

Exploring the Experiences and Perceptions of EAL Learners'
Challenging Cross-Cultural Interactions

By

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Abstract

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This study explores the experiences and perceptions of adult visitors to Canada who experience interaction problems. The researcher adapted Ilieva's (2001) eight step culture exploration process to include the dimension of empathy which was used as a frame to help with analyzing the participants' stories. The researcher expands the phenomenological lens by using a heuristic inquiry approach to highlight ten first-person accounts of adult English as an additional language (EAL) learners' cross-cultural experiences in and out of classrooms. Using open-ended interviews as her primary data source, the researcher advocates for the use of empathy with EAL learners and her findings revealed main themes related to adult visitors' acculturation such as acceptance of ambivalence, challenges with EAL, and cross-cultural learning. The information from the study provides a starting point to fill the gap in research involving the effectiveness of using empathy with EAL learners as a strategy for handling interaction problems.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

In English speaking Canada, an increasing trend exists in which many newly arrived adult English as an additional language (EAL) learners must negotiate cross-cultural encounters in and out of classrooms (Ilieva, 2001; Knutson, 2006; Knutson, 2003; Kumaravadivelu, 2006; Manitoba Labour and Immigration-Adult Training Branch, 2006; Martin, 2009; Scollon & Scollon, 1995; Taylor, 1994, 2001; Wang, 2005). Research on effective communication shows that successful cross-cultural interaction is not innate; such ability is a developed habit of inquiry, reflection, and adapting to an environment; it is the result of attempting to overcome problematic or challenging aspects of an interaction or experience (Ilieva, 2001; Knutson, 2006; Knutson, 2003; Kumaravadivelu, 2003; Okuzaki, 1999).

In fact, research on cross-cultural exploration shows most adult “visitors” (i.e. less than 12 months in Canada) experience a period of cultural adjustment. Such research views communication as more than the analysis of socially constructed reports of ‘reality.’ Indeed, language, both spoken and written, is shaped not only by the behavior of the participants, but also by their histories and the goals they bring to Canada. Acculturation is defined as the learning of or adapting to the ideas, values, conventions, and behavior that characterize a social group (Barber, Fitzgerald, Howell, & Pontisso, 2006; Collins, 1991; Merriam-Webster, 2011); in particular, it means dealing with cross-cultural events that are unfamiliar and interpreting them using one’s own cultural frame of reference. The latter becomes pertinent in learning a foreign language, which is

Canadian English¹ in most of Canada (Duncan, 2005; Ricento, 2005; Taylor, 1994, 2001). The lack of sensitivity or regard for others' feelings/viewpoints often hinders effective communication. When people understand the feelings of other people and alter their actions accordingly, there is less ambivalence in their interactions (Adler, Towne, & Rolls, 2004; Gibb, 1961; Polkinghorne, 1982; Taylor, 1994, 2001). Developing cross-cultural competence is important for both Canadians and visitors to support policies of multiculturalism that celebrate diversity and seek to take advantage of the richness and creativity that is present in the variety of international people² coming to Canada.

In particular, empathy, defined simply as the ability to understand another person's feelings/viewpoints, assists adult EAL visitors with their challenging cross-cultural interactions (Adler et al., 2004; Duncan, 2005; Manitoba Labour and Immigration-Adult Training Branch, 2006; Martin, 2009; Okuzaki, 1999; Ricento, 2005; Scollon & Scollon, 1995; Wang, 2005). Although there are educational programs in Canada that educate grade school and teenage youth about empathy (Bailey, 2005; Caledon Institute of Social Policy, 1999; Gordon & Green, 2004; Lion's Quest, 2001; Peace Power, 2006; Popov, Popov, & Kavelin, 1991) and research that thoroughly explores the culture exploration process (Ilieva, 2001; Knutson, 2006; Knutson, 2003), there is a gap in the research regarding using empathy with adult EAL learners as a strategy for dealing with sociological ambivalence, defined simply as what occurs when there is a possibility of interpreting a cross-cultural interaction in two or more distinct ways (Barber et al., 2006; Collins, 1991; Merriam-Webster, 2011). Currently, there is

¹From my perspective, Canadian English is different than American English; however, both make up the commerce language of the world and thus, my mother tongue remains on par with but different from all the other English languages on the planet (Jurcic, 2003; Sullivan, 2007).

²The term international person refers to foreigners such as immigrants and visitors to Canada, specifically those who speak EAL.

considerable discussion about the relationship between empathy, emotional awareness, and multilingualism/multiculturalism in the fields of cross-cultural education and Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL)³ (Artz, 1994; Crawford, 2005; Dewaele, 2004, 2005; Fischer & Fischer, 2006; Panayiotou, 2004; Pavlenko, 2005; Scott, 2003). As Pavlenko (2005) points out, “emotions and emotional expression have not yet been comprehensively considered” in the fields of second language acquisition and multilingualism (p. 23).

For this thesis, I adapted Ilieva’s (2001) eight-step culture exploration process to include empathy to determine to what extent were international people using empathy with their interaction problems in Canadian society. The intent of this thesis was to examine challenges in cross-cultural interactions with specifically adult EAL learners who were new to Canada and relatively ‘fluent’ in English.

Based on the works of Adler et al. (2004), Caledon Institute of Social Policy (1999), Goldie (1999), Jackson, Meltzoff, and Decety (2005), Okuzaki (1999), Ruby and Decety (2004), Singer et al., (2005), Vignemont and Singer (2006), and Wang (2005), a definition of empathy was developed with specific components: Empathy is an understanding of another person’s feelings/viewpoints. This involves recognition and interpretation of (i) verbal messages including sighs or groans and (ii) nonverbal messages such as facial expressions and body gestures. Empathy has two primary components that are consistent across numerous conceptualizations: 1) an affective response to another person, which often, but not always, entails sharing that person’s

³TESOL is a global education association whose mission is to develop and maintain professional expertise in English language teaching and learning for speakers of other languages worldwide (<http://www.tesol.org>).

emotional state, and 2) a cognitive capacity to take the perspective of the other person while keeping self and other differentiated (Jackson, Meltzoff, & Decety, 2005; Ruby & Decety, 2004; Singer et al., 2005). Additionally, based on the works of Adler (1975), Scollon and Scollon (1995), Taylor (1994), Mandzuk (1997), and Montuori and Fahim (2004), sociological ambivalence was defined as a state of ambivalence arising from conflicting or competing expectations of one or more social structures. This applies to cross-cultural interactions in that if distinct cultures are synonymous with social structures, when adult visitors to Canada engage in challenging cross-cultural interactions they are navigating their way through competing cultural expectations.

The purpose of my research was to explore and collect data related to EAL learners' experiences including:

- (i) their self-initiated strategies
- (ii) their perceived challenges, and
- (iii) emotions related to their own cultural frames of reference.

For this chapter, I will begin by explaining how I am positioned in the study. Then, I will identify the research questions and discuss the context of the study. Finally, I will delineate the purpose and significance of the study.

The Researcher's Background

I have been teaching EAL learners for over 15 years, and my interest in using empathy with EAL learners has evolved overtime. I am passionate about the way I teach adult EAL learners. My style of teaching is better understood by using the metaphor of 'helper,' someone who facilitates interaction. Moreover, I have lived in some of the countries that my EAL learners originally came from and, thus, I believe I have worked

to develop empathy for their acculturation in Canada. I have a Bachelors of Arts degree and certificates in TESOL, Business English, and Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL). I have also completed the University of Manitoba's Tutor Training workshop and the Manitoba Business Start program's Business Planning workshop. Currently, I am a student in the Master of Education program at the University of Manitoba.

From my perspective, I can help adult visitors who have been in Canada less than twelve months with some of their challenging cross-cultural interactions. I have some insider's knowledge because I have extensive experience with difficulties in adapting to new cultures, learning new languages, and handling unfamiliar cross-cultural encounters.

While exploring and fulfilling university and school contracts in other countries using languages that are new to me and attempting to live, adapt, and communicate in these languages, I have found interaction challenging and I have struggled with unfamiliar cultural encounters embedded with ambivalence. Eventually, my passion to interact effectively in other countries and in other languages led me to use empathy intuitively as a strategy for handling sociological ambivalence experiences.

The cultural empathy process (CEP) (Appendix A) for this study was adapted from Ilieva's (2001) eight step culture exploration process to include the dimension of empathy and was used as a frame to help with analyzing the participants' stories. Culture exploration attempts to aid students in learning to live with the ambivalence that accompanies them in their everyday dealings with a new culture. The strategy I developed involves participants cognitively thinking about or reflecting upon questions about their challenging cross-cultural interactions. The participants were given a

handout of the interview questions (Appendix B), some of which incorporated the CEP. Although the participants were not expected to use the handout, it was given to them when I introduced myself and explained the study using the information letter (Appendix C). The strategy was introduced as one way to help the participants prepare for the open-ended interviews (Appendix B) or as a frame to process their thoughts about their experiences with interaction problems. However, it was their choice whether they used the handout or not. Exploring participants' perceived experiences, observations, and feelings helped to shed insight on the use of empathy with EAL learners. In this thesis, 'personal experiences' refer to such matters as: emotions (nervous, discomfort, surprise, unhappy, loneliness, and so on), descriptions of specific situations that caused these emotions and attitudes, and dealing with the sociological ambivalence (what is working, reasons for attempting it, benefits, challenges, and so on). Canada is a multicultural society where people from diverse cultural backgrounds interact. These differences are not only across ethno-cultural lines but also between the different sub-cultural identities. People living in such a society require interaction skills that take into account cultural differences and build intercultural sensitivity (Myles, 2009). Personal stories of my experiences with living overseas are as follows:

Encounters leading to findings of ambivalence.

We have all encountered sociological ambivalence. When the parties involved in a cross-cultural interaction interpret the situation using their own cultural frames of reference, uncertainty and unexpected feelings occur.

1. I experienced it once when I was living in Pusan, the 2nd largest district of South Korea. I began my third month of my contract with a well known institute. I had

decided to go shopping in '*Nam-po-dong*' market with a local female Korean. We had been friends since I moved there and I was especially eager to have the opportunity to try and haggle in the Korean language. As we exited the subway tunnel and walked up the stairs to the outside streets of '*Nam-po-dong*,' my Korean friend began holding my hand. I quickly withdrew my hand in puzzlement; I asked her what she was doing? She explained to me that friends hold hands in Korea when walking together; it is a friendly custom. I still felt uncomfortable holding hands as we walked together and when she tried again, I explained to her that in Canada people usually consider two females, who hold hands while walking in public, as being sexually involved with each other. My Korean friend burst out in uncontrollable laughter. I was unable to tell her about my view and became agitated. She insisted that as friends, I must hold her hand as we walk through '*Nam-po-dong*' market. I understood that she thought of me as a close friend and wanted to express this socially. I understood that she thought the Canadian view of associating the public display of same-sex friends holding hands with sexuality was absurd. Although I felt awkward and embarrassed by the situation, I continued to walk through '*Nam-po-dong*' market holding my Korean friend's hand because I knew that it was important to her and I did not want to hurt her feelings. After a short time of observing all the other local Korean women holding hands as they walked together in '*Nam-po-dong*,' I grew more comfortable with applying this particular Korean custom and the cognitive dissonance abated.

2. I experienced it another time when I was living in Tai'chung (middle district), Taiwan. I was a few months into my contract with a private elementary school. It was the day before Chinese New Years. At school, my Australian boss handed out red envelopes to each employee. When I looked inside the red envelope I was delighted to see hard cash. Since the Taiwanese currency is so beautiful, the sight of NT bills made me happy but puzzled so I asked my boss about the red envelope. He explained to me the Taiwanese way of celebrating New Years. Parents (or people that are married) and bosses present cash in a red envelope to their children and/or employees. It is thought that the gesture will bring luck for a prosperous year and accepting the red envelope is an act of respect. Although I understood my boss's view that the money in the red envelope was a Chinese tradition around New Years, I still felt guilty for accepting the cash because it was so different than the Canadian way of celebrating New Years Eve. I understood my boss's feelings would not be hurt if I did not accept the Chinese custom because he was Australian. I also understood that not accepting the red envelope was a sign of disrespect in Taiwan. Thus, I had conflicting emotions with following the Chinese tradition. Later, after work when I was in my apartment, my Taiwanese landlord unexpectedly visited me. He presented me with a red envelope as well, exclaiming that I was his Canadian daughter and as such, he wanted to wish me a Happy New Year in Taiwan. I felt uncomfortable because I knew I had already received a red envelope with cash in it earlier. I refused to take the red envelope from my landlord's hand. I was unable to tell my landlord about how I felt about the situation and he continued to insist that I take the red

envelope from his hand. I understood his feelings of wanting to include me as part of his family. I also understood I would be disrespecting my landlord if I rejected the Chinese custom. Therefore, although I struggled with guilty feelings and was uncomfortable, I decided to accept another red envelope with NT bills in it because I did not want to be rude to my landlord and possibly hurt his feelings. That evening I went over to a Taiwanese friend's home for eating 'sway-jow,' Chinese dumplings which are traditionally made for the New Years Eve celebration. My friend's parents presented me with yet another red envelope with cash in it. Although, I remained feeling guilty and uncomfortable, I decided to accept it immediately rather than try to explain my view because I had already learned the Taiwanese way of celebrating New Years and I wanted to avoid yet another situation that would create feelings of ambivalence. Nobody sang 'Auld Lang Syne' at the stroke of midnight as we would in Canada and I celebrated New Years the Taiwanese way.

We all have stories like these, and as Canadians living overseas, we collect them assiduously. If cultures are thought of as being synonymous with social structures, where two or more conflicting normative expectations can occur, then my experiences that led to findings of sociological ambivalence are probably quite common among Canadians abroad. The truth, of course, is that adult visitors to Canada experience just as much sociological ambivalence as us and find interaction in Canadian society just as challenging.

Once, after a long day at school, an international student from South Korea who was visiting Winnipeg to attend University, decided to go out for some food with

Canadian friends. They enjoyed their dinner at a local Winnipeg restaurant on the Sherbrook strip. However, when it came time to pay the bill, the South Korean student grew confused because he was accustomed to not leaving a 'tip.' He felt awkward because he did not understand the meaning behind the concept. In South Korea, in many restaurants' 'tips' are incorporated as part of the meal price and servers' wages. Therefore, 'tipping' is not necessary for the patrons, as it could diminish the pride of restaurant servers. He was unable to tell his Canadian friends about how he felt about the situation and they grew visibly frustrated. One Canadian friend at the table explained that it was a polite gesture and custom in Canada, accepted as a norm. However, the South Korean student remained puzzled and wondered why the restaurant servers in Canada would not be offended by tips. Then, he began to feel anxiety and annoyance about giving extra money on top of the bill for the meal. Eventually, his Canadian friends became unhappy and refused to leave without tipping. The group of friends sat and talked about the conflicting normative expectations of the situation; discussing how not giving a tip would be perceived by the server. Although he disagreed with what seemed to be a mandatory Canadian custom, ultimately, the South Korean student decided to tip along with his Canadian friends to avoid being insensitive to the server's feelings.

The problem with sociological ambivalence is that it can originate within every cross-cultural interaction. Not only do conflicting expectations occur, but the kinds of attitudes, beliefs, and activities of the parties involved may be incompatible. Montuori and Fahim (2004) point out that, "cross-cultural encounters can provide an excellent opportunity for personal growth by placing us in situations where our understanding of self and world, and of how we believe things 'are' or 'should be,' is severely challenged"

(p. 244). Therefore, whether you are a Canadian living overseas or a visitor to Canada, straddling the world of other countries and languages with one's own cultural frame of reference can lead to ambivalence.

I believe that empathy along with the use of a new language clarified my learning experiences with living overseas. Specifically, empathy has helped me accept and deal with the uncertainty found within cross-cultural interactions. Empathy clarified my learning experience in South Korea because I held hands with a same-sex friend when walking outdoors since it was a custom that was important to my local Korean friend. Thus, in turn, I interacted in a way that was respectful and mindful of all parties involved even though I felt discomfort and embarrassed at first. I thought about my Korean friend's feelings/viewpoints and in my view, I acted in a way that was empathetic in the cross-cultural interaction thereby minimizing the ambivalence.

