

University of Bialystok
Department of Educational Sciences

LULU HAO

**A STUDY ON THE INTERCULTURAL COMPETENCE OF
ENGLISH MAJORS IN CHINESE UNIVERSITIES**

Prepared under the direction of
Dr hab. Dorota Misiejuk, Prof. UwB

Bialystok 2022

Declaration

I hereby declare that the work presented in this thesis is entirely my own.

Signed _____

Abstract

The aim of this thesis is to assess the intercultural competence of English majors in Chinese universities by conducting an empirical research, meanwhile looking for the major factors that may constrain students from developing intercultural competence. The existing well-known literature is mainly Western-dominated, with obvious emphasis on the outcome afterwards instead of the process during the communication; thus in this study, by combining Oriental values, the importance of harmonious and lasting relationship is particularly pointed out in defining intercultural competence and moral ethics are added as one of key components.

By using two questionnaires respectively designed for English majors and college English teachers in China, students' intercultural competence including language proficiency, intercultural sensitivity, attitude of curiosity and openness, interaction skills, cultural knowledge, and intercultural experience, is assessed; and teachers' cognition in intercultural competence as well as teaching methods are investigated. It turns out that respondents' intercultural competence is in an intermediate level, with problems in language proficiency, the lack of regular assessment in interaction skills and cultural knowledge, along with the very limited intercultural experience and self-motivation in actively looking for such opportunities, plus a potential to become ethnocentric. The finding also shows teachers' incomplete or wrong interpretation of intercultural competence and its relation to English language teaching, and their way of teaching are some of the exterior constraints in guiding young generation to develop intercultural competence.

Theoretically, the significance of this study is that it enriches the definition and theory of intercultural competence by combining both Western and Oriental perspectives; Practically, by positioning problems through data interpretation and analysis, the findings and discussions may provide some reference or guidance to students and teachers of concern; hopefully, it may also contribute to the improvement of foreign language-related policymaking. Besides, it may also be a window for my Polish peers, advisors and readers to get to know more about China and may promote further intercultural exchanges academically.

Acknowledgement

I'm getting sentimental when thinking about who I should thank in the way of writing my thesis and carrying on this PhD program under such special circumstances of the pandemic and turbulence in the world, which basically affected every one of us on earth.

First of all, I'd like to express my sincere gratitude to my dearest tutor, Professor Dorota Misiejuk, an elegant, kind, warm-hearted, inspiring lady. Like I once said in an email to her, it was already some kind of unexplainable miracle that connected us, from two very distant countries with very different cultures. What is more amazing was the smooth, enjoyable and effective communication between us, either online or face-to-face. She has supported me, encouraged me and inspired me all along the way. Whenever I felt frustrated, she has always been so understanding with great empathy. Due to the pandemic, it was a pity that I was not able to stay in Poland to finish my PhD study meanwhile immersing in the exotic culture, yet we still managed to discuss the content of my thesis and clear up confusion quite nicely through email. As I'm writing on intercultural communication in this paper, my tutor and I are experiencing intercultural communication first hand.

Second, I'd like to express my love and thanks to my family. My parents and my parents-in-law have always supported my decision to further my study abroad and they helped me take care of my six-year-old daughter whenever needed. While my beloved husband and daughter have comforted me with a lot of love and laughter when I got stressful at times.

Also, I'd like to thank the Dean, Prof. Lu Zhiguo and my colleagues in the Faculty of Foreign Languages, Luoyang Normal University of China. Prof. Lu showed full support when I told him about my plan to apply for PhD Degree in 2018 and he helped me significantly in contacting college English teachers of other universities to fill in the questionnaires. Without his help, it was impossible for me personally to reach more than 100 English teachers in around 10 universities. What's more, my colleagues He Jianyu, Chengjin, Liujing, Yangyan and many other English teachers in LYNU and other universities kindly helped me in spreading the questionnaires to their students which was one of the most vital steps in finishing my thesis.

For all of the above, I'm truly, truly grateful.

Contents

| | |
|--|----|
| Declaration | 1 |
| Abstract | 2 |
| Acknowledgement | 3 |
| Chapter 1 Introduction | 7 |
| 1.1. Context of my study | 7 |
| 1.1.1. Global Pandemic—A Moment of Unison or Division? | 7 |
| 1.1.2. Multiculturalism and Internationalization | 8 |
| 1.1.3. Belt and Road Initiative | 10 |
| 1.1.4. The Urgent Needs for people with intercultural competence | 14 |
| 1.1.5. The Phenomenon of Chinese Culture Aphasia in China's Foreign Language Education | 14 |
| 1.1.6. Foreign Language Education in China and its Relation with Intercultural Competence | 16 |
| 1.2. Significance of the research | 19 |
| 1.3. Research Objectives and Research Questions | 20 |
| 1.4. Thesis Structure | 22 |
| Chapter 2 Literature Review | 25 |
| 2.1. Introduction | 25 |
| 2.2. What is Intercultural Competence | 25 |
| 2.2.1. The Definition of Intercultural Competence | 25 |
| 2.2.2. Components of Intercultural Competence | 29 |
| 2.3. An Overview of Studies on Intercultural Competence | 30 |
| 2.3.1. Hofstede's cultural Value Orientation | 31 |
| 2.3.2. M.J. Bennett's Intercultural Sensitivity Model and the Intercultural Positioning system | 35 |
| 2.3.3. Stephen Bochner's ABC Model | 38 |
| 2.3.4. Byram's 5-Dimension Model | 40 |
| 2.3.5. Kim's Intercultural Adaptation Theory | 43 |
| 2.3.6. Ting-Toomey and A. Kurogi's Facework Competence Model : an updated Face-Negotiation Theory | 47 |
| 2.3.7. X.S.Xiao &G.M.Chen's Intercultural Competence Theory from Confucianism's perspective | 52 |
| 2.3.8. X.D.Dai &G.M.Chen's Intercultural Competence Model from the Perspective of Interculturality | 54 |
| 2.3.9. J.Takai and H.Ota's Intercultural Competence Model (Japan) | 57 |
| 2.3.10. J.O.Yum's Intercultural Competence Theory from Korean Cultural perspective | 60 |
| 2.4. Assessment of Intercultural Competence | 62 |
| 2.4.1. From Deardorff | 62 |
| 2.4.2. From Fantini | 68 |
| 2.4.3. From Wu Weiping | 71 |
| 2.4.4. Other Assessment Instruments and Methods | 73 |
| 2.5. Conclusion | 73 |

| | |
|---|-----|
| Chapter 3 The Exploration of Key Concepts | 77 |
| 3.1. Introduction | 77 |
| 3.2. Language, culture and communication. | 77 |
| 3.2.1. The Trinity Relationship Among Language, Culture and Communication | 77 |
| 3.2.2. An Overview of cultural/intercultural Teaching in China and the West | 79 |
| 3.3. The Modernization of China Education | 82 |
| 3.4. English Language Education in China since 1949 | 83 |
| 3.5. The Chinese culture influenced by Confucianism | 86 |
| 3.5.1. What is Confucianism? | 86 |
| 3.5.2. The Chinese Culture of Learning | 88 |
| 3.6. Conclusion | 89 |
| Chapter 4 Research Design and Methodology | 90 |
| 4.1. Introduction | 90 |
| 4.2. Research Questions and Hypothesis | 91 |
| 4.3. Research Design | 96 |
| 4.3.1. The Rational of the Research | 96 |
| 4.3.2. Constructing my Assessment Plan | 98 |
| 4.3.3. Clarifying Components and Indicators | 100 |
| 4.3.4. Teachers' Cognition on Intercultural Competence and the Teaching Methods in Practice | 108 |
| 4.4. Methods | 111 |
| 4.4.1. Selection of Participants | 111 |
| 4.4.2. Pilot Interviews | 116 |
| 4.4.3. Questionnaire for students | 117 |
| 4.4.4. Questionnaire for college English teachers | 127 |
| 4.4.5. Advantages, Challenges and Limitations | 127 |
| 4.5. Conclusion | 129 |
| Chapter 5 Findings and Discussions | 131 |
| 5.1. Introduction | 131 |
| 5.2. Findings | 135 |
| 5.2.1. Descriptive Analysis of Students' Intercultural Competence(Questionnaire 1) and College English Teachers' IC Teaching(Questionnaire 2) | 135 |
| 5.2.2. Language Policies | 161 |
| 5.2.3. Summary | 165 |
| 5.3. Discussions | 172 |
| 5.3.1. Correlation Analysis of the Variables | 172 |
| 5.3.2. Profiles v.s. Dimensions | 175 |
| 5.3.3. Intercultural Foreign Language Education as the Way out | 177 |
| 5.4. Conclusion | 183 |
| Chapter 6 Conclusion | 185 |
| 6.1. Conceptualizing the PhD program | 185 |
| 6.2. Reviewing the Thesis | 186 |
| 6.3. Reflecting on the Program | 192 |
| 6.4. Inviting for Further Research | 193 |

| | |
|--|-----|
| 6.5. Concluding the Conclusion | 194 |
| Bibliography | 195 |
| Appendix 1: Questionnaire for College English Major Students | 206 |
| Appendix 2: Questionnaire for English Teachers | 211 |
| Appendix 3: Pilot Interview for English Major Students | 215 |
| Appendix 4: Pilot Interview for College English Teachers | 216 |

Chapter 1 Introduction

1.1. Context of my study

1.1.1. Global Pandemic—A Moment of Unison or Division?

At the end of 2019, a deadly and contagious virus was first discovered in the patients of Wuhan, China and then quickly spread across China and then the globe. No one at that time expected it to be so catastrophic, taking millions of people's life away. In March of 2020 when I first started drafted the outline of my thesis, there was no such thing called COVID-19 that I expected would someday put into my writing like this. The impact of this virus on globalization and intercultural communication is immense. When it was reasonably assumed that a common enemy like this deadly virus could finally bring the whole world together in unison, it went to the opposite—division. As the British Prime Minister said in the 75th UN General Assembly, *"The pace (of coping with the pandemic has been so urgent; the pressures so intense that each national government – democracy or otherwise – has decided entirely understandably to put the interests of its domestic population first. We've seen borders spring up between friends and allies, sometimes without consultation. We've seen the disruption of global supply chains with cheque book wars on airport tarmacs as nation has vied with nation for a supply of PPE....And after nine months of fighting COVID-19, the very notion of the international community looks, frankly, pretty tattered. And we know that we simply can't continue this way. Unless we get our act together, unless we unite and turn our fire against our common foe, we know that everyone will lose. The inevitable outcome would be to prolong this calamity and increase the risk of another."* Like what he said, instead of working together to find the solution, countries blame each other for not dealing with the virus properly; instead of jointly working together to recover the economy, trade war is even more fierce; instead of collectively building a harmonious international community for win-win cooperation, the pursuit of self-interests and extreme individualism and unilateralism is being propagandized by a number of political leaders. As a PhD student studying intercultural

communication and competence, I cannot help but think: Has the pandemic led to the start of anti-globalization? Do people and countries still believe in the value and significance of intercultural communication?... This might be the moment when the importance of intercultural communication should be repeatedly addressed and the education of the notion as “being interculturally competent” should be delivered to the young generation in all countries.

1.1.2. Multiculturalism and Internationalization

Despite of the impact of the pandemic, multiculturalism has been there for a long time after decades of globalization; it is still worth noting in the field of intercultural communication. According to Professor Wanxue Qi(2009), a complicated cultural landscape has formed and intertwined with each other, such as traditional culture and modern culture, national culture and world culture, Eastern culture and Western culture, advanced culture and backward culture, mainstream culture and subculture, religious culture and worldly culture, elite culture and common culture, radical culture and conservative culture, etc. Comparisons and conflicts between different cultures and values have had a subtle and gradual impact on people's cultural awareness and identification for ideas, personal values as well as on their attitudes towards their local culture and other national cultures. What's more, according to the post-colonial theory(Qi, 2009), in this globalized and modernized world, the imperialist practices of those countries that have developed earlier and occupied absolute advantages in economy, science and technology still remain unchanged. In fact this has resulted in another kind of more implicit colonization, which is wrapped under the clothes of legitimate forms--cultural colonization. On the one hand, Western developed countries used their economic advantage to actively and sometimes mandatorily carry out cultural transmission and assimilation; on the other hand, developing countries and underdeveloped countries have to follow or accept either the explicit or implicit cultural invasions in order to keep up with the modernization of the West, which consequently, leads to the gradual loss of local culture and national cultural confidence. In short, cultural imperialism and cultural colonization have become irresistible facts for whatever reasons. Driven by the powerful Western influence, the

western culture represented by American culture has swept the whole world, from values and ideology to lifestyle including clothing and food, from music and art to language expressions etc. To a large extent, Western culture has deeply affected the whole world, with its dominant position in intercultural communication. Thus the theoretically expected 'equality' of different countries and cultures may not always happen in reality.

Along with the world trend of multiculturalism comes the term **internationalization and localization**. As Deardorff said in her PhD thesis(2004), the development of intercultural competence is part of internationalization effort in the institutions of higher education. It mainly refers to a series of activities such as faculty's international involvement, study abroad, international co-curriculum units which are carried out by educational institutions by inputting funding, interested students, and institutional leadership and support so that they can produce interculturally competent graduates as the outcomes.(Deardorff, 2004)

It's undeniable that before the pandemic, international exchanges and cooperation were encouraged and supported everywhere worldwide in almost all fields such as politics, economy, science and technology, art and entertainment, and of course, education. International conferences, cooperation agreements between universities from different countries, and exchange students programs were commonplaces for schools and institutions to go international. The purpose of "going international" is for mutual win-win by utilizing resources and talents globally. Besides, institutions of higher education in China readjusted their missions and goals by stating that their graduates should have intercultural competence with global perspectives in recent decade. However, despite of their good wishes, the goal is yet to be achieved. Though international students are warmly welcomed and steadily growing in Chinese universities(mostly in first-tiered cities such as Beijing and Shanghai, etc.) each year. The average level of intercultural competence of the native Chinese college students is still lagging behind. The situation in China at the present is similar to that of the US two decades ago, as the report by American Council on Education (ACE) in 2000 entitled "Internationalization of U.S. Higher Education" said, "*in spite of an apparent*

growing national interest in international education, relatively few undergraduates gain international or intercultural competence in college.”(Deardorff, 2004). Due to a series of realistic factors such as economic level or remote location, “going international” in the majority of Chinese cities is just a good wish waiting to be realized. For example, based on the sample survey of 150 college students in Liaoning Province(located in the Northeast part of China) by Han Guochong(2019) on intercultural competence in aspects of knowledge, skills, awareness and attitudes, 31% of them have positive attitude and certain intercultural awareness towards intercultural communication; 43% have sufficient intercultural knowledge and only 11% of them have necessary intercultural skills. The result is obviously not optimistic; and on the way of going international, more effective measures should be adopted.

1.1.3. Belt and Road Initiative

Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) provided a perfect platform for intercultural communication between China and the world. And it is a product of globalization, multiculturalism and internationalization. In order to understand what exactly is BRI, we need to first of all know about its origin—the ancient Silk Road. According to the introduction from Baidu Baike of China(2019), the Silk Road, mostly refers to the land Silk Road. Broadly speaking, *“it can be divided into the land Silk Road and the maritime Silk Road. The land Silk Road originated in the Western Han Dynasty (202 BC-8 BC) when Emperor Wudi of Han sent an official Zhang Qian to the Western Regions to open up a land passageway connecting the Mediterranean countries through several Provinces in China including Gansu, Xinjiang as well as regions such as Central Asia and West Asia, starting from the capital Chang'an (now Xi'an). Its initial function was to transport silk produced in ancient China. In 1877, in the book **China**, the German geographer Richihofen named the route as the “Silk Road”, referring it as “the road between China and Central Asia, China and India through silk trade” from 114 B.C. to 127 A.D. It was then accepted and formally used by academia and the public. The “Maritime Silk Road” is a maritime passageway for ancient China to communicate with foreign countries in transportation, trade and cultural exchanges, mainly countries and regions near the South China Sea, so it is*

also called the Silk Road on the South China Sea.”(Baidu Baike, Silk Road, 2019). In 2013, inspired by the great heritage and spirit of Silk Road, Chinese president Xi Jinping put forward a new proposal named Belt and Road Initiative which stands for Silk Road Economic Belt and 21st Century Maritime Silk Road. It is also called One Belt and One Road Initiative, i.e. Silk Road Economic Belt(One Belt) and Maritime Silk Road Initiative (One Road). This Initiative was established with the principles of Extensive consultation, joint contribution and shared benefits, and the purposes of policy coordination, connectivity of infrastructure, unimpeded trade, financial integration and closer people-to-people ties. And it provides a platform to the countries along the route to better exchange and cooperate with each other in the aspects of policy coordination, connectivity of infrastructure, unimpeded trade, financial integration and closer people-to-people ties. The aim of the Belt and Road Initiative, according to its outline from the official website (<https://www.beltrroad-initiative.com/belt-and-road/>, 2022), is to *“promote the connectivity of Asian, European and African continents and their adjacent seas, establish and strengthen partnerships among the countries along the Belt and Road, set up all-dimensional, multi-tiered and composite connectivity networks, and realize diversified, independent, balanced and sustainable development in these countries.”* Though this program, six economic corridors were established, including New Eurasian Land Bridge, China-Mongolia-Russia Economic Corridor, China-Central Asia-West Asia Economic Corridor, China-Indochina Peninsula Economic corridor, China-Pakistan Economic Corridor, and Bangladesh-China-India-Myanmar Economic Corridor.

China's One Belt, One Road



The Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), also known as the One Belt and One Road Initiative (OBOR), is a development strategy proposed by Chinese Government that focuses on connectivity and cooperation between Eurasian countries. It is short for the Silk Road Economic Belt and the 21st-century Maritime Silk Road.

Table 1.1. (Source: <https://www.topchinatravel.com/silk-road/one-belt-one-road.htm>)

➤ One Belt One Road Map



Table 1.2. (Source: <https://www.topchinatravel.com/silk-road/one-belt-one-road.htm>)

Since the proposal of the Belt and Road Initiative(BRI) in 2013, interconnection among countries along the B&R routes has achieved huge progress and new breakthroughs. Statistics show that trade and investment have surged with more cooperation among countries along the route since the proposal of BRI in 2013, *“with the total trade volume rising to 6975.623 billion U.S. dollars in 2017 from that in 2013”*(B&R Interconnection Witnesses Great Breakthroughs in 5-year Development, 2018). Moreover, in the cultural aspect, people-to-people exchanges have been significantly increasing and tourism has thrived both in China and countries along the route. For example, *“In 2017, the two-way tourism between China and the countries along the B&R routes witnessed 60 million tourists. Statistics from the Ministry of Education show that the number of Chinese students studying abroad exceeded 600,000 for the first time in 2017, a number rising continuously. In addition, Chinese travelers now enjoy visa exemption and landing visa service in 29 B&R countries and mutual visa exemption policy in United Arab Emirates and Serbia.”* (B&R Interconnection Witnesses Great Breakthroughs in 5-year Development, 2018).

Inspired by the great wisdom of ancestors, BRI today is the continuation of the Silk Road back then thousands of years ago. It's worth mentioning that, once upon a time, the exchanges through Silk Road was cut due to China's self-seclusion policy in Qin Dynasty in the 17th century which completely cut off China from the outside world which had severely affected its development in economy, culture, science and technology etc. Later China was forced to open by the invasion and the First Opium War launched by Britain in 1840, the country was since then invaded and plundered for the next 100 years by suffering in the so-called Anglo-French Expedition to China (also known as the Second Opium War) (1856-1860), Japan's invasion to China (1894-1895), the Siege of the International Legations (Britain, Russia, Japan, France, Italy, Germany, and Austria) in 1900, and then the 14-year-long War of Resistance against Japanese Aggression from 1931-1945. China learned its lesson so hard from history and know better than ever before the importance of opening up, learning from each other, and striving to keep up with the times. In order to achieve those goals and promote intercultural exchanges and cooperation through BRI, institutions of higher

education bear greater responsibilities to meet the demand of graduating interculturally competent students so that dialogues and negotiations would be more effective in every way which will in turn produce more fruitful results. What's more, as countries along the route understand each other more deeply, bilateral relationship will be deepened and friendship will flourish.

1.1.4. The Urgent Needs for people with intercultural competence

Just decades ago, there were hardly any foreign enterprises or joint ventures in China. while Nowadays, multinationals have been springing up almost in every city of China. As China is more engaged in the global marketplace, higher education has been responding to the new changes and challenges brought up by globalization, by developing international programs and revising its curriculum in the hope of graduating students with intercultural competence and global perspective. Intercultural speakers with global visions are urgently needed than ever before. According to the reports from Chinese government (Weiliang Zhao, 2016), there is a shortage of internationalized talents who have international perspectives, and who are familiar with international rules so as to engage in international affairs. At the international level, among the influential intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations, Chinese people hold relatively fewer posts, especially senior ones, which directly leads to the insufficiency of China's "institutional voice". From the enterprise level, the shortage of internationalized talents has become the biggest bottleneck for Chinese enterprises to go out. It is also an important reason for the failure of enterprises' foreign investment, the inability of transnational operation and the difficulty of successful overseas mergers and acquisitions. That's why the priority mission for foreign language education in China is to cultivate students with intercultural competence so that wise decisions could be made when facing problems with multicultural perspectives.

1.1.5. The Phenomenon of Chinese Culture Aphasia in China's Foreign Language Education

At the heart of intercultural learning and an awareness of other cultures is an awareness of your own.---Simon Greenall(2014)

The reasons for the lack of “voice” in international organizations and the failure of doing business abroad are thought-provoking. Some experts say it's due to the phenomenon of Chinese Culture Aphasia in China's foreign language education. The Chinese Culture Aphasia, namely, the incompetence to express Chinese culture in foreign languages, particularly in the process of intercultural communication. The phenomenon of Chinese culture aphasia has been deeply concerned by the foreign language educators in China for years; but it has not yet been well dealt with effectively(Jin, 2013). In the field of foreign language teaching, language policy maker and educators only focused on the importance of learning western culture and it proves successful to some extent in increasing Chinese students' intercultural competence. However, the role of Chinese culture tends to be neglected in higher education of China. For example, due to the unequal stress and input of Chinese and English culture, Chinese learners of English have some difficulties when they are talking about things which are specific to Chinese culture although they have a good command of English, which shows that the importance of knowing their own culture has been greatly neglected. Most of them do not have much knowledge or are not interested in Chinese culture in their daily life. The aphasia of Chinese culture in education makes it difficult for college students to figure out a clear sense of self in the process of intercultural communication. Just as Byram(2018) wrote in his article, *“language educators need to pay attention to how students' identities are shaped by how their existing languages and associated experiences are fostered or denied through language education. Teaching languages for intercultural communication, the way we envision here, takes into account the complex interplay of our students identity in different linguistic and cultural backgrounds. Knowing and understanding other people and societies involves knowledge and understanding of oneself and one's own society.”* Good and effective intercultural communication should be a two-way activity. If China knows so much about the world while the world doesn't understand China, then that cannot be called intercultural communication. Helping Chinese foreign language learners have a clear understanding and identification of both their

own culture and the target language culture is critical for better intercultural communication; improving their ability to express Chinese culture-specific items in appropriate English expressions and introducing Chinese traditional culture to the world is an effective way to solve the problem of Chinese culture aphasia as well as increasing Chinese people's cultural self-confidence.

1.1.6. Foreign Language Education in China and its Relation with Intercultural Competence

Language is the carrier of culture and all of the above facts have had huge influence on foreign language education in China. Since China's reform and opening-up policy in 1978, the importance of foreign language education has put into the agenda because China was then desperate to learn from the West and got rid of its backward situation. Language policies were made and national curriculum for foreign language education was designed under such a context with the purpose of getting to know everything about those developed Western English-speaking countries. Taking English major in universities for example, besides the skilled-based courses such as speaking, listening, reading and writing, there were other compulsory courses including Introduction to English-speaking Countries, British and American Literature, Introduction to American and British History, etc. However, Chinese culture was seldom paid attention to, not mention any course about Chinese culture and history taught in English or the intercultural communication courses which promotes mutual understanding instead of one-sided knowledge; and this situation also applies to the foreign language education (mainly English language education) in primary schools and high schools. Just several years ago, it was still common for Chinese foreign language learners to know so much about western countries such as their traditions, customs, important festivals, famous writers and masterpieces, and not mention the super stars of Hollywood and famous singers in pop music; yet most of them hardly have any interest in their own country's history and cultural heritage and are unable to introduce them clearly in the process of intercultural interaction; while some of them do know and love their own culture and tradition, they are not be able to express them in English language. The western cultural invasion and China's eagerness to learn

from the West have made most of foreign language learners in China assume Chinese cultural heritage as unimportant and out-of-date while everything from the West is modern and worth learning.

Xu Jialu, former vice chairman of the National People's Congress as well as a famous linguist, once said in the Third International Symposium on Xushen Culture(2015)¹ that language and culture are the symbol of a nation. Chinese people should cherish and respect their own language and culture. Problems caused by attaching importance to foreign language learning meanwhile neglecting Chinese culture have gradually emerged, which have seriously affected the improvement of China's language competence and posed a huge and potential threat to our national cultural security. Just as Mr. Simon Greenall, the chief editor of *Culturally Speaking* (2014), said, “*You may be speaking perfect English, but there is something which gets in the way of perfect communication. This is your cultural background or that of the person you're speaking to.*” Thus, it's not difficult to sum up that while learning a language, we are learning its culture; while having intercultural communication, it should be based on equal and mutual understanding of both sides. Though Chinese people are more culturally-aware with the efforts from Chinese government's media propaganda especially in recent two years, it is just a beginning before the content and the way of teaching in schools could update with the demand of the times.

By reviewing China's biggest academic database cnki.cn, it can be found that more than 80% of the IC-related papers are from teachers and researchers of foreign language teaching, especially English language teaching, which indicates that in China, intercultural communication/competence has been so far being mostly discussed in foreign language field, instead of from media and communication, international business or cultural studies. Compared with China, the motives behind developing intercultural competence in European and North American countries are not from learning a foreign language, but from the actual needs in the workplace, for example, to explain reasons for the failure/success of overseas employment, to

¹ Xu Shen is a famous linguist in ancient China who wrote the *Origin of Chinese Characters*, the first book in China to systematically analyze the shape and source of Chinese characters. It is also one of the earliest dictionaries in the world.

research for the necessary capabilities of expatriates, or to design IC training sessions for those expatriates, or simply because they are immigrant countries with diverse cultures. In the past decade, more attention has been paid to intercultural communication/competence in European countries due to the integration of EU. As mentioned in last chapter, Byram proposed five dimensions of intercultural competence and then was applied to the “Common European Framework of Reference of Languages”: (1) Knowledge; (2) skills of interpreting and relating; (3) skills of discovery and interaction; (4) attitudes of curiosity and openness, etc. (5) critical cultural awareness. And the above abilities can be acquired from classroom, fieldwork and independent learning all together.

By reflecting on China's reality and language policies over years as well as other countries' experiences, it can be summed up that intercultural competence should be integrated in the whole teaching/learning process; many courses in English majors should be taught from intercultural perspectives. Summarized from Hu(2013) as well as indicated by Byram's theory, learning from lectures, reading, video and audio resources, online courses, ect., is helpful in cognitive level. But it doesn't guarantee learners' change in affect and attitude, and surely not meaning skills acquired. Case study, field practice, and contact with people of other countries etc. should also be integrated into the learning process plus language proficiency. Meanwhile, we have to acknowledge the fact that China has a very different foreign language learning environment from European countries or immigrant countries such as Canada, the United States, Australia and New Zealand. Those countries and regions have the advantage of diverse or similar culture and language environment where people have more opportunities to contact with foreign languages while China is a huge country with Chinese(Putonghua) as its only official language. Most English teachers themselves never have the chance to speak to people of other countries in real life. Thus, it is more challenging to develop effective intercultural communication in China.

1.2. Significance of the research

To begin with, the necessity of intercultural competence in globalization is needless to be further explained and it is widely applied to areas such as business negotiations, trade talks, multinationals' adaption to different countries, cultural exchanges and learning, immigration to new countries or cooperation programs of any kind among different countries; not mention its critical role in a time of global pandemic when intercultural communication is greatly compromised while the whole world needs to be united. It responds to the urgent needs for more intercultural speakers, which in a long run, is essential for popularizing intercultural learning among all people that helps foster the attitude of openness, tolerance, and mutual respect, along with the skills of empathy and appropriate communication.

