calibrated by her prior successes and beliefs in her future performance, much like how Rose’s assesses her future teaching abilities.

Rose’s self-confidence is demonstrated by her self-efficacy, or her belief in her ability to succeed as a multicultural teacher. Self-efficacy is defined by an individual’s beliefs about their capacity to succeed in specific situations or to accomplish a particular task (Bandura, 1977). Rose is confident in her ability to effect a positive change in the lives of her culturally diverse students due to her ability to communicate with them on a deeply personal level, as well as personally relate to their experiences given her own distinct cultural background. Rose’s self-confidence is born from her belief in her relational and communication skills and her trust in her

opinions and views on the shortcomings of multicultural education, which she intends to address in her own teaching practice.

Like Rose, Jeremy is unafraid to express his convictions and will take action to achieve his personal goals. Jeremy's positive feelings towards his abilities and achievements motivated him to delve into an unknown culture shortly after high school, and in the process participate in a "euphoric" cultural experience that transformed his perspectives and beliefs in his personal character and the disposition of others, regardless of their race or culture. Incidentally self-confidence is one of the most influential motivators and regulators of human behaviour (Bandura, 1986). For instance, Ivy's self-confidence motivated her to travel to Guatemala and contend with the psychological stresses that arise when navigating a foreign culture with little understanding of its dominant language. However, Ivy's satisfactory response to her previous experience in Japan imbued her with the confidence to embark on a new journey of self-discovery armed with a blueprint on how to successfully interact with her culturally distinct counterparts.

Curiosity. In a general sense, curiosity refers to a person's genuine interest in discovering something or someone unfamiliar. Curiosity is spurred by an unrelenting desire to discover something unknown. The preservice teachers' curiosity was expressed by their willingness to delve into the commonalities and tacit differences that exist between them and people from different cultures. In their quest to move beyond their perceived ignorance, Jeremy, Monica, Ivy, Rose, and Daisy engaged in a number of intercultural experiences that elevated their consciousness and enjoyment of cultural diversity. In each instance, the preservice teachers demonstrated a strong inclination to take risks in order to fulfill their desire to better understand a specific person, place, or thing.

Curiosity implies a willingness to risk and move beyond one's comfort zone in order to overcome their feelings of frustration, uncertainty, or desire (Deardorff, 2006). For instance, Jeremy's fascination with Japan was piqued during his adolescence, and while he would later go on to live out his travel fantasies in South Korea, his curious interest in Japan opened his eyes to the existence of multiple cultural realities. Ivy's curiosity is exemplified by her fascination with the simplicity of Guatemalan culture. She describes gazing at the locals for hours on end just to obtain further insight on their discrete traditions and values. Through sustained engagement and interaction with her cultural hosts Ivy refined her Spanish speaking skills and in so doing discovered further details on the culture she was demonstrably enamored with. Incidentally, relationship interest is correlated to foreign language acquisition such that the desire to effectively interact with one's surrounding environment fuels curious people with the desire to refine their communication skills (Bennett, 2015).

Like Ivy, Monica learned to speak German and French in order to improve the quality of her interactions with her international students. By learning how to communicate with her students more effectively, Monica uncovered several features of their personality that enhanced her perception of their reality as multi-dimensional human beings. Relational interest also spurred Rose and Daisy's curiosity in another culture. While Rose admits to having been previously prejudiced against Aboriginal people due to a number of "negative connotations and stigmas", her inclination to explore Indigenous culture subverted her fears and replace them with feelings of respect and admiration. Rose shares that as a naturally curious person she seeks opportunities to speak with other cultures such to overcome her ignorance and inherent fears. Daisy's curiosity led her to springboard a relatively banal conversation with her Nigerian friend Suzy into a rare opportunity to explore her cultural background and ethnicity. By participating in

a curious conversation on race, culture, and history, Daisy and Suzy's strengthened the bonds of their friendship and acquired greater understanding of their shared colonial histories and personal struggles as visible minorities.

To summarize, Jeremy, Monica, Rose, Daisy, and Ivy's self-confidence and curiosity motivates their desire to communicate effectively and appropriately with people from distinct cultural backgrounds. The preservice teachers display tremendous belief in themselves and have risked emotional and physical security to experience a different culture or to explore their own ignorance and innate fears. What surprised me most about my interactions with the preservice teachers was the openness and honesty that inspired them to engage with people from different cultures at heightened, more meaningful levels than most people will ever experience in their lifetimes.

The preservice teachers were especially candid in their portrayals of their experiences with cultural diversity and were remarkably willing to disclose personal details on their sociocultural backgrounds and educational experiences. Incidentally, intercultural adroitness is tempered by self-disclosure or a willingness to reveal information about oneself openly and appropriately during intercultural interaction (Chen & Starosta, 1996; Gudykunst & Nashida, 1993). On a whole, I engaged in frank and open discussions with the preservice teachers on topics ranging from race and identity to school-based education reform. In each instance they contributed the depth of their knowledge and understanding of cultural diversity to the study at hand, indicative of their ability to convey appropriate and effective messages as exemplified by their intercultural adroitness.