Again, empathy clarified my learning experience in Taiwan because I understood the meaning behind the idea of the 'red envelope.' I recognized that in Taiwan it was a common and happy gesture around Chinese New Years and that accepting the gesture would be more appropriate than if I did not participate. Using empathy helped me avoid disrespecting and hurting the locals' feelings by accepting the red envelopes with NT bills in it. Although secretly I felt guilty about receiving free cash all day from different people, I chose to disregard my discomfort because I understood the meaning behind the custom. Thus, empathy helped me participate in the Taiwanese way of celebrating New Years.

As the previous personal stories about cross-cultural encounters that caused ambivalence demonstrates, I am interested in the use of empathy with EAL learners and

therefore, created this study because empathy is the cognitive strategy that I employ in other countries when experiencing challenges in cross-cultural interactions (Adler et al., 2004; Duncan, 2005; Manitoba Labour and Immigration-Adult Training Branch, 2006; Martin, 2009; Okuzaki, 1999; Ricento, 2005; Scollon & Scollon, 1995; Wang, 2005).

Research Questions

My research questions were:

- (i) How do EAL learners experience sociological ambivalence? (ii) How do they deal with it? (iii) How if at all, is empathy used in dealing with sociological ambivalence?

My research explored EAL learners' experiences and perceptions of how they made sense of their own challenging cross-cultural interactions. Based on past research (Adler et al., 2004; Arnold, 2001; Caledon Institute of Social Policy, 1999; Gibb, 1961; Goldie, 1999; Jackson et. al., 2005; Okuzaki, 1999; Ruby & Decety, 2004; Singer et. al., 2005; Vernon, 1996; Vignemont & Singer, 2006; Wang, 2005; Wang & Sarbo, 2004), I developed an analytical frame (Appendix A) that was used to assess if empathy was used by the participants and if it was helpful for dealing with sociological ambivalence. The frame involves exploring and analyzing the following:

- (i) The participant's summary/interpretations of a target culture situation they have experienced;
- (ii) The participant's contradictions, personal confrontations, and conflicts that arose from the cross-cultural differences and ambivalence;
- (iii) The participant's feelings, thoughts, and personal experiences with sociological ambivalence. (Did the participant use a component of this study's

definition for empathy? Did the participant remain differentiated or emotionally uninvolved from the interlocutor(s)?;

(iv) The approaches the participant used to manage the ambivalence of the cross-cultural interaction. (What were the cultural differences observed? Verbal and nonverbal behaviors?); and

(v) Did the participant develop acceptance for the uncertainty within cross-cultural interactions?

Context of the Study

As previously mentioned, my work is inspired by the concept of empathy and Ilieva's (2001) eight step culture exploration process where participants explore the target culture and discuss:

1. What do/did they see?
2. What is/was happening?
3. How does the situation relate to their lives?
4. How do they react to that?
5. Is this a problem for them?
6. Why do they think they react in this way?
7. Why do they think they perceive the situation as a problem/not a problem?
8. How do they plan to deal with situations like that?

Culture exploration attempts to aid students in learning to live with the uncertainty that accompanies them in their everyday dealings with a new culture. It is a process that involves applying participant observation-inside and outside the language classroom and reflective-interpretive-critical dialogue in the classroom (Ilieva, 2001). Learners are presented with aspects of the target culture, then experience and analyze in a way analogous to the duality of participant observation. Culture exploration has educational significance because it is oriented towards developing a particular mode of thinking that

would allow learners to investigate culture on their own. Furthermore, the culture exploration process emphasizes instruction in ‘ways of knowing’ about culture and thus, language-learning and familiarization with the target culture takes place simultaneously (Ilieva, 2001). The CEP (Appendix A) that evolved from Ilieva’s (2001) eight step culture exploration process involved participants exploring Canadian culture handling the ambivalence found within their challenging cross-cultural interactions and, if they chose to, cognitively thinking about or reflecting upon questions about their experiences with interaction problems. It was unknown if adult visitors were able to understand the concept of sociological ambivalence. However, the participants met with me for open-ended interviews where they were given ample opportunity to discuss their experiences and perceptions about their interaction problems.

Purpose and Significance of the Study

The purpose of my research was to explore adult visitors’ experiences and perceptions of how they made sense of their own challenging cross-cultural interactions. This study aimed to fill the gap in the research involving using empathy specifically with adult EAL learners. The latter is supported by Okuzaki (1999) who believes that “learners with empathy can compensate for their lack of knowledge and experience and make better decisions about appropriateness in intercultural communication” (n.p.). The educational significance of this thesis was that it identified alternatives and solutions related to the participants’ transition in the new language and culture. Moreover, as adult visitors navigated their learning experiences in and out of classrooms they experienced and accepted the uncertainty in cross-cultural interactions. As well, if Canada “is to be effective at associating with other cultures it is imperative that we have individuals who

are successful at working and living in cultures other than their own" (Taylor, 1994, p. 154). To my knowledge, at present there are no programs specifically for adult EAL visitors that emphasize the use of empathy. Instead, the existing programs emphasize instruction in emotional literacy to children and teenage youth. Therefore, there is a gap in EAL programs that use empathy with adult EAL visitors to Canada who must deal with cultural events that are unfamiliar in and out of classrooms. However, globalization will increase cross-cultural interactions in Canadian culture. Moreover, the increasing immigration trends to Winnipeg (CBC News, 2007; David, 2008), suggest that the development of such programs that focus on (i) improving acculturation for adult EAL visitors and (ii) gaining knowledge and understanding of adult EAL learner perspectives would be beneficial.

According to the Department of Immigration, immigration and multiculturalism are recognized as vital to our continuing growth and development (2006). In fact, record numbers of people from all over the world are immigrating and visiting Manitoba (Department of Immigration, 2006). The province has set a very high standard for the number of immigrants they want to attract to Manitoba. Hence, a study that emphasizes helping adult visitors to Canada through the settlement process is a market that will be growing (Martin, 2009). Additionally, "given that 80% of communication is conveyed non-verbally, by understanding cultural differences in non-verbal communication we can develop a clearer picture of why and how communication problems arise in cross-cultural negotiation" (Maslen, 2010, n.p.). It is my hope that the results of the study encourage conversations regarding the use of empathy with EAL learners in the fields of cross-cultural education and TESOL. According to Kumaravadivelu (2003), the role that

educators play not only empower learners “by giving them the knowledge and social skills they will need to be able to function in the larger society as critical agents, but also educate them for transformative action” (p. 14). After completing the study, it was my hope that the participants felt empowered to continue exploring Canadian society dealing with challenging cross-cultural interactions. I also hope that my findings offer an impetus towards improvement of current EAL programs.

I did not believe that participants would develop empathy instantly or respond empathetically in every cross-cultural interaction upon completion of the study. Instead, my purpose was to explore the role of empathy. Additionally, I hypothesize that the concept of empathy can be an ability that develops over time as one observes, interacts, and converses with other people during an encounter.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

This chapter will review literature on the following: sociological ambivalence, non-empathy based theories, empathy, controversial concepts related to empathy, emotional awareness and multilingualism/multiculturalism, and controversial concepts related to emotional awareness and multilingualism/multiculturalism.

Sociological ambivalence which occurs within challenging cross-cultural interactions may be emphasized by using empathy which derives a more satisfying experience. Being able to understand another's feelings/viewpoints within a cross-cultural interaction involves awareness of human emotions and multilingualism/multiculturalism. An individual's multilingual/multicultural background can influence their reception of another's emotions and thus, controversy exists about the interconnectedness of empathy, emotional awareness, and multilingualism/multiculturalism.

Sociological Ambivalence

Sociological ambivalence occurs when there is a possibility of interpreting a context in two or more distinct ways (Barber et al., 2006; Collins, 1991; Merriam-Webster, 2011). For example, when there is uncertainty of meaning or intentions from both parties involved in a cross-cultural interaction. Montuori and Fahim (2004) suggest, "the encounter with another culture, therefore, becomes an opportunity to understand who we are, what we value and hold dear, and what we feel strongly about" (p. 254). Furthermore, juxtaposing two distinct cultural frames of reference reveals huge differences in feelings/viewpoints and consequently, sociological ambivalence occurs. Mandzuk (1997) states that sociological ambivalence can be used "to describe conflicting

normative expectations that are assigned to a status or a set of statuses in society....and can originate within the social structures to which we all belong” (p. 446). Emotions such as discomfort and loneliness are more intensely experienced during culture shock, where the transition to a different environment of experience creates behavioral and attitudinal conflicts (Adler, 1975). This thesis has proposed that different cultures are synonymous with social structures. The latter recognizes that different cultural frames of reference found within a cross-cultural interaction can create sociological ambivalence. According to Taylor (1994), sociological ambivalence:

Occurs out of a necessity for survival, out of a need to relieve stress and anxiety often experienced as the stranger [living in a new country] struggles to meet basic needs. This transformation requires the sojourner to look at his or her world from a different point of view- a perspective of the world that is often in conflict with personal values and beliefs. (p. 155)

Non-Empathy Based Theories

This thesis raises awareness about the value of using empathy with EAL learners, in particular, using empathy to address the sociological ambivalence that occurs within challenging cross-cultural interactions. However, over the past few decades there have also been some non empathy- based theories (Adler, 1975; Ilieva, 2001; Knutson, 2006; Luwisch, 2001; Montuori & Fahim, 2004; Scollon & Scollon, 1995; Taylor, 1994) that have been developed to address various forms of sociological ambivalence.

Adler’s (1975) view about handling the problems encountered from sociological ambivalence involves the understanding of a ‘transitional experience’ which is a journey into the self. His theory describes five phases of the progressive depth into experiential

learning. Adler (1975) emphasizes the understanding that this movement from a state of low self- and cultural awareness to a state of high self- and cultural awareness can be the source of higher levels of personality development. Adler (1975, pp. 16-19) delineates his five phases as:

1. Contact: Differences as well as similarities provide the rationalization for continuing the confirmation of status, role, and identity;
2. Disintegration: The individual experiences the loss of cultural support ties and misreads new cultural cues;
3. Reintegration: The rejection of the target culture causes preoccupation with likes and dislikes; differences are projected;
4. Autonomy: He or she is assured of the ability to survive new experiences; and
5. Independence: The individual is capable of exercising choice and responsibility and is able to create meaning out of new situations.

According to Adler's (1975) transitional experience model, not one culture "is inherently better or worse than another since every culture is its own unique system for dealing with the question of being" (p. 20). Adler's (1975) view about handling sociological ambivalence which occurs in cross-cultural interactions is to focus on the understanding that unexpected feelings are reflected in the ability "to behave in new situations for which there is no personal precedent" (Adler, 1975, p. 20).

In Ilieva's (2001) view, the acceptance of the uncertainty or the ambivalence that occurs in new situations for which there is no precedent is one way of handling sociological ambivalence. As previously mentioned in Chapter One, Ilieva's (2001) eight

step culture exploration process involves participants exploring the target culture and discussing eight questions about problematic interactions that they have experienced. According to her approach, learning to live with the ambivalence that accompanies the transition to a new culture is particularly important. In other words, the ambivalence experienced from cross-cultural interactions is inherent and culture exploration attempts to support the learner's "need to develop their own voice and... fulfill their own goals in the new environment" (Ilieva, 2001, p. 8).

Similarly, E. Knutson's (2006) research on cross-cultural awareness emphasizes the need to acknowledge learners as cultural subjects and accept the third place, the space between home and target cultures. Her theory about handling the sociological ambivalence that occurs within challenging cross-cultural interactions begins within the schools. E. Knutson (2006) points out that "for instructors, the challenge is to understand and acknowledge learner attitudes that are foreign to us and to understand and reveal ourselves to our students as cultural subjects, explaining our own personal history of cross-cultural learning experiences and evolving attitudes toward other cultures" (Knutson, 2006, p. 605). In E. Knutson's (2006) view, to address cross-cultural misunderstandings or sociological ambivalence, curriculum needs to be oriented towards fostering understanding of the cultural dimension.

Luwisch's (2001) theory about handling sociological ambivalence also begins within the classroom. In her view, narratives and storytelling can be a strategy for coexisting and decreasing the gap between others and ourselves. According to Luwisch (2001), issues of difference and multiculturalism (including feelings of sociological ambivalence) can be dealt with through telling and listening to personal and communal

stories. She created a course to help Jewish and Arab prospective teachers to understand the experience of the ‘other’ group. Her course aimed to provide a glimpse of what goes on in the heart and mind of the other. Luwisch’s (2001) theory involves the importance of personal stories as a means of developing a culture of peace. A precursor to the peace process, “telling our stories is indeed a matter of survival: only by telling and listening, storying and restorying, can we begin the process of constructing a common world” (Luwisch, 2001, p. 145).

Similar to Adler (1975) and E. Knutson (2006), Montuori and Fahim’s (2004) theory emphasize understanding of the cultural dimension as an overlooked but vital aspect of our personal growth. The authors’ views on dealing with sociological ambivalence involve perceiving cross-cultural experiences as an opportunity for personal growth. In Montuori and Fahim’s (2004) view, the discomfort often experienced as a result of the loss of familiar frames of reference when we encounter a new culture (essentially sociological ambivalence) “may lead to psychological growth and to a better understanding of who we are, where we came from, and where we might want to go” (pp. 248-249). The authors suggest that cross-cultural sojourners, who go beyond one’s cultural norms to find new ways to interact with people from other cultures, demonstrate creativity and innovation in dealing with sociological ambivalence. Therefore, cross-cultural interaction problems challenge our creativity and the derivatives such as surprise and loneliness provide the opportunity for personal growth and development (Montuori & Fahim, 2004, p. 261).

Scollon and Scollon (1995) used a discourse approach for handling sociological ambivalence. Their research focused on intercultural professional communication in

English between Westerners and East Asians, especially Chinese. The authors used discourse analysis to explain among other things the widely observed differences in face politeness between Westerners and Asians. According to Scollon and Scollon (1995, p. 127), differences in: 1) ideology such as history and worldview, 2) socialization and, 3) forms of discourse patterns are major factors in intercultural communication.

Sociological ambivalence can be dealt with by recognizing that successful communication cannot ignore human relationships. As Scollon and Scollon (1995) explain:

There remains a major distinction between the way human relationships are understood in Asia (and in other traditional societies) and the way they are understood in contemporary western society. The difference, we believe, lies in whether human relationships are thought of as given by society or, on the other hand, as being spontaneously created between individuals (p. 140).

The authors point out that, since communication has inherent ambivalence, effective communication depends on finding and clarifying sources of ambivalence as well as learning to deal with places where ambivalence occurs (Scollon & Scollon, 1995, p. 161).

Similar to Adler's (1975) theory involving the understanding of a 'transitional experience,' Taylor's (1994) theory explored 'perspective transformation' as a possible way of aiding the sojourner during his or her intercultural experience. According to Taylor (1994), when a sojourner lives in another culture for an extended period of time he or she often experiences a transformation and "the sojourner who is successful at working through and learning from...[perspective transformation] experiences has the potential to become interculturally competent within the host culture" (p. 155). Taylor's (1994, pp.

160-168) model for learning to become interculturally competent consists of six components:

1. Setting the stage: What the participant brings to each new intercultural experience;
2. Cultural disequilibrium: Periods of dissonance in the participant's life causing stress and intense emotions;
3. A non-reflective cognitive orientation: Little or no questioning of prior values and assumptions;
4. A reflective cognitive orientation: Deep critical thought in becoming interculturally competent;
5. Behavioral learning strategies: Actions and tools of the trade employed by the participants, reflectively or not, in an effort to balance their cultural disequilibrium; and
6. Evolving intercultural identity: Actual changes that take place in the process of becoming interculturally competent.

To conclude, there have been some non-empathy based theories over the past few decades promoting different strategies for dealing with sociological ambivalence. They have in common, self-awareness, understanding emotions, and a progression towards dealing with the competing or conflicting normative expectations that occur during unfamiliar cross-cultural encounters. This thesis hopefully adds to the research in this area by raising awareness about the value of using empathy as a strategy for EAL learners who must deal with sociological ambivalence experiences.

People who are subjected to an unfamiliar culture or way of life experience discomfort. Culture is the set of shared attitudes, customary beliefs, values, goals, and practices that characterize a social group (Barber et al., 2006; Collins, 1991; Merriam-Webster, 2011). During the transition to a new environment, “the stranger develops an adaptive capacity, altering his or her perspective to effectively understand and accommodate the demands of the host culture” (Taylor, 1994, p. 156).