Second, in the field of foreign language education, though relevant research has been undergoing for decades in western countries, Chinese scholars are relatively new in this arena. China opened its door in 1978 and globalization happened far later than the rest of the world. Therefore, researchers and educators just realized the importance of intercultural competence in the past several years. Nowadays, it's been widely recognized that intercultural competence is one of the key professional abilities for English teachers. However so far, there are still few empirical studies in China on intercultural competence of foreign language learners in China. Most studies mainly focus on theoretical research, such as the definition and the components of intercultural competence, or cultural introduction, culture-related theories, intercultural communicative awareness and intercultural sensitivity; some of the most well-known works include Professor Zhang Hongling's *Intercultural Approach to Foreign Language Teaching*(2007), Professor Hu Wenzhong's *An Introduction to Intercultural Communication*(2013), and Professor Sun Youzhong's *Intercultural Mass Communication: Approaches to Key Texts in Cultural Theory*(2009), and Professor Dai Xiaodong's *A Study on Intercultural Competence*(2018) etc. Students' actual intercultural competence is seldom investigated, analyzed and systematically studied. Therefore, this study plans to conduct a comprehensive and systematic investigation and detailed analysis of more than 400 English Major students in

Chinese universities, particularly those universities in Henan Province. Henan Province is located in the central part of China which is the most populous province in China. And the major reason for choosing a number of universities in Henan Province is that I'm currently working in Luoyang Normal University in this province and it will be more effective for me to conduct the primary research on the English majors students of this region since there has already been frequent contact among universities within the province. These schools can be regarded as the representatives and miniatures of many Chinese universities and the research on them is representative to certain extent. It is a useful attempt and necessary supplement to the existing research on intercultural competence and will play a positive role in promoting intercultural teaching in Chinese universities. Practically, the findings and discussions in this study may provide some reference or guidance to students and teachers of concern; hopefully, it may also contribute to the improvement of foreign language-related policymaking. Besides, it may also be window for my Polish peers, advisors and readers to get to know more about China and may promote further intercultural exchanges academically.

1.3. Research Objectives and Research Questions

According to Professor Zhang Hongling (2019), in language learning, we expect to develop ICC that involves at least the following(which was adapted from Liddicoat, 2013): *'(1)Accepting that one's practices are influenced by the cultures in which one participates and so are those of one's interlocutors; (2)Accepting that there is no one right way to do things; (3)Valuing one's own culture and other cultures; (4) Using language as medium to explore culture and to engage in intercultural interlocutors; (5)Using one's existing knowledge of cultures as a resource for learning about new culture(6)Becoming more aware of one's own identity and intercultural communication style'*. By looking at the language learning in China, the above is far from achieved. Thus, the purpose of my study is to research on intercultural competence and get to know the current situation of the English majors in Chinese universities in terms of their intercultural competence. Under the guidance of relevant

theories and models of intercultural competence and foreign language teaching and by conducting questionnaires and interviews to at least 400 English major students in around 10 universities in China, a comprehensive analysis of the collected data will be made and suggestions will be offered for integrating the learning of intercultural competence into the daily teaching and learning of foreign (English) languages in universities. **Theoretically**, the study will further enrich the current IC theories and models; especially nowadays most of the model are still Western-centric, and some of them may not be applicable to the Chinese context. With data analysis afterwards, new problems may emerged as future research topics. **Practically**, for language teachers, this research may provide guidance for them to integrate intercultural education in a more systematic and critical way. It will also help students to clear out the misconception of the ultimate goal of learning a foreign language as merely learning grammatical patterns and concrete facts, as well as fostering the awareness of cherishing their own culture in their language learning process. **Besides**, this research also calls on the policy-makers of higher education in China to reconsider the language learning policy and national curriculum by attaching the importance of intercultural competence to language learning as well as what kind of language professionals or specialists the modern China and the world need.

With the above purposes and by putting intercultural competence in the China's social, cultural and educational context, my research questions are hence constructed as follows:

1. How interculturally competent are the English majors in Chinese universities at present?
 - (1) In what aspects does their English language proficiency affect their communication with people from other cultures? (questionnaires and interviews)—language proficiency
 - (2) How do they evaluate their performance in the interaction with people from other cultures? (interaction skill)
 - (3) How Interculturally sensitive are they towards their own and other cultures?(intercultural sensitivity)

- (4) Do they have necessary cultural knowledge of the major-English countries for effective and appropriate intercultural communication?(Knowledge)
 - (5) What is their attitude towards cultural differences and intercultural communication?(attitude of openness, respect, curiosity)
2. What are the major factors that may constrain students from developing intercultural competence?
- (1) Are students willing to jump out of their comfort zone and actively participated in intercultural communicative activities both in class and in their daily life? (intercultural experience)
 - (2) Do English teachers integrate intercultural learning/training into their class?
 - (3) Does the language policies in China put IC as one of the major objectives?

1.4. Thesis Structure

My thesis will start with the introduction to the context of my research. With the global trend of multiculturalism and internalization, China has also responded and wants to keep pace with the world. In 2013, Chinese President Xi Jinping launched Belt and Road Initiative; the purpose of course, is to promote understanding and cooperation with the world. In this ambitious project, President Xi particularly stressed the importance of cultural exchanges and mutual learning which also asks for people with intercultural competence in job market. Therefore, higher institutions need to bear the responsibility of graduating students with such competence and global perspectives. However, the phenomenon of Chinese Culture Aphasia should not be neglected in China's English language education because it may result in students' losing their own cultural identity and self-respect which consequently harms the development of their intercultural competence. It is under such a context that my research has great significance to teachers, students and other researchers.

The second chapter of my thesis is Literature Review. The various definitions of intercultural competence is listed and other similar or confusing terms are clarified such as intercultural communicative competence and communicative competence. The major part of this chapter is the overview of studies on intercultural competence

both in China and other countries; I categorized them as western perspective such as Kim's Intercultural Adaptation Theory, Ting-Toomey's Face Negotiation Theory, and M.J. Bennett's Intercultural Sensitivity Model, as well as non-western perspective such as X.S.Xiao & G.M.Chen's Intercultural Competence Theory from Confucianism's perspective, J.Takai and H.Ota's Intercultural Competence Model (Japanese), J.O.Yum's Intercultural Competence Model from Korean Cultural perspective and R.S.Zaharna's Intercultural Competence Model from Arabian cultural perspective, etc. Besides, a number of widely recognized intercultural competence models are introduced such as AAKSR model, Byram's 5-dimension model and Deardorff's model, etc. what's more, the relationship among language, culture and communication is highly relevant to my study; therefore, it will also be illustrated. When investigating the intercultural competence of English major students in China, teachers' role should also be researched. Thus, an overview of intercultural teaching in the west and China is also included in my Literature review, then followed by a critical evaluation of the literature above.

Chapter 3 is an exploration of key concepts related to my study. My research is mainly set under the context of Chinese situation while my tutor as well as my major readers are from Poland who may not be so familiar with Chinese culture and its higher education; therefore, it's very necessary to make a brief introduction to concepts and history such as English language education in China since its opening-up policy in 1968, and the impact of Confucianism on the ways of communication ect.

Chapter 4 of Research Design and Methodology is the most important part of my thesis other than the chapter of Findings and Discussion. The whole process of my empirical research is presented here. Based on the research questions and my hypothesis, the rational and assessment plan are set with the definition and components of intercultural competence particularly to this study being clarified. Among them, language proficiency, attitude of openness, curiosity and confidence, cultural knowledge of the major English-speaking countries, skills and experience of intercultural interaction were the key indicators for assessment of students. Besides, a

questionnaire for college English teachers concerning intercultural teaching is also designed for the purpose of looking at this issue from educators' perspective. In addition, research methods are introduced in detail, including the participants, pilot interview, and the content and operation of the two questionnaires. Finally, advantages, challenges and limitations are discussed.

Chapter 5 is Findings and Discussion. This is the part in which all the research questions are answered. After a general introduction of the respondents' information gained from the survey, descriptive analysis is made by interpreting Questionnaire 1 (for students) in form of answering each detailed research questions concerning the five dimensions of intercultural competence mentioned above, plus intercultural experience. And teachers' cognition on intercultural competence and their teaching methods in practice are then discussed based on the collected data from Questionnaire 2(for teachers). Then summaries are concluded to answer the two main research questions. Besides, correlation analysis of the variables, and of profiles v.s. dimensions is discussed, followed by an exploration of the possible solutions to the detected problems.

Chapter 6 is the conclusion, in which the content of this thesis is once again reviewed. Moreover, the original motivation and process of conceptualizing the PhD program are recalled and illustrated. Afterwards, by reflecting on the program in regards of the regrets and limitations, invitation was sent to readers of interest for further research on this topic.

Chapter 2 Literature Review

2.1. Introduction

Writing literature review is a process of learning and understanding this research topic in a systematic manner; it is like standing on the shoulders of giants by reviewing some of their most classic theories, through which new inspiration may occur. In this chapter, the definition and components of intercultural competence will be explored as a start, followed by an overview of studies on intercultural competence both from Western and Oriental countries; and then discussions on the assessment process by some well-known IC experts will be introduced as guidance for the operation of my assessment procedure empirically.

2.2. What is Intercultural Competence

2.2.1. The Definition of Intercultural Competence

In order to better research on this topic, the priority, of course, is to find out **what is intercultural competence, what differences it has from similar terms such as communicative competence(CC), cross-cultural communication and transcultural communication, as well as what intercultural competence means in foreign language education.**

Intercultural competence(IC), or intercultural communicative competence(ICC), is one of the core concepts in intercultural studies(Dai and Chen,2014). Since 1970s, scholars in this field, especially in European countries and the US, have been trying to define IC comprehensively and understand its nature essentially; hence a variety of definitions appeared but a unified definition is yet to be agreed so far and the exploration and debates still continue (Dai, 2016). While there is no unified definition of IC, the basic concept is not difficult to understand. In a general sense, intercultural competence refers to the ability to survive and develop successfully in a multicultural and international environment. A large number of scholars prefer to use effectiveness

and appropriateness to define the criteria of being interculturally competent. According to Spitzberg((2000, p379), “*Intercultural competence refers to the appropriate and effective behavior of the communicator in a specific context*”. Although this definition is simple, it shows that the appropriateness and effectiveness of intercultural communicative competence are related to a specific context, and the appropriateness in intercultural communication should be coordinated and constructed by the communicating parties according to the specific context. While Chen and Starosta(1996) think that “*Intercultural competence refers to the ability of the interactors to negotiate cultural significance and use effective communicative behavior in a special environment appropriately in order to confirm their multiple identities*”. Through this definition, we understand that effective and appropriate intercultural communication behavior is gained by the construction of multi-identity of social culture. Ting-Toomey(1993) pointed out that intercultural competence is the ability of the communicator to negotiate effectively with the members from other cultures so as to achieve a satisfactory result. And Chinese scholars Chen Junsen and Fan Huayuan(2006) also agree that intercultural competence “*emphasizes the ability to communicate effectively and appropriately with people of different cultural backgrounds*”. Professor Gao Yihong(2000) believes that “*intercultural competence refers to the competence or quality required for successful intercultural communication*”; while Bi Jiwan(1998) argued that “*intercultural competence is a comprehensive competence which includes linguistic competence, non-linguistic competence, intercultural understanding ability and intercultural communicative adaptability*”.

The above scholars provided different definitions of intercultural competence; but they all agree on the importance of appropriateness and effectiveness in communicative behavior. And there are other scholars who define IC from other perspectives. For example, Kims (2001a) thinks that IC is an inner ability of the communicator to adapt to a new environment by adjusting his or her mindset. Arasaratnam & Doerfel (2005) argued that IC is the ability of the interlocutors to reach a satisfactory result that both sides can feel in the communication. Dai & Chen

(2015) define IC as the ability to establish intercultural contact and develop a harmonious and win-win relationship. Those scholars define IC either from the perspective of mental state, the result or the mutual relationship in the process, all of which further enrich the core meaning of IC. Among the various definitions, there are disputes about the importance of personality verses developmental process, inner potential verses external effect, as well as the different emphasis in western and oriental culture which could be research topics for future studies. (Dai, 2018)

All in all, people from different cultural backgrounds have different understandings of behavioral patterns, behavioral norms and social roles. They have different judgments and expectations on the appropriateness of communicative behavior. It's possible that if the communicative behavior of the other party does not conform to their own behavioral norms, disgust and dissatisfied feelings will arise. The influence of negative emotion will lead to the failure of intercultural communication (Peng Yunpeng, 2012). Therefore, intercultural competence requires learners to transcend the constraints of their native and target languages and their corresponding specific cultures, meanwhile trying to understand the similarities and differences in thinking modes and lifestyles of other cultures. Besides, people should make efforts to develop communicative competence that can be adapted to various social and cultural environments(Zhang Hongling, 2007).

Other similar/related Terms—Communicative competence, cross-cultural communication, and transcultural communication

“Competence in culture has come to replace knowledge about culture, and there have been several terms coined, with intercultural competence, transcultural competence, and cross-cultural competence being the most frequently used.”-- (Byram, 2018)

When doing research in the field of intercultural communication, it will be inevitable as well as necessary to understand some other related or possibly confusing terms such as communicative competence, cross-cultural communication, and transcultural communication.

Communicative competence, as quoted from British Council website, refers to “a

learner's ability to use language to communicate successfully.” Or to be more specific, it refers to “*a language user's grammatical knowledge of syntax, morphology and phonology and the like, as well as social knowledge about how and when to use utterances appropriately*”. (Wikipedia) and Tarvin(2014) defines communicative competence as “*the ability to use language, or to communicate, in a culturally-appropriate manner in order to make meaning and accomplish social tasks with efficacy and fluency through extended interactions*”. As seen from the above definitions, the key of communicative competence to a large extent lies in the use of language and a person's linguistic competence; this is different from intercultural competence which is beyond linguistic or grammatical competence and a good master of a (foreign) language doesn't guarantee good intercultural competence. There are factors such as attitude, skills and intercultural awareness and knowledge etc., that need to be taken into consideration. Therefore, attention should be paid when choosing the appropriate assessing methods to evaluate one's intercultural competence.

Cross-cultural communication might be a confusing term with intercultural competence. In a general sense, their meaning is almost the same, i.e. they both refer to communication between people from different cultural background. However, in academic circle, researchers prefer to use cross-cultural communication when stressing or analyzing the differences of different cultural communities or groups, while intercultural communication or intercultural competence is used when observing the interactions between people from different culture. (Dai, 2018)

Another term, **transcultural communication**, comparatively speaking, is newly noticed by researchers in the field of communication and education in recent years. “transcultural”, by its definition in Oxford Dictionary, is “*Relating to or involving more than one culture.*”, or “*involving, encompassing, or extending across two or more cultures.*” (Merriam Webster, 2019) “*Cuban anthropologist Fernando Ortiz coined the term transculturation in 1947 to describe the convergences of various cultures and various phases of transition from one culture to another. These phases include the acquisition of another culture (acculturation), the loss or uprooting of a*

previous culture (deculturation), and the consequent creation of new cultural phenomena (neoculturation). Transculturation can be used to describe a wide variety of global phenomena, including exile, immigration, multicultural contact, ethnic conflicts, interracial marriages, overseas sojourns, and transnational tourism.”(Ding, 2014) Therefore, the nature of transcultural communication lies in the mutual learning or the gradual convergence and fusion of different cultures, which is very different from intercultural communication.

2.2.2. Components of Intercultural Competence

Deardorff(2004)'s research shows that the definition given by Byram(1997) is the most well-acknowledged which includes the following major components: *“Knowledge of others; knowledge of self; skills to interpret and relate; skills to discover and/or to interact; valuing others' values, beliefs, and behaviors; and relativizing one's self. Besides, linguistic competence plays a key role”*. Byram believes that cultural knowledge of other countries and one's own country, intercultural communication skills, language communication skills, cognitive and interactive skills, and the attitude of respect for values, beliefs and behaviors of different cultures, along with critical cultural awareness and self-awareness are vital in effective and appropriate communication and interaction between individuals and people from different cultures in a specific intercultural environment. As stated above, Byram's Model divided intercultural competence into four dimensions: knowledge, skills, attitudes and awareness, which is widely referred and applied in different fields all over the world.

Of course, there are scholars and experts who analyze intercultural competence from other perspectives. Spitzberg and Changnon(2009) argued that the **motivation** behind every effective and appropriate intercultural communication is extremely important, hence proposed the model **consisting of knowledge, motivation and skills as the three dimensions**. Other researchers describe intercultural competence from a developmental perspective and thinks that the development of awareness, knowledge and skills have different stages and the acquiring of intercultural competence should

be a consistent learning process(Bennett 1993; Pedersen 1994). In recent years, the mainstream understanding of intercultural competence is mostly from Western scholars; the question of how to see and analyze this term with a non-western look is still await to be answered. Some researchers from Oriental countries put intercultural competence in Asian cultural context and discussed about the importance of interpersonal relationship in the process. They believed that the skills of empathy, adaptation, tolerance, emotion and relationship are particularly important(Jia 1997; Kim 2001). However, despite of the above different views, **a consensus has been reached so far on the four essential components of intercultural components, i.e. knowledge, skills, attitudes and awareness**(Chen 1996; Jia 1997; Kim 2001; Yang & Zhuang 2007; Zhang & Yang 2012; Chen & Starosta 1996; Spitzberg 1997; Byram 1997; Fantini 2000, 2006; Deardorff 2004, 2006; Spitzberg & Changnon 2009).

2.3. An Overview of Studies on Intercultural Competence

Studies on intercultural competence have been carrying on and developing for decades in South America domestically and Europe (especially within European Union,) where intercultural communication in their own country or across their region is common and therefore is more convenient to be researched. A number of theories have world-wide influence and great value of reference for individuals, for governments to cooperate and for multinational companies to achieve success globally. Examples include Hofstede's cultural value orientation, Ting-Toomey's Face Negotiation Theory, M.J.Bennett's Intercultural Sensitivity Model, M.Byram's Intercultural Competence Model and Deardorff's Intercultural Competence Model, etc. Compared with Western Countries, China is lagging behind in intercultural studies. Domestically, Chinese people's race, language and cultures are rather unitary, as the majority of Chinese people belongs to Han ethnic group, and there seemed no need of intercultural studies within society; historically, China once closed its door for hundreds of years since Qing Dynasty and then was forced to be open by foreign invasions known as Opium War in 1840. It was until 1978 that Chinese government initiated the opening-up policy and started to promote intercultural communication

with the outside world. Despite of the above reasons, Chinese researchers in recent decades have been working hard to keep up with the world and trying to make their voice heard both home and abroad. Examples include Sun Youzhong's IC theory on Higher education, X.D.Dai &G.M.Chen's IC theory from the perspective of interculturality, ect. Besides, this chapter also reviews a number of theories from other Oriental countries such as J.Takai and H.Ota's Intercultural Competence Model from Japan and J.O.Yum's Intercultural Competence Theory from Korean Cultural perspective.

2.3.1. Hofstede's cultural Value Orientation

The cultural dimensions is a concept used by Hofstede, Director of the Dutch Institute of Culture and his colleagues in their quantitative study of cultural factors. According to Hofstede, culture is the generalization of social members' ways of thinking, emotions and behavior patterns, i.e. unwritten rules of social behaviors which is more value-oriented. Hofstede initially identified four value dimensions that continue to be widely applied. Later, his collaborative work with Michael Bond in Hong Kong and more recently with Michael Minkov, his son Gert Jan Hofstede, and other researchers, has led to a 6-Dimensional model, published in his 2010 update of *Culture: The Software of the Mind*, which was also illustrated again in his article *Dimensionalizing Cultures: The Hofstede Model in Context* published online in 2011, as the following, “1. Power Distance, related to the different solutions to the basic problem of human inequality;

2. Uncertainty Avoidance, related to the level of stress in a society in the face of an unknown future;

3. Individualism versus Collectivism, related to the integration of individuals into primary groups;

4. Masculinity versus Femininity, related to the division of emotional roles between women and men;

5. Long Term versus Short Term Orientation, related to the choice of focus for people's efforts: the future or the present and past.

6. Indulgence versus Restraint, related to the gratification versus control of basic

human desires related to enjoying life”(p8, Hofstede, 2011).

(1) Power distance(Small- and Large-)

Power distance refers to the degree of the acceptance of the fact that members of a society, organization, or institution with less power have an unequal distribution of power. Hofstede's research shows that in countries with high power distance, people behave very differently from those with low power distance. For countries with low power distance, there isn't much difference in social hierarchy. The hierarchy in organizations is mainly based on the convenience of management, and most of them are flat management agencies, and they tend to make bottom-up decisions. According to Hofstede's statistics, Asian countries are usually high power distance countries, such as Singapore, China, and South Korea; while United States and most European countries have relatively low power distance index. Although the distance power in American culture is lower than that of China, South Korea, or Japan, its power distance is much higher compared to many Nordic countries, where people pursue a higher degree of democracy. Through the implementation of social economic democracy, class differences and social and economic inequality are eliminated; equality, care, and the spirit of cooperation and mutual help runs through the whole society.(Wang, 2012)

(2) Uncertainty avoidance(Weak- and Strong-)

Uncertainty avoidance refers to a society's fear of uncertainty and ambiguous situations, and the tendency to eliminate these uncertainties and ambiguous situations through regulations and systems, etc. Its degree is measured by the Uncertainty Avoidance Index (UAI). Hofstede's investigation shows that different national cultures have very different uncertainty avoidance tendencies. People with strong uncertainty avoidance regard the unknown and uncertainty in life as the enemy; every effort was made to avoid it, while people with low uncertainty avoidance adopted an open attitude. For example, Japan is a country with a high degree of uncertainty avoidance. Because of this, “total quality management”, a form of management that controls quality through strict systems and regulations achieved great success in Japan.

(3) Individualism-collectivism

Individualism and collectivism refer to the degree of connection between individuals and group. In individualistic culture, people stress on personal goals while group goals are the priority in collectivistic culture. Besides, people in individualistic culture need to take care of themselves and their immediate family while people in collectivistic culture expect their group to take care of them and in exchange, they should show their absolute loyalty to the group. Countries such as the United States, Australia and Canada are typical individualism society which emphasize personal freedom and achievement while Indian, China and Japan are collectivism society that stress on harmony between individuals and society.(Zhuang and Sussman, 2018)

(4) Masculine-feminine culture

Masculine culture refers to the clear differentiation of different genders' social roles. Men should be confident, strong, and focused on material success and achievements, while women should be humble, gentle, nurturing and concerned about quality of life. Feminine culture refers to the overlap of gender roles in society. Men and women are both humble and caring, and people are more open in the roles that both men and women play in the workplace and families. In addition, masculine societies promote the resolute behavior and the pursuit of wealth while feminine society treasure interpersonal relationship and the balance between family life and work(Wang, 2012). Countries such as Japan, Austria and Venezuela are some of the typical masculinity societies where the social roles of men and women are obviously different while in Scandinavian countries, social status of men and women are equal(Zhuang and Sussman, 2018). In Hofstede's research, both Chinese culture and British/American culture are masculinity-oriented, in which success in career and the pursuit of materialism are advocated; the image of those people working hard from scratch and achieve great success are admired, despite of their sacrifice of their own life quality and the time spending with their families.

(5) Long Term versus Short Term Orientation

Hofstede cooperated with Micheal Minkov and combined his findings obtained from World Values Survey(Minkov, 2007 and Hoestede &Minkov, 2010) , hence produced

the fifth and sixth dimension, namely, Long Term versus Short Term Orientation, and Indulgence versus Restraint.

Long Term versus Short Term Orientation reflect the values of a nation's long-term and short-term interests, and indicate whether a society's decision-making is greatly affected by tradition and past events or by present or future influence. Long-term orientation put great importance on frugality, perseverance, and hard work while the short-term orientation emphasizes the obedience of individuals, the whole society respects traditions, focuses on immediate interests, and pays responsibility for society. According to Hofstede's research, China and Japan are typical long-term oriented cultures. Chinese culture focuses on long-term planning, and does not rush to achieve success. Similarly, in Japan, the country invests with a long-term vision. The annual profit is not the priority; instead, the most important thing is to progress year by year so as to achieve a long-term goal. However, in short-term-oriented culture, people pay attention to the fulfillment of social responsibility and believe that "live for now" is the most important. For example, in the United States, companies pay more attention to quarterly and annual profit results. Managers in the United States give employees very clear short-term performance goals and pay attention to profits in the performance evaluation of employees on a yearly or quarterly basis. The United States is not a country with a long history; therefore Americans believe that change is always good, so they constantly explore more creative or better ways of doing things, and optimistically regard the future as the development of the past.

(6) Indulgence v.s. Restraint

As mentioned previously, the sixth dimension of Indulgence v.s. Restraint was newly added in 2010, which was based on Michael Minkov(2007)'s empirical study by using the World Values Survey (www.worldvaluessurvey.org). "*Indulgence stands for a society that allows relatively free gratification of basic and natural human desires related to enjoying life and having fun. Restraint stands for a society that controls gratification of needs and regulates it by means of strict social norms*".(p15, Hofstede, 2011). According to Hofstede(2011), scores on Indulgence are high in regions such as South and North America, Western Europe and parts of Sub-Saharan Africa while

scores on Restraint are high in Eastern Europe, Asia and in the Muslim world.

It's worth mentioning that cultures are never static. Hofstede(2011) added that some of cultural dimensions are affected by external factors. For example, **Power Distance** is correlated with the dimension of **political systems** analyzed by Gregg and Banks (1965), as well as with **economic development** dimensionalized by Aldelma and Morris (1967); **Uncertainty Avoidance** correlated with **mental health** from Lynn and Hampson (1975)'s analysis; and **Individualism** displayed significant correlation with **national wealth** while **Femininity** with **percentage of national income spent on development aid**. Therefore, a variety of factors needs to be taken into account when analyzing the culture of any particular country. Moreover, though Hofstede's Cultural Dimension Theory has provided us with valuable reference on the generalization of more than 90 countries' cultural characteristics through statistics, many of us easily fall into stereotyping people in certain cultures with the above dimensions and may hence produce bias. Even Hofstede(2011) has stressed that *“So culture and personality are linked but the link is statistical; there is a wide variety of individual personalities within each national culture, and national culture scores should not be used for stereotyping individuals”*(p8, Hofstede, 2011).

2.3.2. M.J. Bennett's Intercultural Sensitivity Model and the Intercultural Positioning system

M. J. Bennett 's Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity is one of the earliest IC theories which explained and analyzed the developmental changes of attitudes and views of intercultural communicators. In general, it's a process from 'Ethnocentrism' to 'Ethnorelativism' which includes Denial--Defense--Minimization--Acceptance--Adaptation--Integration (see table below.) It was first published in 1984 and was later further and more deeply explained. (Bennett 1984, 1986, 1993; Bennett &Bennett 2004); but the general framework hasn't changed much.

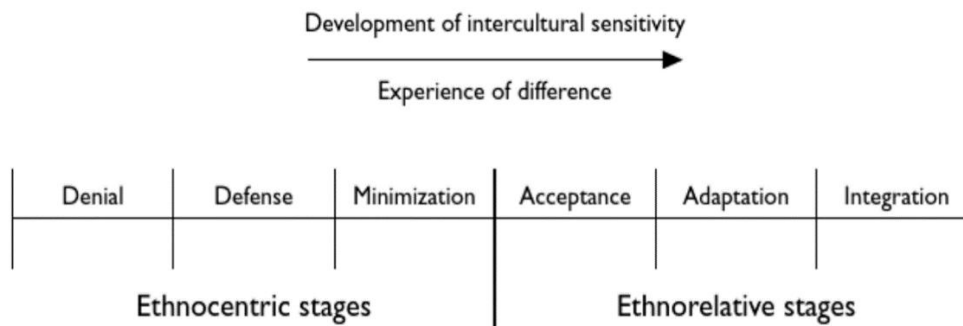


Table 2.1. (Source: Bennett, 1993).