Synthesis of the Essential Structure of Intercultural Competence

As per Giorgi (2009), the structure of a phenomenological experience is simply another way of unifying the concrete data that validates the occurrence of a given phenomenon. In this way, the following description should be read as a synthesis of the constituent features of the preservice teachers' intercultural competence, as identified and analyzed in this chapter:

Intercultural competence is a complex set of behaviours, attitudes, and feelings held by ***open-minded*** *and* ***perceptive*** *individuals who through experience have developed remarkable insight on cultural diversity. Interculturally competent people place a great deal of value on authenticity, are naturally* ***empathetic*** *towards others, and are* ***non-judgmental*** *of alternative cultural views and values. Their* ***self-awareness*** *inspires their* ***curiosity****, motivates their* ***intercultural involvement****, and cultivates their* ***self-monitoring skills****. Though outwardly sociable and* ***self-confident****, interculturally competent individuals may struggle with lower levels of* ***self-esteem*** *when wrestling with their self-identity. They are also outspoken in their personal opinions and values, and quite flexible or amenable to different cultural perspectives.*

Chapter Summary

This chapter specifically addresses my central research questions, specifically: 1.) *To what extent are preservice teachers interculturally sensitive*? And, 2.) *What is the nature of their lived experience of intercultural competence?* To answer these questions I employed a mixed-methods phenomenological approach to investigate the intercultural behaviour, awareness, and sensitivities of a select group of preservice teachers enrolled in a university-level cross-cultural education course. Through examination of Jeremy, Monica, Daisy, Rose, and Ivy's survey and interview results, I identified ten (10) characteristics of their intercultural competence expressed by specific thoughts, feelings, and behaviours.

The affective characteristics of the preservice teachers' intercultural competence (e.g., *self-esteem*, *self-monitoring*, *open-mindedness*, *empathy*, *interaction involvement*, and *suspending judgment*) were captured and measured by Chen and Starosta's *Intercultural Sensitivity Scale*, though three of these qualities (e.g. empathy, open-mindedness, and self-esteem) were also uncovered through my analysis of the preservice teachers' phenomenological interview data. The remaining behavioural and cognitive aspects of the preservice teachers' intercultural competence (e.g., *perception*, *self-confidence*, *self-awareness*, and *curiosity*) were revealed through discussion of their sociocultural backgrounds, intercultural friendships, and travel and educational experiences. In the final chapter of this thesis, I outline the conclusions and implications drawn from the results presented and analyzed herein. I will also identify the limitations of this study and offer my recommendations for future research on the intercultural competence of preservice teachers.

Chapter 6
Conclusion and Implications of the Study

One of the challenges currently faced by Canadian educators is the shifting demographic profile of their classrooms and their relational and ethical responsibilities towards their culturally diverse students. For over a decade, the Province of Manitoba has funded several education policies and programs that support and promote diversity and inclusion in the classroom. In recent years, Manitoba Education (formerly Manitoba Education, Citizenship, and Youth) has instituted a number of intiatives that support transgender and gender diverse students (Manitoba Education and Training, 2017); religious and ethnocultural diversity (Manitoba Education and Advanced Learning, 2015; Manitoba Education, Citizenship, and Youth, 2006); and, Aboriginal education (Manitoba School Board Association, 2015). These policies and programs assist new and experienced teachers in their efforts to deliver culturally appropriate instruction to the culturally and linguistically diverse students present in their classrooms.

While progress has been steady, there is a greater need to better prepare prospective teachers in Manitoba for their roles and responsibilities as multicultural teachers by providing them with culturally enriching instructional content and experiential learning opportunities that help shape and define their teaching practice. As depicted in the literature, intercultural competence is a key component of culturally responsive teaching that enables teachers, characterized in research as Caucasian, female, and middle-class, to move beyond a superficial understanding of their students' ethnic and cultural identities in order to offer them more support and guidance. While gaining currency in this politically charged global environment, intercultural competence remains a largely nebulous concept for most given its complexity and nuance. This study was designed to reduce some of the uncertainty around the concept of

intercultural competence by highlighting its essential features as characterized by a select group of interculturally competent preservice teachers.