Scollon and Scollon (1995) seek insight about intercultural communication arguing that there is no inherent difference between Westerners’ and Asians’ communication strategies, however:

What makes the difference is that relationships of face politeness are treated differently....there is a tendency for Asians to be concerned with showing deference or respect in interactions with non-intimates, in contrast to Westerners, who tend to emphasize egalitarian interpersonal relationships (p. 14).

The latter difference in face relationships leads to the use of different interaction strategies to handle unexpected feelings. In fact, Maslen (2010) concedes that clear cultural differences have been detected between the body language used by Western and Asian negotiators. Research done by Wendi Adair, reviewed by Maslen (2010), on international business negotiators shows that cultural differences in communication styles, strategic repertoires, cognitive schemas, and gender stereotypes lead to a culture clash which causes misunderstandings, misattributions, and conflict.

Adler et al. (2004) and Pavlenko (2005) acknowledge that assuming the existence of basic emotions, mental representations of ‘secondary’ emotions may differ across cultures, and cross-linguistic differences in the emotion lexicon is a reflection of this

cultural variation. Elaborating on the latter, Pavlenko (2005) further questioned the existence of basic emotions and the universality of 'emotion,' arguing that it is a Western cultural construct and thus, a problematic category around which to organize multiple ways in which members of different cultures talk about feelings. Nonetheless, Darwin, the first to demonstrate the universality of expressions and their continuity in humans and other animals, has pointed out that emotions are biologically based and evolutionarily adaptive (Darwin, 1872). Moreover, Anderson (2004) points out that, human language differs from the communicative behaviour of every other known organism. Although the differences we find across the world in sounds, words, meanings and grammars seem very important, for an outside observer- say, a biologist studying communication among living beings in general- all are relatively minor variations on the single theme of human language.

Empathy

The concept of empathy has been studied in-depth over the past few decades and numerous definitions have resulted from the attention (Davis, 1983; Deutsch & Madle, 1975; Hoffman, 1984; Hogan, 1969; Polkinghorne, 1982; Sinclair & Monk, 2005; Taylor, 2001). Some scholars (Arnold, 2001; Caledon Institute of Social Policy, 1999; Vernon, 1996; Wang & Sarbo, 2004) have defined it in cognitive terms, as the ability to comprehend the affective and cognitive status of another.

Likewise, according to Taylor (1994), cross-cultural education has generally included a cognitive component, an affective component, and a behavioral component. The cognitive component relates to the various forms of knowledge, the affective component relates to the EAL learner's curiosity for the target culture, and the behavioral

component relates to the EAL learner's ability to interpret culturally relevant behaviour, and to conduct themselves in culturally appropriate ways. Taylor (2001) further explains that one of the most important aims of cross-cultural education is to help the learner gain an understanding of the native speaker's perspective and "without emotion, individuals are unable to co-ordinate their behavior...prepare for proper action and make progress towards goals" (p. 223). The overall objective of cross-cultural education, then, should be to help EAL learners develop the ability to use the target language in culturally appropriate ways for the intentional use of understanding and interacting with native speakers of the target language (Kumaravadivelu, 2003).

From Goldie's (1999) research on distinguishing and clarifying ways in which we think about the emotions of other people, empathizing with another person involves imagining the enactment of a narrative from the other person's point of view. Empathy thus involves what is often thought of as 'imagining being X,' where 'X' stands for the narrator with whom I empathize. Intuitively, then, empathy can be seen as 'acting in your head.' One study (Vignemont & Singer, 2006) on factors that influence empathic brain responses suggests:

There is empathy if: (1) one is in an affective state; (2) this state is isomorphic to another person's affective state; (3) this state is elicited by the observation or imagination of another person's affective state; (4) one knows that the person is the source of one's own affective state (p. 435).

From her study on how empathy can help Japanese English as a foreign language (EFL) teachers cultivate students' intercultural communicative competence, Okuzaki (1999) defines empathy as involving, "relativism and flexibility, which knowledge alone cannot

furnish” (n.p.). Okuzaki (1999) further delineates that with an empathic attitude, Japanese learners of English can learn more rapidly to cope with norms different from theirs and gain insights about linguistic appropriateness in English speaking cultures. Therefore, by fostering empathy in an EFL context, a Japanese teacher with only limited knowledge of English can still help students develop competence in intercultural communication.

The definition of empathy previously mentioned in Chapter One was used as a conceptual lens for framing the research questions, and is further supported by Adler et al. (2004) who state that, “empathy is the ability to re-create another person’s perspective; to experience the world from the others’ point of view” (p. 121). Likewise, as Wang (2005) suggests in his review on affective factors in foreign language teaching, empathy is thought to contribute to the attitudes people have towards a person or a group with a different language and culture from our own, and it may contribute to the degree of success with which a person learns another language. With empathy, one does not necessarily give up his or her own way of feeling or totally agree with the position of the other person, he or she is just able to imagine and share the thoughts or feelings. Gibb (1961) noted the importance of nonverbal messages in communicating empathy. He found that facial expressions of concern and body gestures are often more important to the receiver than the words used. By simply letting someone know that others care for them is acting in a supportive way. Therefore, empathy is perhaps the most important factor in the harmonious coexistence of individuals in society.

Controversial Concepts Related to Empathy

Empathy is often confused with what is known as “emotional contagion.” Empathy is the ability to maintain “one’s own perspective, while at the same time,

possessing the ability to shift perspectives and see through another person's eyes... emotional contagion is a tendency to catch and feel emotions that are similar to and influenced by those of others" (Empathic Perspectives, 2009, n.p.). They are often confused because both involve emotional states and awareness of another's feelings. Emotional contagion is part of empathy, however, by itself is not empathy. According to Empathic Perspectives (2009), empathy is a conscious process while emotional contagion is an automatic process "which relies on non-verbal communication and even, at times, telecommunication (i.e. online e-mails, forums, and chat)" (n.p.). Additionally, "empathy and in-his-shoes imagining, two distinct imaginative processes, are also often confused with each other" (Goldie, 1999, p. 397). Controversy regarding empathy is pointed out by Vignemont and Singer's (2006) study which suggested that one can represent:

The mental states of others, including affective states, without being emotionally involved (e.g. based on my knowledge of you, I infer from your behavior that you are anxious but I do not feel anxious)...emotional contagion involves affect sharing but does not meet the condition of self-other distinction (e.g. the baby starts crying because other babies cry but the baby is not necessarily aware that the other is the source of their affective state). (p. 435).

Unfortunately, the latter study was not conducted with specifically adult EAL learners. The research was questioning the assumption of the automaticity of empathy, suggesting several modulatory factors that might influence empathic brain responses. Current neuroscientific studies about empathy cannot yet distinguish between the automaticity of the empathic response and the empathic response as the outcome of the appraisal process (Vignemont & Singer, 2006, p. 438). Finally, from their investigation on the neural

response elicited by the assessment of painful situations experienced by others, Jackson et al. (2005) found no correlation between self-report of pain sensitivity and pain intensity ratings. These results may not be that surprising considering that self-measures of empathy are poor predictors of actual empathic behavior (Jackson et al., 2005, n.p.). This informs one of the assumptions of the study, that participant self-reports about whether or not they understand the other's feelings/viewpoints will be subjective.

There are several programs in Canada and the world that develop empathy over several lessons. However, the focus tends to be instruction in emotional literacy to children and teenage youth, rather than emphasizing the use of empathy with adult EAL learners who experience cultural events that are unfamiliar and must handle encounters with ambivalence in and out of classrooms. The following successful programs that educate about empathy will be discussed:

The Seven Sacred Teachings program which is being offered throughout North America focuses on teaching youth about respect, humility, love, truth, honesty, courage, and wisdom. These seven teachings exist to maintain the sacredness of life, and to ensure survival as living beings on this Earth. "To show real respect is to share and give of yourself for the benefit of all life" (Calgary Board of Education, 2011, n. p.).

The Peace Power strategy is a violence prevention program designed for work with preteen, teen, and some adult groups. It is based on four principles- recognize contributions and successes, act with respect, share power to build community, and make peace. The act with respect principle promotes empathy education for reducing the level of interpersonal threat and social toxicity experienced in the community. The program is

offered in Canada and the United States, however, the strategy has also been used in such places as India, Israel and Iraq (Peace Power, 2006, n. p.).

The Virtues Project provides empowering life-skill strategies to make the knowledge and practice of virtues accessible to people of all cultures. Virtues such as, compassion, caring, friendliness and kindness are taught to help parents bring out the best in their children and in themselves. Through facilitators and Virtues connections, the project has touched more than 95 countries (Popov et al., 1991, n. p.).

The Roots of Empathy program is an evidence-based classroom parenting program designed for elementary school students. Through interaction with a baby, students learn to develop their own sense of empathy or taking another person's perspective. The program is offered throughout Canada, the United States, Japan, and New Zealand. In addition, other parts of the world have expressed interest in the Roots of Empathy program (Caledon Institute of Social Policy, 1999, n. p.). Roots of Empathy has shown dramatic effect in decreasing aggression and violence among school children while raising social/emotional skill and increasing empathy (Gordon & Green, 2004).

Lion's Quest, like the Roots of Empathy program, is a research-based program focusing on fostering empathy in students (K-12). The program can be adapted to a variety of settings and formats. It helps youth through positive prevention skills such as emotional competencies, cultivating positive expression of feelings and behavior, and personal and social responsibility. The program includes Skills for Growing (K-5), Skills for Adolescence (6-8), and Skills for Action (9-12). The Lion's Quest principles guide research and development to ensure that the program is effective within the entire scope

of youth environments- inner city, suburban, and rural communities- and in serving the youth across all income levels (Lion's Quest Canada, 2001, n. p.).

Emotional Awareness and Multilingualism/Multiculturalism

Emotional information is all around us. Emotions communicate feeling states; they signal urgent messages such as 'let's get together' or 'I am uncomfortable' or 'I am happy with you' or 'I am angry with you.' Emotional information is crucial. It is one of the primary forms of information that human beings process. That does not mean that everybody can process it well. But it does mean that it is circulating around us, and certain people who can pick up on it (for example one who has developed empathy overtime) can perform certain tasks very well that others cannot perform such as interactions with sociological ambivalence (Goldie, 1999).

Being able to understand another person's feelings/viewpoints will vary amongst adult visitors to Canada because they come from different backgrounds and have their own psychology and thus, experience emotional awareness and multilingualism/multiculturalism differently. Likewise, adult EAL learners will interpret cultural events that are unfamiliar using his or her cultural frame of reference. Krashen (1981, p. 76) explains that certain cognitive and affective changes that take place around puberty may boost language learning. These biological changes may be responsible for observed child-adult differences in language acquisition. Furthermore, Eden (2010) points out that although both left and right cerebral hemispheres work together in people with optimum mental ability, the left brain takes control, choosing logic and reasoning over imagination and artistic talent. Nobel Prize winner (1981) Roger Sperry conducted "split-brain" experiments which showed that there are "two modes of thinking, verbal and

nonverbal, represented rather separately in left and right hemispheres respectively and that our education system, as well as science in general, tends to neglect the nonverbal form of intellect. What it comes down to is that modern society discriminates against the right cerebral hemisphere” (Eden, 2010, n.p.). In fact, Vingerhoets, Berckmoes, and Stroobant (as cited in Viewzone, n.d.) studied blood flow velocity to each side of the brain and when participants were asked to focus on what was said or the semantics of the message, blood flow velocity increased significantly on the left side of the brain. When participants focused on how it was said (tone of voice, whether happy, sad, anxious, angry or neutral) blood flow velocity increased markedly on the right side of the brain. However, it did not decrease on the left because, according to the researchers, the left brain processes meaningful semantic content automatically and helps to label the emotions. Therefore, the right cerebral hemisphere, while being the brain’s ‘emotional’ side, is not solely responsible for processing the expression of emotions.

Moreover, Proverbio (David, 2008) attributed the differences in primary and secondary language acquisition to the fact that “the brain absorbs the mother tongue at a time when it is also storing early visual, acoustic, emotional, and other non-linguistic knowledge” (David, 2008, p. B6). In addition, the native language triggers an increase in brain electrical activity thus, “our mother tongue is the language we use to think, dream, and feel emotion” (David, 2008, p. B6).

The ability to communicate clearly about feelings has been characterized as part of what Goleman (1995) calls ‘emotional intelligence’ (EI). He “identifies a wide range of problems that arise for people who are not able to talk about emotions constructively, including social isolation, unsatisfying relationships, feelings of anxiety and depression,

and misdirected aggression” (Adler et al., 2004, p. 138). Alternatively, Fischer and Fischer’s (2006) study which designed a psychological instrument (the Affective Response to Literature Survey) to measure an emotional response to literature, claim that individuals who possess a high Emotional Quotient (EQ) readily perceive emotions, assimilate emotion related feelings, understand the information of those emotions, and manage them. In fact, emotions vary in many respects. Adler et al. (2004) acknowledge, “eight primary emotions (joy, acceptance, fear, surprise, sadness, disgust, anger, and anticipation) and they combine to form other, mixed emotions” (pp. 139-140). Goldie (1999) distinguishes emotions from moods stating that:

If you are feeling angry, you are angry about something or other, whereas if you are feeling depressed, your mood will not have the same focus. A person’s emotion will comprise elements or episodes which are bound together as part of a narrative structure which makes best sense of this aspect of a person’s life; this narrative structure includes not only the episodes of the emotion, but also reasoned actions out of the emotion and actions which are expressive of it (p. 395).

To the same extent, Artz’s (1994) study describing a six-step strategy for understanding emotional experiences, distinguishes feeling from emotion. Feeling becomes an active orienting process in which the feeling person engages in, in order to decide and choose for or against something. Emotion becomes the manifestation of that evaluation. The emotion words which we use to describe our feelings capture our experience with descriptive language and alert us with regard to the kinds of judgments we have made (Adler et al., 2004; Artz, 1994; Pavlenko, 2005).

Adler et al. (2004) points out that “one of the most significant factors that influence emotional expression is the position of a culture on the individualism-collectivism spectrum” (p. 143). In a study about emotions that cross linguistic and cultural boundaries, Pavlenko (2005) argues that, “to think of the first language as the language of emotions or the self and the second language as the language of detachment is to oversimplify the relationship between languages, emotions, and identities in bi- and multilingualism” (p. 236). The latter suggests that adult visitors who engage in cross-cultural interactions may find it difficult to discern another person’s emotions because of their unique multilingual/multicultural backgrounds which influence emotional awareness and expression.

All the studies previously examined show that regardless of whether there exists a concept of ‘emotion’ shared by all cultures, and independent of whether emotions are universal or culture specific, languages offer distinct emotion lexicons and affective repertoires to their speakers. This means that EAL learners (i.e. multicultural multilinguals) have distinct, language and culture appropriate semantic and conceptual representations of emotion and emotion related words. Therefore, EAL learners must learn new semantic and conceptual distinctions in this area as they adapt to the new environment (Pavlenko, 2005, p. 237). De Bot, Lowie, and Verspoor (2006) further clarify the latter in their resource book on second language acquisition stating that the underlying assumption in the organization of most multilingual mental lexicon models is that “there is one common conceptual system, but that there are independent lexicons for the words in each language” (p. 44). Traditional views of the multilingual mental lexicons are essentially static. We must realize that the lexicon is constantly changing due

to the influence of a wide range of interrelated factors. Moreover, “the language that is used at a certain moment is the selected language; languages that, at that particular moment, play a role in the background are labeled active; languages that do not play a role at that moment are dormant...this code-switching is very common, and models of lexical processing must be able to account for this” (De Bot, Lowie, & Verspoor, 2006, p. 45). Studies point to a number of factors that mediate language emotionally in multilingual speakers. These factors include: (a) age of acquisition, (b) context of acquisition, (c) personal history, and (d) language proficiency, a factor that impacts the speaker’s performance of affect and thus its perception by interlocutors (Pavlenko, 2005). As one final note, De Bot et al. (2006) declare that, “it is not possible to look into a person’s brain to see what happens, but even if we could, we would probably never really know how all the different factors interact” (p. 39).