This model was built on the assumption that people's intercultural competence could be gradually developed through learning and adaptation and could be further advanced if managing cultural differences with more tolerant attitudes and rational behaviors. The first three levels of Denial--Defense—Minimization are in the stage of Ethnocentrism, which could then be developed into the stage of Ethnorelativism, i.e. the level of Acceptance--Adaptation—Integration.

In general, people in the stage of Denial assume that their own culture is the only real one. They neglect the diversity of cultures and therefore feel perplexed or even hostile when encountering cultural difference. People in Defense stage assume that their own culture is the only good one. They separate clearly about “us” and “them”, “superior” and “inferior”, hence always stereotyping other cultures and holding prejudice or bias. People in the stage of minimization assume that their own culture world view is universal, and they always try to correct others to match their expectation.

And then the following three stages are to describe “difference seekers”(Bennett, 2003). People who develop into Acceptance stage symbolize a transformation of worldviews. They accept cultural differences and diverse cultural behaviors. However, *“acceptance doesn't mean agreement—cultural difference may be judged negatively—but the judgement is not ethnocentric.”*(Bennett, 2003). The next stage is adaptation. People in this stage realize that only admitting cultural differences is not enough; seeing from others' perspective is necessary. They have developed the skills of empathy and mindfulness and have the motivation to adapt each other and carry out

the intercultural dialogue appropriately and effectively. The final stage is integration. Mostly people in this stage are very familiar with both or multiple cultures. *“it is the state in which the experience of another cultural worldviews is incorporated into one's identity.”*(Bennett, 2003). The stage of Integration is not necessarily better than Adaptation in that sometimes people at this stage may fail in reconstructing their new identity when integrating both cultures, which may lead to “cultural marginality”. However, there are also other scholars saying that DMIS doesn't take into consideration of the wandering and retrogression in the process(Xiao & Chen, 2009). For example, people in Acceptance/Minimization stage may fall back to Defense if they are over frustrated or hurt by cultural conflicts and may want to flee away from this discomfort forever.

Still, Bennett's model is of great significance to help language teachers to realize that their students in one class may be in different stages thus posing challenges when preparing cultural materials and content. It is necessary to evaluate at what stage their students are so as to balance the challenge and support in the curriculum. In a word, it's important to assess at which stage students are before applying content and methods in the classroom. It's possible that students will respond negatively if the cultural materials are too threatening or causing too much discomfort from cultural shocks. Trying to know what level of their IC and in which stage is their intercultural sensitivity is what guided me in designing the questionnaire. It will provide important reference for language teachers to design their curriculum, culture content and teaching methods.

Intercultural Positioning System

It's worth noting that Bennett also invented a tool to help people develop their intercultural competence, which is named as Intercultural Positioning System(IPS). This interests me a lot because it is helpful in “locating ourselves”, i.e. *“to develop our own cultural self-awareness through understanding our cultural patterns. Only then can we begin exploring the gap between our values, beliefs, and behaviors and those of others.”* (Bennett, 2003). This is urgently needed in to solve the problem of Chinese culture aphasia in its foreign language education, as stated in the Introduction

Chapter. Many English teachers are really trying hard to pour Western culture knowledge into students' head, not realizing that knowing ourselves and learning to relate and interpret should be the beginning.

Briefly speaking, IPS includes the following steps: “(1) *Fostering attitudes that motivate us*; (2) *Discovering knowledge that inform us of our own and others' cultural position*; (3) *Assessing the challenge and support factors that affect our adaptation*; (4) *Developing Skills that enable us to interact effectively and appropriately.*”(Bennett, 2003). The whole idea of this system, just like GPS, is to guide us a way to locate ourselves and others in the cultural map. Knowing where we are, what challenges we face is important for managing intercultural interactions. After which, we can assess the challenges and find our support as well as polish our skills. In a word, both DMIS and IPS help us to find out where we are in the process of developing intercultural competence which also provide me with guidance to assess students' IC. However, it should be noted that a long period of observation, tests, interviews, and even journals are needed to more accurately locate people's stage of intercultural sensitivity. Comparatively speaking, to evaluate people as either being ethnocentric or ethnorelative might be the starting point.

2.3.3. Stephen Bochner's ABC Model

By considering social psychology of intercultural interaction, Stephen Bochner developed a so-called ABC Model for understanding cultural shock and better adapt interculturality. According to Bochner(2003), cultural shock usually happen in two types of societies—between-society and within-society. The term **between-society** refers to “*individuals who travel beyond the countries of origin for a particular purpose and for a specified period of time, and relationships they establish with members of the host society.*” While **within-society** refers to multicultural societies such as the United States, Canada and Australia, etc. Mostly, those countries themselves consist of diverse ethnic groups of different race, cultures or even languages. And the reasons behind cultural shock mostly is **from experiencing different values** such as religious beliefs or practices, or different greeting habits, eating habits, etc., which then causes discomfort. For years, experts and scholars in

intercultural field had focused on the negative side of intercultural adaptation: either describing it as painful experiences, inherently unpleasant, or sometimes stigmatize those who “broken down” and gave up adapting.

But Stephan Bochner see this process of intercultural adaptation as a learning process, with both **negative and positive impacts**. And it could act like a catalyst for people to become more interculturally competent. He supported his argument from the following three aspects: **Affect, Behavior, and Cognition**. First of all, Negative affect such as confusion, anxiety, disorientation, suspicion and even grief, if dealt with properly, can lead to active and adaptive response. Secondly, lacking behavioral skills such as **social interaction skills, language proficiency and relevant cultural knowledge** may lead to failure in adaptation. However, under such circumstances, solutions like having host -culture friends might be a good choice. Thirdly, people from different cultural backgrounds may have different understanding towards the same cultural event, and may perceive things differently. However, it is those special moments and experiences that enhance people's cultural sensitivity and awareness.

Stephen Bochner also provided indicators to measure cultural shock from Affective, Behavioral and Cognitive dimensions respectively. Affective adjustment can be measured from negative aspects such as stress, anxiety, confusions, physical and mental illness, low self-esteem and homesickness, etc. while positive adaption may also happen, such as the extent of emotional well-being, and a sense of satisfaction. Behavioral dimension includes a series of skills that help to adjust: (1) Instrumental Adjustment, i.e. the ability to navigate in the new, foreign environment. (2) Interaction Adjustment, casual interaction with host members. (3) Relational adjustment, the ability to maintain non-trivial friendship and social networks with host members. Cognitive Dimension can be measured from the interest in other cultures, tolerance for cultural differences, and positive attitudes towards new or unusual cultural environment.(Bochner, 2003)

Stephen Bochner's theory mainly focus on the adaptation in a new and different cultural environment; it is of great help for those who plan to work or live overseas. For most Chinese students, their intercultural competence is developed for the

purpose of between-society culture contact, with the consideration of China as a non-migrant country, in which the race, and cultures are relatively unified. The purpose of intercultural communication is mainly for communicating with people from other countries. From my point of view, a clear sense of ethnic and cultural identity can also be included when interacting interculturally, in case of losing oneself in the process of adaptation or integration.

2.3.4. Byram's 5-Dimension Model

Michael Byram is one of the most influential scholars in the field of intercultural competence, with his specific research area in **foreign language education**. He wrote lots of research papers on the importance of integrating intercultural competence into the objectives of foreign language teaching and learning. And he also stressed on the key role of foreign language education in helping students to become global citizens with intercultural citizenship. He developed an IC model in 1997 (shown below), with the purpose of providing reference to foreign language teachers and learners.

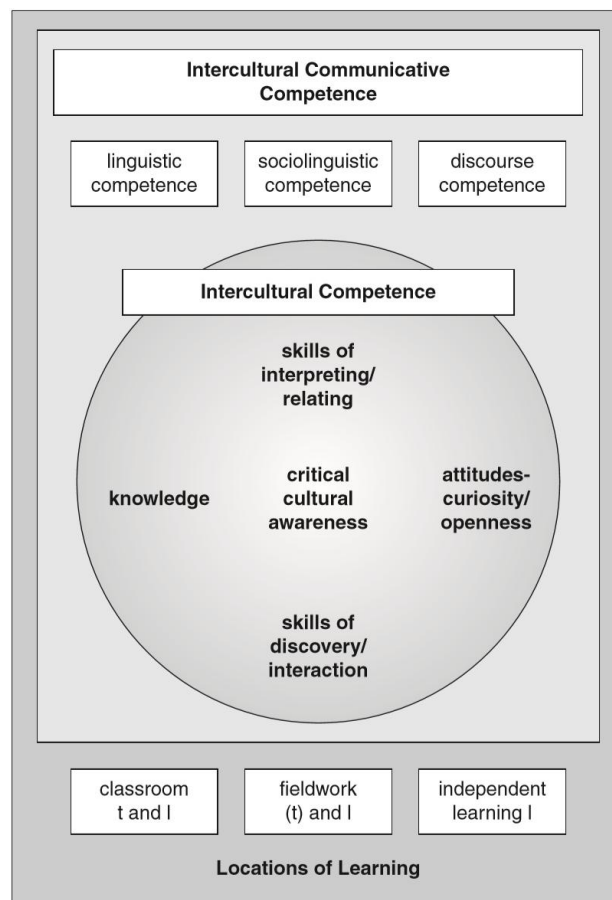


Table 2.2. Source: Byram(1997)

Byram(1997) argued that for a long time, imitating native speaker is how foreign language is taught in schools, which is actually unrealistic and wrong. It is unrealistic because it's impossible for foreign language learners to have the exact level of linguistic competence that native speakers have, plus it's unnecessary. **It is wrong because learning a foreign language is also a process of knowing more about one's own cultural identity and identities of other cultures. It's about integrating both cultures and looking for the best way to communicate interculturally instead of using the other culture's "native way" to communicate.** In other words, This is a misguide. They imitate everything about the other culture, including the ways of speaking, behavior, and even values etc. **The result of imitating the native speaker is either assuming the other culture is better or being not able to communicate with one's own cultural identity.** Therefore, as Byram suggested, becoming intercultural speakers should be one of the objectives of learning a foreign language.

Byram's model includes four aspects: (1) linguistic competence; (2) sociolinguistic competence; (3) discourse competence; (4) intercultural competence. Intercultural competence is then **further divided** into the following five components: **(1) attitudes of curiosity and openness etc. (2) knowledge; (3) skills of interpreting and relating; (4) skills of discovery and interaction; (5) critical cultural awareness.** According to Byram, one will successfully become an intercultural speaker if acquiring the above competences. **And he clearly pointed out that the term "intercultural speaker" was developed for the purpose of foreign language learning and teaching, not for preparation of migrating to another country.**

The first three aspects can be generalized as communicative competence, which combine with the fourth aspect, i.e. intercultural competence to become intercultural communicative competence. One thing worth noting is that Byram distinguishes IC from ICC, by stating that IC is part of ICC. Attitude of curiosity and openness is the first component in intercultural competence. A positive attitude is the beginning of effective intercultural communication, which refers to being curious and open about

other cultures, being tolerant and respectful to cultural differences, as well as being able to seeing things from others' perspectives. The second component is knowledge which includes cultural knowledge of one's own and others', interpersonal and social interaction knowledge. And those knowledge should not be static; it should be a process of reflecting and understanding one's own and others' cultures and identities. Critical cultural awareness should always be there when learning knowledge. The third component is skills of interpreting and relating which is helpful in fostering mutual understanding and avoid cultural conflicts. The fourth component is skills of discovery and interaction. Intercultural speakers are good at discovering useful knowledge and skills they need and being flexible and adaptable in intercultural interaction. They are creative and smart to apply what they have in order to guarantee effective and appropriate communication. The last component is critical cultural awareness, i.e. the ability to understand and interpret one's own and others' cultures critically and rationally. This is something enlightening for English teachers in China: how to make English language learning more educational, thought-provoking and transferable as a skill for students to apply in the real world. Critical cultural awareness is central and vital but challenging for teachers, since many of them may feel they themselves are lacking such awareness and have no idea where to start. Therefore, intercultural training is critical and urgent for all the EFL teachers, helping them to realize English learning is beyond grammar, sentence patterns, and the factual knowledge of certain countries.

As mentioned above, Byram constructed this model in the hope that foreign language teachers are aware of the importance of developing students' intercultural competence while learning the language and will hence specify this objective in their lesson plans. Actually, it's quite common that teachers may mention cultures and comparison of their own with the other cultures from time to time. However, mostly it's not planned. Rather, they are just bits and parts, instead of in a systematic manner. As Byram(2009) said, "*The model shall help foreign language teachers to plan more deliberately than they often do, to include intercultural competence in their pedagogical aims.*" Besides, In China, too much emphasis has been put on linguistic competence when learning

English; and sociolinguistic, discourse competence as well as intercultural competence as Byram suggested, is more often than not, neglected. We have to ask ourselves as English teachers: do we help our students to fully prepared for communication across cultures or using lingua franca to communicate intercultural? Have we make efforts to help students to find opportunities to emerge in intercultural conversations?

2.3.5. Kim's Intercultural Adaptation Theory

Intercultural adaptation/adjustment is a continuous learning process. According to Carse (1986), the continuous game is not “to win”, but “to play endlessly”. In other words, intercultural adaptation as a dynamic process aims to increase mutual understanding, expand mutual respect, and extend the space for mutual acceptance. “understanding → respect → acceptance” is the development direction of intercultural adaptation.

Y.Y.Kim is one of the most prominent and influential scholars in the field of intercultural communication studies. She has started to construct the Intercultural Adaptation Theory since 1979 and published a more comprehensive version in 2001 after several times of revisions. The subject investigated and analyzed is sojourner, and the main point discussed is the developmental process of intercultural adaptation competence. The theory combines macro level and micro level, as well as internal and external conditions, which systematically illustrated a series of elements that affect intercultural adaptations competence. Kim(2001a) thinks that “stranger” is an open system; when facing the pressure brought by the new environment, strangers living in unfamiliar places can continuously change, adapt and grow through learning and adjustment; people and the environment have a mutually reinforcing relationship. Cross-cultural adaptation is first of all a process of learning. While strangers learn new knowledge and develop new habits, they remove some old habits and gradually transform into cross-cultural people who can cross cultural boundaries freely. There are six influential factors in intercultural adaptation theory: (1) personal communication. (2) social communication. (3) Ethnic communication. (4) Environment. (5) predisposition. (6) intercultural transformation.

The first factor that affects intercultural adaptability is personal communication, that is, the ability of strangers to learn and internalize communicative symbols. Strangers need to develop positive emotions and motivations, learn local language, non-verbal knowledge and cultural customs, and master interpersonal communication skills. Personal communicative competence forms the basis of social communication.

Social communication is the second factor that affects intercultural adaptability, which refers to the ability of strangers to participate in local social activities directly or indirectly, including face-to-face interpersonal communication and communication through mass media such as newspapers, magazines, TV or movies and advertisements. In the process, strangers and hosts (that is, locals) begin to form a series of social relationships. Social communication provides strangers with opportunities to learn language and culture, obtain various information, get help and support, so that they can smoothly integrate into the new culture.

The third factor is ethnic communication, that is, communication with members of the stranger's own ethnic group. Ethnic communication also belongs to social communication, but the former only involves members of the same ethnic group, while the latter may involve different groups. At the initial stage of the new culture, ethnic communication enables strangers to get emotional support and material support to ease the pressure of adaptation, but later it will hinder their interaction with local people and slow down the process of cross-cultural adaptation.

The fourth factor is environment. Cross-cultural adaptation is carried out in a new social environment, and environmental factors include the acceptance of strangers by local society, assimilation pressure and ethnic strength. If the local society is open, tolerant and friendly to strangers, it can create a good and relaxing environment for adaptation. If it requires strangers to abandon the original culture and strictly follow local customs, it will generate greater pressure for assimilation. A diverse and multicultural social environment will help to relieve the pressure of assimilation and make the process of cross-cultural adaptation relatively peaceful and comfortable. Ethnic strength refers to the status, prestige, and influence of a stranger's ethnic group in local society. Strong ethnic groups can increase the acceptance of strangers in local

society and reduce the pressure to assimilate, but they can also reduce their motivation to change themselves and integrate into the local culture.

The fifth factor is predisposition, that is, the potential of the communicator to adapt to the new society and environment. It includes three aspects: (1) preparedness for change. (2) ethnic proximity. (3) adaptative personality.

If the communicator is willing to accept new things and wants to integrate into the local society as soon as possible, he/she will have strong adaptability. If the ethnic group of the communicator is close to the culture of the local dominant ethnic group, the cross-cultural adaptation will be relatively smooth; otherwise, it will be more difficult. In addition, the personality of the communicator also affects the development of the ability to adapt. If the communicator is open, tolerant, positive, resilient and willing to take risks, he or she will be able to withstand multiple pressures and adapt to the new culture as soon as possible.

The sixth factor is intercultural transformation. After overcoming the difficulties and pressures of cross-cultural adaptation and overcoming setbacks and failures, the strangers gradually transformed themselves, their personalities were re-integrated at a higher level and gradually transformed into intercultural people. There are three criteria to measure intercultural transformation: (1) functional fitness; (2) psychological health; (3) intercultural identity. At this stage, communicators are able to cope with various communicative situations with ease, participate in social activities happily, and have a broader vision and an identity beyond a single culture, which can effectively promote the interaction and dialogue between self-culture and other cultures. Intercultural transformation is not only the result of cross-cultural adaptation, but also has an impact on cross-cultural adaptation, so that the intercultural competence of strangers continues to develop and improve. The following shows Kim's intercultural adaptation model (Kim 2001 a).

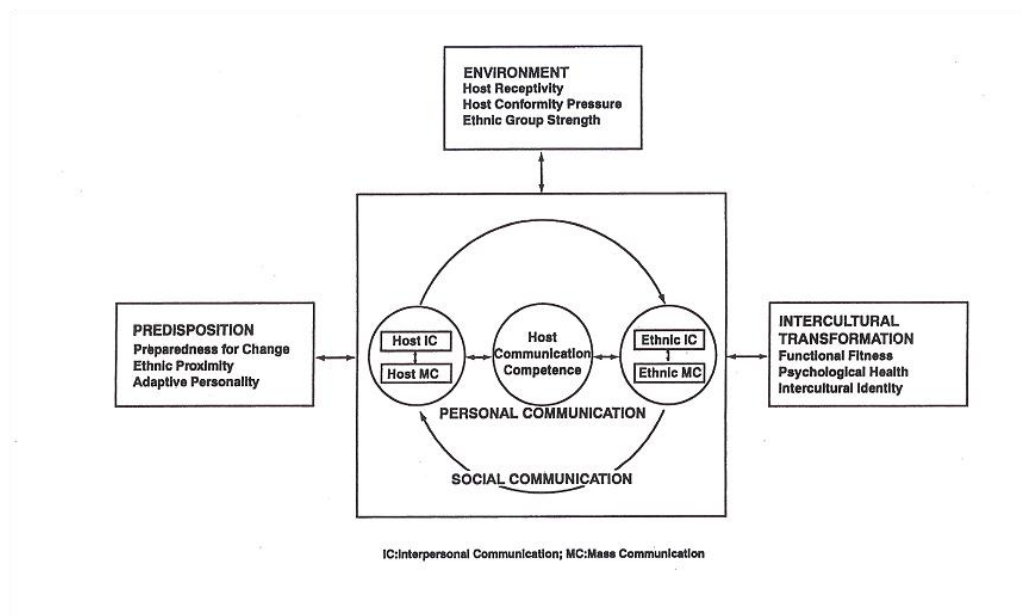


Table 2.3. (Source: Kim, 2001).

Kim's (2001a) theory systematically explains the key factors influencing the development of intercultural adaptability from multiple levels, and its contribution mainly includes two points. First, a comprehensive IC analysis of the individual and social levels of communication. Most theories of intercultural competence focus on the individual personality or motivation of communicators and fail to analyze the role of social factors such as the acceptance degree of the host country, ethnic power and mass media. Kim's theory combines factors at the individual level with those at the social level, providing a new way for us to look at intercultural competence more comprehensively.

Besides, Kim (2001a) clearly pointed out that cross-cultural adaptation is a process in which strangers face the pressure brought by the new environment, constantly learn and change, and become intercultural people. At the same time, the success of cross-cultural transformation will promote the development of cross-cultural adaptability and hence leading to a benign interaction. The three criteria she proposed to measure cross-cultural transformation -- functional fitness, psychological health and intercultural identity, jumped out of the veil of appropriateness and effectiveness, and were full of enlightenment.

However, according to Dai(2018), there is weakness in Kim's (2001a) theory. the interpretation of ethnic factors. According to Kim, ethnic factors that influence cross-cultural adaptation include proximity and strength of ethnic groups, while ignoring the history of inter-ethnic interactions. Gallos et al. (2005) revealed that the history of inter-ethnic communication is an important factor influencing cross-cultural adaptation. Numerous facts show that the history of friendly and mutually beneficial exchanges between ethnic groups often has great positive effects. On the other hand, a history of antagonism and unpleasantness often has a very negative effect. Therefore, if a sojourner is only close to his own ethnic group or to a similar culture, it's possible that he/she may take longer time accept or even reject other cultures.

2.3.6. Ting-Toomey and A. Kurogi's Facework Competence Model: an updated Face-Negotiation Theory

Ting-Toomey has long been dedicated to the research of face-related conflicts in intercultural communication, and she has started to constructed Face Negotiation Theory since 1988 and has been consistently improving it since then. According to Ting-Toomey(1988), *“Face refers to a claimed sense of favorable social self-worth that a person wants others to have of her or him...Losing face and saving face are some of the key concerns of face-negotiation theory.”* By analyzing the influence of “I-identity” and “we-identity” in individualism and collectivism respectively on intercultural communication across cultures, Ting-Toomey(1988) proposed Face Negotiation Theory, which originally includes 7 assumptions and 12 propositions, and later updated into 32 propositions in 1998. The general idea of the 7 assumptions is to acknowledge that it's common for people in all cultures to maintain and negotiate face in communication; but sometimes face is vulnerable and may cause conflicts when the feeling of discomfort or embarrassment occurs. Also, the understanding of face varies in different cultures, and the facework behaviors are influenced by individualism-collectivism, and power distance, etc. Based on the above assumptions, a series of updated propositions are made as follows,

TABLE 1

A Summary of Face-Negotiation Theory (1998)

Culture-level propositions

Proposition 1: Members of individualistic cultures tend to express a greater degree of self-face maintenance messages than members of collectivistic cultures.

Proposition 2: Members of collectivistic cultures tend to express a greater degree of other-face or mutual-face maintenance messages than members of individualistic cultures.

Proposition 3: Members of individualistic cultures tend to use self-face autonomy-preserving interaction strategies more so than members of collectivistic cultures.

Proposition 4: Members of collectivistic cultures tend to use other-face non-impositional strategies more so than members of individualistic cultures.

Proposition 5: Members of individualistic cultures tend to use self-face approval-seeking interaction strategies more so than members of collectivistic cultures.

Proposition 6: Members of collectivistic cultures tend to use other-face approval-enhancing interaction strategies more so than members of individualistic cultures.

Proposition 7: Members of individualistic cultures, when their face is threatened, will tend to use situational accounts (i.e. external causes) to save face more than members of collectivistic cultures.

Proposition 8: Members of collectivistic cultures, when their face is threatened, will tend to use dispositional accounts (i.e. internal causes) to accept face loss more than members of individualistic cultures.

Proposition 9: Members of individualistic cultures tend to use a greater degree of direct, upfront facework strategies in a conflict situation than members of collectivistic cultures.

Proposition 10: Members of collectivistic cultures tend to use a greater degree of indirect, smoothing facework strategies than members of individualistic cultures.

Proposition 11: Members of small power distance cultures tend to expect and express a greater degree of horizontal facework interaction (i.e. minimizing respect-deference distance) than members of large power distance cultures.

Proposition 12: Members of large power distance cultures tend to expect and express a greater degree of vertical facework interaction (i.e. maximizing respect-deference distance) than members of small power distance cultures.

Proposition 13: High-status members of small power distance cultures tend to use verbally-direct facework strategies such as direct disapproval strategies (e.g. criticism) and autonomy-threat strategies (e.g. order) to induce compliance more than high-status members of large power distance cultures.

Proposition 14: Low-status members of small power distance cultures tend to use self-face defensive strategies to counter face threat more than members of large power distance cultures, and that low-status members of large power distance cultures tend to use self-effacing strategies to mitigate face threat more than members of small power distance cultures.

Proposition 15: Members of individualistic cultures tend to use more dominating/competing conflict strategies than members of collectivistic cultures.

Proposition 16: Members of collectivistic cultures tend to use more avoiding/obliging conflict strategies than members of individualistic cultures.

Proposition 17: Members of individualistic cultures tend to use more substantive, outcome-oriented conflict strategies (e.g. substantive appeals, task-oriented integrating and compromising styles) than members of collectivistic cultures.

Proposition 18: Members of collectivistic cultures tend to use more relational, process-oriented conflict strategies (e.g. identity and ingroup-based appeals, relational integration and concession styles) than members of individualistic cultures.

continued

TABLE 1—continued.

Proposition 19: High-status members of small power distance cultures tend to use more dominating conflict styles and verbally-direct coercive tactics than high-status members of large power distance cultures, and that high-status members of large power distance cultures tend to use more shame-inducing relational conflict styles and indirect tactics than high-status members of small power distance cultures.

Proposition 20: Low-status members of small power distance cultures tend to use dominating conflict styles to resist compliance more than members of large power distance cultures, and that low-status members of large power distance cultures tend to use obliging, avoiding, and neglect conflict styles more than low-status members of small power distance cultures.

Individual-level propositions

Proposition 21: An increase in self-face emphasis is associated with an increase in self-face honoring or self-face enhancement interaction behaviors.

Proposition 22: An increase in other- and mutual-face emphasis is associated with an increase in self-effacing or ingroup-enhancement facework behaviors.

Proposition 23: Self-face maintenance is associated positively with dominating/competing conflict management style.

Proposition 24: Other-face maintenance is associated positively with avoiding/obliging conflict management style.

Proposition 25: Self-face maintenance is associated positively with substantive conflict resolution modes.

Proposition 26: Mutual or other-face maintenance is associated positively with relational conflict resolution modes.

Proposition 27: High independent self-construal type is associated positively with dominating/competing conflict management style.

Proposition 28: High interdependent self-construal type is associated positively with avoiding/obliging conflict management style.

Proposition 29: High independent self-construal type is associated positively with substantive conflict resolution modes.

Proposition 30: High interdependent self-construal type is associated positively with relational conflict resolution modes.

Proposition 31: Biconstrual type is associated positively with both substantive and relational conflict resolution modes.

Proposition 32: Ambivalent type is associated negatively with both substantive and relational conflict resolution modes.

Table 2.4. (Source:Ting-Toomey& A. Kurogi. 1998)

In 1998, she cooperated with A.Kurogi and published Facework Competence Model in Intercultural conflict. The two researchers stated that people of different cultures all try to protect their own face; face conflicts are common in the process of intercultural communication. Therefore, facework competence is needed to avoid or solve such conflicts. “*Facework competence is conceptualized as an optimal integration of knowledge, mindfulness and communication skills in managing self’s and other’s face-related concerns*”(Ting-Toomey, 1994b, 1997).

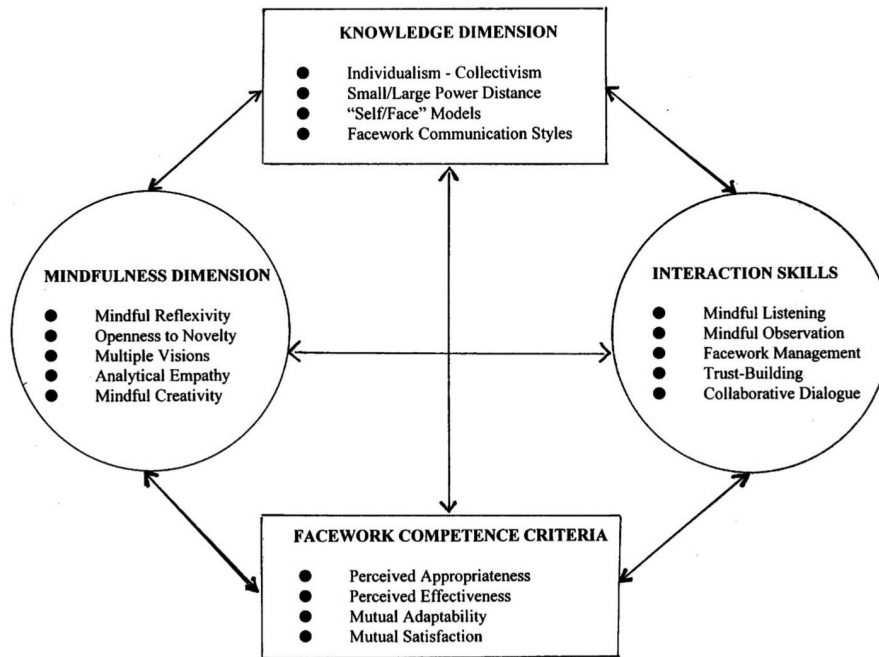


FIGURE 1. A Facework Competence Model: Composite Dimensions © Stella Ting-Toomey. All Rights Reserved. 1998.