In a number of significant ways, it seems like a lifetime has passed since I recruited these individuals to participate in this study. When I first began to tackle this thesis a word like 'xenophobia'[1] had not yet entered the lexicon of public discourse. Over the past five years public consciousness of the social realities of minoritized cultural groups has steadily increased and xenophobia has taken, once again, a focal point in public discussions. This thesis is written during a period of heightened awareness and intolerance of cultural diversity spurred by mounting global environmental insecurity and ongoing social and political challenges. In these perplexing times, those of us striving for greater moral authority, human kindness, and civility can take comfort in knowing that the arc of the moral universe, though long and unwieldy, eventually bends towards justice[2]. I believe that critical multicultural education *is* social justice and that culturally appropriate and responsive pedagogy promotes equality and social cohesion when practiced by interculturally competent teachers.

While it is unrealistic to expect all pre- and in-service teachers to know exactly how to respond to the distinct cultural needs of each student in their multi-ethnic, multicultural classrooms, at the very least they should be committed to notions of lifelong learning, and continuously learn more about their students' cultural communities, and use this knowledge as a basis for understanding cultural differences (Ladson-Billings, 2000). For some preservice teachers this is a tall order given their apathy, resistance, or outright fear of cultural diversity (Barnes, 2006; Cho et al., 2005; Walker-Dalhousie et al., 2006). Yet, a growing number of

[1] According to Dictionary.com, xenophobia is the most searched word of 2016 because of the US presidential election and the negative sentiments it entailed. Source: http://blog.dictionary.com/xenophobia/

[2] This statement is an adaptation of Martin Luther King's refrain "the arc of the moral universe is long, but it bends toward justice." – 1965 State Capital in Montgomery, Alabama.

prospective teachers are remarkably sensitive and responsive to cultural differences and recognize the potential of intercultural communication as a means to improve and enhance the learning environment (Gay, 2002).

The preservice teachers described in this report possess several essential qualities that equip them for their future roles as multicultural teachers. Analysis of their survey results oriented me to their intercultural sensitivity, as validated and analyzed by Chen and Starosta's *Intercultural Sensitivity Scale* (Chen & Starosta, 2000). In this study, intercultural sensitivity is confined to the affective domain of intercultural competence and consists of six characteristics, namely *self-esteem, self-monitoring, open-mindedness, empathy, interaction involvement, and suspending judgment*. While useful to my understanding of the structure and features of intercultural sensitivity, Chen and Starosta's ISS revealed little about other personal dimensions of the preservice teachers' intercultural competence, namely their intercultural awareness and adroitness.

As a consequence, I employed phenomenological interviews with a smaller sample of the preservice teachers to uncover additional features of their intercultural competence. Interviews provided the preservice teachers with a space to share their thoughts and feelings on cultural diversity and describe their personal intercultural experiences. The preservice teachers' intercultural competence was gleaned from their narrative accounts of significant intercultural experiences and encounters with strangers, teachers, family, and friends. Phenomenological interviews confirmed several features of their intercultural sensitivity, specifically their *empathy*, *self-esteem*, and *open-mindedness*, and revealed four cognitive and behavioural features of their intercultural competence, namely their *self-confidence*, *self-awareness*, *perception*, and *curiosity*.

Conclusions and Implications of Results

Several inferences may be drawn from my analysis of the preservice teachers' intercultural competence. Below I discuss four (4) conclusions derived from my assessment of Daisy, Jeremy, Ivy, Rose, and Monica's descriptive survey and phenomenological interview results. In addition to discussing my conclusions, I describe the implications of my findings on the current and future practice of multicultural education for preservice teachers and their potential students.

Conclusion #1 – Intercultural Competence is Exhibited by Several Characteristics

My investigation into the intercultural competence of preservice teachers confirms the existence of certain dispositional and experiential characteristics that promote the development of intercultural competence. For one, as described in this study, interculturally competent people possess several qualities that inform their behaviours, attitudes, and thoughts towards different cultures, many of which are verified in other research studies (Garmon, 2004; Locke, 2005; McAllister et al., 2000; McAllister et al., 2002; McNeal, 2005; Sample, 2012; Sleeter, 2001; Sleeter, 2011; Spinthourakis et al., 2009; Walker-Dalhouse et al., 2006). Secondly, while these characteristics are separate, they often overlap, which makes it difficult to distinguish between their differences. For instance, while the characteristics of *self-esteem, self-confidence, self-awareness, self-monitoring,* and *perception* are related, they are oriented to one of the three conceptual dimensions of intercultural competence (e.g. cognitive, affective, and behavioural), which cause them to present differently in intercultural interaction. Furthermore, the dispositional and experiential characteristics displayed by the preservice teachers do not co-exist in equal measure, nor are they reflected by the same communicative abilities (e.g., interaction engagement, confidence, enjoyment, attentiveness and respect for cultural diversity).