Controversial Concepts Related to Emotional Awareness and Multilingualism/Multiculturalism

Studies on cross-cultural communication remind us that proficiency is an important factor that, together with dominance, influences language choice for emotional expression. Pavlenko (2005) suggests that since:

Emotional communication-arguments in particular- at times proceeds at a faster pace than regular conversation, in multilingual settings speakers may feel particularly compelled to revert to their dominant or most proficient language in order to draw on the richest and most accessible set of linguistic resources (p.141).

There is no research yet that proves EI or EQ is the single most important predictor of effective communication ability. The superiority of ability measurement in emotional intelligence seems to taint well-validated and useful self-report measures, which are depicted as inaccurate or measures of the extent that people have ‘positive illusions.’ Hence, some researchers are great believers that criterion-report (ability testing) is the only adequate method to employ.

To understand another person’s emotion, we must be able, at least, to say what the emotion is which that person is experiencing. Therefore, if one fails to take sufficient account of the person’s mood, of the other emotions which he or she might be experiencing at the time, and of his or her character, then one can fall significantly short of what is required for understanding (Goldie, 1999, p. 402). Unfortunately, I was unable to predict if the adult visitors who chose to participate in this study would be able to accurately express their emotions about their interaction problems in Canadian society.

In summary, when there is a possibility of interpreting a context in two or more distinct ways, feelings of sociological ambivalence can occur. Keeping in mind the conceptualization that different cultures are akin to social structures, different cultural frames of reference found within a challenging cross-cultural interaction can create sociological ambivalence. The results of this study reveal that empathy, understanding another person’s feelings/viewpoints, emphasizes sociological ambivalence which is useful for handling the experience. However, empathy involves awareness of human emotions and multilingualism/multiculturalism because a multilingual/multicultural background can influence the reception of another’s emotions. Thus, controversy exists about how empathy, emotional awareness, and multilingualism/multiculturalism are

linked together. Nonetheless, participants' stories of how they made sense of their own cross-cultural experiences with ambivalence shed insight about the value of using empathy with EAL learners.

Chapter 3: Methodology

The purpose of my research was to explore and collect information about adult visitors' experiences (including self initiated strategies, perceived challenges, and emotions) and perceptions about their challenging cross-cultural interactions. This study's research questions were: "How do EAL learners experience sociological ambivalence? How do they deal with it? How if at all, is empathy used in dealing with sociological ambivalence?" To address these questions, the thesis involved specific research instruments, namely open-ended interviews (Appendix B). With a heuristic inquiry approach, the researcher was interested in understanding, in considerable detail, what participants experience and how they make sense of these experiences, how they think and how they came to develop the perspectives they hold. It is concerned with meaning, process, and thus descriptive data. Mandzuk (1997) suggests that, "heuristic inquiry is a research method that challenges individuals to pursue areas of deep, personal interest and to understand that the data for these kinds of pursuits lies within themselves" (pp. 440-441). Heuristic inquiry (Mandzuk, 1997; Moustakas, 1990; Patton, 1990; Polanyi, 1983) has arisen from the phenomenological tradition and not only begins with a question that has been of intense personal interest and a challenge for the researcher, but it also holds important social meanings for others in similar situations. I used a heuristic inquiry approach that focuses on description and perceptions rather than explanation (Osborne, 1990). It is a science anchored in the belief that multiple ways of interpreting experiences and perceptions are available.

Edmund Husserl (Osborne, 1990; Science Encyclopedia, 2010, n. p.), considered to be 'the father of phenomenology,' defines it as the scientific study of the crucial

structures of consciousness. The special viewpoint achieved by the qualitative researcher as he or she focuses not on things but on our consciousness of things. As van Manen (2007) points out, “through the reflective methods of writing, the aim is not to create technical intellectual tools or prescriptive models for telling us what to do or how to do something” (p. 13). Rather, phenomenology in practice is about finding the essence of a phenomenon through perceptions and lived experiences. According to Bogdan and Biklen (2007), this type of research:

Begins with silence. This ‘silence’ is an attempt to grasp what it is they [researchers] are studying by bracketing an idea the informants take for granted as true. That is, researchers act as if they do not know what it means and study it to find out what is actually taken for granted (p. 25).

The latter coincides with the belief that many participants have possibly used empathy previously to the study when dealing with examples of sociological ambivalence but were unaware that they were doing so and have taken its use as a communication strategy for granted. Moreover, if they had not used empathy and continued to experience unsatisfying cross-cultural interactions, could they have had alternative outcomes by considering being more empathetic? Husserl reasoned “that if consciousness is our primordial window on the world, then an understanding of human knowledge would be best based upon an understanding of consciousness” (Osborne, 1990, p. 80).

Meanwhile, with the intense, personal nature of heuristic research, concerns about sample size is important for reaching data saturation; where the researcher is no longer hearing or seeing new information. This research was concerned then with understanding the experiences and perceptions of ten selected adult visitors to Canada. Dewaele (2005)

points out that historically, research on instructed second language acquisition focused on groups rather than on individuals. Nevertheless:

A problem that should not be lightly dismissed is that considering broad group averages is a way of constructing faceless average learners. The danger is that in the quest for easy generalizations, one may lose sight of individual learners, with their unique cultural, linguistic, psychological, social, and cognitive characteristics, who function within well-determined sociocultural contexts (pp. 368-369).

This study sought to provide an understanding of the lived experiences of adult ‘fluent’ EAL learners as they made sense of the sociological ambivalence that they experienced in and out of classrooms.

Heuristic Inquiry

There are six phases of the heuristic inquiry model (Mandzuk, 1997; Moustakas, 1990; Patton, 1990; Polanyi, 1983). The first phase is the process of initial engagement where individuals engage in self-dialogue; “the recognition that if one is going to be able to discover the constituents and qualities that make up an experience, one must begin with oneself” (Moustakas, 1990, p. 16).

When living overseas I experience intense stress and feelings such as discomfort and loneliness usually during the first six months of attempting to acculturate to the target culture and language. During these times I use empathy to handle the sociological ambivalence that arises out of straddling two social structures, my own Canadian cultural frame of reference and the target culture. The latter was the impetus for designing the study since I believe from my own lived experience that visitors to Canada experience

similar challenges in cross-cultural communication as I do. In self-dialogue, Moustakas (1990) admits that “one faces oneself and must be honest with oneself and one’s experience relevant to the question or problem” (p. 17). Thus, there was never any doubt about exploring the question of whether or not empathy was helpful within challenging cross-cultural interactions. At the core of heuristics, “lies an emphasis on disclosing the self as a way of facilitating disclosure from others” (Douglass & Moustakas, 1985, p. 50). I have wondered why my clients, who are visitors, find interaction in Canadian society challenging. Therefore, I recorded the participants’ experiences with sociological ambivalence in the form of interviews. The responses to my questions were (i) the primary data source for my study and (ii) concerned with understanding the experiences and perceptions of select adult visitors to Canada (i.e. less than 12 months) who handle sociological ambivalence. Denzin (1997, pp. 3-10) suggests that researchers write from the inside out, seeking to identify the essence of an occurrence and wishing for understanding of another based on deep involvement in the participants’ worlds of experience. My positioning in this study allowed me to experience a shared practice and common meanings with the research participants. Therefore, I approached my work from two perspectives, as someone who has experience with handling sociological ambivalence while living overseas and as a researcher who explores the experiences that visitors have with interaction problems here in Canada.

The concept of theoretical sensitivity is important to my methodology and credibility of my interpretations. As Strauss and Corbin (1990) suggest, “theoretical sensitivity refers to the attribute of having insight, the ability to give meaning to data, the capacity to understand, and the capability to separate the pertinent from that which isn’t”

(p. 42). My personal experience, analytical process, and understanding of other cultures are sources of theoretical sensitivity. As Strauss and Corbin (1990) further point out, “theoretical sensitivity is a personal quality of the researcher. It indicates an awareness of the subtleties of meaning of data” (p. 41). By using theoretical sensitivity, the researcher is guided to data that they might have overlooked; such as, the acceptance of people who are noticeably different by those who are not (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007, p. 233).

The second phase of heuristic inquiry is the process of immersion where “the researcher lives the question in waking, sleeping, and even dream states” (Moustakas, 1990, p. 28). At this phase, researchers grow in knowledge and “need to discuss their questions with others both in formal and informal settings” (Mandzuk, 1997, p. 441). Moustakas (1990) emphasizes that “people, places, meetings, readings, nature- all offer possibilities for understanding” (p. 28). I believe the latter was naturally the case for my situation where I was preoccupied with my study and made a point to discuss my research with my committee members, friends who had expressed interest, family, and other ‘helpers’ who facilitated interaction. Any information gathered during this phase was recorded on paper for future use. In fact, the newspaper articles that I used in this document were brought to my attention by family members and friends who knew I was conducting research in this area. In doing the latter, I was provided with different sets of lenses that helped me come to a greater understanding of my research than relying just on myself.

The third phase of heuristic research is the process of incubation. This phase involves a retreat from the intense, concentrated focus on the research questions, allowing the expansion of knowledge to take place, which enables the inner tacit dimension and

intuition to clarify and extend understanding. Mandzuk (1997) finds, “in spite of the apparent inactivity...it is during this phase, that the tacit or implicit dimension is able to reach its fullest potential often enabling heuristic researchers to see new dimensions related to their research questions” (p. 441). At this stage of the inquiry process many shifts occurred in my perception of the research questions and I began to note themes and relationships between ideas which had not been apparent previously.

The fourth phase of heuristic research is the process of illumination which is an awakening “that occurs naturally when the researcher is open and receptive to tacit knowledge and intuition” (Moustakas, 1990, p. 29). Essential qualities and themes are discovered. According to Mandzuk (1997), “this phase can either present new perspectives on the topic or it can correct previous distortions or misunderstandings” (p. 442). At this stage of the inquiry process I achieved ‘a-ha!’ moments and noticed some recurring themes in the data, opened a door to new awareness, modified old understandings, and synthesized fragmented knowledge.

The fifth phase of heuristic research is the process of explication which involves a full examination of what has been awakened in consciousness by the tacit processes of the previous phase. During this phase, organization and a comprehensive depiction of the core themes is required. In particular, “researchers try to understand the various layers of meaning by attending to details related to each layer” (Mandzuk, 1997, p. 442). At this stage of the inquiry process I used an analytical frame (Appendix A) to help me analyze the data. The themes that I identified were discussed with my committee members for their reflections, feedback, and clarification.

The sixth phase of heuristic research is the process of creative synthesis, that is, an original integration of the material that reflects the researcher's intuition, imagination, and personal knowledge of the themes. According to Moustakas (1990), this is often accomplished through a narrative depiction using verbatim material and examples. Thoroughly familiar with the data, much of my time at this stage was spent putting the components and core themes into an individual depiction and "selecting anecdotal comments that best illustrated these themes" (Mandzuk, 1997, p. 442). By returning again and again to the data, I developed an overall outlook of the themes and essential meanings of the results.

Heuristic inquiry is an interpretive approach, capturing and critically analyzing participants' experiences with, and their perceptions of sociological ambivalence. From the use of personal stories and thick descriptions of lived experiences, researchers can compare and contrast the perspectives of participants (Polkinghorne, 1982). Thus, through interpretation, this study examined the perceptions that were held by participants and identified cross-cultural strategies that these participants used in their social situations that were aligned with the concepts of empathy, emotional awareness, and multilingualism/multiculturalism.

Empathy, emotional awareness, and multilingualism/multiculturalism was evoked from this study which employed an analytical frame (Appendix A) to help with analyzing the data, i.e. the learners' exploration experiences in the form of open-ended interviews (Appendix B) which incorporated a CEP (Appendix A) to have learners think about or reflect upon their participant-observation learning experiences in and out of the classroom. As Davies and Guppy (2006) point out, sociological thinking employs

“methods to examine links between various realms of social life and education....one must think beyond one’s immediate experience....to rigorously use evidence to study meaningful human activity and its context” (pp. 6, 8). As well, E. Knutson (2006) argues that, “if the goals of culture learning are less tied to coverage of content and more allied with the notion of engaging students’ interest in and appreciation of cultural identity and difference as such, instructors and students alike may feel less overwhelmed” (p. 605). The latter is aligned with the intention and goal of this study which was to collect adult visitors’ stories about investigating Canadian culture and how they experience interaction problems as they navigate their way through competing cultural expectations.

The Study Participants

This study’s invitational poster (Appendix D) was posted in the urban area around the University of Manitoba to recruit ten participants who were: (i) adults (18 years and older), (ii) visitors to Canada (i.e. less than 12 months) who speak EAL, and (iii) experiencing interaction problems in Canadian society. The potential participants were able to contact me by e-mail or phone and I set up an appointment with them to explain the study. At that time I answered any questions the potential participant had about the study. Additionally, I gave the potential participant a handout of the interview questions (Appendix B). I explained the handout and that it was their choice whether they used it or not to prepare for the interview(s) (Appendix B). I provided an example (Appendix E) about a challenging cross-cultural interaction in Canada to help clarify what the study explored. At the end of the appointment, I got the potential participant’s contact information. One week after meeting me, I called the potential participants who in my view were relatively ‘fluent’ in EAL to find out if they were interested in participating in

the study. I met those who were interested a second time to give them the required consent form (Appendix F). I reviewed the consent form with each of the potential participants and answered any questions that he/she had about the study. I explained to the participant that they must sign the consent form (Appendix F) and give it to me before participating in the open-ended interview(s) (Appendix B).

My participants were comprised of eight females and two males who represented cultures from all over the world and ranged from ages 20-75. They all felt happy to live in a multilingual/multicultural society such as Canada and all met the criteria to participate in the study. Participants were visiting Canada for numerous reasons which included: studying at a University or college, living in the culture to decide whether or not to settle and have a family here, exploring better opportunities for their children, being closer to their family who had immigrated here, studying English, and being closer to their Canadian born grandchildren. All the participants were multilingual, speaking three to five different languages before learning English. Besides being new to Canada, all the participants had been living in Winnipeg for a short time. The following is a brief review of the 10 participants in this study:

EAL learner A was a visiting international student from Nigeria. She was in her 20's and had a kind and gentle demeanor. She was a student at the University of Manitoba and desired to study something in business, such as marketing at the University of Manitoba in the future.

EAL learner B was a visiting business person from Nigeria. She appeared to be in her 30's and was studying English in Canada. She wanted to study nursing in the future at Red River College in Winnipeg.

EAL learner C was a visiting mother from El Salvador. She appeared to be in her 40's or 50's. She was in Winnipeg to learn English and to further her daughter's education.

EAL learner D was a visiting senior from the Ukraine. She was 65 years old and a retired gynecologist. She was in Winnipeg to help her son and grandchild.

EAL learner E was a visiting senior from the Republic of Belarus. She was in her 70's and was in Winnipeg to visit family and learn English.

EAL learner F was a visiting rehabilitation nurse from Russia. She was in her 60's and retired. She was in Winnipeg to visit family and learn English.

EAL learner G was a visiting engineer from Israel. He appeared to be in his 40's or 50's and was retired. He was in Winnipeg to visit family and learn English.

EAL learner H was a visiting researcher from China. She appeared to be in her 30's or 40's. She had a quiet and soft demeanor and was in Winnipeg with her husband hoping to further their daughter's education and to learn English.

EAL learner I was a visiting engineer from China. He appeared to be in his 30's or 40's. He had a gentle smile and was very soft spoken. He was in Winnipeg with his wife to further their daughter's education and to learn English.

EAL learner J was a visitor from Egypt. She appeared to be in her 40's or 50's. In Egypt she was an assistant manager of a bank. She was in Winnipeg to visit family and learn English.

Participants were happy to meet with me and perceived the study as a great opportunity to practice reading, writing (as some participants wrote down their answers to the handout), listening, and speaking in English.