Table 2.5. Source: Ting-Toomey, S & A. Kurogi. (1998)

Knowledge dimension involves the influence of individualism-collectivism, large/small power distance on facework communication styles in different cultures. Communicators should consciously learn culture-related knowledge and accumulate experiences for the benefit of mutual understanding. For example, Chinese people value group-face and other-face, while US value I-face. When communicating with each other, proper facework strategy should be applied such as integrating the interest of both sides or making concessions. The second dimension is mindfulness which includes mindful reflexivity, openness to novelty, multiple visions, analytical empathy and mindful creativity. Mindful reflexivity is a very interesting term, which is seldom mentioned or explained in other IC theories. It is a proactive reflection on one's own values, self-monitoring if one's own assumption is true meanwhile being mindful of others' values and making effort to reach mutual understanding. And as Ting-Toomey illustrates, being creative also helps, since being creative means to see things from

multiple perspectives, which coincide with the need of being ethnorelative, knowing that people in different cultures see things from different perspectives. The third dimension is interaction skills, which refer to the ability to appropriately and effectively interact and adapt each other in specific contexts. Key skills include mindful listening, mindful observing, facework management, trust building and collaborative dialogue. In Ting-Toomey's theory, she talks a lot about mindfulness, which I think is more holistic than empathy. It reminds people of taking proactive facework strategies to avoid possible face-threatening conflicts. That's why this theory has been widely used in the intercultural training for multinational companies.

As Ting-Toomey said, *“we have identified the four criteria of appropriateness, effectiveness, mutual adaptation and mutual satisfaction for evaluating intercultural facework competence. Other criteria may be added in the future to reflect the facework concerns of different cultural regions.”* I can't help but think, as appropriateness and effectiveness are already recognized as the standard to evaluate intercultural competence which is more western-value oriented, is it possible to apply Ting-Toomey's criteria of evaluating intercultural facework competence to assessing IC in a more holistic way? Since mutual adaptation and satisfaction indicate the importance of making efforts to adapt and satisfy each other in the communication process, which correspond with the Oriental culture in valuing the harmonious relationship in the process and afterwards, instead of only focusing on the one-time goal after the communication. Thus, Ting-Toomey's theory is actually a good combination of western and Eastern understanding on communication.

By reviewing Ting-Toomey and A.Kurogi's theory, it's not difficult to realize that actually face-related concerns usually exist in intercultural conflicts; and therefore facework competence can be regarded as a complementary competence when solving the conflicts. In other words, it is vital in promoting a harmonious atmosphere and a lasting relationship between the two sides. By considering my topic which is related to the cultivation of students' intercultural competence, questions such as “should facework competence be included as part of intercultural competence students need to master?” and “can mindfulness be learned effectively during college years?” are

worth pondering.

2.3.7. X.S.Xiao &G.M.Chen's Intercultural Competence Theory from Confucianism's perspective

In view of the phenomenon that western scholars tend to attach importance to the knowledge and skills of communicative competence while ignoring moral cultivation, Xiao &Chen (2009) explored intercultural competence from the Confucian perspective, highlighting its moral and ethical aspects, aiming to reveal the different understandings on communicative competence between Chinese culture and western culture and promote intercultural communication between China and the west. Confucian culture has always attached great importance to moral cultivation and advocated the life doctrine of “Dao, virtue, and benevolence ”. Based on the Chinese Confucian tradition, Xiao &Chen's theory has attracted the attention of many scholars with its unique perspective and profound insights (e.g. Dai &Chen, 2015; Nakayama &Martin 2014; Samovar et al. 2019) which provided meaning inspiration for Chinese researchers to construct localized theory.

Xiao &Chen (2009) believe that western culture is self-centered and emphasizes the control of process and the realization of predetermined goals when evaluating communicative competence. However, this perspective does not apply to the analysis of Chinese communicative competence. Chinese Confucian culture takes interpersonal relationship as the center, and focuses on interpersonal telepathy and mutual influence in the evaluation of communicative competence. In the view of Confucian culture, a person's communicative competence lies not in whether one can control the communication process and achieve personal goals, but in whether he/she can influence others by virtue and constantly improve his/her character. This theory is guided by the core concept of sensing ability, which means the ability to feel and respond to each other and it includes four basic propositions: (1) Confucian culture regards all things as one and organically connected with each other. The sensing ability is an ability endowed by nature to touch and respond to each other, both psychologically and biologically; (2) the medium of mutual sensing of all things in

the world is “qi”(explain). Since all living things, including people, mountains, vegetation, earth and sky, are born with “qi”, they can communicate with each other and feel each other; (3) all forms of interaction take place in an organic whole. Each component can feel the overall development status and needs of the whole when interacting with other parts, and make appropriate responses; (4) sensing is the feeling and compassion for other creatures, an act of appropriate moral influence or response. Based on the above prepositions, they proposed that communicative competence in the Confucian perspective composed of two supplementary abilities-- internal and external. Internal ability is to touch people's heart and influence others with virtue and sincerity. And sincerity is like a mirror which could show the needs of others and hence being empathetic; external ability is the ability to abide by certain moral codes, so as to behave appropriately and establish harmonious relationship. In other words, to perform propriety(Li in Chinese). “Propriety” is the standard to define the intimacy of interpersonal relationship, the similarities and differences of things as well as distinguish right from wrong. In this sense, the ability to practice moral codes is also the ability to practice propriety. “Li” plays a double role in social communication, which not only normalizes social communication, but also creates new forms of interaction.

In Xiao and Chen's theory, the ability to practice moral codes or propriety can be realized by following two types of rules: regulative rules and constitutive rules. The former refers to rules that people must follow in a social context, such as table manners and cultural taboos in different regions , which helps to regulate and adjust social relations, and the latter refers to the rules that is connected with people's specific actions and behaviors, such as being sincere, honest, polite and respectful etc., which is more flexible that people could be creative when following them.

Xiao & Chen's theory discussed a lot about the roles of moral codes, propriety and sensing ability in intercultural competence; this traditional value from Confucianism is very different from western culture that emphasizes on knowledge and skills. Of course, we couldn't say which is better or which is more right; rather, they all help to enrich our understanding of intercultural competence. what's more, the highlight of

this theory is the attention to the value of moral and ethical aspects, especially in today's world when racial discrimination is heatedly discussed. It's necessary to keep certain moral and ethical rules in mind when dealing with intercultural issues.

2.3.8. X.D.Dai &G.M.Chen's Intercultural Competence Model from the Perspective of Interculturality

Dai and Chen (2015) discussed intercultural competence from the perspective of **interculturality**, which means to focus equally on the personality of the communicators and the interaction process of both sides, and then to combine the two in a harmonious way. In interculturality, self and others are independent and connected. They constantly learn new knowledge, expand their own identity and adapt to each other as they interact in an intercultural context.

As a Chinese saying goes, "Harmony generates vitality and sameness stifles vitality." According to Dai and Chen , if there is nothing in common between the two sides, then mutual understanding will be impossible; if the two communicators are exactly the same, then it will be meaningless to communicate. Therefore, only when differences and commonness are balanced and proper tension is formed, can intercultural communication be more dynamic and creative(Dai, 2010). Based on this view, **intercultural competence is the communicators' ability to establish intercultural connections, develop harmonious and balanced relationships and grow together.**

As stated in previous chapters, most western scholars agree on the dimensions of knowledge, emotion/attitude and behaviors as the essential components of intercultural competence. This view neglects the moral and ethical factors valued by Asian and African cultures. Therefore, Dai and Chen argued that, in the process of intercultural communication, some people dominate the conversation and enjoy more discourse power , while others are suppressed and cannot fully make their voice heard. Some people care about each other's feelings while others are self-centered, regardless of others' feelings and even impose their own opinions on others. Hence, establishing sound moral codes and ethical norms might be the solution to guarantee successful

intercultural communication to a maximum extent(Casimir, 1997; Hall 1997). That's why Dai and Chen debated that moral competence should be included as an indispensable element in intercultural competence.

With the perspective of interculturality, Dai and Chen's IC theory includes the following,

(1) Emotional aspects, (2)Cognitive aspects, (3) behavioral aspects, and (4) Moral aspects.

Emotional aspects consists of four elements :(1) an open mind; (2) a self-concept of interconnection; (3) positive empathy; (4) mutual appreciation. An open mind is an attitude of being open to different perspectives, trying new things, and enriching one's horizon. When communicators cross cultural boundaries and form social relationships with others, they reframe their sense of self and develop more inclusive identities (Brewer 1991). Self-concept is the way people see themselves. A self-concept of interconnection could reveal people's social attributes and promote the development of intercultural relations. Communicators with such concept regard others as the necessary conditions for their own survival and development, and would take the initiative to adjust themselves to the new environment and try to explore effective ways to live in harmony with people from different cultures. Empathy is the ability to see things from others' perspective; it's either pure empathy or positive empathy(Dai, 2010). The former only think about what others think and abandon their own thoughts, while the latter not only see things from other people's perspective, but also share their own feelings and experiences and strive to maintain their own identity. Positive empathy enables communicators to put themselves in others' shoes while thinking rationally and critically, which contributes to the development of sound and harmonious intercultural relations. The fourth factor on the emotional level is mutual appreciation, which means to appreciate each other as respectful partners and being eager to explore each other's cultural treasures and experience the unique charm. Mutual appreciation help people to realize the diversified cultures of mankind are interdependent and should be treated equally.

The second aspect is **cognition**, which refers to the ability to master the knowledge

and comprehend the content. It consists of cultural knowledge, critical cultural awareness, cultural integration and an intercultural perspective. Knowing others' culture and history could help to better understand the meaning behind verbal and nonverbal language, and then comprehend its rich cultural connotation. What's more, those who have critical cultural awareness is capable of telling truth from the false and become a creative communicator of his/her own opinions, hence to promote cultural integration.

The third aspect is **behavioral skills**. An intercultural communicator should be able to apply what he/she learned into practice. To be more specific, the skills of interaction, identity negotiation, construction of harmony and creative tension are necessary to achieve this goal. The first two skills are needless to explain; while keeping creative tension is the ability to bravely express one's different point of view and defend one's position, meanwhile carrying out constructive dialogues with the other side. Sometimes this may result in a feeling of discomfort or difficulties in communicating, but this is when people could see different perspectives that make the conversation more dynamic and meaningful.

The fourth dimension is **moral ethics**. Moral competence refers to the ability to practice values and codes of conduct conforming to communicative ethics. It consists of four elements : (1) mutual respect; (2) the sincerity; (3) tolerance; (4) the responsibility. Mutual respect is the basis for developing harmonious intercultural relations. Respect for others means treating them as worthy partners, giving them the right and opportunity to express themselves freely. Sincerity means being honest with yourself and others without concealing your actual intentions and desires. Intercultural interaction involves diversity and requires communicators to be tolerant; only with an open mind can we share the insights and wisdom of others. Responsibility means the obligation of one party to the other to explain, persuade, cooperate and assist. The greater the cultural difference, the more important the moral obligation (Casmir 1997). When both sides can shoulder the responsibility of communication, harmonious intercultural relationship will be very likely to be realized.

Dai and Chen's theory on intercultural competence from the perspective of

interculturality is of great significance and more holistic in that it equally takes into consideration of Western and Oriental cultures. Therefore, the author has found it enlightening in understanding the essence of intercultural competence more deeply. What impresses me most is the addition of moral competence. East Asian culture, represented by China, Japan and South Korea, has always attached great importance to communicators' moral cultivation and communicative ethics. The introduction of moral competence is conducive to correcting the bias of western theories, so that people can have a more comprehensive understanding in the definition of intercultural competence and a clearer understanding of its complexity.

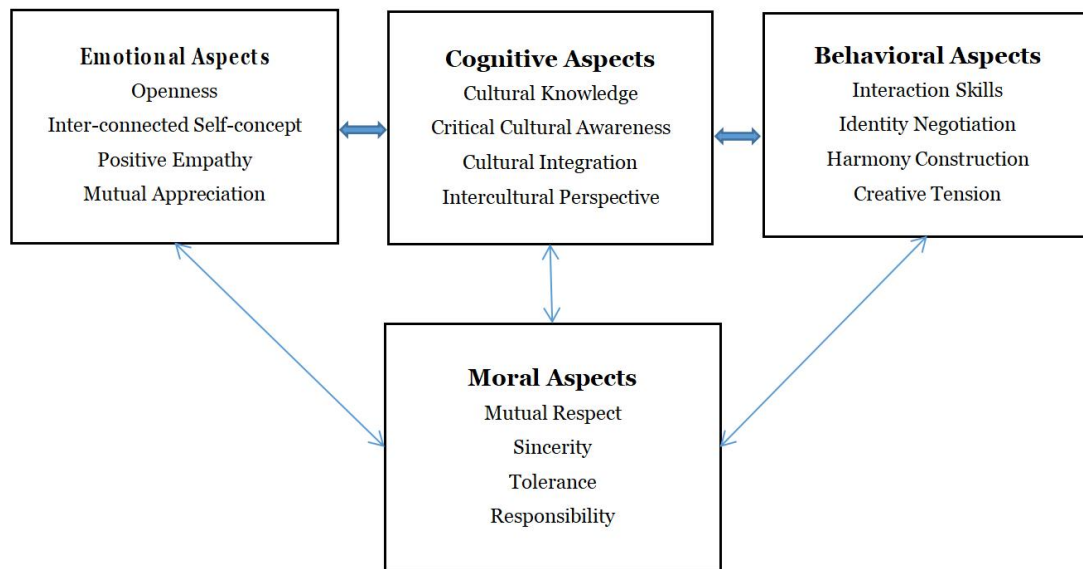


Table2.6. Intercultural Competence Model from the perspective of Interculturality(translated from the Chinese version, Dai and Chen, 2015)

2.3.9. J.Takai and H.Ota's Intercultural Competence Model (Japan)

Japanese culture is deeply influenced by Confucianism, and these effects are manifested in various aspects of Japanese values and behaviors. As early as the 1990s, Japanese scholars started to explore intercultural competence from a local perspective and construct their own theories. They criticized the cultural prejudice of the western perspective and displayed the uniqueness of Japanese ways of communication. The theoretical model of Takai & Ota (1994) is selected here which provides a way for us to know Japanese people's view on intercultural competence.

There are many similarities between Japanese culture and Chinese culture. For example, they both attach importance to interpersonal harmony, paying attention to maintaining mutual face(mianzi in Chinese) in communication; and they both have a strong sense of hierarchy, and tend to convey information in an indirect and euphemistic way. Takai & Ota believes that harmony, sensitivity, humility, restraint, interdependence and strong sense of group and hierarchy are some of the typical and particular features in Japanese society. If the western IC theory is used to interpret Japanese communicative behavior, cultural bias might be generated. Therefore, more localized perspectives should be taken into account in intercultural communication.

Takai & Ota(1994) constructed intercultural competence model into five dimensions :(1) the perceptual competence :(2) self-restraint; (3) social appropriateness; (4) interpersonal sensitivity; (5) tolerance to ambiguity.

Perceptual competence refers to the ability of perceiving or sensing the other party's unspoken words or underlying intensions, especially through nonverbal details. And self-restraint is the ability to refrain from expressing direct dissatisfaction or outright confrontation when you have negative feelings for someone or have to do something against your will since interpersonal harmony is the core value of Japanese culture; people tend not to collide with others and try to avoid conflicts. And the third dimension is social appropriateness. It is the ability to deal with hierarchical relationships, that is, to properly handle the relationship between superiors and subordinates, respectfully treat the boss, and appropriately socialize. And it is especially important to use honorific language to speak to their superiors. Interpersonal sensitivity, i.e. being sensitive and acute in grasping direct and indirect message from others' words as well as accurately interpret others' intentions. Japanese people value face when socializing, therefore they will avoid putting themselves or others in an embarrassing situation by expressing indirectly, which require listeners to be sensitive enough to tell which words are for maintaining face and which is the real intentions. The last aspect is tolerance for ambiguity. Being ambiguity is a very typical feature in Japanese communication which should be a reminder for people from low context culture.

To sum up, Takai & Ota's (1994) theoretical model identified and analyzed the key elements of communication with a more localized perspective, which means it is more targeted on the intercultural communication between Japanese and other cultures, hence providing us with enlightenment for exploring the theory of intercultural competence from a non-western perspective. In that sense it is helpful to people from Western countries who travel to Japan for the first time in understanding what matters in Japanese culture when communicating with them, especially dimensions such as self-restraint and social appropriateness which display quite distinct cultural differences (i.e. harmony and hierarchical relationship) from western culture. What's more, elements such as interpersonal sensitivity and harmony, and the responsibility of the listeners to figure out and infer the other party's intentions are seldom mentioned in western IC theories. Of course, we should also realize that the importance of cultural knowledge is neglected in Takai & Ota's (1994)'s theory. It would be more inclusive if integrating the dimension of knowledge into their theory.

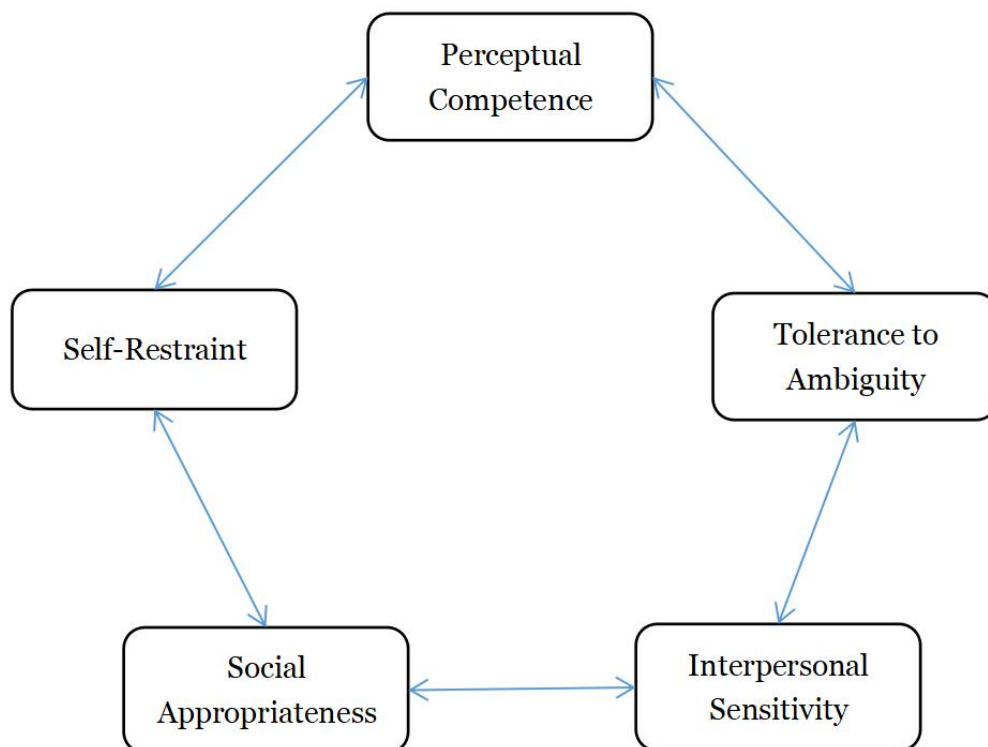


Table 2.7. Intercultural Competence Model under a Japanese Perspective (translated from Dai, 2018, Chapter 4, P95)

2.3.10. J.O.Yum's Intercultural Competence Theory from Korean Cultural perspective

Both Korean culture is also deeply influenced by Confucius' thoughts. And those influences too have largely formed the values and preferences of Korean people. For example, a harmonious interpersonal relationship is also very much cherished in Korean society. Other similarities include the importance of social hierarchy and Mianzi(face), etc. J.O.Yum started to study Koreans' cultural value and communicative patterns from 1980s and compared with those of western countries' cultural value and communicative patterns. Yum(2012) stated that the mainstream value in Korean society is harmony. Only when he / she establishes a relationship with others and integrates fully into the group/community by entering the state of "no self", can he / she realize self-worth. The standard to measure a person's communicative competence is not to achieve self-goals, but to form and develop a harmonious interpersonal relationship.

In 2012, Yum put forward her Intercultural Competence Theory from Korean Cultural perspective which consists of five components: (1)empathy; (2) sensitivity;(3) euphemistic; (4) Silence; (5) Transcendentalism.

Empathy is the most important skill to master when communicating with Koreans, which refers to the ability to share another person's feelings and emotions as if they were your own. It requires the communicators not only to understand the intention of others accurately, but also to be able to empathize with others and put themselves in the interests of others. The second component is **sensitivity**, which is closely related to empathy. It means that the communicator should be sensitive enough to judge if the language used is appropriate, if need of the other side is satisfied, and if the mutual relationship is harmonious. It requires communicators to be compassionate first, and not to hurt others' feelings; secondly, to keep a good interpersonal relationship with the sincerity as the bridge. The third element is **euphemism** which refers to the use of vague language or indirect methods to express. Korean culture belongs to high context culture; there are many obscure meanings and ways of expressions; and the

purpose is to prevent the embarrassment caused by the refusal of the other party, or to ease the disagreement between the two parties and try not to affect the harmonious interpersonal relationship.

Silence is the fourth component in Yum's theory. It means that when expressing feelings or opinions, communicators should be careful in their words and actions, and not easily reveal them directly. Because direct and reckless expression may hurt other people's feelings and cause interpersonal tension. The last component is **transcendentalism**, which means to communicate by using intelligible intuition that is beyond language use and common practice. Korean culture advocates the ability to read and comprehend one's thoughts, i.e. the real high level of communication doesn't need words to understand each other. Therefore, those who could fully understand the others' intention by either capturing the "unspoken language", or getting the whole picture through bits of information are regarded as the truly competent intercultural communicators.

Yum's theory not only elaborates the meaning of empathy in a Korean context but also further analyzes the power of influencing others by seeing things through other people's eyes. Besides, it is innovative to bring "intelligible intuition" into the discussion of intercultural competence. This term is similar to a Chinese expression "Hearts that have a common beat are linked"; in other word, the role of heart-to-heart communication and the stress on emotion and feelings are irreplaceable in Oriental countries such as Korea, Japan and China. This is very different from western perspectives that emphasize on direct language expression and rational communication. Yum's theory is a very good example to display some Oriental perspectives in communication. For example, observing from J.O.Yum's Intercultural Competence Theory, we could have a glimpse of the characteristics of Korean culture, i.e. the value of "we-identity" is quite obvious, and it is even concerned with one's survival in the society. Also, the ability of comprehending others' unspoken languages is also indispensable especially when the other sides is being euphemistic and silent. All of the above is useful information in understanding the intercultural communication with Korean culture. However, Just like Takai & Ota(1994), the

importance of cultural knowledge is also not mentioned in her theory, which should be indispensable in developing intercultural competence.

2.4. Assessment of Intercultural Competence

2.4.1. From Deardorff

Dr. Darla K. Deardorff is Executive Director of the Association of International Education Administrators, a leadership organization. She is also a research fellow at Duke University. And she has published widely, including editor of the well-known *The SAGE Handbook of Intercultural Competence* (Sage, 2009), and the latest published *Manual for Developing Intercultural Competence: Story Circle* (2019). Deardorff has conducted very systemic research on the assessment of intercultural competence. In her papers, she explained in detail about the questions such as: is there consensus on the definition of intercultural competence? What are the major components of intercultural competence? How to implement IC assessment? What are the challenges in the process of the assessment? Besides, Deardorff used the Delphi technique in order to find out what are the aspects that the panel of experts agreed on in terms of defining intercultural competence. In this sense, Deardorff's definition can be considered relatively reliable. The model below is constructed based on Delphi technique and this framework generally shows a broad idea that a panel of experts agree on; every aspect can be extended and further explained in detail based on contexts.

Based on Deardorff's framework, summary could be made as the following: cultural diversity is what makes our world worth exploring and full of beautiful surprises. Therefore, it's important to let others know that their cultures are valued and respected; even if encountering new or unbelievable cultural phenomenon, one should be open and curious enough to jump out of the comfort zone and try to understand others. Besides, knowledge and comprehension are also needed which include cultural self-awareness, cultural-specific knowledge and deep cultural knowledge which is

essential in understanding the world from others' perspectives. What's more, the skills of observation, listening, evaluating, analyzing, interpreting and relating are also needed for intercultural communication. These attitudes, knowledge, and skills ideally lead to an internal outcome that consists of flexibility, adaptability, an ethnorelative perspective and empathy. At this point, individuals are competent to understand the other party's words or behavior from others' perspective and react accordingly in an appropriate manner, hence achieving certain degree of success in the outcome of this intercultural conversation.(Deardorff, 2008)

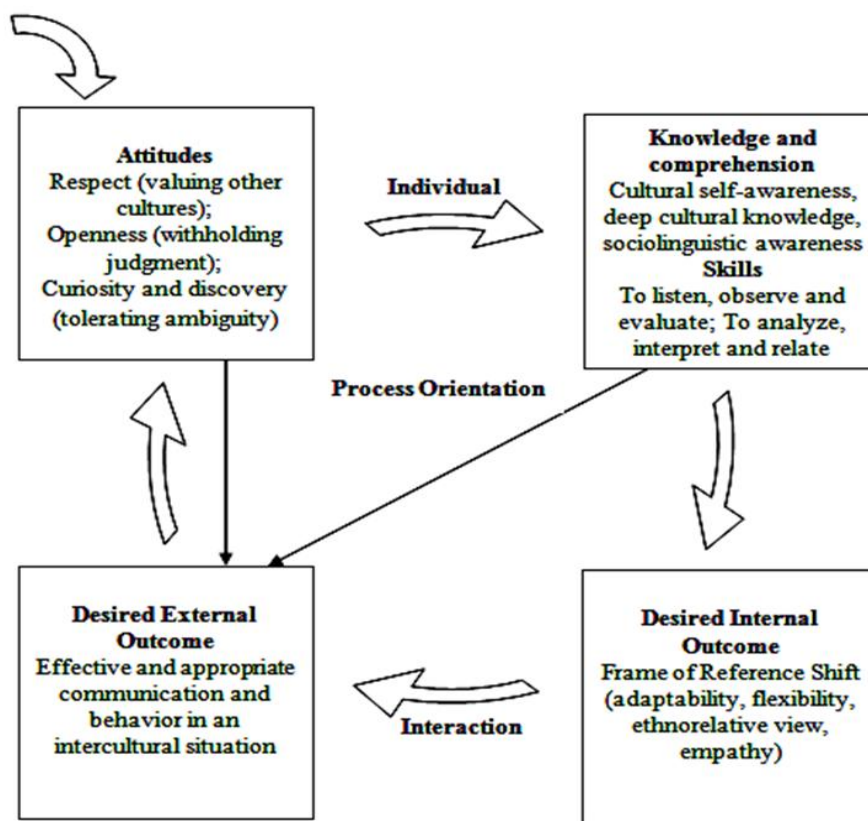


Table 2.8. Source: Deardorff, 2008.