While the individuals described in this thesis are unique in terms of their sociocultural backgrounds, education, and intercultural experiences, they share a number of traits that contribute to their intercultural competence. Although these charactersitics are not exhaustive of the shared qualities of interculturally competent people, they do provide a basis for discussing and assessing intercultural competence in higher education. As argued throughout this thesis, teachers require a remarkable amount of intercultural competence in order to effectively teach in multicultural classrooms. It is thus the responsibility of university administrators and faculty to ensure that students enrolled in teacher education are supported with meaningful resources and experiential learning opportunities to develop and refine their intercultural skills.

Intercultural competence is a nebulous concept that is often misunderstood given the variety of ways it is conceptualized and assessed. One of the key benefits of this study is that it validates and identifies a number of essential qualities held by interculturally competent people, making the concept easier to comprehend and articulate. For instance, the ten characteristics outlined in this report may be used by university administrators to guide changes to admission policies and procedures for recruiting and selecting students into teacher education given the importance of intercultural competence to effective teaching and learning. Over the past few years, university and colleges across the Province have made significant strides in education reform. For example, the University of Mantioba recently modified its admission standards to attract a greater number of cultural minority students into its B.Ed. program (Janzen & Cranston, 2016).

In addition to laying the groundwork for change to the demographic profile of public school teachers, university administrators should begin to formulate policies that prioritize and assess other important predictors of student-teacher readiness, such as their intercultural skills.

Intercultural competence is a valuable student outcome and marketable indicator of career readiness and institutional success. Research indicates that intercultural competence leads to increased learner engagement and greater academic performance (Riley, Bustamante, & Edmonson, 2016), and is instrumental to communicative competence, which is a key learning outcome for different stakeholders in higher education. While many graduating teachers possess the technical skills to teach, their soft skills are the qualities that are most demanded in today's competitive job market. The ten characteristics described and analyzed in this report are 'job ready' intercultural competencies that enhance the employability of preservice teachers and raise the profile of education programs that help graduates cultivate these skills.

The characteristics uncovered in this analysis may also be used to inform the design of professional development programs and workshops created for faculty members who teach culturally diverse students and/or are required to prepare their students to teach in multicultural classrooms. These intercultural skills also support the need for educational administrators to provide faculty with meaningful opportunities to develop the intercultural competencies described in this report. The intercultural competence of faculty employed in teacher education is especially crucial given their role and professional responsibilities towards their students, which includes preparing them to teach in culturally diverse settings.

Conclusion #2 – Intercultural Competence is Exhibited Differently

Intercultural competence is not a static outcome of intercultural interaction nor is it comprised of a finite set of affective, cognitive, and behavioural skills. In this study, intercultural competence is recognized as a state of cultural consciousness manifested by individuals during a particular period of time. The data uncovered in my analysis suggests that the shared characteristics of the preservice teachers' intercultural competence are configured and exhibited

in idiosyncratic ways. As per the results generated from surveys and interviews, the preservice teachers' share a number of characteristics generally recognized for their impact on the development of intercultural competence. These characteristics are manifested differently in intercultural interaction such that an individual who appears reserved or tense in a particular intercultural setting may also be exceptionally observant and respectful of the cultural diversity that surrounds them.

The differing nature and intensity of the preservice teachers' intercultural competence presents an instructional challenge for faculty tasked with applying a 'one-size-fits-all' model to multicultural teacher education. For one, my research findings suggest that intercultural competence is developed at different rates depending on the configuration and strength of its underlying characteristics. Given its highly nuanced and personal nature, the concept of intercultural competence is difficult to teach and harder yet to master during the typical length (e.g., approximately 2 years) of teacher education and teacher professional development. Therefore, faculty tasked with delivering multicultural coursework to preservice teachers should participate in professional development opportunities to enhance their intercultural competence in order to evolve their teaching practice and better address the needs of their prospective teachers.

The results of this study also suggest that there is no clear end to the development of intercultural competence since it is acquired through experience. For as long as preservice teachers are provided with avenues through which to experience and interpret the world around them they have the capacity to refine their intercultural awareness, sensitivity, and adroitness. The characteristics identified in this study should be viewed as starting blocks from which to strengthen academic policy surrounding cultural diversity and to enhance the instructional

content delivered to preservice teachers. It is important for administrators and faculty of teacher education to be cognizant of the fluid nature and limitless scope of intercultural competence when discussing educational reform at the policy level or when implementing it in their classroom practice since this ability is developed throughout one's lifetime. This means that administrators may wish to revisit policy and programs every few years to ensure pedagogy and content are culturally relevant.

Conclusion #3 – Intercultural Competence is Developed Through Intercultural Exposure

Intercultural competence is exhibited by a number of characteristics developed through sustained intercultural contact. Several preservice teachers' were critical of their program's concentration on the theory of cultural diversity opposed to its social reality, prompting them to advocate for the integration of more experiential learning opportunities into existing curriculum. This tells me that the study participants desire practical applications of intercultural competence. Furthermore, cultural immersion is recognized as having a significant impact on the burgeoning intercultural competence of the preservice teachers since it provided them with an opportunity to develop and refine their intercultural skills. As evident from their survey and interview responses, the preservice teachers' multicultural teaching self-efficacy is developing, though it is bolstered by their respect for cultural diversity and their willingness to engage in meaningful intercultural experiences.