Research Instruments

The study involved one open-ended interview with each participant. The adult visitors were given a handout of the interview questions (Appendix B), some of which incorporated the CEP (Appendix A) to prepare for the interview and help with the understanding of their own challenging cross-cultural interactions. It was given to the participants along with the information letter (Appendix C) when they first met me and I explained the study. However, they were not expected to use the handout. They were not asked to record their experiences in writing but rather, during the interview they retold their experiences and perceptions based on memory. The interview focused on how adult visitors handled cultural events that were unfamiliar and how they interpreted them using their own cultural frames of reference. Since the questioning process was in itself a cross-cultural challenge for the participants, I used a white board to write out and explain any words that they did not understand. If the initial 60 minute interview was not sufficient time to discuss experiences and/or there were questions from the initial interview that needed elaboration, an additional final interview was arranged. If there had been questions that the participant wished not to respond to during the initial interview then I marked them with a red star to ensure that I did not ask these questions for the final interview. Thus, the adult visitors had ample opportunity to express and discuss their personal stories, ways of thinking, and reflect on the benefits and challenges of handling interaction problems.

Data Collection

This study's data collection involved open-ended interviews (Appendix B). The interview questions which involved the participants' reflections of challenging cross-

cultural encounters in Canada were aligned with my research questions. As mentioned before, the final interview was conducted when questions from the initial interview were not discussed and/or needed elaboration. Two participants, EAL learner A and EAL learner D, needed a final interview to clarify things from the first interview. During the study, participants explored Canadian society and experienced challenging cross-cultural interactions. They all chose to use the handout of the interview questions (Appendix B) to prepare for the interview and to help with the understanding of their interaction problems. All interviews were digitally audio recorded using a personal digital audio recorder for transcription purposes. During the interviews and the making of detailed fieldnotes, I sought understanding of how participants made sense of their experiences with sociological ambivalence. Luwisch (2001) suggests:

Storytelling can be a way of admitting the other into one's world and thus of neutralizing the otherness and strangeness. Further, in telling stories about one's life, one is exposing the self to the view of others, implicitly allowing that the self-created by one's culture may not be the only one possible (p. 134).

Therefore, I wrote the fieldnotes which I hoped would shed light on my predictions about empathy as a helpful strategy for handling challenges in cross-cultural interactions. The interview sessions of this study were held in locations that were convenient: a study room/empty classroom at the University of Manitoba, a participant's apartment/house, a study room at a church, and my house. The interviews took the form of a conversation and the interview protocol (see Appendix B) was used only as a guide. With the participants' permission, interviews (initial and final) were recorded and later transcribed verbatim (Moustakas, 1990, p. 46). During the interview(s) I used a researcher's journal

(Appendix G) to record any additional observations such as non-verbal gestures of participants that could not be captured on the digital audio recorder. Transcribed interviews were reviewed against the original recording for accuracy. I confirmed that data contained within the transcripts was accurate and determined what notes would be deemed public or private data through member checking with the participants by reviewing the transcripts with them. The process for member checking involved meeting with the participant to follow up on parts of the interview that were not clear to me. When I did the member checking, I explained to participants that they could delete, add, or revise any of their comments. To be efficient, if a final interview was necessary, the member checking of the initial interview was done at the same time. As soon as possible after the interviews, fieldnotes were prepared that included a description of the interview setting, transcripts, and observer comments. I used my researcher's journal (Appendix G) to help with the writing of the fieldnotes. After writing the fieldnotes the researcher's journal (Appendix G) was shredded and discarded. In a general sense, fieldnotes are interpretations or representations that follow from the purposes and working theories of the researchers, as well as from general assumptions about the transparency of language (Moustakas, 1961). The questions from the initial interview that were not discussed and/or needed elaboration were used to focus the final interview. Thus, the previously mentioned comprises the data of my research and was weighed in the analysis.

Data Analysis

The data analysis involved reading the fieldnotes multiple times to examine the trends, gaps, or contradictions. I used participants' stories and an analytical frame (Appendix A) to 'tease out' the topics of and relationship between empathy, emotional

awareness, and multilingualism/multiculturalism. My analysis focused exclusively on the responses to the questions asked about the study during the open-ended interviews (Appendix B) which were about (i) how adult visitors handled unfamiliar cultural encounters and how they interpreted using their own cultural frames of reference and (ii) reflections of participants' experiences with sociological ambivalence to find out if using empathy was a helpful strategy or not for handling challenging cross-cultural interactions. Many themes emerging from my analysis of the data were set up in the form of a chart and further analyzed for common meanings and practices among EAL learners. In particular, the themes were used to address the common threads of experiences and perceptions among adult visitors to Canada. The results of my research were drawn exclusively from the responses to the questions asked during the open-ended interviews.

According to Adler et al. (2004), "cultural background influences the way we interpret others' emotions as well as the way we express our own" (p. 143). Even EAL learners with a shared linguistic and cultural background may differ in affective styles and in the values they attribute to certain styles; highly expressive people may judge less expressive people as cold and arrogant, and less expressive people may see the highly expressive ones as offensive and domineering (Pavlenko, 2005, p. 117). Therefore, the data collected in this study is specific to the ten participants of the study and not all adult EAL learners.

Reliability/Credibility

This study used one data-gathering procedure, open-ended interviews (Appendix B), which were (i) recorded, (ii) confirmed through member checking, and (iii) interpreted and analyzed by means of striving to 'tease out' themes that were consistent

with the data and results of the research. According to Brown and Rodgers (2006), “member checking entails confirming the data ...with the respondents themselves...verifying the conclusions as they emerge” (p. 245). The criteria I used for ensuring the trustworthiness of the study were based on Bogdan and Biklen’s (2007) four step model for using the qualitative approach to improve effectiveness:

Step 1: Pick a problem on which to focus such as challenging cross-cultural interactions that adult visitors to Canada experience.

Step 2: Attempt to emphasize interactions that happen around this issue. Record what the participant does and says. Record detailed notes, observations and dialogue on the issue. My research design addressed this step by encouraging participants to observe their own interaction problems in Canadian society and discuss these types of encounters during the open-ended interview(s)

(Appendix B). I recorded the interview dialogue and observations using a digital audio recorder and a researcher’s journal (Appendix G). I transcribed the interview(s) which constituted the data and I used member checking with the participants to check for accuracy of meaning. Additionally, I wrote my fieldnotes with observer comments.

Step 3: Look through the data for patterns that emerge. My research design addressed this step by analyzing the data with multiple readings, using an analytical frame (Appendix A), and asking questions about what stands out.

Step 4: Use the data and my knowledge to make decisions, plans or improve the situation. My research design addressed this step by writing a final report about the results of the study (p. 245).

The credibility of my heuristic inquiry involved asking whether or not the creative synthesis comprehensively and accurately represented the findings of the study. Was it honest? While I would not claim that the data that I collected contained ‘the truth’ or the only way of recording the empirical world, I would claim that my renderings can be evaluated in terms of accuracy (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007), and I did so through member checking with the participants. Additionally, my renderings provided enough information to judge the appropriateness of applying the findings to other settings.

This type of research does not lead to generalization but rather transferability since handling experiences of sociological ambivalence may not be that different from others who engage in unfamiliar cultural encounters. Specific strategies used to achieve transferability included thick descriptions and purposive sampling. Thick descriptions are richly described data that provide the researcher with enough information to identify the themes, labels, categories, or constructs of a study. Purposive sampling is a non-representative subset of some larger population, and is constructed to serve a very specific need or purpose (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007; Bryne, 2001). Thus, my results are transferable because I have provided thick descriptions and purposive sampling. The release of study results is intended to give participants an understanding of how their stories provided useful information.

Reliability is critical in this research in that, if the instruments were not reliable, the study could not produce useful information. As such, I strove to have my writing be consistent with the data I collected by referring only to information provided from the open-ended interviews (Appendix B). Additionally, my methodology involved i) randomly recruiting the participants in my study by poster (Appendix D) (ii), articulation

of my qualifications and explanation of the study to the participants (Appendix C), and (iii) interviewing participants for a period of time and more than once if it was necessary (Appendix B). I digitally audio recorded the interviews which provided referential adequacy of the findings. I employed multiple readings while analyzing the interview transcripts for additional engagement. I employed 'member checking' to confirm the accuracy of participants' words and multiple readings during document analysis. My writing was consistent with the data I collected because I referred only to information provided from the open-ended interviews. The findings of my study can extend to other contexts which further enhance the reliability and credibility of my study (Graziano & Raulin, 2007).

My heuristic inquiry has provided interpretations that are reasonable because (i) as the researcher I have provided the reader with the opportunity to understand my interpretations of the data and how I arrived at those interpretations, (ii) after the data collection and analysis of my fieldnotes I received feedback from my advisor, and (iii) I have presented my data in a coherent and convincing manner. My work is aligned with Osborne (1990) who suggests that "the best the researcher can do is to argue a particular interpretation as persuasively as possible, supported by references to the data, and leave the final judgment to the reader" (Osborne, 1990, p. 87). This study was an examination in which I used open-ended interviews as the research instruments and should be of interest to other 'helpers' who facilitate adult visitors to Canada.

My research findings may have been affected by participants' limited proficiency in the language. Most participants had difficulty expressing themselves and at times during the interview(s) did not know the accurate translatable word, sentence, phrase or

slang in Canadian English. The latter is a limitation of this study's method. In fact, in research on language and emotions, it is not unusual to see disagreements in cases where more than one researcher has worked on a specific language (Pavlenko, 2005, p. 12). Thus, reliability of cross-linguistic research may also be affected by the idiosyncratic competencies of multilingual informants and interpreters. As Pavlenko (2005) notes:

Challenges...may also arise in the process of translation...Reporting conventions in emotion research are beset with unacknowledged translation problems, among them the tendency to translate local emotion terms with single-word English glosses, as well...assurance from translators or collaborators about conceptual equivalence of the terms should not be considered sufficient (p. 13).

Researcher Bias

I advocate for the use of empathy with EAL learners in the field of cross-cultural education, more specifically, as a strategy for handling sociological ambivalence. I definitely have my own ideas and biases concerning the education of empathy with EAL learners due to my own (i) gender: since I am a female, my experience using empathy to handle sociological ambivalence may be different than a male's experience, (ii) nationality: I believe as a Canadian, I may handle cross-cultural interaction problems differently than people from other nationalities because being Canadian has influenced the way I interact and interpret others' emotions. Canadian English offers distinct emotion lexicons and affective repertoires which influence the way I express my own emotions, and (iii) fluency: my judgment of whether or not an adult visitor was 'fluent' was subjective and therefore, may have had an impact on the study. Although I have my

own ideas and biases, I tried to always be careful to prioritize the voices of the participants.

Heuristic inquiry has been affected by me, the researcher. I enhanced this study because of my own experiences with and position on handling sociological ambivalence when I live in other countries; I used my personal stories to relate to participants during their first meeting with me to get information about the study, the interviews, and as observer's comments while writing the fieldnotes. I think my personal experience interacting in other diverse cultures, is not only where the idea of the study originated, but it also accounts for how I have influenced the study.

Ethical Issues

Some ethical considerations regarding the participants of the study are delineated in the article entitled, "Guidelines for Researchers and Research Ethics Boards at the University of Manitoba" (Office of Research Services, 2006). In accordance with the latter established procedures, free and informed consent was voluntarily given, without manipulation, undue influence or coercion. The participants knew from the outset that they could withdraw from this study at any time. Care was exercised by the researcher/committee members so as not to compromise either the free and informed consent or the privacy and confidentiality of the participants (e.g. pseudonyms were assigned to each of the participants). The boundaries of the procedures were made clear in the consent forms (Appendix F) given to the participants. Member checking was done to confirm meaning and accuracy of the data.

I first sought permission from the Education/Nursing Research Ethics Board (ENREB) to conduct my study. As previously mentioned, the people who agreed to be a

part of this study participated in the process in a location that was convenient (e.g. study rooms at the University of Manitoba or in a location of their choice). Although the identities of the participants were known to me as the researcher, their names or any other identifying information were not used in any reporting of the results and were also kept out of any documents for distribution. None of my participants shared an abuse-related matter during the interviews, however, if this had occurred appropriate protocols to report the information to authorities would have been followed. All participants in this study were given pseudonyms for the purposes of anonymity and confidentiality. The pseudonyms “EAL learner A-J” were used. Data was (i) recorded through open-ended interviews, (ii) confirmed through member checking, and (iii) interpreted and analyzed by means of striving to ‘tease out’ themes that were consistent with the data and results of the research. All information was kept strictly confidential. All notes were filed into folder A-J accordingly and were kept confidential, in a locked filing cabinet. After the data was transferred to the password protected computer, the written data was shredded and discarded. The digital files were encrypted to ensure that confidentiality was maintained. The digital audio files on my personal digital audio recorder were deleted after transfer to the Digital Voice Editor software program on the computer for transcription. Directly after the completion of the study, all notes and digital files were destroyed. Please note: my laptop with all encrypted files and the locked filing cabinet were located in my house and only I had access to both.

Implications for Practice

The aim of this study was to explore participants' interaction problems and to gather information about solutions or alternatives related to their acculturation in the new language and culture. As Ilieva (2001) states:

Participant observation allows students to discern as many variables as possible in a situation and to learn how to observe and interpret situations...[students] look for personal themes they encounter in the target culture...that relate to their personal circumstances and affect their lives. They are enabled to address the culture as it is lived, experienced, and talked about by real people. (p. 13)

At the outset of the study, I raised the question: What are some of the experiences and perceptions of adult visitors involving sociological ambivalence? One of the most basic and important goals of cross-cultural education, is to lead learners to some understanding of the notion of culturally determined behaviour as such, so that they begin to see themselves, not just others, as culturally distinct (Knutson, 2006). As Scollon and Scollon (1995) suggest, the most successful communicator is the person who strives to learn as much as possible about other language systems "while recognizing that except within his or her own communication systems he or she is likely to always remain a novice" (p. 15). In the end, the goal of this thesis was to provide meaningful and useful information about how participants experience the uncertainty of unfamiliar cultural encounters. E. Knutson (2006) succinctly clarifies the stance of this thesis by suggesting that, if learners "emerge with a sense that culture is here as well as there, if they begin to recognize the differences that reside with self and home and can respect rather than fear the unfamiliar, they will have crossed an important educational threshold" (p. 605). This document serves to

provide recommendations for the use of empathy with EAL learners as a strategy for handling interaction problems.

Chapter 4: Data and Results

Levels of Analysis

To represent the data and to make the findings clear to readers, I summarized major themes and sub-themes that emerged from the data and then discussed the findings presented. To illustrate themes, I drew upon quotations from the transcripts for one or more of the participants as it related to the categorical chart. During the final phase of heuristic inquiry, the process of creative synthesis, the themes that emerged from the data were organized into two levels of analysis: (i) themes and subthemes and (ii) my analytical frame. Quotations from the fieldnotes that best illustrate these themes and subthemes were then selected and the result of this synthesis is found in the following section. I will discuss the themes and subthemes that emerged from the data and my analytical frame.

Themes and Subthemes

After analyzing the participants' fieldnotes, several themes and subthemes emerged from the data. A categorical chart was created with participants' quotes. The categories were created to reflect and encompass the repeated themes throughout the data. The categories consisted of recurring themes such as "Acceptance of Ambivalence", "Challenges with EAL", and "Cross-Cultural Learning". Within the categorical chart, subthemes emerged such as: "the Fake Canadian Smile", "Globalization", "Transition to a New Culture", "Different Perspectives of Respect", and "Emotional Awareness".

Categorical Chart

Themes	Subthemes
Acceptance of Ambivalence	
Challenges with EAL	Globalization The Fake Canadian Smile
Cross-Cultural Learning	Transition to a New Culture Different Perspectives of Respect Emotional Awareness

The first category, “Acceptance of Ambivalence”, was created to reflect the participants’ recognition that the meaning or intentions of both parties involved in a cross-cultural interaction are often uncertain or conflicting which is essentially, sociological ambivalence.

The second category, “Challenges with EAL”, was created to represent participants’ comments about the target language and culture. It consisted of participants’ perceived challenges with living in a Canadian cultural context, and in particular, strategies to improve their English ability.

Within the second category, Challenges with EAL, two subthemes emerged from the data, “Globalization” which reflects participants’ perceptions of international trade/communication and “The Fake Canadian Smile” which represents participants’ perceptions of the insincerity in how Canadians greet each other. Globalization or the trend toward a global economy is related to Challenges in EAL in that factors that have contributed to globalization include increasingly sophisticated communication

technologies/services and mass movement of people which increases the interconnectivity and interdependence of the world's markets and business. As more countries on the planet become more culturally diverse, English, specifically, the commerce language becomes an important skill for international trade and communication. The Fake Canadian Smile is related to Challenges in EAL because as participants learn about and adapt to Canadian society, challenges with understanding the new ideas, values, conventions, and behavior that characterize the target culture such as greeting customs occur.