Deardorff's Model of Intercultural Competence is comprehensive enough to get a clear picture of the essential components of IC for individuals, and it is especially helpful to evaluate one's attitudes, knowledge and skills towards the other culture in a western cultural context since this model was originally derived from the need to develop an assessment model for US education administrators for the purpose of internationalization of US education. Generally, it is a reliable framework to refer to;

however, some other elements may need to be considered when it is applied to the IC of foreign language learners in oriental countries such as China. In China, there are two realistic problems to some extent affecting the feasibility of model. First of all, as the main foreign language learners, English major students may have sufficient knowledge about western culture, their language skills such as listening and speaking cannot keep up due to lack of practice and intercultural opportunities. Therefore, they don't have interaction confidence to actively engage in an intercultural conversation. Secondly, the phenomenon of Chinese culture aphasia(which I mentioned in the first part of my thesis) is commonplace in China's higher education. With the lacking of critically comprehending and evaluating their own culture, young people easily get confused about their own cultural identity. which then leads to the loss of cultural confidence. Thus, the above should be carefully considered when applying

Deardorff's research is of great value in guiding me to have a comprehensive and holistic clue about the research methods I need to apply. She listed examples of Assessment Plan, Checklist for Evaluating Assessment Efforts, Intercultural Competence Assessment Guide, etc.(Chapter 28, Deardorff's *The Sage Handbook of Intercultural Competence*, 2009, see table below). All of the above provide a good reference in constructing the whole idea of assessing IC, especially in the preparation stage for designing the assessment plan. When talking about implementing intercultural competence assessment, she listed a number of items that have been agreed among top intercultural experts, such as case studies, interviews, mix of quantitative and qualitative measures, analysis of narrative diaries, self-report instruments, observation by others/host culture, etc.(Deardorff, 2009). However, it is still a very general guide, too general to offering systematic steps/procedures; for example, it didn't explain how to use the indicators or items to assess one's intercultural competence. Besides, the field practice is totally based on US experiences, which may be not totally applicable to my research under a Chinese context. According to Deardorff(2009), “graduating interculturally competent students” has been one of the essential goals for US education for quite a long time. This is of no surprise since the United States is a country with citizens of diverse cultural

backgrounds. The situation of China is very different from that of the US, therefore a more localized assessment plan might be needed. Questions such as what are the priorities of assessment in my research under Chinese context, and whether my research questions aligned with the assessment plan, and how to specify the degree of intercultural competence, ect, need to be pondered.

Once the assessment plan has been fully implemented, it is also important to evaluate the effectiveness of the assessment plan itself. To evaluate this process, one can use the checklist in Figure 28.4.

| MISSION: | | | | | |
|----------|--------------|---|---------------------------------------|----------|--|
| Goal | Objective(s) | Assessment Tool/Method and What It Measures | Planned Use of Data From Tool/ Method | Timeline | Shared Responsibility for Implementation (Including Analysis, Communication, etc.) |
| | | | | | |

Figure 28.3 Starting an Assessment Plan

Table 2.9. Source: Deardorff, 2009.

| |
|---|
| ____ Aligned: Are goals, objectives, and assessment measures aligned? |
| ____ Intentional: Is assessment intentionally addressed through an assessment plan? |
| ____ Developed: Have assessment issues (including logistical implementation) been carefully analyzed before a plan is implemented? |
| ____ Integrated: Is assessment integrated throughout the program and not viewed as an “add-on” (i.e., implemented only as a pre-post phenomenon)? |
| ____ Focused: Is assessment realistic within the parameters of the program/course, with two to three outcomes being assessed per program/course? |
| ____ Shared: Are assessment responsibilities shared with others (i.e., through an assessment team)? |
| ____ Supported: Is the senior leadership supportive of assessment efforts? |
| ____ Resourced: Is there adequate time and funding for assessment efforts, and have administrators received sufficient training and knowledge in assessment, with ongoing professional development? |
| ____ Analyzed: Have the assessment tools, results, and process been analyzed and evaluated? |
| ____ Communicated: Have the assessment results been communicated to all stakeholders? |
| ____ Used: Have the results been used for program improvement as well as for learner feedback? |
| ____ Reviewed: Has the assessment process and strategy been reviewed on a regular basis and improved upon? |

Figure 28.4 Checklist for Evaluating Assessment Efforts

SOURCE: Deardorff (2008).

Table 2.10. Souce: Deardorff, 2009.

| |
|---|
| <p><i>Questions to analyze when assessing intercultural competence:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Has the term <i>intercultural competence</i> been defined using existing definitions in the literature? From whose cultural perspective? 2) What are the cultural biases of the evaluator? Of the assessment tools and methods? 3) Who is the locus of the evaluation? 4) What is the context of the assessment? 5) What is the purpose of the assessment? 6) How will the assessment results be used? Who will benefit from the assessment? 7) What is the time frame and timeline of the assessment (i.e., one point, ongoing, etc.)? 8) Do the assessment methods match the working definition and stated objectives of intercultural competence? 9) Have specific indicators been developed for the intercultural competence assessment? 10) Is more than one method being used to assess? Do the methods involve more than one evaluator's perspective? 11) In regard to intercultural competence, are the degrees of intercultural competence being assessed? What is to be done with those not meeting the minimal level of intercultural competence? 12) Has the impact of situational, social, and historical contexts been analyzed in the assessment of intercultural competence? 13) How do the assessment methods affect the measurement outcomes? Have the limits and cultural biases of the instruments/measures been accounted for? 14) Have participant goals been considered when assessing intercultural competence? |
|---|

Figure 28.5 Intercultural Competence Assessment Guide

SOURCE: Deardorff (2004).

Table 2.11. (From Chapter 28, Deardorff, 2009)

In sum, Deardorff's study on assessment is instructive in guiding me to construct my assessment plan at the beginning by clarifying a number of significant questions as mentioned above. Also, her "Checklist for Evaluating Assessment Efforts" shown above is considerate enough for those like me who wants to guarantee a feasible and effective assessment procedure. Questions such as "*are goals, objectives, and assessment measures aligned? Have the results been used for program improvement as well as for learner feedback? Has the assessment process and strategy been reviewed on a regular basis and improved upon?...*" is easily to be neglected when designing questionnaires and interviews.

2.4.2. From Fantini

Fantini has also contributed significantly to the assessment of intercultural competence. He particularly emphasized on the importance of foreign language education to the development of one's intercultural competence. He argued that many intercultural educators has ignored the role of host language proficiency plays in intercultural communication. According to Fantini, *“target language proficiency is considered central to the development of intercultural competence, although clearly not equal to it. Proficiency in a second language at any level enhances all other aspects of intercultural competence in quantitative and qualitative ways.”*(Fantini, 2009) More often than not, they are mutually enhanced and promoted. He built a framework for the holistic understanding of intercultural competence as below, which *“included various attributes, three areas, four dimensions, target language proficiency, and developmental levels.”*(Fantini, 2009). Attributes include *“flexibility, humor, patience, openness, interest, curiosity, empathy, tolerance for ambiguity, and suspending judgement.”* And Three interrelated areas are as follows: *“the ability to establish and maintain relationship, the ability to communicate with minimal loss or distortion, and the ability to cooperate to accomplish tasks of mutual interest or need.”* While the four dimensions are *“knowledge, positive attitudes, skills and awareness.”* Compared with many other versions of definitions of intercultural competence and its components, Fantini's version, in my view, is more comprehensive. He not only agreed on the four dimensions of knowledge, attitudes, skills and awareness with many of the IC experts, but also stress the importance of cooperating for common good as well as maintaining the relationship. What's more, he is clearly aware of the essential role language proficiency plays in cultivating intercultural competence more effectively.

When talking about the assessment of intercultural competence, Fantini argued that many researchers have ignored the essential role of language proficiency, which is actually the foundation for anyone who wants to develop intercultural competence. As he said(Fantni, 2009), *“Proficiency in a second language at any level enhances all other aspects of intercultural competence in quantitative and qualitative ways.”*

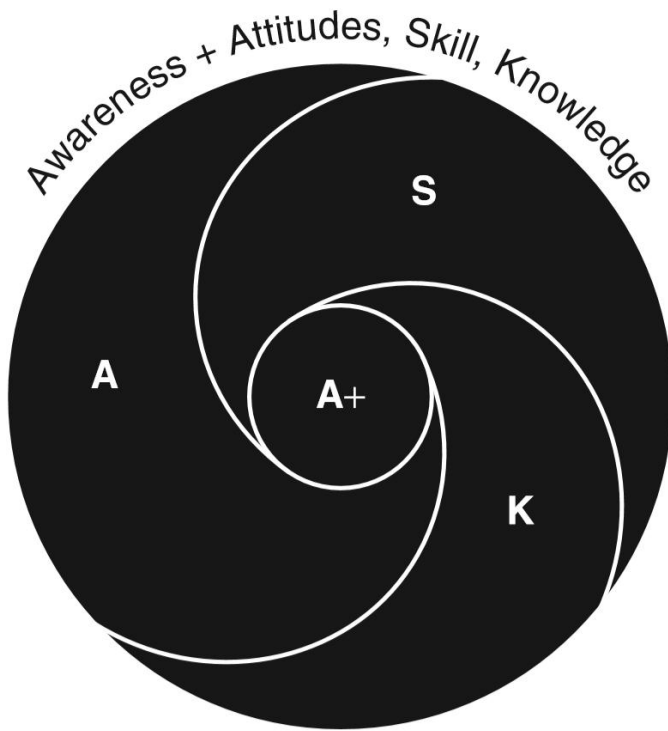


Figure 27.2 Intercultural Competency Dimensions

Table 2.12. Source: Fantini, 2009.

Fantini also pointed out the dilemma in assessing people's intercultural competence—there is no standard since different fields use different assessment tools; different tools have different stress. Therefore, it is very necessary to clarify the purpose of the assessment. And from learners' perspective, being assessed and knowing the result can help them to self-monitor their learning process. For example, by marking their level with numbers or with terms such as "basic/intermediate/advanced", they will be clearly know where they are and hence more motivated to move forward.

It motivated me to think about what's the purpose of my research—What's my assessment for? It is for students to be more culturally-aware; for teachers to know the reality, realize the urgency, adjust their teaching objectives, so as to grow up together with their students in the way of becoming competence global citizens. Of course, this is a life-long process. Fantini's theory is helpful to me in explaining the necessity of

assessment and the challenges being faced. If teachers don't have a clear idea about the level/situation of their students, the educational process will be compromised. Therefore, quality assessment, as Fantini said, should be integrated into the whole teaching process.

In the *Sage Handbook of Intercultural Competence(2009)*, Fantini provided readers with guidance on selecting proper assessment formats, techniques and strategies. For example, direct, indirect, discrete or global assessment could be adopted separately or together based on researcher's assessment objectives. Direct formats include *traditional tests, quizzes, portfolios, capstone projects* etc. While indirect formats are usually time-consuming such as *class observation, self-report surveys, interviews, and focus group*, ect. Discrete assessment is used for measuring a specific aspect while global assessment is more general and comprehensive. Mostly, multiple formats need to be utilized in order to get more accurate results. Besides, a series of techniques and strategies are also proposed by Fantini (Deardorff, 2009) as follows ,

- *Closed and open ended questions*
- *Objective strategies that involve scoring (e.g. matching items, true/false questions, multiple choice questions, cloze or gap-filling items)*
- *Oral or written activities (e.g. paraphrasing, translation, essay)*
- *Active and passive activities*
- *Individual and interactive activities in pairs or groups*
- *Dialogues, interviews, debate and discussion*
- *Demonstrations, poster sessions, role-plays, and simulations*
- *Structured and unstructured tasks and experiences*
- *Questionnaires that require self-evaluation, peer evaluation, peer evaluation, group evaluation, and/or teacher evaluation*

(from Chapter 27, Deardorff, 2009)

Besides, Fantini also listed 44 instruments available for assessing intercultural competence with different items of focuses and priorities(please check Fantini 2006 or Deardorff 2009 for details). Researchers could selectively utilized or refer to them based on actual needs. Among the 44 instruments, I find some of them relevant and

helpful in assisting me constructing the outline of my questionnaire, such as ACTFL Proficiency Scale & Guidelines for measuring foreign language proficiency, Assessment of Intercultural competence(AIC), Cross-Cultural Assessor(CCA) for measuring individual understanding of self and others, Intercultural Readiness Check (IRC) for measuring intercultural skills, etc.

2.4.3. From Wu Weiping

There are only handful of researchers in China who have studied or done empirical assessment of intercultural competence; Wu Weiping is one of them. He wrote his PhD thesis with the topic of *A Comprehensive Evaluation on Chinese College Students' Intercultural Competence* and later published several papers based on his thesis. With Byram's ICC Model as theoretical guidance, Wu Weiping designed the *Intercultural Communicative Competence Assessment Scale for Chinese College Students*(see the following table). In his study, Wu reconfirmed the validity of Byram and Deardorff's versions of IC definition, and he then provide a definition of intercultural competence applicable to his own research. Besides, Western and Chinese scholars' research on ICC, assessment tools and methods of ICC were also reviewed, as well as the importance of ICC in the Chinese context. And according to Wu(2015), very few studies were found on the assessment of ICC in the Chinese context, which made such type of empirical research more valuable and meaningful.

FCE index system of Chinese college students' ICC.

| Target layer | First-layer index | Second-layer index | |
|----------------------|---|---|---|
| ICC index system (U) | Knowledge of self(u_1) | u_{11} general knowledge of one's own history | |
| | | u_{12} understanding the native social norms | |
| | | u_{13} understanding the native sense of value | |
| | Knowledge of others(u_2) | u_{21} understanding the foreign knowledge of history | |
| | | u_{22} understanding the foreign social norms | |
| | | u_{23} understanding the foreign sense of value | |
| | | u_{24} understanding foreign cultural taboos | |
| | | u_{25} understanding foreigners' speech | |
| | | u_{26} understanding basic concepts of intercultural communication | |
| | | u_{27} understanding successful intercultural communication strategies | |
| | | Attitudes(u_3) | u_{31} willingness to learn from those who differ from one's self and culture |
| | | | u_{32} willingness to respect foreigners' lifestyles and customs |
| | | | u_{33} willingness to learn a foreign language and cultures well |
| | Intercultural communication skills(u_4) | u_{41} the skill of consulting with foreigners if there are misunderstandings | |
| | | u_{42} the skill of communicating with foreigners through body language or other nonverbal communication when it is difficult to communicate through language | |
| | | u_{43} the skill of successfully communicating with foreigners | |
| | | u_{44} the skill of treating foreigners politely | |
| | | u_{45} the skill of avoiding offending foreigners with inappropriate words and behavior | |
| | | u_{46} the skill of avoiding prejudice against foreigners | |
| | | u_{47} the skill of avoiding violating foreigners' privacy | |
| | | u_{48} the skill of having intercultural sensitivity | |
| | | u_{49} the skill of taking different perspectives when encountering different cultures | |
| | | Intercultural cognitive skills(u_5) | u_{51} the skill of acquiring knowledge of other cultures from foreigners |
| | | | u_{52} the skill of learning different intercultural communication strategies |
| Awareness(u_6) | u_{53} the skill of learning how to manage cultural conflicts | | |
| | u_{61} realizing cultural differences and similarities when communicating with foreigners | | |
| | u_{62} realizing how to judge a cultural situation from both one's own and the other's cultural perspective | | |
| | | u_{63} realizing differences in cultural identity when communicating with foreigners | |

Table 2.13. (From Peng, Wu and Fan, 2015)

As seen from the above table, Wu designed the questionnaire based on six indicators as follows, knowledge of self, knowledge of others, attitudes, intercultural communication skills, intercultural cognitive skills, and awareness. Wu then used FCE(Fuzzy Comprehensive Evaluation) index system as the evaluation method to get the results. 340 Chinese college students of different majors participated in the assessment; and the results showed that the majority of the participants' intercultural competence was on an average level. To be more specific, among the indicators, the level of knowledge of others and awareness was quite low and IC skills were in a

mediocre level. Wu said the reason behind is that, for most of them, they rarely had opportunities for real intercultural conversations which limited their IC development. Comparatively speaking, the level of self and attitudes was higher, benefited from school education and the Confucius value of tolerance, respect and harmony (Peng, Wu and Fan, 2015).

Wu's assessment method has the advantage of being simple and easy to operate, as well as being holistic by covering the six aspects. However, the description of each item is too general. When participants evaluate themselves, it's quite possible that they may over/underestimate their own competence, hence producing inaccurate results. Also, Wu said his questionnaire was designed specifically for Chinese context yet little sign has shown his intention. What's more, the relationship between intercultural competence and the mastering of foreign language wasn't discussed which according to my research, is quite necessary. Despite of the limitations, Wu's empirical study on intercultural competence in 2005 is still very valuable for China's IC research and it inspired me to explore further and deeper into this topic.

2.4.4. Other Assessment Instruments and Methods

By reviewing a large quantity of literature on the assessment of intercultural competence, some more assessment instruments are also worth noting and among which some of the assessment questions are referred and used in my questionnaire, such as ICCS by Arasaratnam (2009), GENE by Neuliep & McCroskey (1997a), ISS by Chen & Starosta (2000a), IES by Portalla & Chen (2010) and CQS by Earley & Ang (2003).

2.5. Conclusion

So far, the definition of intercultural competence is yet to be settled, except that its 'appropriateness' during the communicative process and its 'effectiveness' as the outcome have been widely-recognized. This is totally understandable since intercultural communication for different purposes may produce different definitions, whether it's among individuals or nations/countries, or for sojourners or for doing

business. As can be seen from the literature in this chapter, some scholars study intercultural competence from the perspective of immigrants, some from foreign language learners, while others from either the Western point of view or the Oriental's angles. Therefore, a consensus on any particular version of definition may never be reached and it is not necessary to do so.

By reviewing the above literature on IC studies, **a table is summarized below** to more clearly show a variety of interpretations about intercultural competence from different scholars. Culture already has too many dimensions, therefore it's quite understandable that researchers have different emphasis when it comes to intercultural studies. Hofstede's Six Dimensions offer us a series of categories to understand cultural differences more systematically; M.J. Bennett's model demonstrates the dynamic and developmental process of one's intercultural sensitivity; Stephen Bochner, Deardorff, Fantini, Micheal Byram, Ting-Toomey and A. Kurogi, and X.D.Dai &G.M.Chen have certain degree of consensus on the importance of emotion/attitude, behavior/skills, and cognition/knowledge in developing intercultural competence. Besides, IC researchers from Eastern countries stress elements such as moral ethics, self-restraint, harmony and being euphemistic which are rarely mentioned by western scholars. Clashes of those ideas have further enriched intercultural studies and deepened our understanding towards this complex topic.

A STUDY ON THE INTERCULTURAL COMPETENCE OF ENGLISH MAJORS IN CHINESE UNIVERSITIES

| COMPONENTS AUTHOR | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
|--|---|--|--|--------------------------------------|----------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Hofstede's Five Dimensions | Individualism-collectivism | Masculine-feminine culture | Power distance | Uncertainty avoidance | Long-term/short-term orientation | Restraint-Indulgence |
| M.J. Bennett's ISM | Denial (Ethnocentric) | Defense (Ethnocentric) | Minimization (Ethnocentric) | Acceptance (Ethno-relative) | Adaptation (Ethno-relative) | Integration (Ethno-relative) |
| Deardorff's IC Model | Attitudes (respect, openness, curiosity and discovery) | Knowledge and Comprehension(cultural self-awareness, deep cultural knowledge, sociolinguistic awareness) | Skills(to listen, observe and evaluate, to analyze, interpret and relate) | | | |
| Fantini's IC Model | Positive attitudes | knowledge | skills | Awareness | | |
| \Stephen Bochner's ABC Model | Affect (both Negative- stress, anxiety. Confusions, physical and mental illness, low self-esteem and homesickness and Positive-emotional well-being, and a sense of satisfaction) | Behaviors of instrumental, interaction and relational adjustment. | Cognition (interest in other cultures, tolerance, positive attitudes towards new/unusual environment) | | | |
| Byram's Five Dimensions | Attitudes of curiosity and openness | knowledge | Skills of interpreting and relating | Skills of discovery and interactions | Critical cultural awareness | |
| Kim's Intercultural Adaptation Theory | Personal communication | Social communication | Ethnic communication | environment | predisposition | Intercultural transformation |

| | | | | | | |
|--|--|--|--|---|---|--|
| Ting-Toomey and A. Kurogi's Facework Competence Model | Mindfulness Dimension (mindful reflexivity, openness for novelty, multiple vision, analytical empathy, and mindful creativity) | Knowledge Dimension (individualism-collectivism, small/large power distance, "self"/"face" model, and facework communication style) | Interaction skills (mindful listening, mindful observation, facework management, trust-building, collaborative dialogue) | | Facework Competence Criteria (perceived appropriateness, perceived effectiveness, mutual adaptability, mutual satisfaction) | |
| X.S.Xiao &G.M.Chen's IC Theory from Confucianism's perspective | Internal ability of virtue and sincerity (sensing ability) | External ability of practicing moral codes and propriety | | | | |
| X.D.Dai &G.M.Chen's IC Model from the perspective of Interculturality | Emotion (open mind, a self-concept of interconnection, positive empathy, mutual appreciation) | Cognition (cultural knowledge, critical cultural awareness, cultural integration and intercultural perspective) | Behavior (interaction, identity negotiation, construction of harmony, and creative tension) | Moral ethics (mutual respect, sincerity, tolerance, responsibility) | | |
| J.Takai and H.Ota's IC Model | the perceptual competence | self-restraint | social appropriateness | interpersonal sensitivity | tolerance to ambiguity | |
| J.O.Yum's IC Theory from Korean Cultural perspective | empathy | sensitivity | euphemistic | silence | transcendentalism | |
| Fantini | Positive attitudes/affect, knowledge, skills and awareness | Attributes of flexibility, humor, patience, openness, interest, curiosity, empathy, tolerance for ambiguity, and suspending judgements | Three areas(building relationship, communicating and collaborating) | Language proficiency | | |

Table 2.14. A Summary of IC Studies in this Chapter

Chapter 3 The Exploration of Key Concepts

3.1. Introduction

This chapter explores some key concepts and topics that are relevant to my study. Intercultural communication and competence in nature is the study of communicative competence in an intercultural environment. Therefore, the relationship among language, culture and communication is explained below, plus a review of culture teaching in China and the West. What's more, my study is carried out with the consideration of higher education system and English language education in China, hence their development and situation are also illustrated, which includes the modernization of Chinese education in general, and specifically English language education since 1949, and its relation to intercultural competence. Last but not the least, the learning style with Chinese characteristics is researched under the deep-rooted influence by Confucianism. All of the above concepts contributed to the current reality of English language education in colleges and universities of China as well as are vital for me to understand the definition of intercultural competence for Chinese English major students. More adaptive pedagogic strategies might be applied to fit Chinese students in terms of cultivating their intercultural awareness and competence.

3.2. Language, culture and communication.

3.2.1. The Trinity Relationship Among Language, Culture and Communication

Bates and Plog (1990) once described **culture** as “*a sharing system of faith, values, customs and behaviors. People depend on it to communicate with others and the world; then people inherit culture in the way of learning.*” While Ferraro(1995:17) believes that culture includes material entities, values, behavioral patterns etc and argued that culture is “*everything that a member of society owns, thinks and does together*”. and Geert Hofstede, the most renowned scholar in culture study, defines culture as “*the collective programming of the mind distinguishing the members of one groups or category of people from another*”(Hofstede keynote, 2007). while

Hall(1959)'s statement may help readers better understand the essence of culture: “*Culture hides much more than it reveals, and strangely enough, what it hides, it hides most effectively from its own participants.*” More than 1000 years ago, a famous Chinese poet Su Shi in ancient China also said something similar in his poem *Written on the Wall of West Forest Temple*, “*Why can't I tell the true shape of the Lu Shan Mountain? Because I myself am in the mountain.*” Culture is mostly invisible, just like fish in the water. Only when the fish is out of water, can it feel the existence and importance of water.

Language and communication are part of culture; and the three are inseparable as a whole. **Language** is created, used, developed and perfected by human beings. Its emergence gives people culture; this function of language determines its cultural attribute. Sapir(1921) pointed out that language cannot be separated from culture, traditions and beliefs inherited from society. The relationship between cultural development and language development is mutually reinforcing. Language is called the carrier of culture and a mirror reflecting national culture and the creation of culture cannot be separated from language.(Chen,1994).

Communication is an important way to spread and develop language and culture. People acquire language and form cultural competence in social interaction. Without the necessary social activities, the complete language acquisition mechanism cannot guarantee the mastery of language knowledge. Language and culture can only be shared by people through communicative activities, and the role of cultural ties can be reflected in communicative activities.

The use of language reflects people's values, lifestyles and habits of thinking. The development of social culture is the basis for the survival and development of language. And communication is the link between language and culture. Therefore, language, culture and communication are a kind of “trinity” relationship that is inseparable. Thus, to truly understand the essence of intercultural competence, we have to first comprehend that learning a foreign language means learning its culture at the same time, so as to better perform in intercultural communication. And the trinity relationship among language, culture and communication determines the nature of

language teaching, i.e. while it is called "language teaching", it is actually more than just language teaching; the learning of culture and the acquisition of communicative competence should be naturally integrated into the whole language teaching process(Chen, 1999)

3.2.2. An Overview of cultural/intercultural Teaching in China and the West

The trinity relationship of language, culture and communication allows us to re-examine language teaching in its true sense. The interdependence of language and culture determines the important position of culture in language teaching, whether it's language learning of one's mother tongue or when learning a foreign language. Wang(2003) have also commented on culture teaching as "*learners of second foreign language must also become learners of second culture, in that language cannot be learned without understanding its cultural environment.*" It is assumed that the ability to learn and master a second language will necessarily lead to the learning of its culture; therefore culture should be included in language courses purposefully, consciously and explicitly. However, for a long time, culture teaching has been separated from or even ignored in language teaching in China. Learners may master the language system of a foreign language skillfully, but many of them do not understand the social and cultural content of the language; and they are unclear about the values of the target language culture, hence still feel challenging in using the target language to communicate effectively with the people from that culture. That's how the term "an eloquent fool" was coined. To avoid such awkward situation, it's high time culture/intercultural learning go hand in hand with language learning.

As mentioned in previous chapters, the most important objective of learning a foreign language, especially learning English as the international language, is to be able to communicate interculturally in an effective and appropriate manner. Especially under the current context of global turbulence impacted by the pandemic and regional tensions, respectful and effective intercultural dialogues that strive to clear up misunderstanding and promote cooperation become even more precious and vital. In China, though intercultural competence has been discussed by scholars, policy makers

and educators in recent decades, the learning outcome of EFL learners' actual intercultural competence cannot keep up with the times. Therefore, therefore some research is necessary on what is intercultural education like in different regions of the world so that lessons could be learned and further research could be carried out.

Educational administrations and scholars in Europe and America have paid great attention to intercultural education and made remarkable achievements. As early as 1996, the *American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages* has proposed 5C (communication, cultures, connections, comparisons and communities) as the goals of foreign language education in its *National Standards of Foreign Language Learning in the 21st Century*. Among them, communication competence is the key; cultural knowledge is the basics; connections (i.e. by knowing a foreign language, one can consolidate and expand the knowledge of other subjects or acquire and learn knowledge of other subjects as well as mastering new skills) is an important goal of foreign language learning. These three aspects are generally recognized and has long been practiced in the US. "Comparisons" and "Communities" are new objectives which is put forward in the 21st century. By comparing the target language and the mother tongue, as well as the target language culture and native culture, learners not only enhance their understanding of the two different languages and cultures, but also are more competent in dealing with the communication difficulties caused by cultural differences. Communities refer to the integration of foreign language learners into the multicultural environment at home and abroad. They will work effectively and live happily by using their mastered foreign language skills and cultural skills. These two new objectives emphasized on the importance of the master of intercultural knowledge to the better integration into the multicultural society of the US.

In Europe, in order to enhance the strength of national economy, politics and culture in international competition, the Language Policy Department of the European Commission has been working since 2002 to help member countries reform their language education policies. *The Guidelines for the Development of European Language Education Policies*, issued in 2003, stated that the purpose of contemporary language education is to further maintain and develop the characteristics of European

language and cultural diversity, and to help learners adapt to this diverse social environment, promote mutual understanding through international and cross-cultural communication, and foster the attitude of respect and tolerance towards different cultures for a closer cooperation among European countries. Although this guiding document mainly focuses on the development of cultural pluralism within the EU, this regional-oriented idea of cross-cultural language education is also applicable to the international environment of globalization.