In this thesis, cultural immersion is depicted as an all-encompassing experience that forces a person to adapt to unfamiliar social environments, and in so doing evaluate their perception of self in relation to the people around them. Individuals who have lived-experience of cultural diversity are recognized for their consciousness of culture and their awareness of its different manifestations. This conclusion is based on the results generated from my investigation

and other research on the impact of community-based experience and overseas immersion on the development of intercultural competence (Bennett, 2012; Cho et al., 2014; Sleeter et al., 2011).

Given the significance of experience to intercultural competence, educational policies, programs, and coursework developed for preservice teachers should present students with an opportunity to engage in experiential learning opportunities designed to enhance and refine their intercultural skillset. As portrayed in this study, multicultural education has a limited impact on the intercultural competence of preservice teachers given its narrow focus on theory opposed to practice. In addition to their teaching practicums, preservice teachers should be presented with other experiential learning opportunities that promote the development of the intercultural skillset displayed by the individuals investigated in this study. While studying abroad encourages students to participate in local customs and traditions that support the development of their intercultural consciousness, these opportunities are not practical for all students. A more feasible option requires faculty to integrate experiential learning opportunities into their instruction to preservice teachers to provide them with opportunities to develop and refine their intercultural competence. For example, teacher-educators can employ talking circles to facilitate important classroom discussions on Indigenous peoples and cultures, or they may integrate cultural simulation exercises into their instruction to rouse the intercultural awareness and sensitivity of the preservice teachers enrolled in their courses.

Conclusion #4 – Multicultural Coursework Supports the Development of Intercultural Competence

While education is instrumental to the growth of a person's consciousness, it is an insufficient conduit of intercultural development in and of itself (Barnes, 2006; Lee Olson et al., 2001; Locke, 2005; McAllister et al., 2002; Peebles et al., 2014; Sleeter, 2001; Sleeter et al., 2011). When combined with fieldwork multicultural education is a powerful driver of

intercultural awareness, sensitivity, and adroitness. However, standalone multicultural educational courses, such as the cross-cultural education course from which participants were recruited, are often criticized for their limited focus and length. For instance, several of the preservice teachers criticized their program for offering multicultural education courses that focus too narrowly on a limited number of cultures and for failing to provide them with meaningful learning experiences in which to develop and refine their intercultural skills.

Despite the education and training they have received throughout their academic program, the preservice teachers interviewed in this study feel unprepared to address the diverse learning needs and abilities of their prospective students. In the absence of an infused multicultural education approach supported by vicarious learning opportunities, several of the preservice teachers interviewed in this study express feelings of anxiety and uncertainty about their ability to teach in multicultural classrooms. To overcome this issue, it is recommended that instructional content delivered to preservice teachers be respectful of a diverse range of cultural perspectives, traditions, and values presented through theoretical and experiential learning content, and local or international service-learning opportunities. The goal of such efforts is to better prepare preservice teachers to work in culturally and ethnically diverse classrooms by helping them cultivate the requisite intercultural skills to provide culturally appropriate and responsive instruction.

Furthermore, given the fear and anxiety exhibited by several of the preservice teachers interviewed in this study, it would be beneficial for university administrators to consider extending the length of teacher education beyond two years to ensure that the characteristics identified in this report are developed or enhanced before students graduate from their programs. As per the literature cultural diversity should be addressed in all subjects delivered to preservice

teachers throughout the entire length of teacher education given the importance of intercultural competence to their roles as multicultural teachers (Garmon, 2004; Sleeter, 2001; Sleeter & Owuor, 2011).

My investigation on the intercultural competence of preservice teachers revealed that cultural diversity is generally regarded as a sensitive topic despite evidence to suggest that several of the preservice teachers enrolled in teacher education programs across the country are exposed to cultural issues in various aspects of their personal lives. The information presented in this study may be employed by faculty and the administration of teacher education to justify efforts to reform the design and practice of multicultural teacher education by ensuring that prospective teachers are presented with frequent and significant opportunities to develop their intercultural communication skills.