The third category, "Cross-Cultural Learning", was created to represent participants' comments about their love and quest for always learning from (i) the target culture and (ii) the locals of the target culture.

Within the third category, Cross-Cultural Learning, three subthemes emerged from the data, (i) "Transition to a New Culture" which represents participants' comments about their transitional process to the new target culture, (ii) "Different Perspectives of Respect" which reflects participants' dislike for the lack of respect that older people received in Canadian society, and (iii) "Emotional Awareness" which reflects the similar emotions that participants experienced when interacting in Canadian society. Transition to a New Culture is related to Learning because learning from the target culture and its locals involves a gradual transitional process. Different Perspectives of Respect is related to Learning because as participants learn from the target culture and its locals they reflect upon their perceptions from their own cultural frames of reference. Emotional Awareness is related to Learning because as participants learn from the target culture and its locals

they experience challenging cross-cultural interactions which produce similar unexpected feelings.

Acceptance of Ambivalence

Juxtaposing two distinct cultural frames of reference within a cross-cultural interaction can be illustrated by EAL learner C's comment about the argument her neighbour had with her on the importance of recycling garbage here in Canada:

C: (laughs) The neighbour. The family, next to, my sister house. When I come Canada they say, to me...⁴ they are telling me garbage no in street, RE-CY-CYLE. I say, what is it? They argue me...in my country no. We have nothing. No. We not.

R: So, how do you think the neighbour felt when they saw you weren't recycling?

C: Not happy. Funny, for me. Canadian peoples not happy. In my country we have no. I don't have. (shrugs shoulders)

A comment by EAL learner H also illustrates interpreting a context in two or more distinct ways (i.e. Acceptance of Ambivalence). She retold a story about an experience that she and her husband had in a department store. They were shopping when her husband began staring at a Canadian woman. The Canadian woman got angry and accused her husband of sexual harassment. However, as the following comment depicts, EAL learner H accepts that her husband was unaware that his behavior was likely to make Canadian women uncomfortable:

H: (laughs) My husband don't know...he sorry to she, he laughing her and say... he say, "no the sex harass, no". (laughs; points to word on whiteboard) My husband is good man only look the one time, but...she angry.

⁴A brief pause; please refer to the Transcription Legend (Appendix I) for more details.

Another participant, EAL learner A, illustrates the acceptance of competing cultural expectations when interacting in Canadian society with the following comment:

A: What I try to do is...is that I try to take my time to really understand how they behave in their culture. Ya, because certainly, I do this. Because it's obvious that if you don't understand something you can't just rush into it and make it a big deal. As in make a big deal of it, rather, watching it to do...what I normally do is that I try a possibly best to try and understand why they are behaving this way. Because it's their culture.

Challenges with EAL

Some examples of participants' perceived challenges with living in Canadian culture and strategies they used to improve their English ability are, having a strong accent, translating instead of thinking in English, practicing English every day, meeting locals to practice English, interpreting English words inaccurately, and feeling alone in our society. One comment from EAL learner B illustrates the perceived challenge of having a strong accent:

B: Ya, I think they say "*my ACCENT.*"

R: Ya.

B: Ya. Because I say something and they say "*OH...YOU HAVE A VERY STRONG ACCENT.*"

R: (LAUGHS) Yes, I understand.

B: OH MY GOD, wanting my strong accent to be less.

Another participant, EAL learner C, illustrates the perceived challenge of translating instead of thinking in English with the following comment:

C: Yes. Important to me, thinking in English. VERY difficult.

R: I know because you have to translate from Spanish to English. I know, it's difficult.

C: Yes...VERY difficult for me. The English. But I have to think, in English...no Spanish. We try.

Another participant, EAL learner F, delineates the perceived challenge of not practicing English every day with the following statement:

F: Because I not practice every day. I think I listening every day and my...better for me if I listening. Not, speaking...better for me listening. I want every day listening English. I listen to news from Winnipeg, not, every word I understand.

Some strategies that participants employed to improve their English ability include participating in Winnipeg local events, listening to the radio/TV, attending free English classes at local community centers and churches, and trying to meet local people.

A comment from EAL learner D illustrates her strategy to improve her English ability:

D: (reads from her notes) Yes. You must very intelligent. Seeing as a good and learn that country language. I go to concert. I saw 'Mama Mia' and with my daughter-in law. Very, very nice.

R: 'Mama Mia', it's a musical, right?

D: Ya. Yes, from New York. Very nice.

R: And you saw it here in Winnipeg?

D: Yes. I see and hear English. Very, very nice. Winnipeg opera. I listen.

Winnipeg Symphony Orchestra and many Winnipeg concert. I go and listen English. Very, very nice.

Another participant, EAL learner E, illustrates her strategy to improve her English ability by stating:

E: I think I need to improve English. I am going to doctor. I am going to shopping. I am going to library. I go out...and I very like music listen...and I am going to concert hall. People around, I need for English. Practice.

Globalization

The following comment from EAL learner D illustrates the subtheme of Globalization as she explains how living in a multicultural society like Canada is similar to living in the Ukraine:

D: (reads from her notes) For me, this is not new. Ukrainian life live many people from different culture. I like all the peoples. I like all people. Always learn something new.

Another participant, EAL learner J, discusses how learning from other cultures and the English language is important for globalization:

J: Yes, (reads answer from her notes) because I want to know more about them first, and, at the same time...improve my English language. Yes, I, all people can communicate...with English, so, I improve my English and learn from them.

The Fake Canadian Smile

Although the smile can be a facial expression that shows kindness and communicates friendliness, it can communicate a variety of emotions across different cultures. The greeting customs I experienced in Korea and China were expressionless with no smile, the greeting customs I experienced in the Netherlands and France were intimate involving a big smile with kisses on both cheeks of the face, and the greeting

customs I experienced in other countries such as Jamaica and Thailand involved a warm and friendly smile while remaining distant. Thus, although the nature of smiles in Canadian culture may be pleasant, it is represented differently in other cultures. The latter may lead to communication problems.

The subtheme, the Fake Canadian Smile, can be illustrated by EAL learner B's comments on how the Canadian way of greeting is viewed from her cultural frame of reference:

B: So, I immediately learned, these people, Canadians, like even if...you are, you are not happy with them you still smile and laugh or...you know WE are into, mostly our expressions. Maybe if I am not happy with you, I express it that you should know that I am not happy with you.

R: Ya. Ok.

B: But if I'm smiling with you, how will you know that I am not happy with you?
It's not like that here.

Later, EAL learner B further clarifies her view with the following comment:

B: YES! SMILE, Canadian, SMILE. Yes, what is it? (laughs)

R: (laughs) I like it.

B: Yes, to us it is a fake smile. Because, why am I smiling? So, cheerful.

Another participant, EAL learner C, illustrates her view about the Fake Canadian Smile from her cultural frame of reference by explaining how although Canadians greet people with a smile, it is difficult to develop close relationships or friendships with them:

C: Ok. This is my point. Ok. You understand? In my country, we CAN, close (hugs herself) and with Canadian peoples they are very politeful and I have respect to him or her but you get NO close. NO CLOSE. (shakes head 'no')

R: So, in El Salvador it's different?

C: It different. Close yes. Yeah. Everybody. Canada, no. (shakes head 'no') In the bus, for example, the Canadian people are friendly but they keep their distance.

On the other hand, some participants such as EAL learner E described the Fake Canadian Smile from her cultural frame of reference as a cultural difference:

E: Ya, people. In Belarus people not friendly. NOT friendly, and...(rolls eyes to think; makes a 'grumpy' face)

R: Their faces are different? (giggles)

E: Ya. Not smile on the face. Not smiling. The people not smiling to me or I. And the people under the Soviet system is very hard. Very hard. Ya. And the people is...not smiling.

Another participant, EAL learner H, further illustrates the Fake Canadian Smile from her cultural frame of reference as a cultural difference by stating:

H: I feel very happy, I feel Canadian is so friendly and polite. Smile is big. Ya.

Beijing, in China, in CHINA, no greet in street, no greet.

Cross-Cultural Learning

Learning from (i) the target culture and (ii) the locals of the target culture can be illustrated by EAL learner J's comment about how learning from the surrounding

Winnipeg culture is important for learning about Canada:

J: (reads answer from her notes) in general Canada has a great civilization and progress and advance comparing to the Middle East. I very interesting to live and enjoy learning here. I enjoy learn of Canada.

Another participant, EAL learner F, further illustrates her view about learning from the multiculturalism that Canadian society offers visitors with the following comment:

F: Ya, I meet good person from culture China in here, in Winnipeg. I ask, “what is culture in your country”. And, say answer me, “*Good China*”. I meet person...to learn culture.

Another participant, EAL learner C explains why meeting locals are important for her stay in Winnipeg:

C: Because people or person can't live alone. No. (shakes head) We live in a *société*?

R: Society.

C: Society. I need to meet another people. For that I like this study. Yes, because I can meet a Canadian. And my conversation class, because I can meet another culture. And I need to improve my English because my daughter has friends and they speak Canada English. She study at University of Manitoba. And, for example, some friends hers come to my house and I want to speak with them.

Transition to a New Culture

Transition to a New Culture included comments about adjusting to a different climate, having difficulty translating from primary language to the local language, adopting local slang usage, and saying the following words/sentences in the local

language as a communication strategy: “Pardon? Can you repeat please? Can you speak slowly? I do not know. I am sorry I do not speak English.” A participant, EAL learner B, illustrates adjusting to climate change with the following comment:

B: It’s nice. Very cold (giggles). And could discover in Winnipeg extreme weathers. When it’s cold is is very too cold and when it’s hot it’s VERY hot. So...I thought that Winnipeg is nice and safe.

Another participant, EAL learner G, illustrates his communication strategy here in Winnipeg by explaining what he said to the workers who were fixing the floor and jacuzzi in his daughter’s house:

G: Yes, I can’t understand Canada workers in house...I ask to speak slowly and (massages chin with thumb, index finger, and middle finger) they...do.

Different Perspectives of Respect

The subtheme Different Perspectives of Respect is best illustrated by EAL learner I. He retold a story about witnessing two kids fighting on the playground of the school that his daughter was attending. After telling the two kids to stop fighting, EAL learner I described how they ignored him and continued fighting. The following comment illustrates his view about not being respected as an older person:

I: My wife and I we pick up daughter at...daughter school, after school. (reads answer from his notes) We see another, the other child fight. He is boy, he fighting. He is Canadian children. I say to the child, “why you fight, you must stop, you stop this”...but he (turns head) and continue. He did not listen me, no respect. I think the Canada child is no respect older. China different.

Another participant, EAL learner F, illustrates the subtheme Different Perspectives of Respect with her story about asking Canadian youths, who were sitting at the front of the bus she was on, to stand up and give up their seats to seniors who had come on the bus. The Canadian youths ignored her and remained sitting. The following comment illustrates EAL learner F's perspective about the interaction:

F: In Canada...the Winnipeg. The young no standing. Make seniors standing, not sitting. In Russia not happen.

R: How did you feel when you saw that the Canadian teenagers were not standing, for the seniors that came on the bus?

F: Not good. In Russia not happen. The young must stand for old people.

EAL learner F further delineates her dislike of the Canadian cultural difference, not respecting older people, with the following comment:

F: (scratches head; struggles to speak) I don't know. I don't like. It's not respect senior. (writes word 'respect' on whiteboard) The old. In Russia different.

Another participant, EAL learner A, aptly illustrates the subtheme Different Perspectives of Respect as she describes what occurred while attending school in Winnipeg:

A: Ya. (laughs) I have, another example was there at school...is this lady she Canadian lady that brought her grandchild picture. She want me to see her grandchild picture. So, I was, "oh, you have a grandchild?" and then she say, "*no, I have 3 grandchilds.*" And then I say, "oh, I never knew you were THAT old!" And she took an offense...like I am calling her...

R: Old?

A: Yes. Old woman. But in our history we don't count it. We don't count it as an offense.

R: Oh, that's interesting. So, in Nigeria it would be just a regular question?

A: Ya, in Nigeria we feel the more older you are the more respect you deserve...you get!

Emotional Awareness

Among the many emotions that participants experienced when interacting in Canadian society, feeling nervous, discomfort, surprise, unhappy, and loneliness were most prevalent. EAL learner A explained from her cultural frame of reference how she felt after customs officers in the Winnipeg International Airport grew angry with her when she mistakenly told them that she had drugs with her instead of using the term medication. She illustrates the latter with the following comment:

A: Nervous. Very nervous. I feel uncomfortable. I need improve my English more.

Another participant, EAL learner J, described from her cultural frame of reference how she felt after a Canadian man here in Winnipeg held her arm in order to help her cross a slippery road. She illustrates the latter by stating:

J: Yes, he is very nice Canada man, Canadian. He take my arm. He hold my arm like this (grasps her right arm with her left hand) and I surprise first. He help me stand up.

Loneliness can include feelings of anger toward self and others, estrangement, frustration, upset, and depression. The latter were prevalent emotions found throughout the data. Such feelings are illustrated by the following comment from EAL learner D as

she describes from her cultural frame of reference how she felt alone when a local doctor made fun of her instead of helping her:

D: (reads answer from her notebook) I feel upset. Not happy...why did he make a joke? I Ukrainian. It is joke, *borscht*, but pain in arm is very, very serious. He... (shakes head) what I say, my English is not good. I alone. It is me. I speaking English but, not good. Nobody to helps me with speak.

Another participant, EAL learner E, illustrates frustration with her comment on how she felt when she got on the wrong bus in Winnipeg and got lost in the city:

E: I speak NOT so good English...I worry where am I. But I am lost. Very lost. I all alone. I only.

Another participant, EAL learner B, delineates the estrangement she felt as a newly arrived visitor to Canada by comparing the closeness of her neighbours in Nigeria with not even knowing her neighbours here in Canada:

B: We know each other and relate like a family. Go there and...Maybe I'm cooking and I need an ingredient that I don't have...I can go to the next door. They have it. So, here it is just stay on your own. Kind of lonely.

My Analytical Frame

For the second level of my analysis, I used my analytical frame (Appendix A) to gain more insight into the value of using empathy as a strategy for dealing with sociological ambivalence. As previously mentioned in Chapter One, for this study empathy was defined as an understanding of another person's feelings/viewpoints. This involves recognition and interpretation of: (i) verbal messages including sighs or groans and (ii) nonverbal messages such as facial expressions and body gestures. I found that all

the participants used at least one of the components of empathy as defined in this study and it preceded an action that minimized the sociological ambivalence that was occurring. Additionally, it is unknown whether or not the participants were consciously aware of the latter connection.

Addressing this study's research questions, I found that EAL learners experience sociological ambivalence as a state of 'not understanding' or 'not knowing' between both parties and being unaware of the local cultural practices. EAL learner A depicted the sociological ambivalence which occurred from her challenging interaction as a state of 'not understanding' between her and the woman who got offended by being called 'old.' The following is EAL learner A's explanation of the ambivalence:

A: Ya, so, sometimes a visitor might say something and my said a word and the Canadian is interpreting it to be something else...it might be bad.

Another participant, EAL learner H, illustrates how she and her husband experienced sociological ambivalence as being unaware of the local cultural practices. EAL learner H describes what happened after a Canadian woman accused her husband of sexual harassment for staring at her with the following comment:

H: He say, "*you are very beautiful woman. VERY beautiful.*" (laughs)

R: (laughs) And the woman didn't like his compliment?

H: In China ok, China no problem, woman happy but Canada no...(stutters) the foreigner...the Canada woman is not like.

Although recognizing and interpreting verbal and non-verbal messages does not always lead to examples of empathy, they are the components of this study's definition of empathy that indicate the ability to understand another person's feelings/viewpoints.

Additionally, the results show that empathy helps to emphasize the ambivalence that occurs within a challenging cross-cultural interaction. Empathy led the participants to act in ways that minimized the sociological ambivalence that they were experiencing. Strategies such as repeating themselves and speaking more clearly, conceding and doing nothing but walking away, relying on an interpreter, and accepting/rejecting the local cultural practices were used to minimize sociological ambivalence. Upon further analysis of the data without using my analytical frame (Appendix A) I found that participants transformed from a state of awareness to using either an assessment or a problem solving strategy.