Although **China** has also carried out reform on foreign language education in the 21st century and formulated the *Requirements for College English Teaching (2007)*, intercultural competence is only mentioned once as part of teaching content in this programmatic document, “*College English is guided by foreign language teaching theory, with English language knowledge, skills and intercultural communication as the main contents. It is a teaching system which integrates various teaching modes and means. The aim of College English teaching is to cultivate students' comprehensive English application ability, especially their listening and speaking ability, so that they can communicate effectively in English in their future study, work and social interaction. At the same time, it should help to enhance students' autonomous learning ability and improve their comprehensive cultural literacy so as to meet the needs of social development and international communication in China.*”

Since the documents do not put forward specific suggestions and requirements for intercultural education, it has long been neglected in the higher education of China. Although many foreign language teachers are aware of the importance of cultural teaching and intercultural communicative competence training for students, yet they themselves are not competent enough to teach such content and skills because they have not received systematic and scientific teachers' training in how to improve cultural competence in an effective way. As Byram(2018) said, “*That teaching culture is part of language teaching is an axiom widely shared among world languages educators...That teaching culture as information about a country or countries where the target language is spoken is a common yet misguided interpretation is perhaps less self-evident, for this approach is often present in textbooks and hence widely*

adopted because many educators reply on a textbook as their mainstay.” In academic circle, scholars from the fields of pedagogy and foreign language teaching constitute the main body of intercultural education research. Their research mainly focused on introducing or criticizing multicultural education and intercultural education in the United States and other countries as well as expounding the significance of developing intercultural education in China (Lu Ziwen 2002, Wang Jian 2004; Han Hua 2000; Zeng Yu 2005). With the recognition of cultural learning and intercultural communicative competence as an important part of foreign language teaching, the research on cultural teaching and Intercultural Education in foreign language teaching has gradually gained popularity in recent years. The representative research achievements include Hu Wenzhong (1997), Chen Shen (1999), Lu Ziwen (2005), Zhang Hongling (2007), etc. Among them, the first two works are all based on the needs of language teaching itself, combining with relevant language phenomena to talk about cultural teaching, from the perspective of language to the perspective of culture; the latter two books start from the perspective of culture and then interconnects with language. They are based on the background of foreign language teaching to expound the intercultural educational function of foreign language teaching. These achievements broaden the perspectives and approaches of current foreign language teaching research and practice, and arouse people's awareness of cultural teaching and intercultural education in foreign language teaching. On the basis of these research results, we should further elaborate the importance of intercultural education in China, sort out the relevant theories and explore the ways to help students develop their intercultural competence in the process of learning foreign languages.

3.3. The Modernization of China Education

The education system and philosophies in China have experienced different periods such as introducing western education theories and then abandoning them afterwards, the resurgence of Confucianism and then the denial of it, and the integration of both western and Chinese traditions, etc. Deng (2011) summarized the modernization of

Chinese education as four stages: (1) The Late Qing Dynasty(1840-1911): the frustrating and almost devastating failure due to the invasion from Japan and Western countries made Chinese people reflect and consider borrowing western ideas and technologies to China, including education system. That was when the imperial examination for selecting officials was abolished. (2) The Republican Era(1912-1949): Chinese intellectuals started to challenge the value of Confucianism and advocating western standards by launching The New Culture Movement and May 4th Movement. The use of classical Chinese language was abandoned, simplified Chinese writing and spoken language was put into use across China. It was a time Chinese people themselves denied their own cultural heritage and worshiped the Western ideas. (3) Mao's Era(1949-1976): Chairman Mao Zedong was then the founder of People's Republic of China in 1949. Isolated by Western countries, China had to learn from Soviet Union. Education system was again reformed by imitating Soviet Union's way; political campaigns were carried out to erase any trace of Western influence and "learning from the West" was seriously condemned. However, when China's relation with Soviet Union was in tension and split up, Soviet Union's practice was criticized. In 1966, The Cultural Revolution initiated by Chairman Mao led to a irredeemable consequence to China. Schools were closed and people were brainwashed to attacked the Four Olds: old idea, old culture, old customs and old habits. This Campaign lasted 10 years and it *"not only eradicated residual Western-style education and the earlier emulated Soviet Union education model, but also wiped out any trace of Confucian education"* (Yang and Frick, 2009:31). (4) Reform and opening up (1977-1999): when the Cultural Revolution was finally over, the process of modernization accelerated when China re-opened to the world. Exchanges and cooperation between China and abroad facilitated both sides to get to know each other; and Chinese leaders had again realized the urgent need to learn from the more developed countries so as to keep up with the world. What's more, Confucianism was also rejuvenated as the precious heritage of Chinese culture.

3.4. English Language Education in China since 1949

The development of English language higher education in China is of course impacted by the dynamic social changes as well. According to Hu(2014), it was divided into three phases: from 1949 to 1980, from 1980 to 2010, from 2010 till now.

Stages 1:The People's Republic of China was founded in 1949, that was a time when China was largely influenced by and was eager to learn from “his Big Brother” Soviet Union. English language as a major in college was newly created by imitating the mode from Soviet Union. For example, in 1950s, the curriculum design and even the textbooks were all the same with those of Soviet Union; and the learning objectives during this period were mainly skill-focused—speaking, listening, reading, and writing. Since most Chinese students back then had never learned anything about English before entering college, so it was understandable that only very basic skills were taught in the four years of college time. In 1958, a national-level conference was held by Ministry of Education and some changes were made by adding more varieties of courses such as Literature, Linguistics, and Introduction to English-speaking countries, for Junior and Senior students. Since the number of English major graduates were still small and so was the job opportunities, the supply could basically meet the demand in the job market, mainly in the fields of diplomacy, international trade, media, translation and teaching, etc. However, graduates usually take one or two years to adapt and qualify the jobs since basic language skills were only thing they learned in colleges and it was obviously not enough.

Stage 2: since 1980s, the economic development and the China's market have raised their standards for employing graduates with language majors, i.e. most students with language majors were not competent enough for their job positions and more competences were needed to response to the changes. Therefore, many universities started to act. For example, in 1983, Shanghai International Studies University initiated more programs and directions for English major students such as Journalism, Business Management, etc., which signified reforms of English majors from uni-discipline to multi-disciplines. Beijing Foreign Studies University also made similar moves in 1984, by adding Literature, Linguistics, Journalism, international Relations, and translation as discipline-oriented programs for English major students.

Thus, it can be summarized that during this period, English plus other disciplines was the trend. However, this also brought criticism and doubts. By adding another discipline under the title of English major—is it still English Major? May be both, may be neither. And some educator said the above reform neglected the essence of language learning, which should be Liberal education(*mainly concerned with broadening students' general knowledge and experience, rather than technical or professional training*). And graduates complained that their English teachers were not qualified to teach other discipline/subjects in English class. There were lots of investigations and discussions going on during this stage from educators, policy-makers as well as scholars. That's why in 2000, *The Syllabus for College English Majors* finally came out, with its goal of cultivating interdisciplinary graduates. This time, the Syllabus clearly stated that it was not merely skill-focused(speaking, listening, reading and writing) anymore. More advanced skilled-related courses were added such as Translating and Interpreting, Advanced Speaking and Listening, Intensive and Extensive Reading of English Newspapers, etc. Also, culture-related courses and other discipline-related courses were also included. However, harsh challenges appeared from reality. First of all, when this Syllabus was applied nationwide across China, the fact that different regions had different situations, and different levels of universities and colleges had different types of students, had led to ineffective teaching and fierce homogeneous competition when they graduate; and the number of students with ordinary levels were more than market demand, while the need for high-level or more specialized expertise were still urgently needed. What's more, English teachers were also stressful to cope with the new challenge of teaching new courses of other disciplines (such as journalism, translation, business etc.); they themselves were not sure whether they are competent or not. To sum up, lessons learned from this period is to “localize the syllabus”; it is not realistic to completely copy the curriculum design to each and every school.

Stage 3: In recent decades, the trend of globalization and China's fast development have called for multi-perspective and diversified talent development; some leading universities in China have once again realize the urgency of keeping pace with the

times. A number of universities have launched their own reforms, in hope of graduating students with critical thinking ability, research ability as well as with global vision and intercultural competence. They reduced the amount of teaching hours for repetitive language training and more time on the integration of language skills with the above abilities and guide students to apply them into practice. For example, Beijing Foreign Studies University has just published a series of textbooks in 2014 by integrating the learning objectives of liberal education, critical thinking, intercultural competence and self-learning ability together, followed by the *Intercultural Communication* textbook series by Shanghai Foreign Language Education Press in 2019 and the *Intercultural Reading* series by East China Normal University Press in 2020. we're not sure how many universities across China have updated their textbooks by using some of the above, but it is definitely a good try.

3.5. The Chinese culture influenced by Confucianism

3.5.1. What is Confucianism?

Confucianism is never an easy term to define. Briefly speaking, it is a school of thought initiated by Confucius (Kong zi in Chinese) more than 2000 years ago and has been developing over time, starting with the thoughts of Confucius and his disciples, then later integrating Taoism and Buddhism as well as evolving and transforming under social and cultural contexts throughout different dynasties; it is a whole set of thoughts and philosophies that overwhelmingly influenced East Asia in numerous aspects, including social norms, politics, education, values and beliefs, etc. The masterpiece in Confucianism is *The Analects (of Confucius)* which revealed his ambition to help rulers govern the country and bring harmony to the society. In order to understand the main thoughts of Confucianism, key concepts such as Ren and Li needs to be elaborated.

Ren(仁) is the core concept of Confucianism which appears 109 times in the book *The Analects*. It is a term not easy to be translated into English, with its connotation including multiple meanings such as love, humanity, kindness, and benevolence, etc.

Originally, the Chinese character Ren, “connotes a mother being linked with her baby”(p12, Wang and Lu, 2018), and love is born out of their relationship naturally. This fundamental and intimate relationship between children and parents was the source inspiration of Ren. When it is enhanced, it is filial piety of children to their parents; when it is further extended to other loved ones, friends and then to everyone in the society, it is benevolence(Wang and Lu, 2018). The practice of Ren aims to build harmonious relationship among family members as well as within society, including between the ruler and subjects. If the ruler govern the country with morality and virtue, social and political order would be restored. Actually, Confucius proposed the concept of Ren for the purpose of fulfilling his political ambition.

Li(禮) is the second most important concept after Ren, which could be translated into 'rituals, proprieties, traditions, norms of social life, standard of conduct, order of society, ect.'(p16, Wang and Lu, 2018). If Ren is the essence of Confucianism, then Li is the form; and Ren is practiced by Li. Li is changeable according to different occasions and contexts. In the Book of Rites, which was edited by one of Confucius' disciples, “Li is defined as the order that everything is in place. Confucius placed emphasis on Li with the aim of preserving social order, stability and harmony”(p16, Wang and Lu, 2018). It is a way to pay respect to others, especially for people to pay respect to their parents, to ancestors, to the departed, and to the sages such as Confucius. This sense of respect, and the rituals held along with it, will further enhance filial piety within family, courtesy to others, and political hierarchy, hence harmony stabilized in the society. .

Ren and Li, in addition to Yi(righteousness), Zhi(wisdom) and Xin(trustworthiness and reliability), are known as the Five Constant Virtues of Confucianism that have had huge and lasting influence on Chinese life and culture till the present day.

In order to practice the Five Constant Virtues well, Confucius said one has to receive education on moral ethics, political affairs, Chinese language and literature. For example, more than 1500 years ago, China has established its **exam-oriented system**, which was back then mainly for selecting officials for civil service by testing people if

they know enough and comprehend thoroughly about Confucianism theories and if they could apply them into practice. Looking back in history, this exam-oriented educational system was deeply rooted in Chinese tradition and mindset. Hence it's not difficult to explain why even nowadays, still millions of teachers and parents perceive "scores on the exam papers" as the ultimate judgement of students' competence.

In brief, the thoughts of Confucianism could help readers understand better the Oriental IC theories in the previous chapter of Literature Review, especially the stress of moral ethics and harmony in communication, and also the historical reason why China's exam-oriented education system is so difficult to be reformed despite of its obvious defects in the modern society.

3.5.2. The Chinese Culture of Learning

There were researchers from other countries studying the characteristics of Chinese students decades ago and traces could be found in a number of academic papers from Western scholars. It is likely that stereotype has somehow formed since then. According to Shi(2006), Ballard and Clanchy(1991), Carson(1992) and Connor(1996), Atkinson(1997) and Fox(1994), etc., have all shared their views on Chinese students either based on their personal teaching experience or from relevant literature. They generally described Chinese students as being passive, quiet, submissive and disciplined, as well as lacking in critical thinking and open-mindedness. From their illustration, it could be sensed that Chinese students seems somehow 'inferior' to their western counterparts. And they also claimed that the reason behind might be the deep-rooted values from Confucianism. However, Shi (2006) debated against this stereotype by conducting an empirical survey on 400 middle school students in Shanghai in 2003, with a questionnaire covering the following aspects: learners' attitude towards learning English, the aims of learning English, criteria for being a good teaching of English, teacher-student relationship, students' perception of teachers' attitudes towards students' questions, students' favorite teaching method, how to memorize English vocabulary, and how to practice speaking, listening, reading and writing skills, etc. Shi (2006) argued that, the investigation demonstrated that contemporary Chinese students were actually quite active in class and were willing to

ask and answer questions. Besides, they respect their teachers meanwhile they are critical of what they learned. But Shi(2006) also stressed that there something particular to Chinese students according to her finding. For example, most students agreed that the criteria of a good teaching as being knowledgeable and skillful in helping students pass the exams and a good student as being extremely hard-working. Also, quite a number of them thought the purpose of learning English was to pass the exams. This is understandable since the pressure comes from the reality in China's exam-oriented education system. Though Shi's research was conducted 17 years ago, there is still reference value in understanding Chinese students, except that, with globalization and leapfrogging development of China in recent decade, Chinese students are even more opened-minded yet still very much exam-oriented.

3.6. Conclusion

This chapter intends to provide a general picture of the Chinese education, including its recent history, development and the influence from Confucianism etc., especially the historical development of English language education, that experienced imitation, opening-up, and transformation in modern times ect. By exploring the relevant concepts as the above, it will be easier for readers to understand the current situation of foreign language education in China as well as to interpret the research results in a multi-angle and historical perspective.

Chapter 4 Research Design and Methodology

4.1. Introduction

In recent years, the assessment of intercultural competence has been frequently used in multinational companies and international institutions, the purpose of which is usually help human resource department to select the best candidates from the job interviews, or to evaluate which manger is the best choice for working in overseas market. The assessment *“usually employs a number of cross-cultural role-plays, case studies, group discussions, and international negotiating simulations to evaluate intercultural competencies, such as behavioral flexibility, cultural empathy, a nonjudgmental attitude, and meta-communication skills.”*(Bennett, 2015) And the participants will be assessed both by the assessors as well as by their peers in the assessment project. Spurred by global migration and economic globalization, more and more workplaces are calling for interculturally competent employees, hence more educators are responding to the calling and making efforts to help students develop necessary skills. In China, besides the above reasons, national policy and government propaganda on China's international image to the world in recent years are also the driving force for more Chinese people to realize the importance of intercultural competence. Considering college students majored in foreign languages, especially in English, are the primary group for intercultural exchanges in their future career, it becomes more significant in cultivating and assessing their intercultural competence. In this chapter, The research questions and hypothesis will be explained in detail, as well as the research design which includes the rational of my research, how the assessment plan is assessed, the timeline, and the clarification of IC components and indicators relevant to the design of the questionnaires. Also, selection of participants (Junior and Senior English Major students and College English teachers), pilot interviews of students and teachers, the construction of the final questionnaires respectively for students and teachers are introduced as the content of research methods for my study. According to Deardorff(2005), *“The starting point for assessment is in understanding why assessment is needed and what*

specifically is to be measured, usually as stated through a goal (end result) and objectives (checkpoints for reaching the end result). Once the why and what have been determined, the how can be answered.” Any tool has its limitations, and these include cultural bias, language restrictions, and administrative and logistical issues, including time. Given the complexities of intercultural competence, there is no perfect tool.” Therefore, lots of preparation need to be made before actual field practice, such as giving a clear definition based on my context and clarifying indicators, etc., so as to design suitable assessment plan. One thing that needs to be kept in mind is that what will be assessed must be aligned with my research questions and objectives. The following part illustrates my research design and methodology.

4.2. Research Questions and Hypothesis

The following research questions are designed based on author's observation and reflection over the past ten years of teaching English in Luoyang Normal University of China, along with a series of pilot interviews with a group of English major students and college teachers as preparation for carrying out the PhD project(see Pilot Interview in Appendix 1).

(1) How interculturally competent are the English majors in Chinese universities at present?

This research question is designed under the context of global pandemic, border closure, trade wars and the practice of unilateralism in certain major countries. The author is more than ever eager to know what's the situation of intercultural communication like within China at a time when the communication among different nations and cultures are being threatened. Of course, despite of the above uncertainties and turbulence, the support for equal and constructive intercultural cooperation and exchanges is still the voice of many countries across the globe and it still bears great significance for young generation to develop intercultural competence. Therefore, getting to know the level of intercultural competence of English majors in Chinese universities is the primary task in my research; the assessment of intercultural

competence is complicated because different IC theorists have different definitions of IC and have proposed different frameworks for assessment. However, there are some key elements in intercultural competence which are well-recognized by scholars and educator, i.e. the attitude of openness, curiosity and respect, adequate cultural knowledge and necessary interaction skills etc. which the author has been elaborated in the part of Literature Review. Also, the influence of specific Chinese cultural context and the educational system in China will also put into consideration when conducting the research. What's more, according to the answers from the pilot interviews, **detailed research questions and hypothesis can be made as follows,**

① *How does their English language proficiency affect their communication with people from other cultures?*

First, affected by the fierce competition under exam-oriented education system in the most populous country in the world, students are busy cramming knowledge into their head and have little time to practice spoken English before entering college. And this habit continues to influence their way of learning on college campus. **Therefore, their language proficiency necessary for intercultural conversation is not satisfactory, especially in the second and third tiered cities of China where the economic and educational level is not as developed and internationalized as cities** such as Beijing and Shanghai(**language proficiency**).

② *How do they evaluate their performance in the interaction with people from other cultures?*

Second, the components of intercultural competence are interrelated. If the language proficiency as mentioned above is an obstacle for them to become intercultural competent, so are their **interaction skills**. Almost all the students interviewed said they are not very confident when communicating in English either because they have problem in grammar and fluency or because they don't know what to say to their culturally-distinct counterpart; not mention that such intercultural opportunities are so rare during their daily life. Besides, the author is curious to know whether students in China still value harmony and **face(mianzi in Chinese)** in terms of interpersonal relationships by avoiding direct confrontation during the communication, considering

the sweeping influence of American culture to the young generation of China through internet and other forms over the past decades which promotes directness, effectiveness and sometimes problem-solving style of communication(**interaction and facework skills**).

③ *How do they feel when interacting with people from different cultures?*

Third, when asked about their attitudes towards cultural differences or interaction with people of other cultures, most of them showed the attitudes of openness and curiosity. This might be explained by the fact that they chose English as their major in the first hand, indicating that they're interested in English language and culture in the first hand(**Attitude**).

④ *How interculturally sensitive are they towards their own and other cultures?*

Fourth, Ethnocentric and ethnorelative are being frequently discussed at present, giving the fact that the protest against racial discrimination has reached its peak worldwide in 2020 and 2021 after events such as Floyd's death, and the killing of 8 Asians in Atlanta Spas in the United States. It reminds people that discrimination and unequal treatment among different races have always been there. The reasons behind it might be too many and too complex; but being ethnocentric must be one of them. Ethnocentrism produce bias and prejudice, and then discrimination gradually and unconsciously occur. Such news were also broadcast by the mainstream media in China and have caught lots of attention nationwide. As China is gaining more strength and influence in the world, the author wants to know what's the attitude of English major in China, as part of young generation, towards their own culture and other cultures; as this is the start of successful intercultural communication(**intercultural sensitivity**).

⑤ *Do they have necessary cultural knowledge as basis for effective and appropriate intercultural communication?*

Last of all, cultural knowledge is also indispensable in developing intercultural competence. There are courses in China's universities on the introduction of cultures and general situation in major English-speaking countries for English majors, plus such information is easily accessible online. Students interviewed also said they think

they know enough cultural knowledge in English-speaking countries. However, it is the importance of their own culture that they often neglected, as illustrated in the part “Chinese culture Aphasia” in the first chapter. Since testing students' cultural knowledge of their own and English culture is a huge project, the evaluation of their master in English culture will be assessed in this paper, while more systematic and detailed culture quiz on their own and others' will be carried out in my future research on this topic(**Cultural knowledge**).

(2) **What are the major factors that may constrain students from developing intercultural competence?**

This main question is designed for the purpose of investigating possible factors that may constrain students from developing intercultural competence. Based on author's previous research, observation from teaching English majors in Luoyang Normal University, along with the answers from the pilot interviews, three possible factors will be investigated, namely, **intercultural experiences, teachers' cognition on IC and their IC-related teaching method, and the language policies of China**. Therefore, detailed research questions and more hypothesis are shown below:

① **Are students willing to jump out of their comfort zone and actively participated in intercultural communicative activities both in class and in their daily life?**

Unlike multicultural and diverse cultural environment such as European Union, the United States and a number of other immigrant countries, students of China in most universities don't get enough opportunities to meet people from other countries and cultures in real life, hence lacking in intercultural experiences, which makes the term “intercultural communication” far away or even strange to students' daily life. What's more, Asian countries such as China, Korea and Japan's way of education is deeply influenced by Confucian heritage culture, in which students respect the authority of their teachers and they feel more comfortable by sitting in the class and listening to teachers' lecturing, instead of asking questions in front of the class or having active interaction with teachers. Thus, when choosing English as their major in the university, they know it's important to practice their spoken English, yet many of them may not

be willing to jump out of the comfort zone and challenge themselves to speak in English in and after class. This cultural heritage somehow affects the learning outcome of English major students since the nature of learning a language requires students to be more active in the class as well as in the intercultural communicative activities. However, if they want, there are still channels for them to make friends with people of other cultures and develop intercultural competence such as through Skype or other social media. The author will investigate through questionnaire on whether they actively look for opportunities to develop their intercultural competence in their daily life(**Intercultural experience**).

② Do English teachers integrated cultural teaching/IC-related content into their class?

Previous literature shows that, compare with Western academic circle, the study of intercultural competence is relatively new in China which only has a history of two to three decades. Therefore, it is possible that even many English teachers are not familiar with this term, not mention delivering this concept to their students. Many of them may unconsciously or randomly talk about this topic in class, but not in a systematic way. Actually many foreign language teachers are aware of the importance of cultural teaching and intercultural communicative competence training for students, yet they themselves are not competent enough to teach such content and skills because they have not received systematic teachers' training in how to improve intercultural competence in an effective way. What's more, mostly, intercultural knowledge is regarded only as an appendage of language teaching, which means teachers only spend little time talking about it when time and conditions permit; the intercultural teaching is not systematic, and learners often learn fragmentary cultural knowledge and information. This method of introducing and learning culture as fragmentary knowledge may easily lead to one-sided or even wrong recognition of the target language. In sum, intercultural teaching in foreign language teaching has long been ambiguous and incomplete. Many foreign language learners and teachers only pay attention to the cultural factors and contents that affect foreign language skills such as reading and writing but fail to fully recognize the role of foreign language

teaching in helping students to develop more comprehensively with a global vision. Therefore, it's worth conducting primary investigation on the teaching methods and then looking for ways of improvement(**Teacher's questionnaire**).

③ Does the language policies in China put IC as one of the major objectives?

As introduced in Chapter 3, China has carried out reforms on foreign language education in the 21st century and formulated the *Requirements for College English Teaching (2007)*. However, intercultural competence is only mentioned once as one item among the teaching content in this programmatic document. Since the documents do not put forward specific suggestions and requirements for intercultural education, it has long been neglected in the higher education of China. It's been 14 years since the formulation of the document and many scholars and educators have been making efforts in calling on the revision of *the Requirements* as well as the redesign of the National curriculum for English majors, pioneered by influential language experts such as Prof. Sun Youzhong, the vice-president of Beijing Foreign Studies Universities, and Prof. Zhang Hongling, Deputy Dean of the Journalism and Communication College of Shanghai International Studies University etc., both of whom happen to be influential IC scholars as well. Thus, more details concerning the development and change of language policies will be discussed in the next chapter when answering this research question. It is significant to find out how the language policies have changed over the years as the policies will affect significantly where the IC education is headed.

4.3. Research Design

4.3.1. The Rational of the Research

As Dr. Deardorff stated in her PhD thesis(2004), over years scholars and educators in Western countries have been discussing and stressing the importance of intercultural competence to college graduates yet few institutions have provided effective methods for developing or assessing intercultural competence. The reason may lie in the lack of specifics in defining intercultural competence as well as in identifying the key components of this complex concept. As mentioned in the previous part (Definition of

Intercultural Competence), there is hardly a consensus on the this concept so far, possibly due to its different applications in different fields such as international business, diplomatic relations, migration and immigration, and of course, internationalized education; and assessment tools vary in the above arena. Thus it will be one of the challenges faced by my research. Despite of the challenge, it is still necessary to clarify a definition of intercultural competence in order to conduct valid assessment. Based on previous literature and by considering the features of my participants in the Chinese context, intercultural competence(for English major students in China) can be defined as **the ability to communicate effectively and appropriately in an intercultural context , as well as to maintain a harmonious relationship during and after the communication.** This definition is largely borrowed from Fantini's elaboration on intercultural competence. **His theory is more holistic in the way that not only “effectiveness and appropriateness” is included, the essential role of language proficiency and the ability to maintain relationship are also stressed. In my point of view, Fantini's theory is more culturally flexible as well as more relevant to language learners.**

Being effective and appropriate is a cognitive process of the interaction while maintaining a harmonious and lasting relationship is the emotional and decisional process. Therefore, the understanding of “effective”, “appropriate” and “harmonious relationship” may differ in different cultures, which adds more complex in defining it. For example, in face of conflict in an intercultural interaction, the effectiveness in western culture means discussing about the conflict and solving the problem, and both sides should talk about their own concerns frankly and directly—they considered this as being sincere and appropriate, which is the basis for their future harmonious relationship; while in Eastern culture, it means trying to avoid the conflict in their first meeting even if they know differences or problems are there; and they'd rather avoid them and find something in common to talk about in order to build up a good relationship as priority. Differences and problems can wait until their following meetings. They consider this to be effective and appropriate. That's why intercultural speakers should be consciously aware of those different interpretations towards those

terms and find the best way out. Besides, maintaining a harmonious relationship will be equally emphasized as this is very much valued in Oriental countries, especially in China.

4.3.2. Constructing my Assessment Plan

4.3.2.1. General

While constructing my assessment plan, specific aspects of intercultural competence needs to be determined and prioritized. Since there are so many IC components proposed by scholars around the world from different angles(see the Table in the Chapter of Literature Review), they may not be equally important in various contexts and programs. As in my case, the intercultural competence of Chinese college students in English major is to be investigated. Thus, key words such as China, Chinese culture, higher education, college students, English major etc. should be considered when leveling which are essential aspects to be assessed in my study. According to Sun Youzhong(2016), the President of Beijing Foreign Studies University, as well as a well-known scholar in the field of intercultural competence in China, described the core connotation of intercultural competence for college students of China as follows: respecting the diversity of world cultures, having intercultural empathy and critical cultural awareness; mastering basic theoretical knowledge and analytical methods of intercultural research; familiarizing with the history and current situation of the target-language country, understanding the basic characteristics, similarities and differences of one's own national culture and foreign cultures; being able to interpret and evaluate different cultural phenomena, texts and products; being able to communicate appropriately and effectively across cultures; and helping people with different languages and cultural backgrounds to communicate effectively across cultures(eg. as translators or interpreters). Indeed, attitudes of respect is the basis for any kind of communication, and being ethnorelative is especially vital in intercultural communication under the current circumstance. While for English major students in China, language proficiency and cultural knowledge are their advantages facilitating them to be more interculturally competent. And they should be aware of their responsibility of being the bridge across cultures, helping individuals, organizations,

and even nations to better communicate by involving in intercultural exchanges and cooperation. What's more, as stated in the first chapter, the problem of Chinese Culture Aphasia is await to be solved, hence guiding students to be more critically culturally-aware so as to properly comprehend and evaluate their own and others' cultural positions is urgent. In summary, attitude of openness and curiosity, language proficiency, intercultural sensitivity, cultural knowledge as well as interaction skills will be the priorities to be assessed in my empirical investigation.