Limitations of the Study

While I uncovered several shared characteristics of the preservice teachers' intercultural competence, the results generated from my investigation should be viewed solely within the context of this study given its relatively small-scale. That is, data gathered from survey and interviews reflect the opinions and values of a microcosm of preservice teachers who are primarily middle-class, Caucasian, and female; a fact consistent with other similarly designed research studies (Cho et al., 2005; Cho et al., 2014; Garmon, 2004; Hill-Jackson, 2007; Sleeter, 2001). The size of the research sample used in this investigation is too small to make generalizations from and therefore the results presented in previous chapters may not hold up well in regions that are more ethnically and/or culturally diverse than the location from which participants were recruited. Furthermore, the small sample size correlates with a higher degree of

sampling error that arises from the unrepresentativeness of the greater population of preservice teachers enrolled in teacher education programs across the country.

While the individuals who participated in each phase of this study willingly volunteered to be surveyed and interviewed, it remains to be seen how the findings described in this thesis would have differed if those reluctant to participate in the second phase of my investigation had been receptive to interviews. The inclusion of their opinions and values into this report would have added an additional layer of depth and insight on the factors facilitating or impeding the development of intercultural competence. It is also unknown how the multicultural education course from which the preservice teachers were recruited will impact their long-term success in the classroom.

Suggestions for Future Research

This study contributes to a growing body of research on teacher identity and multicultural teacher education since it emphasizes the skills and characteristics required by multicultural teachers (Barnes, 2006; Bennett, 2012; Chen & Starosta, 1996; Cho et al., 2005; Garmon, 2004; Hoffman, 1996; Locke, 2005; McAllister et al., 2002; Siwatu, 2011). Multicultural teachers should possess a strong and unwavering understanding of culture and diversity, and a remarkable ability to communicate with culturally and linguistically diverse students. While this study provides greater insight into the multifaceted and complex nature of intercultural competence, it is important to note that the essential features of the phenomenon are not limited to a prescriptive set of personal characteristics. Consequently, the results of my investigation should not be viewed as an end, but rather a starting point for discussing and evaluating the intercultural competence of preservice teachers.

Intercultural competence is a dynamic concept with no clear beginning or end, so to suggest an ending delimits the endless ways in which it manifests in human social interaction. Given Canada's rapidly changing demographic profile there is an increased need for interculturally competent people to be employed in careers in public service, particularly in the field of education. More to the point, teachers are at the forefront of change given their influence over their students and their consequent ability to sculpt the impressionable minds of a new generation of learners who will colour and shape society.

This study is, at best, the beginning to a series of future investigations on the relationship between intercultural competence and culturally responsive teaching. One of my recommendations for future research is to expand on this study with a larger sample of preservice teachers, which would allow for a greater variety of perspectives and experiences that may be explored to uncover additional dispositional and experiential characteristics of intercultural competence. A wider range of participants could also lead to the discovery of intercultural experiences and/or traits that inhibit certain individuals from developing the competence required to teach in culturally diverse classrooms. It is my opinion that understanding a person's resistance to cultural diversity is as important as evaluating the circumstances under which it is developed. Further effort should be made by educational researchers to uncover the personal characteristics of intercultural competence, particularly as they pertain to preservice teachers.

Secondly, it would be beneficial to perform a pre- and post-test of the preservice teachers' intercultural sensitivity after they complete their coursework and field experience to capture changes in their emotional response to cultural diversity. It would also be beneficial to follow preservice teachers into the classroom after they graduate from their programs and

develop into novice teachers. Presently, there is a paucity of longitudinal research that faculty can consult with to help them better prepare prospective teachers for their ensuing roles as culturally responsive teachers. Although I uncovered a few studies during my research that specifically address the multicultural classroom practices of novice teachers (Agee, 2004; Athanases & De Oliveira, 2008; McNeal, 2005) further research should be conducted in this area to determine the teaching challenges faced by novice teachers during their first few years of working in the profession, along with the ongoing multicultural training they receive as practicing teachers.

Chapter Summary

In this, the final chapter of my thesis, I described the inferences drawn from my analysis, the limitations of my study, and my suggestions for future research. The list of characteristics outlined in this report is not exhaustive, meaning to say, it may be added to or subtracted from dependent on the geographic region in which this study is performed. If nothing else, the characteristics exhibited by the preservice teachers described in this study provide a baseline for future investigations on the phenomenon of intercultural competence and the factors that influence its occurrence among preservice teachers. While I uncovered a variety of characteristics that define the preservice teachers' intercultural competence, my results are not without its limitations. However, rather than viewing these limitations as shortcomings, I chose to see them as starting points for future investigations and discussions on the occurrence and development of intercultural competence among preservice teachers.