One previously mentioned example of a participant's communication problem was illustrated by EAL learner A's story about her cross-cultural interaction in the Winnipeg International Airport:

A: Ya. (Fidgets in chair) It was happening in the airport. I was traveling and they say, "*what do you have?*" And I say, "I don't really have much but I have my drugs in my bag"

R: (LAUGHS) You actually said that, at the airport? (laughs) Winnipeg airport? And what did you see, like what happened?

A: Ya. Winnipeg...And their expression was, "*WHAT?*" You know? Meanwhile my drugs I mean my medicine, my medication. (laughs)

When I inquired about what EAL learner A thought that the interlocutors were feeling at the time of the incident, she responded:

A: I...They think I am drug person. With drug. The bad drugs. I explained them...I say to them, medication is the drugs back home. In my home

country.

Later, EAL learner A interprets the interlocutors' verbal messages and repeats herself in a clearer way, thereby decreasing the ambivalence:

A: So, we call medication drugs back home. So, I say to them. They say, "*Oh, your MED-DI-CA-TION.*" So, I...what? Is it not drug? I think all backwards. It is a difference. They angry.

EAL Learner A's Transformation

Upon further analysis of EAL learner A's story, I found that she transformed from a state of awareness to using a problem solving strategy. She became aware that the customs officers in the Winnipeg International Airport did not understand the meaning of her English words. Then, she repeated herself in a clearer way to explain her choice of words. The latter strategy minimized the ambivalence as the following comment from EAL learner A about the customs officers illustrates:

A: Yes, they angry. After I explain...there was no problem. Language problem. I show my medication to them and they see. I remain polite.

Another example of a participant's communication problem was illustrated by EAL learner G's story about his challenging cross-cultural interaction with a sales clerk at a shopping mall. He went to the shopping mall to see an antique vehicles exhibition. However, when the show did not begin on time he asked the sales clerk what time the show was going to begin? The sales clerk was unable to understand him, as EAL learner G describes:

G: She (laughs) don't speak anything, (laughs) she look and her eyes on me but (laughs) don't speak anything. (shrugs shoulders)

When I inquired about what EAL learner G thought that the sales clerk was feeling at the time of the incident, he responded:

G: (laughs) Maybe same me, she is confused but she don't understand me and maybe I am crazy to her, like crazy, you know?

In my view, EAL learner G recognized the sales clerk's nonverbal facial expressions and interpreted them as her misunderstanding or confusion of his attempt to speak English.

Then, he acted in a way to minimize the sociological ambivalence by conceding and doing nothing but walking away:

G: (laughs) I go off and she was not speak to me. I can't speak English very good. I go off and shop in Grant Park, you know?

EAL Learner G's Transformation

Upon further analysis of EAL learner G's story, I found that he was transformed from becoming aware, to assessing the strategy, and then to acting on it. He became aware that the sales clerk was unable to understand him. Then, he assessed that he needed to improve his English in order to communicate and decided to walk away from the situation. The latter strategy minimized the ambivalence as the following comment from EAL learner G illustrates:

G: I know that I say wrong. Because I study Britain English. I hope I study Canada English better, more and I speak many.

Another previously mentioned example of a participant's communication problem was illustrated by EAL learner D. She was experiencing pain in her arm and went to a Winnipeg Clinic to see a doctor. After recognizing and interpreting that the local doctor who was looking after her could not understand her English and made a joke of her

Ukrainian background, she made the decision to rely on an interpreter while living in Winnipeg:

D: The next time I go to doctor, it is my son with me. My son help me, no problem. No problem. (reads answer from her notebook) My son is a very helpful son and he is always helping me. He speak to doctor and...the pain in my arm. ▲
The doctor, no problem. He understand my son speaking.

When I inquired about what EAL learner D thought that the local doctor was feeling at the time of the incident, she responded:

D: The doctor not...did not understand me, what I say? Ya, funny. I know...(giggles). I Ukrainian. ▲ (laughs) You know, very serious my pain in the arm. (laughs) He say “*BORSCHT! BORSCHT!*” I must speak to the nurse.

EAL learner D understood the local doctor’s feelings/viewpoints and then, decided to rely on an interpreter to minimize any future experiences with sociological ambivalence when visiting the doctor.

EAL Learner D’s Transformation

Upon further analysis of EAL learner D’s story, I found that she transformed herself from a state of awareness to using a problem solving strategy. She became aware that the local doctor did not understand her English and was making fun of her Ukrainian background. Then, she decided to bring her son as an interpreter for future visits to the doctor’s office. The latter strategy minimized the ambivalence as she explained that the doctor had no problem understanding her son.

Another previously mentioned example of a participant using empathy to deal with sociological ambivalence was retold by EAL learner J. She discussed a story about

asking a woman for help to cross a slippery road here in Winnipeg. The woman did not understand her words and did not help her. EAL learner J decided to cross the slippery road by herself and fell down. Suddenly, a Canadian man ran over to help her. He touched her arm in order to help her stand up and then held her arm to help her walk across the slippery road. EAL learner J compares this cultural difference with Egypt stating:

J: Ok, you see...in my country no...it °never° happen, °never°. It is not permitted for the man to °touch° the woman. (taps researcher's arm) NO touch, no. (shakes her index finger 'no') In my country, in public the man must never touch the woman body. Especially when they go to play in the outside, NO touch. If happen in my country I must stay on the road and no man help me, he pass, he pass...and a woman like me will come to help because it is not permitted for man to touch woman, no touch...touch the woman body, °forbidden°.

When I inquired about what EAL learner J thought the Canadian man who held her arm was feeling at the time of the incident she responded:

J: He is good man for helping me. I think he see me fall down on the road and he want to help me. He is nice man, nice Canada people. I think...The Canada man is want to help the woman. I don't know? I see he is happy to help me, happy for him to helping me.

In my view, EAL learner J was able to recognize and interpret that the Canadian man's behaviour was indicative of a cultural difference and she liked it. Therefore, she accepted the local cultural practice that men are allowed to touch women in public thereby minimizing such experiences of ambivalence in the future.

EAL Learner J's Transformation

Upon further analysis of EAL learner J's story, I found that she transformed from a state of awareness to using an assessment strategy. She became aware that the Canadian man was touching her body in public as his behavior surprised her. Then, she assessed the situation as a cultural difference where men in Canada were allowed to touch women in public. The latter strategy minimized the ambivalence as she explained that she understood that the Canadian man was happy to help her cross the slippery road by holding her arm.

Since the results of my research were drawn exclusively from the responses to the questions asked during the interviews, I believe, the above creative synthesis presented the findings of the study comprehensively and accurately. Moreover, it is honest. From conversations with the participants, I found that they had similar experiences and perceptions, specifically, (i) Acceptance of Ambivalence, (ii) Challenges with EAL, and (3) Learning. The anecdotal comments and others recorded in my fieldnotes suggest that adult EAL visitors to Canada find it challenging to straddle the world of a new culture and language with their own cultural frames of reference. In many ways, their experiences mirror my own experiences dealing with the ambivalence that stemmed from the conflicting norms and expectations that I experienced as a Canadian living abroad. Therefore, I would make the case that sociological ambivalence can be experienced by both Canadians living overseas and adult visitors to Canada.

Chapter 5: Discussion and Conclusions

Upon reflection, the results of my study reveal that living in a multilingual/multicultural society such as Canada and dealing with sociological ambivalence experiences are intertwined. Indeed, the findings show a linkage between using empathy or making a transformation and minimizing the sociological ambivalence that inherently occurs within challenging cross-cultural interactions. If distinct cultures are synonymous with social structures, the findings additionally reveal that when adult visitors to Canada engage in challenging cross-cultural interactions they are navigating their way through competing cultural expectations. This chapter will first revisit sociological ambivalence, second, discuss the key findings, and third, discuss my conclusion and provide recommendations.

Sociological Ambivalence Revisited

Juxtaposing two distinct cultural frames of reference reveals conflicting normative expectations and huge differences in feelings/viewpoints, consequently, sociological ambivalence occurs. The findings of the study reinforce a connection between empathy and minimizing sociological ambivalence. When experiencing a challenging cross-cultural interaction, the ability to understand another person's feelings/viewpoints can lead to actions that decrease the inherent sociological ambivalence. In other words, I have suggested that my study has described participants' experiences of dealing with sociological ambivalence which occurs during challenging cross-cultural interactions. On that note, it is important to acknowledge that participants in the study did not view their experiences with sociological ambivalence as problematic but rather, an expectation or a bi-product of living in a new environment.

The Key Findings

I think one of the key findings from this study is that within a challenging cross-cultural interaction, the experience of ‘not understanding’ is often accompanied by the realization that one must rely on oneself to lessen the ambivalence. Furthermore, Moustakas (1961) points out that “when an individual avoids facing directly a situation which contains the seeds of loneliness, he alienates himself from his own capacity for being lonely and from the possibility for fundamental social ties and empathy” (p. 103). Therefore, since generally globalization dictates that more adult visitors to Canada will experience sociological ambivalence, I hope my study paves the way for creating more psycho/social studies (i.e. involving the emotional, cognitive, and psychological areas of the brain) that explore how adult EAL learners deal with their experiences with sociological ambivalence.

Based on much analysis and reflection on my fieldnotes, the study findings addressed the research questions as outlined in Chapter Four. I found that EAL learners experience sociological ambivalence as a state of ‘not understanding’ or ‘not knowing’ between both parties and being unaware of the local cultural practices. They dealt with it by employing strategies such as repeating themselves and speaking more clearly, conceding and doing nothing but walking away, relying on an interpreter, and accepting/rejecting the local cultural practices. I found that all the participants used at least one of the components of empathy as defined in this study which preceded actions employed to minimize the sociological ambivalence that was occurring. However, it is unknown whether or not the participants were consciously aware of the latter connection.

My interpretation of the data suggests that empathy helped the participants by leading to acts that minimized the sociological ambivalence that they were experiencing.

Research is humanistic when it addresses questions raised by considering people as agents who can act in a purposeful and meaningful way. Using a heuristic inquiry model reflects my belief that research is humanistic and should serve as the means for reshaping and enriching our propositions. Human beings exist within an experience of meaning and retain the possibility of acting with self-determined purpose (Polkinghorne, 1982). An interesting finding of the study was that although in my view, participants were relatively 'fluent' in EAL, the participants perceived their English ability as needing improvement. I believe the latter is aligned with the theme "Cross-Cultural Learning." Participants in the study expressed a love for learning the local language and target culture. Therefore, the study explored the participants' experiences and perceptions with interaction challenges in Canadian society.

However, the results of the study did not show that the participants were consciously aware of using empathy within their challenging cross-cultural interactions. Likewise, the results of the study did not shed light on whether or not participants had previously used empathy but were not consciously aware of their use of it. Therefore, their use of empathy to deal with sociological ambivalence was unintentional. The latter aligns with Taylor's (1994) study on the learning process of intercultural competency as he suggests that some participants living in a second culture show little conscious connection between their cultural disequilibrium (sociological ambivalence), possible learning strategies, and their change towards competency. Similar to the participants of Taylor's (1994) study, the participants in my study went through transformations in

which there was a strong need to take immediate action in response to their intercultural challenges and thus, adapted and adjusted to the new environment quickly.

Although optional, the participants used the handout of the interview questions (Appendix B). In my view, the handout to prepare for the interview and help with the understanding of the participants' own challenging cross-cultural interactions was a helpful aspect of the study. The participants perceived benefits of participating in the study were (i) meeting and interacting with a local Canadian, (ii) listening, reading, and writing in English practice, and (iii) conversational practice with a local Canadian. Since the questioning process was in itself a cross-cultural challenge for the participants, I believe my use of a white board to write out and explain the words that they did not understand was an equally helpful aspect of the study.

Finally, a discussion of any contradictions, trends, and gaps found from the data analysis is needed. I found one contradiction with the results of the study which was that although all the participants expressed a need to improve their English ability in order to communicate and interact better in Canada, from their cultural frames of reference they were not having problems in Canadian society. The latter is aligned with the participants' view of experiences with sociological ambivalence as an expectation or a bi-product of living in a new environment rather than a problem. My assumption is that the participants already know that Canada is not their home country and therefore, interaction challenges are inevitably how one adapts to the new environment. Some trends that were found from the data were the participants desired (i) conversation practice with a local speaker on a frequent basis and (ii) to meet more locals to learn about the culture.

Findings from the study show that empathy is helpful with EAL learners. When an adult EAL visitor to Canada experiences interaction problems, understanding the feelings/viewpoints of the others involved may lead to actions that minimize the sociological ambivalence that occurs. Integrating EAL learner perspectives reveals a link between being able to understand another person's feelings/viewpoints and minimizing the sociological ambivalence that adult visitors experience while living in a multicultural society like Canada. The findings of my study are connected to emotions in that during their challenging cross-cultural interactions, all the participants were able to understand the other's feelings/viewpoints which enabled them to act in ways that helped to deal with the conflicting normative expectations. This perspective is consistent with the argument made by Taylor (2001) who points out that, "emotions should be recognized as inherently cognitive, because research shows that emotions anticipate future needs...and even prepare for thinking certain types of thoughts" (p. 222). As mentioned earlier, the findings of my study reveal a need for more studies involving the emotional, cognitive, and psychological areas of the brain (psycho/social) to fill the gap in research regarding the effectiveness of developing empathy in adult EAL learners as a strategy for dealing with sociological ambivalence. Therefore, my study begins to address the need for considering an emotional element to learning. The study also reveals the challenge of implementing empathy with EAL programs since one can never really know how all the different facets of learning (cognitive, emotional, social) interact. Based upon participants' self-reports, the study findings add to the understanding that empathy is a helpful strategy for dealing with sociological ambivalence. The analytical frame used in

the study enabled further analysis of the data to gain insight about whether or not empathy was occurring and if so, was it helpful?

Conclusion and Recommendations

I recommend that EAL programs adopt an emotional learning element. This view is consistent with the arguments made by Kumaravadivelu (2006) and Taylor (2001) who state that it is very difficult for people to accurately identify emotions, cognitive processes, and their connection to each other, because these primarily occur on a tacit level. Therefore, due to the interdependent relationship that exists between reason and emotions and how decision-making can occur outside one's conscious awareness, there is a need for research into the relationship between empathy, emotional awareness, and multilingualism/multiculturalism.

Emotions reside predominantly in the subcortical structures of the brain, but have an interdependent relationship with the neocortex in managing the cognitive process of the brain. As Taylor (2001) succinctly states:

The view of a unified system of emotions separate from cognition and less evolved dominates to this day despite little evidence for (1) the evolutionary concept on which the limbic system was built; (2) that it operates as a singular system; and (3) that the hippocampus (located in the limbic area of the brain) is more involved in emotional functions than other cognitive processes. (Taylor, 2001, p. 222)

My participants were multilinguals who immersed themselves and attempted to participate in our multicultural society. While they were doing the latter they experienced challenging cross-cultural interactions. Consequently, they tried to understand the other

person's feelings/viewpoints to deal with the inherent sociological ambivalence and that began with emotional awareness. An emotional learning element enhances EAL programs because emotional awareness is embedded within the attempt to recognize and interpret another person's feelings/viewpoints and although the findings of this study revealed another explanation, transformations for how participants dealt with their sociological ambivalence experiences, the results also showed that empathy was a helpful strategy for adult EAL visitors to Canada who experienced interaction problems. Therefore, I believe that my study is just the beginning of learning more about the alternative solutions that EAL learners use to deal with sociological ambivalence experiences.

As previously mentioned in Chapter Three, the limitations of the study involved the decision of whether the participants were 'fluent' or not, which was intuitive. Thus, subjectivity influenced the study. Although I had my own ideas and biases, I tried to always be careful to prioritize the voices of the participants while analyzing the data. Additionally, other limitations of the study involved participants not being able to find the accurate English words to express themselves during the interviews and participants feeling nervous about being interviewed which could have influenced their responses to the interview questions. The results of the study are limited to the study's ten selected participants and not representative of all adult EAL visitors to Canada who experience interaction problems. The study results are also limited to participants' self-reporting of experiences and not the researchers' direct observations of those experiences.