4.3.2.2. Timeline and Schedule

The whole PhD project is expected to be finished in three years, with timeline and detailed schedule as follows,

| Timeline | Schedule |
|------------------|---|
| 2019.03--2019.05 | Research Proposal |
| 2019.06-2019.07 | Reading literature on IC and guidance books on writing PhD thesis and methodology |
| 2019.08-2019.10 | Writing the Chapter of Introduction |
| 2019.11-2020.6 | Reading more books and journals on intercultural competence |
| 2020.07-2020.12 | Writing Literature Review and clarifying key definition and concepts, meanwhile constructing the questionnaires |
| 2021.01-2021.3 | Finish designing questionnaires for students and teachers |
| 2021.04 | Contact participants and send out the questionnaires, meanwhile writing about Methodology chapter |
| 2021.05 | Start collecting data results and start organizing the outline of the chapter on Findings and Discussions |
| 2021.06 | Finish the Methodology Chapter |

| | |
|-----------------|---|
| 2021.07 | Finish the Findings and Discussions Chapter |
| 2021.08 | Finish the Conclusion Chapter |
| 2021.09 | Finish the first draft of my thesis |
| 2021.10-2021.12 | Revising the draft till its final version |

Table 4.1. Timeline and Schedule.

4.3.2.3. Stating Goals and Measurable Objectives

The goal of my empirical study is to investigate and assess the intercultural competence of English Major students in China under the current context. In order to achieve this goal, several measurable objectives are settled with the consideration of time limit, the possible reach of potential participants, the feasibility of the survey in the form of questionnaire, as well as whether the items in the questionnaire is assessable or not. The following part shows the process of clarifying components and indicator, then finally specifying the items in the students' questionnaire as the measurable objectives.

4.3.3. Clarifying Components and Indicators

It's necessary to clarify specific components of intercultural competence so as to further explore indicators for assessment based on the context of my research. So what's the context of my research? Currently it is an unusual time for all mankind—amid the threat of Covid-19 pandemic and border closure(since the start of 2020), intercultural communication is being challenged yet still supported and encouraged by the majority of global leaders and their people; The Belt and Road Initiative is still making progress in the hope of prospering China's international cooperation globally. English major students in China should be more aware of their role as intercultural speakers under such background. Along with language proficiency, intercultural sensitivity, attitudes, knowledge, skills are all important components to demonstrate one's intercultural competence. What's more, moral ethics are especially vital and necessary in a time of world turbulence at present.

4.3.3.1. Components of Intercultural Competence

With the guidance of the definition provided at the beginning of this chapter, along with my research objectives and research questions(see below), seven components are listed and explained as follows. Please note that the assessment in this paper will not cover all of the seven aspects, given that knowing one's intercultural competence comprehensively is a complex project which needs continuous efforts from the author in her research and teaching career. To be more specific, the aspects of critical cultural awareness and moral ethics will not be investigated in the form of questionnaires in this paper since for example, moral ethics are difficult to be assessed merely by asking several simple questions in the survey. Future assessment concerning these two components will be carried out in the forms of class observation, journal writing and interviews etc when I return to work in Luoyang Normal University.

(1) Language proficiency--grammar, lexical richness, fluency and cohesion, clarity of expression.

Fantini said, "It's interesting to note that target language proficiency is frequently ignored in many models of intercultural competence."(Fantini, 2009) As a college English teacher, I deeply resonate with his argument. While teaching students English language, they at the same time expose to cultural differences and various communication styles. As explained in the last chapter, learning a new language can never be separated from learning its culture and communication; it offers learners with new perspectives and implicitly enhance their ability to empathize. That's also why both Byram and Fantini stress multiple times on the role of language proficiency in reinforcing one's intercultural competence. However, one should always keep in mind is that the master of a foreign language never means imitating the language and worshipping their culture. The major purpose of learning a foreign language, especially English as the international language, is to have equal conversations with people of different countries and cultures, to experience the diversity of the world, to exchange and learn from each other. Chinese Culture Aphasia, as discussed in the first chapter, is the consequence of this misconception in many English language learners in China,

as they assume that English cultures from developed countries are more superior than their own culture, so they neglect the importance of understanding their own identity. This is why this indicator is particularly vital in my assessment of intercultural competence.

(2) Intercultural sensitivity—ethnocentric and ethnorelative

M.J. Bennett's Intercultural Sensitivity Model could help people quickly locate themselves as either being ethnocentric or being ethnorelative, so that they have a direction to work for, by referring to the developmental process from Denial towards Adaptation and Integration. This components is particularly vital in helping college students realize the importance of respect and tolerance towards cultural differences amid the impact of the pandemic. What's more, this is a very good starting point for researchers to know about the participants' current stage in the paradigm, which is effective in assessing in the form of questionnaire.

(3) Attitudes of openness, curiosity and confidence

When one is capable of speaking a foreign language fluently, attitudes of openness and curiosity, become the foundation for communicating interculturally with a good start, which have been confirmed again and again by IC experts (Bennett, 2009; Byram, 2009; Ting-Toomey, 1998; Dai and Chen, 2015). According to Bennett(2009), *'For curiosity to thrive, the first action is suspending assumptions and judgments, leaving our minds open to multiple perspectives. By asking, "What do I see here? What might it mean? And yet again, what might others think it means?...The second action is to increase our tolerance of ambiguity, an essential characteristic for working effectively across cultures.'* This is especially true under the current global context. Besides, the attitude of confidence is added as When I was constructing the outline of my thesis at the beginning of 2019, Chinese Culture Aphasia was a typical phenomenon in China's foreign language education as introduced on Chapter 1. Over the past two years, there has been positive propaganda from China' government about the value of Chinese culture more frequently than ever before. Actually Chinese people's state of mind has been gradually changing from looking up to Western cultures to equalize them with their own culture, or sometimes even criticize some of

their cultural phenomenon (such as racism under the pandemic) with the United States as one of the most cited example. It's worth finding out whether and how is the China's young generation's attitude towards their own culture and others' has changed. Of course, there are other IC attitudes which could add more certainty to guarantee appropriate and effective communication such as positive empathy and mutual appreciation (Dai and Chen, 2015), sincerity (Xiao and Chen, 2009), etc.

(4) Knowledge of one's own and others

Simply speaking, knowledge of one's own and others refers to cultural knowledge of both sides. Quoted from Bennett (2004,) the content of culture is classified it into subjective culture and objective culture, i.e. *'By subjective culture, we refer to the learned and shared values, beliefs, and behaviors of a group of interacting people. Most scholars define subjective culture to include nationality, ethnicity, gender, age, physical characteristics, sexual orientation, economic status, education, profession, religion, organizational affiliation, and other cultural differences learned and shared by a group of people (M. J. Bennett 1998:4-5)...objective culture, which refers to the artifacts and structures created by a group of interacting people, such as their political and economic systems, artistic expressions, architecture, literature, theatre, history, heroes, and holidays.'* while the master of cultural knowledge means *"An understanding of others' world views, values, norms and ways of life; an understanding of the role and impact cultural elements exert on behavior and communication; an understanding of historical, political and religious contexts; a sociolinguistic awareness of the relation between language and meaning in a societal context."* (Zhang Hongling, 2021). All of the above helps us to understand things from multicultural perspectives that enables us to better adapt across cultures and it is definitely essential and indispensable. However, having cultural knowledge does not guarantee someone to become an intercultural speaker.

(5) Skills of interaction, and facework

The skills of listening, observing, interpreting, analyzing, evaluating and interpreting, and the ability of managing difference, resolving conflicts, managing synergy are all

indispensable for intercultural communication (Zhang Hongling, 2021), all of which can be generalized as interaction skills. And according to Ting-Toomey and A. Kurogi's Facework Competence Model (1998), interaction skills includes mindful listening, mindful observation, and facework management, ect. Facework management is seldom mentioned in other IC theories, especially in the field of foreign language education. However, the concept of “face” which is similar to the term “mianzi” in China, is very much valued in Chinese way of communication. Briefly speaking, it is the ability to avoid conflicts in the process and maintain harmonious relationship afterwards. It is based on the above comprehension that four items were designed for the assessment of interaction skills and facework.

(6) Critical cultural awareness

Deardorff(2006), Byram(1997, 2009) and Fantini(2020) all stressed the importance of critical cultural awareness in intercultural communication. It means one should consciously “*evaluate perspectives, products, practices from multiple cultural perspectives, and identify criteria for evaluation.*” (Byram, 1997, p. 53). And “*Guilherme(2015) added to the idea of critical cultural awareness by including elements such as reflection and dialogue, and dissonance and transformation.*” (Bennett, 2015). As said by Prof. Simon Greenall(2014), “*intercultural awareness does not imply assimilation or mimicry but the understanding and appreciation of different values. It should help us enjoy recognizing similarities between cultures, and celebrate our differences.*” Byram(2009) also said the concept of critical cultural awareness helps teachers to identify more clearly their educational aims and objectives of foreign language teaching. In a word, critical cultural awareness builds a bridge between foreign language education and critical pedagogy; it helps foreign language learners to become intercultural speakers and global citizens.

In China, Sun Youzhong(2016, 2019) has explained multiple times in his papers as well as in IC-related academic conferences and seminars the reason why the cultivation of critical cultural awareness is vital for foreign language learners in higher institutions of China. He said that the cultivation of critical cultural awareness

should be integrated into every step of the whole teaching process because it matters greatly whether higher education in China could graduate students that the country and the world truly need. Based on this notion, he proposed 5 principles in developing critical cultural awareness, namely, Critiquing, Reflecting, Exploring, Empathizing and Doing. (Sun, 2016). In this paper, critical cultural awareness is identified as a critical IC component for English major students yet the assessment of this part will be carried out in the stage two in near future.

(7) Moral ethics (sincerity, honesty, no discrimination, mutual respect and responsibility)

The connotation of moral ethics specialized for intercultural communication was inspired by the "constitutive rules" in X.S.Xiao &G.M.Chen's Intercultural Competence Theory from Confucianism's perspective as well as the moral competence in Dai & Chen's theory of interculturality. As explained in chapter 2, the "constitutive rules" are the rules "that is connected with people's specific actions and behaviors, such as being sincere, honest and polite etc".This is largely neglected or rarely mentioned in Western theories yet it seems increasingly necessary nowadays in the midst of globalization and anti-globalization. While in Dai and Chen's theory on intercultural competence from the perspective of interculturality, they stress the necessity of establishing moral codes and ethical norms to avoid unequal discourse power in an intercultural conversation.

4.3.3.2. Specific Indicators for IC Assessment of this Research

The content of the students' questionnaire will assess the five dimensions of intercultural competence, namely, language proficiency, intercultural sensitivity, attitude of openness, curiosity and confidence, interaction skills and facework and cultural knowledge of major English-speaking countries. Indicators which derived from the above dimensions are settled for the convenience of designing specific items as assessment tools as shown below. Please note that some of them are borrowed from existing assessment scales while others are constructed based on this particular study.

(1) Language proficiency--grammar, fluency and cohesion, clarity of expression

and expression of ideas

① **Grammar:**

I have problems with grammar when interacting with people of different cultures(IES, Portall and Chen (2010)).

② **Clarity of expression:**

I know enough English grammar knowledge but facing difficulty when putting them together in order to express my thoughts.

③ **Cohension :**

I am able to express my ideas cohesively when interacting with people of different cultures.

④ **Fluency**

I am able to answer questions fluently and effectively when interacting with people of different cultures(adapted from IES, Portall and Chen (2010)).

⑤ **Expression of ideas**

I know I have problem in grammar; but I also know that it is more important in communication to express ideas than to do it properly linguistically.

(2) Intercultural Sensitivity--Ethnocentric or Ethnorelative

① **Ethnocentric:**

Most other cultures are backward compared to my culture (GENE, Neuliep & MccROSKEY(1997a)).

The Chinese ways of doing things are the best way in the world (adapted from GENE, Neuliep & MccROSKEY(1997a)).

I'm not interested in the values and customs of other cultures (GENE, Neuliep & MccROSKEY(1997a)).

② **Ethnorelative**

People of different cultures could learn from each other (adapted from GENE, Neuliep & MccROSKEY(1997a)).

I treat people of different color, race and cultures equally and with respect.

(3) Attitude of Openness, curiosity and confidence

I dislike interacting with people of other cultures (GENE, Neuliep &

MccROSKEY(1997a).

I don't think it's necessary to communicate with people of other cultures; it's meaningless.

I have a feeling of enjoyment towards differences between my culturally distinct counterpart and me(ISS, Chen & Starosta (2000a).

I follow the world news in the internet.(reference)

Confidence

I feel confident when interacting with people of other cultures(ISS, Chen & Starosta (2000a) .

(4) Cultural Knowledge of major English-speaking countries (All of the items below are adapted from Ang et al (2007)'s Cognitive CQ(Cultural Quotient).

I know the basic rules and taboos of intercultural communication.

I'm able to briefly illustrate the main traditions, cultural values and religious beliefs of major English speaking countries.

I'm able to briefly illustrate the political, legal and economic system of major English speaking countries.

I'm able to briefly illustrate the characteristics of the main arts and crafts of major English-speaking countries.

I know the general rules(including taboos) for expressing non-verbal behaviors (such as body language) in the major English-speaking countries.

(5) Skills and experiences of interaction, and facework,(i.e., the ability to maintain harmonious relationship during the process and afterwards)

Interaction

I avoid those situations where I will have to deal with culturally-distinct counterpart (ISS, Chen & Starosta (2000a).

All of my friends are from my own culture.

I have many friends from different cultures (GENE, Neuliep & MccROSKEY(1997a) .

I often look for opportunities to interact with people from other culture such as

through online social media or internship in foreign companies.

it's almost impossible for me to meet people from other culture in the city I currently live.

Facework

I always try to avoid conflict in the first meeting with people of other cultures.

I'm always able to make friends with people of other cultures as well as maintain a harmonious and lasting relationship afterwards.

4.3.3.3. Summary

As I have realized that only questionnaires with students and teachers cannot fully reveal their IC. It is a time-consuming project that need more documents such as observation and journal writing over a semester, or even one year. Therefore, I will regard my PhD thesis as the first stage of my research which could to some extent reveal the situation of IC education in China as well as take a glimpse on the intercultural competence of the students, though not so accurately. In the near future, I could continue with the assessment in and after class with my students, by collecting more data. Those indicators are selected because first, it's more related to English majors as I put language proficiency as one of the indicators. Second, the importance of maintaining relationship will be stressed as this is very much valued in Oriental culture, especially in China. Third, as this is the first stage of my IC assessment, the above indicators is relatively easier to be assessed in the form of questionnaire. there are other important indicators such as skills of relating and interpreting, empathy, tolerance to ambiguity, being flexible and adaptive, ect,. it's very difficult to assess the above indicators in a short term, which I will further researched afterwards in my daily teaching.

4.3.4. Teachers' Cognition on Intercultural Competence and the Teaching Methods in Practice

A series of statements and questions are constructed as follows for teachers to choose among them in order to answer the research question “Do English teachers integrate intercultural learning/training into their class?”, as well as to explain students'

intercultural competence in a more evident and persuasive way.

(1) The definition of intercultural competence

Statement: Intercultural competence for English language learning, as I understand, is

- a. A Western concept that is irrelevant to my teaching.
- b. The ability to speak English fluently.
- c. A concept that mainly introduces cultural knowledge and cultural differences.
- d. The attitude of openness, curiosity and respect towards other cultures that is not supposed to be taught in an English class.
- e. A set of interaction skills such as listening, observation, interpreting and relating and negotiating.
- f. An awareness that helps to reflect on one's own and others' cultural identity.
- g. The ability to communicate effectively and appropriately with people of other cultures.

(2) IC Education

Statement: IC education for English majors in universities of China, in my opinion, is,

- a. Equal with linguistic competence such as speaking and listening.
- b. It should be acquired through intercultural experiences instead of in English class.
- c. It is useful only for those who plan to go abroad or work in foreign companies.
- d. It is an indispensable part in English Majors' curriculum.
- e. It helps students to have multicultural perspectives that prepare them to be globe citizens.

(3) IC-related teaching methods

Question: What teaching methods you may use when encountering culture-related content in your teaching material?

- a. Introduce relevant cultural knowledge
- b. To remember the relevant words and phrases is the key
- c. Make comparisons between Chinese culture and western culture
- d. Simulation and reflection upon experience

- e. Role play
- f. Presentation

(4) IC learning and language skills

Question 1: How do you deal with the relationship between the training of language skills and the learning of intercultural competence?

- a. Only care about their language skills
- b. Only care about the amount of cultural knowledge they master
- c. Equally important
- d. Language training as priority
- e. IC cultivation as priority

Question 2: Do you often encourage your students to think critically about the relationship between language and culture as well as the cultural differences among different countries?

- a. Never
- b. Seldom
- c. Sometimes
- d. Quite often

Question 3: How long do you usually spend on IC-related teaching in a 45-minute class?

- a. 20 minutes
- b. 15 minutes
- c. 10 minutes
- d. None

Question 4: Do you put intercultural competence into your lesson plan?

- a. Yes
- b. No
- c. Sometimes

(5) The importance of Chinese culture in IC learning

Question 1: Do you think knowing Chinese culture is equally important as knowing

English culture for English major students in China?

- a. Not important at all
- b. A little important
- c. Not sure
- d. Equally important

Question 2: To be more specific, knowing Chinese cultural for English major students is:

- a. It develops the student's general knowledge of the world.
- b. It allows students to understand the complex structure of culture.
- c. It helps to understand cultural differences
- d. It builds open attitudes toward one's own culture and others' culture.
- e. It develops a sense of identity.

(6) Intercultural experience/training

Question 1: Do you think you have adequate intercultural experiences or intercultural training to assist your English language teaching?

- a. Yes
- b. No

Question 2: Do you have any overseas experience? _____; if yes, which country is it and how long did you stayed there? _____

(Teachers' questionnaire is attached in the Appendix 3)

4.4. Methods

4.4.1. Selection of Participants

4.4.1.1. Junior and senior English Major Students

Since the reform and opening-up policy of China in 1978, English as a major, started to gain its popularity in Chinese universities. People wanted to learn English because they were eager to know the outside world. With decades of development, English major has covered more fields such as business English, translation, interpretation, literature and English education, etc. However, for a very long time, the public and even the foreign language learning community themselves often regard the English

major as a skill-based major, which is equivalent to the training of listening, speaking, reading and writing. So far, the vast majority of undergraduate courses in English majors have largely retained the basic structure prescribed by the “Syllabus for English Majors in Higher Education” (Ministry of Education 2000) issued 22 years ago. In this syllabus, English major courses are divided into three types: skills courses, English knowledge courses and related specialized knowledge courses. The course hours are 65%, 15% and 20% respectively. It's clear from the curriculum that language skills courses account for nearly 70% of the school hours which seriously squeeze students' learning of cultural knowledge and other related specialized knowledge as well as the acquisition of intercultural communicative competence. The consequence is that, students may not be able to communicate with people from other cultures effectively and appropriately after four year of learning. Thus, questionnaire will be designed for investigating and assessing the intercultural competence of English Major students in China; and discussions and analysis will be carried out after data collection.

Actually, to be more specific, junior and senior students will be my targeted participants. They have learned all the basic courses of English language in the first two to three years, which means their language proficiency should have achieved the level where it can facilitate them to more efficiently develop other aspects of intercultural competence such as the comprehension, interpretation of cultural knowledge, and a critical awareness towards issues related to cultures, as well as the skills of interactions, ect. However, it is likely that for many junior and senior English majors, they may have very little or no intercultural experience on campus given the fact that either there are limited intercultural opportunities in their daily life or they don't actively look for such opportunity . What's more, as mentioned in previous chapter, academically, they have limited access to intercultural learning due to the curriculum design or teachers' lack of IC education.

After targeting junior and senior as the participants, I started to contact my colleagues in Luoyang Normal University as well as English teachers working in other universities, in the hope that they could spare several minutes in their class time for

their students to fill in the questionnaire, so that the quantity and quality of their answers can be guaranteed. It's a lot to ask yet it produced effective outcome. Actually trial had been made beforehand, sending the link as a mobile phone message to a class of 34 junior students and asking them to fill in the questionnaire after class; however, very few of them replied, since it is a voluntary act and it is understandable even if they neglect the message. That's why I made the decision to ask teachers for help during class. Eventually, 470 English major students from six universities participated in this survey, including Luoyang Normal University, North China University of Water Resources and Electric Power, Sichuan International Studies University, Chengdu Institute of Sichuan International Studies University, Wuhan Qingchuan University and Henan University of Science and Technology. Among them, three are from Henan Province(located in the central part of China, and one from the capital city of Sichuan Province(located in the southwest part of China), and one from the capital city of Hubei Province(located in the south part of China and one from Chongqing, a mega-city in the southwest part of China.

4.1.1.2. College English Teachers

A questionnaire for college English teachers is also designed, in the hope of better understanding the possible problems or causes behind the current situation of students' intercultural competence in China. As a college English teacher myself for more than 10 years, I deeply feel that the influence of teachers to students is huge, and sometimes even life-changing. Thus, what and how English teachers teach in class matter a lot in shaping students' cognition as well as their purpose of learning a foreign language in and after class. And a general introduction is made below to better understand their situation in China.

(1) General challenges faced by College English teachers in China

When targeting college English teachers as the research object, it's not difficult to find in many journal articles about the challenges and pressure they face over the past decade till now. According to Zhang Lian(2013), a professor from Beijing Foreign Studies University, there were three major challenges facing college English teachers. First, the difficult balance between teaching and academic research, i.e. more often

than not, too many teaching hours/tasks squeezes the time for academic research, hence the quality and quantity of published papers have to be compromised. Second, pressure from unsatisfactory teachers' long-term career development as well as the judgement and evaluation from society, university they work for, and of course, from their students. Competition got more fierce each year as the threshold for recruiting college teachers got higher. Take Luoyang Normal University for example, only those who have PhD degree are eligible for job application over the past six years; not mention many more prestigious universities across China. However, the job prospect and assisted academic training is limited afterwards, based on the data results from Zhanglian(2013)'s empirical survey. College English teachers felt stressful by the required amount of papers they need to publish, along with the increasingly higher demand for better, up-to-date teaching style from their students. In the 2016 Annual Joint Conference of College English-related Majors in Beijing, Professor Wen Qiufang, the chairman of China English Language Education Association(CELEA) again talked about the challenges and pressure faced by College English teachers over the struggling balance between the overload of teaching hours and the difficulty in publishing academic papers, which indicated that the situation had not changed much till 2016; Professor Wang Lifei(2016) in that conference also agreed with Wen by saying that most college English teachers in China are very busy in teaching two to three courses over one semester and leave no time for attending academic conferences, training or further study. Actually it hasn't changed much till now.(reference??) Therefore, the chain effect brought by the above dilemma to College English teachers is the lack of up-dated knowledge and skills when new subjects such as IC-related courses are introduced to their curriculum.

(2) IC Education from Teachers' Perspective

The definition of intercultural competence has been discussed in detail in previous chapters; however, rarely has it elaborated from teachers' perspective. Byram(1997) argued that the goal of foreign language learners is to become “intercultural speakers”. Then how can teachers help their students to achieve this goal? Liddicoat(2004) proposed that foreign language teaching should include the following four aspects:

culture learning, cultural comparison, cultural exploration and the positioning of the third party's identity interculturally. Thus, IC education not only involves the teaching of cultural knowledge and communicative skills, but also guide students to foster the ability to analyze, comprehend, interpret, relate, empathize, adapt and integrate. Only keep the above in mind can teachers properly and effectively synergize language learning with cultural learning, offering opportunities for students to reflect on cultures of their own and others, and providing soil for them to form the value of ethnorelativism, instead of ethnocentrism (Zhang Hongling, 2021, online conference). Han(2014) conducted a survey in the form of questionnaire in order to research on College English teachers' cognition to IC education. 1081 English teachers in 39 universities participated in the research. The result showed that college English teachers generally recognize the importance of IC education yet most of them only have a vague idea about the definition and components of intercultural competence. Besides, the role of Chinese culture is absent and there is lacking in cultural comparison in their English class. To sum up from Han's research, College English teachers of China realized the importance of IC education but they don't know how to integrate it effectively into their class. Very limited relevant studies were conducted since Han's in 2014, hence it adds more value and significance to my current empirical study.

(3) Summary

The questionnaire in this study intends to investigate on how are the college English teachers' understanding of intercultural competence at the present time, and whether they put IC cultivation as one of their teaching objectives, etc., since the way they teach plays a vital role in shaping students' comprehension and practice of intercultural competence. The questionnaire covers questions such as teachers' interpretation on IC definition, IC education, the teaching methods they may use when encountering culture-related content, and the way they deal with the relationship between the training of language skills and the learning of intercultural competence; plus their opinion on the role of Chinese culture in English language learning process. teachers' feedback is likely to answer or explain some of the problems in students'

development of intercultural competence.

4.4.2. Pilot Interviews

4.4.2.1. Interview with English major students

At the early stage of my PhD project, at least 10 English major students were interviewed in helping me forming the hypothesis for my thesis. The interview question are as follows,

- (1) *Are you familiar with the term intercultural competence? How do you understand it?*
- (2) *Do you have any intercultural experiences to assist your language learning? If you have, what are they?*
- (3) *What's your desirable goal after four years of learning English?*
- (4) *Do you think you have adequate linguistic competence (such as speaking, listening, and writing etc.) and communicative skills (such as listen, observe, interpret, and analyze, and interaction etc.) as basis for effective intercultural communication? Any evidence?*
- (5) *As an English major, do you have adequate cultural knowledge of the major English-speaking countries and that of your own country? Which do you think is more important in the process of intercultural communication?*
- (6) *When encountering different, strange or even unbelievable foreign cultural phenomenon, will you respect, tolerate or appreciate it instead of holding prejudice against it? Can you give an example?*
- (7) *Do you have the habit or the skill to think critically in the process of learning English language or communicating with people from other cultures, or watching some culture-related news/events happening in other cultures from social media? Example?*
- (8) *Are you willing to jump out of comfort zone both in and after class and look for opportunities to improve your intercultural competence? Have you been doing this?*
- (9) *Do you think the curriculum design of your major along with teachers' teaching methods/strategy can effectively help you to become an interculturally competent*

graduate that could meet the demand of our times? Why or why not?

4.4.2.2. Interview with College English Teachers

Five English teachers from the Foreign language Department of Luoyang Normal University were also interviewed as a beginning to know about the current situation of the IC education and learning in universities of China. Questions concerning teachers' understanding and application of IC education in their daily teaching practice were asked as follows,

- (1) *Have you ever taught any course that is closely related to intercultural competence? (Experience)*
- (2) *What's your understanding of the role of IC in language learning/teaching process? Important or not important? (Awareness/knowledge)*
- (3) *Do you think you have adequate intercultural experiences or intercultural training to assist your English language teaching? (Experience/training)*
- (4) *Do you think having good speaking and listening skills can guarantee successful intercultural communication? Why or why not? (skills)*
- (5) *Please talk about the content and teaching methods you applied in the classroom for intercultural teaching. (Teaching methods)*
- (6) *Do you often encourage your students to think critically in class when teaching them cultural knowledge? (Critical thinking)*
- (7) *What do you think about the role of Chinese culture for the English major students? Is it necessary for them to be familiar with their own culture when learning a foreign language? (Chinese Culture Aphasia)*
- (8) *Do you think the way you teach is somehow confined by any exterior factors when you want to integrate intercultural teaching into your class?? If yes, what are they? (exterior factors)*

4.4.3. Questionnaire for students

4.4.3.1. Content Construction

The questionnaire for students is named as “*Intercultural Competence Assessment Scale for English Major Students in China*” which is divided into two sections. The

Section one is about personal information such as the gender, the place of origin, the university they're from, and the description of their own identity, etc. Section Two includes 28 items for the assessment of five dimensions as discussed above, i.e. language proficiency, intercultural sensitivity, attitude of openness, curiosity and confidence, interaction skills, cultural knowledge, along with intercultural experience. As stated previously, some items in the assessment were borrowed from existing intercultural scales, while others were devised specifically for this study. Participants are required to address each item on a five-point scale by marking “√”, ranging from 1-Strongly Disagree, 2-Agree, 3-Uncertain, to 4- Agree and 5-Strongly Agree. One thing worth noting is that originally, a Cultural Quiz was included in the questionnaire as Section Three (as below) for the purpose of getting to evaluate more accurately on students' master and interpretation of cultural knowledge; however, it was deleted after the trial test of 31 students for the reason that it was too time-consuming to finish this part(more than half of them spent 30 to 40 minutes) and many of them look up online in their mobile phone for the answer which is a potential factor to affect the credibility of the data result. Hence it would not be operable on a larger scale; and more effective methods are needed for the feasibility of this part in my future survey.