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Appendix A: Interview Questions

1. In your own words, define what ‘culture’ means to you?
    a. Tell me about your cultural background?
2. Express what you feel it means to have ‘intercultural awareness’?
    a. Describe your experiences with people from different cultures?
3. What types of intercultural experiences have you had in the past? Where, When, Who with?
    a. How do you learn about different cultures?
4. How did you acquire these intercultural experiences?
    a. How do you build relationships with people from different cultures?
5. Describe your feelings when interacting with people from different cultures?
6. Do you think that anything can be learned through intercultural contact? If so, what? How is classroom learning the same or different from this?
    a. Can you describe a situation and/or event when you felt uncertain about how to interact with people from other cultures?
7. What do you think are some of the major challenges faced by students from diverse cultural backgrounds?
    a. How do you demonstrate your appreciation of cultural diversity?
8. Do you feel prepared to address cultural issues as a teacher? Why or why not?
    a. How do you remain engaged when interacting with people from different cultures?

Appendix B: Intercultural Sensitivity Scale

Below is a series of statements concerning intercultural communication. There are no right or wrong answers. Please work quickly and record your first impression by indicating the degree to which you agree or disagree with the statement. Thank you for your cooperation.

5 = strongly agree 4 = agree 3 = uncertain 2 = disagree 1 = strongly disagree	Please put the number corresponding to your answer in the blank space before the statement

_____ 1. I enjoy interacting with people from different cultures.
_____ 2. I think people from other cultures are narrow-minded.
_____ 3. I am pretty sure of myself in interacting with people from different cultures.
_____ 4. I find it very hard to talk in front of people from different cultures.
_____ 5. I always know what to say when interacting with people from different cultures.
_____ 6. I can be as sociable as I want to be when interacting with people from different cultures.
_____ 7. I don't like to be with people with different cultures.
_____ 8. I respect the values of people from different cultures.
_____ 9. I get upset easily when interacting with people from different cultures.
_____10. I feel confident when interacting with people from different cultures.
_____11. I tend to wait before forming an impression of culturally-distinct counterparts.
_____12. I often get discouraged when I am with people from different cultures.
_____13. I am open-minded to people from different cultures.
_____14. I am very observant when interacting with people from different cultures.
_____15. I often feel useless when interacting with people from different cultures.
_____16. I respect the ways people from different cultures behave.
_____17. I try to obtain as much information as I can when interacting with people from different cultures.
_____18. I would not accept the opinions of people from different cultures.
_____19. I am sensitive to my culturally-distinct counterpart's subtle meanings during our interaction.
_____20. I think my culture is better than other cultures.
_____21. I often give positive responses to my culturally different counterpart during our interaction.
_____22. I avoid those situations where I will have to deal with culturally-distinct persons.
_____23. I often show my culturally-distinct counterpart my understanding through verbal or nonverbal cues.
_____24. I have a feeling of enjoyment towards differences between my culturally-distinct counterpart and me.

Appendix C: Consent Forms

UNIVERSITY OF MANITOBA | Faculty of Education

Department of Educational Administration, Foundations and Psychology

230 Education Building
University of Manitoba
Winnipeg, Manitoba
Canada R3T 2N2
Telephone (204) 474-9018
Fax (204) 474-7550

Research Project Title: *Assessing the Development of Cultural Sensitivity*

Principal Investigator and Contact Information: Melissa Goulbourne
Email: Goulboum@myumanitoba.com Phone number: [redacted]

Research Supervisor and Contact Information: Marlene Atleo
Email: Marlene.Atleo@umanitoba.ca Phone number: [redacted]

This consent form, a copy of which will be left with you for your records and reference, is only part of the process of informed consent. It should give you the basic idea of what the research is about and what your participation will involve. If you would like more detail about something mentioned here, or information not included here, you should feel free to ask. Please take the time to read this carefully and to understand any accompanying information.

Research Project - Purpose and Objectives:
The purpose of this study is to examine how intercultural sensitivity is developed amongst students enrolled in the University of Manitoba B.Ed. program. There are two main research objectives associated with this study. These objectives are: a.) To examine the role that education plays in the appreciation of other cultures, and b.) To evaluate the life experiences which contribute to cultural awareness.

Study Procedures:
You are invited to complete a survey that will take approximately 10 minutes. You will be asked questions specific to your intercultural communication skills; there are no right or wrong answers. At the start of each survey you will be asked to provide a unique four-digit code to allow the researcher to identify your submissions. Please select a number that is distinct to you and can be easily remembered. Once data is submitted, it cannot be retrieved. The researcher conducting the survey will receive a confidential report of your answers. If desired, please contact the researcher directly to request that a copy of your survey results be sent to you via email or regular mail.

The survey will be administered once more during the week of May 11. An email reminder will be sent to you by the Dean's office to remind you of your participation.

Risks:
There are no known risks identified with this study. While questions are not intended to create distress, should you find yourself uncomfortable with a question asked, feel free to withhold your response or discontinue your participation by exiting Survey Monkey at any time throughout the process.

If you experience any distress beyond this point, you are encouraged to contact the researcher directly, or the Human Ethics Secretary.

Benefits:
Benefits include the opportunity to reflect upon your perception towards cultural differences, and to put into greater perspective the situations that have contributed to your cultural identity.