In conclusion, I have used a heuristic inquiry model to investigate, richly describe, and understand the experiences and perceptions of adult EAL visitors who have

interaction problems in Canada. Although, the results of my findings were aligned with my prediction that empathy is helpful within challenging cross-cultural interactions further investigation is needed. I recommend that an emotional learning element to EAL programs would be beneficial and one way of using empathy with EAL learners since the attempt to understand another's feelings/viewpoints begins with emotional awareness. By exploring how the study's EAL learners made sense of their cross-cultural experiences I hopefully provided a starting point for filling the gap in research involving using empathy with EAL learners as a strategy for dealing with sociological ambivalence. However, as the participants did not consciously use empathy as a strategy, future research would involve actionable plans that support my attainable goal of using empathy with EAL learners and this study serves to support such an educational endeavour.

The results of my study could extend to other contexts such as psycho/social development and communication strategies. Aligned with Kumaravadivelu (2006) and Taylor (2001) I hope that the results of my study contribute to the cross-cultural education profession by examining the interdependent connection between empathy, emotional awareness, and multilingualism/multiculturalism. Although the results of this study reveals the value of using empathy with EAL learners, further exploration about the effectiveness of using empathy to deal with sociological ambivalence is needed. Hopefully, the results will narrate a possible transition to other attainable studies involving the emotional, cognitive, and psychological areas of the brain.

The pursuit of knowledge or lifelong learning must be tempered with the realities of globalization. Perhaps one way that schools can become more effective institutions is incorporating lifelong global education strategies for in and out of the classroom. This is

consistent with Ricento (2005) who proposes a paradigm shift from doing TESOL to doing Teaching English for Globalized Communication (TEGCOM) where instruction emphasizes using EAL for cross-cultural communication in specific contexts such as conducting business overseas and in Canada (Ricento, 2005, p. 905).

Whether a Canadian living in a foreign country or a visitor to Canada, complications pervade as explorers learn to look at old situations in new ways. As an explorer myself, I found that while attempting to live in a new culture I had to develop many new habits such as local greetings and other daily routines and customs. I often struggled with the elements (i.e. weather, water pollution, public insect spraying, overpopulation, and sanitation on a daily basis) and learned new ways to lessen the impact the elements had on my life. In essence, when explorers attempt to live on an unfamiliar land, they set themselves squarely between their cultural frames of reference and the new culture's frame of reference. Reconciling the conflicting normative expectations is not an easy task but it is certainly within reach. In spite of the challenges that I have experienced with sociological ambivalence, I still contend that empathy is a useful strategy for dealing with sociological ambivalence and the results of my study compliment my contention. I have used a heuristic inquiry model to guide my research which does not propose that human action is completely independent of the environment. My results suggest that individuals can choose to act in ways not determined by prior events. By using a heuristic inquiry model to "open up possibilities for creating formative relations between being and acting...between who we are and how we act, between thoughtfulness and tact" (van Manen, 2007, p. 11), my research has expanded the phenomenological lens.

My research is thus derived from the everyday experiences that people have by themselves or with others, and this is what I sought to test through my research. Therefore, my research is consistent with that of Polkinghorne (1982) who believes that researchers should be concerned with how to use research to examine a humanistic understanding about human existence and behavior. For many reasons, including neurobiological (Taylor, 2001), no method or activity can be said to be helpful for all situations and all EAL learners. In this way, using empathy with EAL learners to deal with experiences with sociological ambivalence may function as an important catalyst for educational reform at a time in history where globalization is influencing the learning process in very fundamental ways.

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Appendix A: Cultural Empathy Process (CEP)

The CEP is a way to consider the emotions of others. It involved cognitively thinking about or reflecting upon the following questions about experiencing an interaction problem.

Describe an interaction where you experienced a problem.

- a. What did you see?
- b. What was happening?
- c. Why did you perceive the cross-cultural interaction as a problem?
- d. How did you feel?
- e. How did the other feel?
- f. What was the other's viewpoint?
- g. Was this a problem for them? Please explain.
- h. Why did they react in this way?
- i. What did you do?

Analytical Frame

Definition for empathy used in this study:

Empathy is an understanding of another person's feelings/viewpoints. This involves recognition and interpretation of (i) verbal communicative messages including sighs or groans and (ii) nonverbal communicative messages such as facial movements and other bodily gestures.

Concept of empathy in the study:

A person has empathy for another if he or she uses one or all of the components of empathy as defined in this study, to share another person's emotional state while remaining differentiated from and possibly in disagreement with that same person. In other words, empathy has ensued if the inner experience of sharing in and comprehension of the mental state of another person has occurred and if one can represent this psychological state without being emotionally involved.

How empathy differs from sympathy:

Although both words have to do with feelings, empathy differs from sympathy in that there is no focus on 'feeling sorry for' the other interlocutor without really having any understanding of that person's feelings. Instead, empathy focuses on experiencing and sharing the feelings of the other interlocutor with full understanding of their feelings irrespective of 'feeling sorry for' that person.

My research questions are:

- (i) How do EAL learners experience sociological ambivalence? (ii) How do they deal with it? (iii) How if at all, is empathy used in dealing with sociological ambivalence?

<p>1. What happened and what did the participant see? Present the participant's summary/interpretations of a target culture situation they have experienced.</p>
<p>2. Why did the participant perceive the cross-cultural interaction as a challenge? 3. What are some of the examples of how the EAL learners' experience sociological ambivalence? Explore the participant's contradictions, personal confrontations, and conflicts that arose from the cross-cultural differences and ambivalence.</p>
<p>4. What did the participant do to attempt to understand the interlocutor's feelings/viewpoints? (Was empathy used?) Refer to participant's feelings, thoughts, and personal experiences with sociological ambivalence. Did the participant use one or all of the components of this study's definition for empathy? Did the participant remain differentiated or emotionally uninvolved from the interlocutor(s)?</p>
<p>5. After attempting to understand the person's feelings/viewpoints, what did the participant do to deal with the sociological ambivalence? 6. Was empathy (understanding the person's feelings/viewpoints) useful for decreasing the ambivalence? What were the cultural differences observed? Verbal and nonverbal behaviors? Explore the approaches the participant used to manage the ambivalence of the cross-cultural interaction.</p>
<p>7. Did the participant develop acceptance for the uncertainty within cross-cultural interactions?</p>

Appendix B: Initial Open-Ended Interview Questions

The initial interview required approximately 60 minutes with each of the 10 participants and was digitally audio recorded. Since the questioning process was in itself a cross-cultural challenge for the participants, I used a white board to write out and explain any words that they did not understand.

Pseudonym: _____ Date _____ Time _____ Location _____

Situating the EAL learner in Canada

1. What were you doing before coming to Canada?
2. What languages do you speak and how long have you been studying English?
3. How would you describe Winnipeg? What is the purpose of your stay here?
4. What are your goals for the next 12 months?

Positionality of the EAL learner

5. Is speaking with people from other cultures important to you and if so, why?
6. As a visitor to Canada, how would you describe your way(s) of (i) learning the new habits/customs and (ii) improving your ability to speak English?
7. As you live in Canada, how would you describe your interactions in Canadian society? Please explain. How do other people, such as Canadians, react to you?

Reflections of challenging cross-cultural encounters in and out of classrooms

8. Describe an interaction where you experienced a problem.
 - a. What did you see?
 - b. What was happening?
 - c. Why did you perceive the cross-cultural interaction as a problem?
 - d. How did you feel?
 - e. How did the other feel?
 - f. What was the other's viewpoint?
 - g. Was this a problem for them? Please explain.
 - h. Why did they react in this way?
 - i. What did you do?
9. How do you plan to deal with similar situations as you continue to explore Canadian culture?

Debriefing

10. Has this study changed your way(s) of (i) learning the new habits/customs of Canadian culture and (ii) improving your English speaking ability? Please explain.
11. Are there any other comments that you would like to make? About the study? About whether or not the study would be helpful for other visitors to Canada?

(Probes and prompts were used as necessary to facilitate the interview.)

An appointment with the participants for member checking was made after the initial interview, at which time the participants (i) followed up on areas of the interview whereby I was not clear on what the participant meant; when I did the member checking, I explained to participants that they could delete, add, or revise any of their comments and (ii) engaged in a final interview if it was necessary.

Final Open-Ended Interview Questions

If necessary, the final interview required approximately 60 minutes with each of the 10 participants and was digitally audio recorded.

Pseudonym: _____ Date _____ Time _____ Location _____

Reviewing

The researcher went over questions from the initial interview that were not discussed and/or needed elaboration, hence, the final interview was adjusted for each participant. The questions that the participant wished to not respond to during the initial interview were marked with a red star to ensure that I did not ask these questions for the final interview.

(Probes and prompts were used as necessary to facilitate the interview.)

An appointment with the participants for member checking was made after the final interview, at which time the participants followed up on areas of the interview whereby I was not clear on what the participant meant. When I did the member checking, I explained to participants that they could delete, add, or revise any of their comments. If indicated on the consent form for the participants, a written summary of the results of this study was sent to the participants via e-mail.

Appendix C: Information Letter for Participants

Date:

Dear (EAL Learner's Name):

I am a Master of Education student at the University of Manitoba. I am interested in why adult visitors have interaction problems in Canada. I would like to get your feedback about how you deal with interaction problems here in Canada.

I am doing this study for my Master's of Education program. If you are interested in sharing your stories about interaction problems in Canada, please contact me at ----- . If you agree to be in this study, I will arrange to meet with you at a time and place of your choice to conduct one to two interviews. The interviews will gather information about how you deal with interaction problems. Each interview will be digitally audio recorded. (i) You do not have to answer any questions that you do not want to, (ii) you are free to stop the interviews at any time, and (iii) you can withdraw from the study at any time. After each interview, I will write what was said during the interview and we will meet again for another 60 minutes to confirm your answers to the questions. You will be able to delete, add, or change any of your comments. Interviews will be done in English. Everything you tell me will be kept privately.

It is important for you to know that your participation in the study and interviews is voluntary. Your feedback will be very helpful. Your stories will be used to understand more about adult visitors' interaction problems in Canadian society. Please contact me if you have any questions or my advisor Charlotte Enns at (204) 474-9017 or ennscj@cc.umanitoba.ca.

Thank you,
Charmagne Karim
Master of Education student
University of Manitoba

Appendix D: Invitational Poster

I am a M.Ed. student at the University of Manitoba and I have over 15 years experience helping International people with Canadian English and acculturation.

My study is about how adult visitors to Canada deal with interaction problems.

You are invited to participate in my study if you

- are an adult (18 years and older)
- are a visitor to Canada (less than 12 months) who speaks English as an Additional Language
- have interaction problems in Canadian society

The study involves:

- 1-2 open-ended interviews (60mins. each)

If you would like to participate in my research contact

Appendix E: Story

I provided an example about a challenging cross-cultural interaction in Canada by retelling the following story using more simplified words to help clarify what the study was about.

A South Korean couple, who had just moved to Winnipeg, had bought furniture from a store and when it was delivered to their house, the workers who carried the furniture downstairs cracked and damaged a corner of the wall. The delivery workers did not acknowledge what they did and my clients remained agitated about the situation. My clients were unable to communicate how they felt about their wall being destroyed to the workers. The next business day, my clients spoke to the manager of the store to see if the store would pay for the damage done to their wall. The Canadian store manager was unable to understand them. From his cultural frame of reference: he was confused as to why my clients did not say anything about the wall damage to the workers and why they gave a big 'tip' to each of the workers in the first place if their wall was damaged. My clients were unable to explain to the manager how they felt about the situation and as to why they gave such a big 'tip' to each of the delivery men. Thus, my South Korean clients asked me to help them out with the interaction problem. From their cultural frame of reference: they were not accustomed to 'tipping' in Korea but however, they knew it was an important custom here in Canada. They also felt sorry for the workers who had to carry the furniture from their truck, in -38° C winter weather, into the house. They were unaware that if they were not satisfied with the service, they did not have to 'tip.' Thus, my clients were experiencing a challenging cross-cultural interaction.

Appendix F: Consent Form for Participants

Consent Form for Participants

Date:

Research Project Title: Exploring the Experiences and Perceptions of EAL Learners' Challenging Cross-Cultural Interactions

Principal Investigator: Charmagne Karim, M.Ed. student

Research Supervisor: Dr. Charlotte Enns

Affiliation: University of Manitoba

This consent form, a copy of which will be left with you for your records and reference, is part of the process of informed consent. It explains what the study is about and what your participation will involve. If you would like more detail about something mentioned here, or information not included here, please ask. Read this carefully to understand all the information.

I am a Master of Education student at the University of Manitoba. If you would like more information or clarification about the study please contact me, Charmagne Karim, at ----- --. My advisor is Charlotte Enns and can be contacted at (204) 474-9017 or ennscj@cc.umanitoba.ca. I am interested in why adult visitors have interaction problems in Canada. I would like to get your feedback about how you deal with interaction problems here in Canada.

I am requesting your participation in this study. This will require you to participate in one or two interviews in English for 60 minutes each. I am doing this study for my Master's of Education program. The interviews will be done in a location of your choice (arranged between June to August 2012). The purpose of the interviews is to get your stories about dealing with interaction problems. Your stories will be used to understand more about adult visitors' interaction problems in Canadian society. The interviews will be digitally audio recorded using a personal digital audio recorder and later written out. After the interview(s) I will meet with you again for another 60 minutes to review your responses to the questions. You will be able to delete, add, or change any of your comments. Only I and my committee members will have access to these documents. The written documents will not include your name or any identifying information about you. The names of the participants will be digitally filed and encrypted on the computer. The pseudonyms EAL learner A-J will be used. All information will be kept strictly confidential. All notes will be filed into folder A-J accordingly and will be kept confidential, in a locked filing cabinet to ensure privacy. These written notes along with the researcher's journal will be shredded with a shredder machine and discarded at the conclusion of the study or if you decide to withdraw from the study. The digital audio files on my personal digital audio recorder will be deleted after transfer to the Digital Voice Editor software program on the computer for transcription. Directly after the completion of the study all notes and digital files will be destroyed. Please note: the researcher's laptop with all encrypted files and the locked filing cabinet is located in her house and only she has access to both.

Your participation in this study is completely voluntary. You can withdraw from the study, without negative consequences by telling me. This study has no deceptions or risks and I will not recruit participants for future studies. Besides conversation practice, the benefit of you participating is that by sharing your experiences with interaction problems in Canada, I will get information about how adult visitors deal with such problems. If you would like to receive a written summary of the results of this study when it is completed (10/12), please indicate this on the form below. The release of study results is intended to give participants an understanding of how their stories provided useful information.

Your signature on 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 informed 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 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) at the University of Manitoba. If you have any concerns or complaints about this project you may contact any of the above-named persons or the Human Ethics Coordinator (HEC) at (204) 474-7122. A copy of this consent form has been given to you to keep for your records and reference.

Participant's Signature _____ Date _____

Researcher's Signature _____ Date _____

_____ Please send me a written summary of the results of the study:

(E-mail or mailing address)

Appendix G: Researcher's Journal

Researcher: Charmagne Karim			
Pseudonym:		Date:	Time: Location:
Probes used: Tell me about that Could you say more about that? Can you elaborate more on that? So, that was a hard time for you...			
Q's	Body Language	Social Atmosphere	Emotional Atmosphere
1			
2			
3			
4			
5			
6			
7			
8			
9			
10			
11			

Transcription Legend

The following legend was adapted from Pavlenko's (2005, p. 257) Transcription Conventions.

Symbol Example	Symbol Explanation
-word-	Tangent/off topic
<u>WORD</u>	Emphatic/strong stress
WORD	Very loud volume
WORD	Loud volume
◦word◦	Very soft volume
.hhh	Inbreath
hhh	Outbreadth
(h)	breathiness
▼	Falling pitch
▲	Rising pitch
FRIday	Word stress
<i>word</i>	Language other than English
"word"	Mimicking another person's dialogue
(word)	Description of gesture or atmosphere/nonverbal communication
...	Brief pause
(1.0)	Measured pause
^	Noticeable step-up in pitch
v	Noticeable step-down in pitch
Wo::rd	Lengthened sound or syllable
(((Transcriber can't make out word