Confidentiality:
All efforts will be made to protect your anonymity throughout the duration of this study. Any identifying information obtained in connection to this study will be effectively removed in order to maintain your confidentiality. Your confidentiality will be protected to the extent allowed by Canadian law.

The number assigned to your electronic submission will be kept on a spreadsheet and saved on a password-protected and encrypted computer only accessible to the primary researcher. The file will be kept in a locked cabinet in the primary investigator's home; only the primary investigator and research supervisor will have access to this information. Study data will also be saved on a password-protected and encrypted computer. The files will be destroyed one year after the research has been completed (05/2016). The University of Manitoba may look at your research records to see that the research is being done in a safe and proper way.

Participation and Withdrawal:
Please understand that you are free to withdraw your consent and discontinue your participation in this study at any time without prejudice or consequence. To withdraw from the study, select 'no' to be redirected to a page from which to exit Survey Monkey. Alternatively, you may select the 'x' button at the top of the screen to exit the system at any point when completing the questionnaire.

Rights of Research Participants:
Your acceptance of this form indicates that you have understood to your satisfaction the information regarding participation in the research project and agree to participate as a subject. In no way does this waive your legal rights nor release the researchers, sponsors, or involved institutions from their legal and professional responsibilities. You are free to withdraw from the study at any time, and/or refrain from answering any questions you prefer to omit, without prejudice or consequence. Your continued participation should be as willing as your initial consent, so you should feel free to ask for clarification or new information throughout your participation.

The University of Manitoba may look at your research records to see that the research is being done in a safe and proper way.

This research has been approved by the Education/Nursing Research Ethics Board (ENREB). If you have any concerns or complaints about the project you may contact any of the above-named persons or the Human Ethics Secretary at (204-474-7122), or by email to: Margaret.Bowman@umanitoba.ca. A copy of this consent from has been given to you to keep for your records and reference.

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Study Procedures:
Your participation is requested in a brief 30-minute interview centering on issues relating to culture. Participation is limited, and candidates will be selected on a first-come basis. Those consenting to interviews will be contacted by email to determine an appropriate date and time for interviews.

Risks:
There are no known risks identified with this study. While questions are not intended to create distress, should you find yourself uncomfortable with a question asked, feel free to withhold your response or discontinue your participation at the time.

If you experience any distress beyond this point, you are encouraged to contact the researcher directly, or the Human Ethics Secretary.

Benefits:
Benefits include the opportunity to reflect upon your perception towards cultural differences, and to put into greater perspective the situations that have contributed to your cultural identity.

Confidentiality:
All efforts will be made to protect your anonymity throughout the duration of this study. Any identifying information obtained in connection to this study will be effectively removed in order to maintain your confidentiality. Your confidentiality will be protected to the extent allowed by Canadian law.

Interviews will be recorded on a digital recorder and transcribed by the primary researcher. Real names and locations will be replaced with pseudonyms to ensure your confidentiality. You will be sent an electronic copy of your interview transcripts which you are asked to review and verify within fourteen (14) days of receipt. Study data will be saved on a password-protected and encrypted computer only accessible to the primary researcher. Handwritten notes taken by the primary researcher during interviews will be kept in a locked cabinet in the their home; only the primary investigator and research supervisor will have access to this information. All files (including audio) will be destroyed one year after the research has been completed (05/2016).

Participation and Withdrawal:
Please understand that you are free to withdraw your consent and discontinue your participation in this study at any time without prejudice or consequence. You are encouraged to notify the researcher by the scheduled time of interviews of your desire to withdraw from the study. Alternatively, you are free to discontinue your participation (either verbally or in writing) once you have received and reviewed your interview transcripts.

Rights of Research Participants:
Your acceptance of this form indicates that you have understood to your satisfaction the information regarding participation in the research project and agree to participate as a subject. In no way does this waive your legal rights nor release the researchers, sponsors, or involved institutions from their legal and professional responsibilities. You are free to withdraw from the study at any time, and/or refrain from answering any questions you prefer to omit, without prejudice or consequence. Your continued participation should be as willing as your initial consent, so you should feel free to ask for clarification or new information throughout your participation.

The University of Manitoba may look at your research records to see that the research is being done in a safe and proper way.

This research has been approved by the Education/Nursing Research Ethics Board (ENREB). If you have any concerns or complaints about the project you may contact any of the above-named persons or the Human Ethics Secretary at (204-474-7122), or by email to: Margaret.Bowman@umanitoba.ca. A copy of this consent from has been given to you to keep for your records and reference.

Participant's Signature _____
Participant's Email Address _____
Date _____

Researcher's Signature _____
Date _____

Please mail a summary of report findings.

____ ____
YES NO

Mailing Address

_____
_____
_____