Section 3 Culture Quiz

1.

Could you list and explain one or two taboos when interacting with people from major English-speaking countries.

2.

Please list at least 4 major festivals in European countries.

Please write down something you know about Christianity.

3.

Please write down your understanding of terms such as "Constitutional Monarchy" and "Capitalism".

4.

Please write down something you know about Western Art.

5.

Although body languages such as handshaking register the same meaning in most cultures, interpretations of many others may vary from culture to culture, such as facial expressions, body postures, gestures, eye movement and the use of space. (Zhang Guiping, 2019)

Please write down 2 to 3 examples of culturally-distinct body languages in different countries.

4.4.3.2. Corresponding Items for Research Questions

The two questionnaires are designed for the purpose of answering my research questions. The assessment items are listed below for each of the corresponding research question.

1. How interculturally competent are the English majors in Chinese universities at present?

1) How does their English language proficiency affect their communication with

people from other cultures?

When I'm speaking English,

| <i>Scale</i> | <i>1</i> <i>Strongly</i> <i>Disagree</i> | <i>2</i> <i>Disagree</i> | <i>3</i> <i>Uncertain</i> | <i>4</i> <i>Agree</i> | <i>5</i> <i>Strongly</i> <i>Agree</i> |
|---|---|---|--|--|--|
| <i>I have problem with grammar when interacting with people of different cultures.</i> | | | | | |
| <i>I know enough English grammar knowledge but facing difficulty when putting them together in order to express my thoughts.</i> | | | | | |
| <i>I am able to express my ideas cohesively when interacting with people of different cultures.</i> | | | | | |
| <i>I am able to answer questions fluently and effectively when interacting with people of different cultures.</i> | | | | | |
| <i>I know I have problem in grammar; but I also know that it is more important in communication to express ideas than to do it properly linguistically.</i> | | | | | |

2) How do they evaluate their performance in the interaction with people from other

cultures?

When I'm having intercultural conversation,

| <i>Scale</i> | <i>1 Strongly Disagree</i> | <i>2 Disagree</i> | <i>3 Uncertain</i> | <i>4 Agree</i> | <i>5 Strongly Agree</i> |
|--|------------------------------------|-----------------------|------------------------|--------------------|---------------------------------|
| <i>I avoid those situations where I will have to deal with culturally-distinct counterpart.</i> | | | | | |
| <i>I don't know what to say when I'm with people from other cultures.</i> | | | | | |
| <i>I'm always able to make friends with people of other cultures as well as maintain a harmonious and lasting relationship afterwards.</i> | | | | | |
| <i>I always try to avoid possible conflict in the first meeting with people of other cultures because I think protecting the face(mianzi) of both sides is more important.</i> | | | | | |

3) What's their attitudes towards their own and other cultures?

What's your attitude towards your own culture and other cultures?

| <i>Scale</i> | <i>1 Strongly Disagree</i> | <i>2 Disagree</i> | <i>3 Uncertain</i> | <i>4 Agree</i> | <i>5 Strongly Agree</i> |
|--------------|------------------------------------|-----------------------|------------------------|--------------------|---------------------------------|
| | | | | | |

| | | | | | |
|---|--|--|--|--|--|
| <i>Most cultures are backward compared to my culture.</i> | | | | | |
| <i>The Chinese ways of doing things are the best way in the world.</i> | | | | | |
| <i>I'm not interested in the values and customs of other cultures</i> | | | | | |
| <i>People of different cultures could learn from each other.</i> | | | | | |
| <i>I treat people of different color, race and cultures equally and with respect.</i> | | | | | |

4) Do they have necessary cultural knowledge as basis for effective and appropriate intercultural communication?

How do you evaluate the amount of knowledge you have that is related to intercultural communication?

| <i>Scale</i> | <i>1 Strongly Disagree</i> | <i>2 Disagree</i> | <i>3 Uncertain</i> | <i>4 Agree</i> | <i>5 Strongly Agree</i> |
|---|------------------------------------|-----------------------|------------------------|--------------------|---------------------------------|
| <i>I know the basic rules and taboos of intercultural communication.</i> | | | | | |
| <i>I'm able to briefly illustrate the main traditions, cultural values and religious beliefs of major English speaking countries.</i> | | | | | |

| | | | | | |
|--|--|--|--|--|--|
| <i>I'm able to briefly illustrate the political, legal and economic system of major English speaking counties.</i> | | | | | |
| <i>I'm able to briefly illustrate the characteristics of the main arts and crafts of major English-speaking countries.</i> | | | | | |
| <i>I know the general rules(including taboos) for expressing non-verbal behaviors in the major English-speaking countries.</i> | | | | | |

5)How do they feel when interacting with people from different cultures?

How do you feel when interacting with people from different cultures ?

| <i>Scale</i> | <i>1</i> <i>Strongly</i> <i>Disagree</i> | <i>2</i> <i>Disagree</i> | <i>3</i> <i>Uncertain</i> | <i>4</i> <i>Agree</i> | <i>5</i> <i>Strongly</i> <i>Agree</i> |
|---|---|---|--|--|--|
| <i>I dislike interacting with people of other cultures.</i> | | | | | |
| <i>I don't think it's necessary to communicate with people of other cultures; it's meaningless.</i> | | | | | |
| <i>I have a feeling of enjoyment towards differences between my culturally distinct counterpart and me.</i> | | | | | |

| | | | | | |
|---|--|--|--|--|--|
| <i>I always follow the world news on the internet.</i> | | | | | |
| <i>I feel confident when interacting with people of other cultures.</i> | | | | | |

2. What are the major factors that may constrain students from developing intercultural competence?

1) Are students willing to jump out of their comfort zone and actively participated in intercultural communicative activities both in class and in their daily life?

Do you actively look for opportunities to develop your intercultural competence in your daily life?

| <i>Scale</i> | <i>1 Strongly Disagree</i> | <i>2 Disagree</i> | <i>3 Uncertain</i> | <i>4 Agree</i> | <i>5 Strongly Agree</i> |
|--|---|------------------------------|-------------------------------|---------------------------|--|
| <i>I often look for opportunities to interact with people from other culture such as through online social media or internship in foreign companies.</i> | | | | | |
| <i>All of my friends are from my own culture.</i> | | | | | |
| <i>I have many friends from different cultures.</i> | | | | | |
| <i>It's almost impossible for me to meet people from other culture in the city I currently live.</i> | | | | | |

2) Do English teachers integrated cultural teaching/IC-related content into their class?

(Please check Teachers' questionnaire in Appendix 2)

3) Does the language policies in China put IC as one of the major objectives?

4.4.3.3. Procedure of operation

Wjx.cn is the most commonly used online questionnaire platform in China; and my questionnaires were edited and sent out through this website in the form of two QR Codes as follows.



The QR Codes were then sent to participants' WeChat(the most popular social network app in China) in which the QR Codes are scanned and the questionnaire will appear so that students and teachers could conveniently fill in the forms in their smart phones.

A trial test was carried out in May 2021 in my colleague's English class with 34 students. I expected the students to finish the questionnaire in 8 to 10 minutes; however it took them more than 30 minutes. Therefore I had to deleted Section 3 in the questionnaire as mentioned previously so that it would be more realistic to get valid data results when it is sent to more students in different universities across China. I contacted every possible College English teachers that I know and asked them for help; I found it more effective when students fill in the questionnaire in class instead of after class as many of them are likely to neglect the WeChat message after class and they're definitely more concentrated on the content in class. However this means

part of the class time has to be taken; thankfully, most of the teachers that I contacted were willing to help. Eventually, 470 answers were collected from junior and senior English major students in five colleges and universities by the end of July 2021.

4.4.4. Questionnaire for college English teachers

The questionnaire for teachers is named as “*A Survey on Intercultural Teaching of College English Teachers*” was also uploaded to wjx.cn so that it's just a click away for the teachers to fill in the questionnaire and the platform would automatically collect the results which were clearly displayed on the website.

The content of this questionnaire is divided into two parts. Part 1 is Personal Information concerning participants' university, gender, age, degree, working experience and overseas experience, etc. Part 2 is about IC-related teaching that covers the questions on definition of IC, understanding of IC education, teaching methods, the relationship between IC and language skills, and the role of Chinese culture for English language education, etc. Those questions were designed for the purpose of answering the research question of “*Do English teachers integrated cultural teaching/IC-related content into their class?*”

It was challenging for me to reach a large number of College English teachers in different universities due to my limited network. Therefore, at first my expected sample size was 60 teachers at most and then I decided to ask my dean in Luoyang Normal University for help and he was kind enough to send my QR Code to his contact. At last, 113 College English teachers in 9 universities participated in the survey.

4.4.5. Advantages, Challenges and Limitations

(1) Advantages

As a large amount of academic resources from both China and abroad have been reviewed, articles about the IC assessment of English major students in colleges and universities are rare meanwhile so many IC scholars and language scholars have stressed again and again on the importance of intercultural competence to foreign language learning. And this is particular true in China; only very limited number of

papers are related to the assessment of college students and language learners. Therefore, it adds more value to conduct such empirical research. Also, language proficiency is included as one of the essential components in intercultural competence which is also put into the assessment content. In this way the assessment is more targeted on English major students; and the relationship between their language level and intercultural competence can also be studied. Besides, when defining intercultural competence and designing assessment tools for Chinese English major students, the importance of facework management and maintaining harmonious relationship is especially considered, which is also seldom seen in other literature. The reason is not only because in Chinese culture, harmonious relationship is oftentimes more valued than the “actual effectiveness” of the conversation itself; but also because of the dynamic situation in China and the world as a whole that have been affected so badly by the pandemic. This is a time when harmony among different countries is so vital so as to work together to fight against Covid-19. What's more, Teacher's questionnaire is designed for the purpose of better understanding and explaining the data results in a more persuasive way.

(2) Challenges

Generally speaking, the sudden outbreak of the pandemic in 2020, and the consequential turbulence of the world may lead to new understanding of intercultural competence. It may pose challenge to the empirical research in that the dynamic change of intercultural communication seems always make the research a step behind the reality. It is likely that the data result is not keeping up with the time when this thesis is finally finished. Second, the different interpretations of “effectiveness and appropriateness” in different cultures is another challenge; being considered “effective and appropriate” on one side may not mean the same on the other side. Here Fantini(2009) provided us with an explanation that may possibly solve this puzzle in our mind: '*whereas effective reflects the view of one's own performance in the target language culture (i.e. an outsider's or “etic” view), appropriate reflects how natives perceive such performance (i.e., an insider's or “emic” view).*' Despite of that, it's still challenging for both sides to learn to recognize their own stance during intercultural

communication as well as conduct assessment in terms of the outcome.

Specifically speaking, it seems that the content of the questionnaire and the data collected are never enough to cover all aspects of intercultural competence in order to get comprehensive and relatively reliable results. Even after defining what intercultural competence is for a particular research object, it is still not easy to operate the assessment process comprehensively. According to Deardorff (2009), case studies, interviews, analysis of narrative diaries, observations by others/host culture, and judgement by self and others are some of the assessment items with 80% to 100% agreement among top intercultural experts. However, it usually needs a whole team or takes very long time if operating the assessment by using the above methods combined. Hence, another challenge posed to me personally is the access to potential participants, both English major students and college English teachers across China. It would definitely more convincing if a larger sample size is available.

(3) Limitations

As mentioned above, 470 students from 5 universities are only a small group of participants, and it's only a small glimpse into the 3005 colleges and universities across China. It's possible that the sample is opportunistic. What's more, though the survey covered five dimensions yet every dimension has a lot more aspects than the questionnaire showed. Ideally, every aspect of each dimension should be carefully studied and assessed if the problem of time constraint and the workload needed can be solved.

4.5. Conclusion

In conclusion, Research Design and Methodology is the most essential chapter in my thesis; it formulates the general map in answering the research questions of my study. In this chapter, research questions and hypothesis were illustrated in detail, followed by the introduction of research design that includes the rational, the assessment plan, clarification of IC components and indicators; then the operation of research methods such as the selection of participants, pilot interviews, questionnaires for students and teachers were described. Finally, advantages, challenges and

limitations were discussed.

When constructing the whole design, existing IC definitions and assessment tools from influential IC scholars were valuable resources to refer to. Darla K. Deardorff's *The SAGE Handbook of Intercultural Competence*(2009), Janet M Bennett's *The SAGE Encyclopedia of Intercultural Competence* (2015), Jane Jackson's *The Routledge Handbook of Language and Intercultural Communication*(2020), Michael Byram, Adam Nichols, David Steven's *Developing Intercultural Competence in Practice*(2014), X. D. Dai's *A study on Intercultural Competence*(2018), and E.P.Zhuang and Nan M.Sussman's *Intercultural Communication*(2014), etc., are all ready-to-use guidebooks that could inspire those who are interested in intercultural competence. I was well-guided when defining intercultural competence specified to my study, constructing the five assessed dimensions based on IC components, and clarifying indicators to serve my research questions. In the way, I was also inspired to put the importance of facework and harmony into consideration when designing specific assessment items.

Since the research endeavors to find out in what aspects the foreign language education needs to improve in terms of cultivating students' IC in the language learning process by collecting data from English major students and College English teachers. The primary audience for using the result of this study is the higher education administrators as well as language teachers who are responsible for the learning outcome of foreign language learners. Thus, when all of the above is done, the next question to be pondered is how to interpret the data and utilize the results to help teachers and students in their teaching and learning process effectively. Hopefully, the assessment could provide a clearer picture for teachers to know the reality in China's IC education, realize the urgency, adjust their teaching objectives, as well as be motivated to attend intercultural seminars and training, and then learn and improve intercultural competence together with their students.

Chapter 5 Findings and Discussions

5.1. Introduction

Questionnaire 1

Intercultural Competence Assessment Scale for English Major Students in China includes 33 items, 5 items in Section 1 and 28 items in Section 2 which combined 18 self-designed items and 10 existing items borrowed from previous IC assessment scales. It covers 5 dimensions of intercultural competence, namely, language proficiency, intercultural sensitivity, attitude of curiosity, openness and confidence, interaction skills and cultural knowledge, plus intercultural experience. The assessment adopted a five-point scale, ranging from 1-Strongly Disagree to 5-Strongly Agree; the higher the score, the better their intercultural competence is supposed to be. **In this study, 1-2.4 is defined as low level of intercultural competence, 2.5-3.8 is defined as intermediate level of intercultural competence and 3.9-5 is defined as high level of competence.**

In this study, the Cronbach's alpha coefficients of each dimension are 0.510, 0.718, 0.551, 0.507, 0.508 and 0.844 respectively, and the Cronbach's alpha coefficient of the total table is 0.711

Table 5.1. Presentation of the Respondent Group from Questionnaire 1 (n=470)

| Variable | | Frequency | Percentage | χ^2 | p |
|-------------------|-----------|-----------|------------|----------|---------|
| Gender | Female | 411 | 87.40 | 263.626 | < 0.001 |
| | Male | 59 | 12.60 | | |
| Grade | Freshmen | 18 | 3.80 | 855.723 | < 0.001 |
| | Sophomore | 11 | 2.30 | | |
| | Junior | 339 | 72.10 | | |
| | Senior | 96 | 20.40 | | |
| University | HUST | 94 | 20.00 | 308.249 | < 0.001 |
| | NCWU | 40 | 8.50 | | |
| | LYNU | 223 | 47.40 | | |

| | | | | | |
|--------------------|--------------------|-----|-------|--------|---------|
| | SISU | 37 | 7.90 | | |
| | WQU | 32 | 6.80 | | |
| | Other Universities | 44 | 9.40 | | |
| Language(s) | 1 Language | 84 | 17.90 | 58.326 | < 0.001 |
| | 2 Languages | 168 | 35.70 | | |
| | More than 2 | 218 | 46.40 | | |
| | Languages | | | | |

Note: HUST-Henan University of Science and Technology; NCWU-North China University of Water Resources and Electric Power; LYNU-Luoyang Normal University; SISU-Sichuan International Studies University; WQU-Wuhan Qingchuan University

In brief, 470 students participated in the survey and most of them are juniors and seniors from five universities within China as shown in the table--, with 339 juniors and 96 seniors respectively. The author assumed that the results will be more effective if only juniors and senior are targeted, for the fact that they've been learning English intensively for two to three years which laid a foundation linguistically for intercultural communication. Yet the survey result actually shows a negative result according to students' self-evaluation on their language proficiency; here to some extent educational system might be to blame in not only failing to improve students' linguistic competence effectively but also in working on the weak link of self-evaluation in the language learning process. Besides, almost half of them speak more than two languages, which is a good sign to indicate the potential and possibility for this generation to become global citizens, and profile analysis later in this chapter proves this speculation as quite true in that almost half of the respondents belong to the Profile 5-Global Citizen which will be discussed in detail in the following analysis.

Questionnaire 2

A Survey on Intercultural Teaching of College English Teachers also includes two parts. Part 1 is personal information such as gender, age, degree and overseas

experience, etc.; part 2 includes 10 questions related to IC teaching. To be more specific, participants' cognition on the definition of intercultural competence, IC education, IC teaching methods, IC & language skills, and the role of Chinese culture, etc. are investigated. The result of Questionnaire 2 serves as an effective channel to understand IC education in China from teachers perspective.

Table 5.2.: Presentation of the Respondent Group from Questionnaire 2 (n=113)

| | | |
|-------------------------------|---------------------------------------|--|
| Information Category | | |
| Gender | Female | Male |
| | 92 | 21 |
| Age | Age Range | Number of Teachers in Each Category |
| | 30-39 years old | 44 |
| | 40-49 years old | 54 |
| | 50-59 years old | 15 |
| Educational Background | PhD Degree | 14 |
| | Masters Degree | 90 |
| | Bachelors Degree | 9 |
| Teaching Experience | Duration | Number of Teachers in Each Category |
| | 1-6 years of teaching | 7 |
| | 7-12 years of teaching | 16 |
| | 13-18 years of teaching | 46 |
| | 19-24 years of teaching | 27 |
| | 25-35 years of teaching | 17 |
| | University they are working in | Number of Teachers in Each Category |
| | Luoyang Normal University | 12 |

| | | |
|-------------------|--|----|
| University | Henan Agricultural University | 16 |
| | Henan University of Engineering | 10 |
| | North China University of Water Resources and Electric Power | 10 |
| | Xinxiang Medical University | 29 |
| | Xuchang University | 8 |
| | Zhengzhou University of Aeronautics | 7 |
| | Other universities | 21 |

As shown in the Table 2, 113 college English teachers from more than 10 universities participated in the survey, with age ranging from 30 to 56. Among them, 14 teachers have PhD degrees, 90 teachers have Masters degrees and 9 teachers have Bachelors degrees. As for overseas experience, there are 56 teachers who have been abroad for work or study, with duration ranging from 1 week to 4.5 years, mainly to English-speaking countries such as the United states, the United Kingdom, Australia, and New Zealand, ect,; and that accounts for 50% of all the participants. Yet, the data result from the following tables indicate that their knowledge and understanding regarding the field of intercultural competence is rather limited. This may due to teachers' lack of intercultural training/preparation before departure and reflection over their intercultural encounters afterwards. Or, may be they have no idea about interculturality and are not interculturally sensitive enough to perceive cultures of their own and others' in an ethnorelative point of view even when they immersed in a different culture , hence ignoring the value of learning and reflecting on the cultural differences, and impeding their intercultural learning process. Besides, the major group in the participants have teaching experience from 13 to 24 years, meaning that

most of them are already very experienced English teachers. Besides, almost all the participated teachers are from universities in Henan Province; hopefully in the future, the sample size could reach more regions across China. Generally speaking, aside from the limitation on the regional coverage, the sample group is pretty ideal for my study and analysis, given their educational background, teaching experiences and intercultural experience.

5.2. Findings

5.2.1. Descriptive Analysis of Students' Intercultural Competence(Questionnaire 1) and College English Teachers' IC Teaching(Questionnaire 2)

The findings from the two questionnaires will be listed by answering the research questions through descriptive analysis as below. Specifically, Respondents' Identification Profiles, the assessment items of the five dimensions plus intercultural experience from the students(Questionnaire 1) and the investigation and evaluation of teachers intercultural teaching(Questionnaire 2) will be interpreted and analyzed.

5.2.1.1. Questionnaire 1-Intercultural Competence Assessment Scale for English Major Students

(1) The Analysis of Respondents' Identification Profiles

① Introduction

Question 6 in the Section 1 of Questionnaire 1 intends to investigate students' identification profile which may affect ones potential in developing intercultural competence. How respondents perceive themselves geographically reveals how much they are willing to connect with the world. There are four cultural circles of identification in the table as below, namely, the choices of 'the member of the world and Asian' is the sphere of 'Global', the choice of 'Chinese' is the sphere of 'National', the choice of 'inhabitant of province/city' is the sphere of 'Regional', and choice of 'the member of the family' is the sphere of 'Local'.

| How much do you feel when describing your identity? | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|--|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|
| The member of the world | | | | | |

| | | | | | |
|------------------------------------|--|--|--|--|--|
| Asian | | | | | |
| Chinese | | | | | |
| Inhabitant of the province/region | | | | | |
| Inhabitant of my city/town/village | | | | | |
| Member of the family | | | | | |

② **Latent Profile Analysis (PLA)**

Latent Profile Analysis was adopted to analyze the data result collected from the above table, hence a chart demonstrating different types of identity profiles were calculated as below. In this chart, 1 to 5 at the **vertical axis** represents how much respondents feel when describing their identity. 1 means *I don't feel this way at all*; 2 means *I feel this way a bit*; 3 means *it is hard to say*; 4 means *I feel so generally*; and 5 means *I always feel this way*. Item 1 to Item 5 at the **horizontal axis** respectively represents the identity of '**the number of the world**', '**Asian**', '**Chinese**', '**Inhabitant of the province/region**', '**Inhabitant of my city/town/village**', and '**The member of the family**'. Based on how respondents identified themselves, they were categorized into six types of identity profiles.

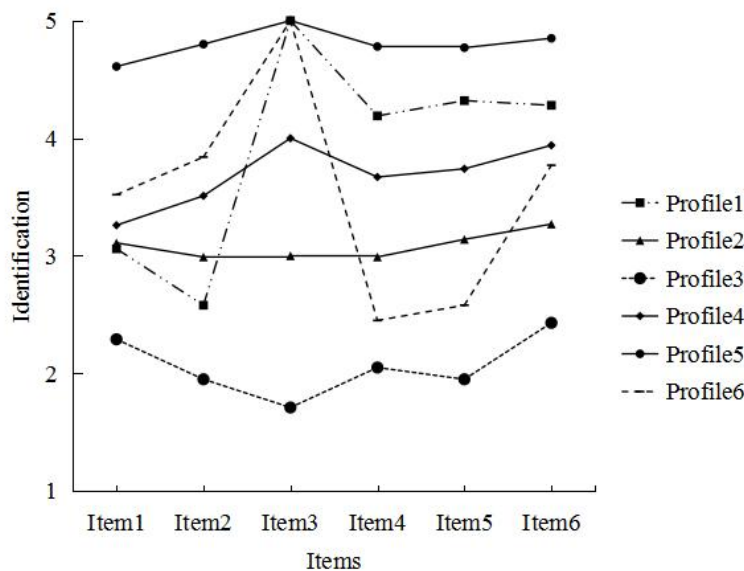


Table 5.3. Latent Profile Analysis.

| Profile Category | Number of Students and Its Percentage in Each Group | Profile Identification |
|-------------------------|--|---|
| Profile 1 | 53 students, 11.3% | National and Local |
| Profile 2 | 71 students, 15.1% | Aligned Profile of being Non-preferential |
| Profile 3 | 21 students, 4.5% | Limited sense of Belonging |
| Profile 4 | 81 students, 17.2% | Slightly National |
| Profile 5 | 213 students, 45.3% | Global Citizen |
| Profile 6 | 31 students, 6.6% | National' |

Table 5.4. Summary of data result in Profile Identification.

As shown in the chart and table, respondents in Profile 1 (53 students, 11.3%) displayed a high degree of recognition in the identity of being Chinese and the inhabitant of the province/region/city/town/village as well as being the member of the family, while they generally don't feel themselves as the number of the world and Asia. In this profile we observe dominance of the National and Local sphere, which means that this kind of people see themselves first of all through the national and local culture and they use this "glasses" to recognize themselves as a social creature. Therefore, Profile 1 is identified as being 'National and Local'. Data of Profile 2 (71 students, 15.1%) shows no dominance of any dimension, i.e. they generally demonstrates an attitude of uncertainty (3-Its hard to say) as well as no preference over any type of identity; this group of respondents see their own identity on the level of ambivalence, hence are defined as being 'Aligned Profile of being Non-preferential'. While data of Profile 3 (21 students, 4.5%) are also aligned, i.e, the result shows no dominance of any dimension, yet this group display a relatively low degree of recognition in any of the given identity, hence are defined as 'Limited sense of Belonging'. It seems that students in this group are not so sure if the descriptions in the table can be like that and they may have never imagined that one can have layers

of identities. Respondents in Profile 4 (81 students, 17.2%) display an attitude of uncertainty towards the choice of a Global identity (A member of the world and Asian), but they are relatively assured of being Chinese particularly and being local regionally, though not as strong as those of Profile 1 in this respect. Therefore, Profile 4 are defined as Slightly National. Respondents in Profile 5 (213 students, 45.3%) show a very high degree of recognition in all of the six identities, hence are defined as 'Global Citizen'. Respondents in Profile 6 (31 students, 6.6%) prominently identify themselves as 'Chinese' while rarely as 'Inhabitant of the province/region', and 'Inhabitant of my city/town/village'. therefore this group are defined as being 'National'.

On the whole, when looking at the proportions of the population in each of the profile, it could be summarized that almost half of the participants recognize themselves as global citizens, around one fifth of them as national citizens, another one tenth as members of regional or local community, and the remaining 15% holds a neutral attitudes while 4.5% more display a very limited sense of belonging towards all of the six identities. By categorizing students into different profiles, it would be convenient to study if their identity awareness affect the development of intercultural competence.

5.2.1.2. Data Results Corresponding to Research Questions

Question 1: How does their English language proficiency affect their communication with people from other cultures?

(1) Language Proficiency Regarding Communication Effectiveness in Respondents Opinion

Table 5.5. Language Proficiency

| Dimension | Items | Mean | S.D. | Strongly Disagree | Disagree | Uncertain | Agree | Strongly Agree |
|-----------|-------|-------|-------|-------------------|----------|-----------|-------|----------------|
| Language | 7_1 | 2.449 | 0.884 | 8.5% | 53.6% | 24.9% | 10.4% | 2.6% |

| proficiency | | | | | | | | |
|-------------|------------------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| | -Grammar | | | | | | | |
| | 7_2 | | | | | | | |
| | -Clarity of expression | 2.409 | 0.848 | 10.2% | 50.4% | 29.6% | 7.9% | 1.9% |
| | 7_3 | | | | | | | |
| | -Cohesion | 3.117 | 0.793 | 2.3% | 16.4% | 51.3% | 27.2% | 2.8% |
| | 7_4 | | | | | | | |
| | -Fluency | 2.983 | 0.821 | 3.4% | 22.1% | 49.4% | 23% | 2.1% |
| | 7_5 | | | | | | | |
| | -Expression of ideas | 3.830 | 0.929 | 2.1% | 5.7% | 23% | 45.3% | 23.8% |

Analysis: The choices for the items of Grammar and Clarity of expression are similar, i.e. more than 60% of the participants disagree or strongly disagree" as shown in the above table. Since these two items are reversely scored, they actually chose "agree or strongly agree" when filling in the questionnaire. **As shown above, the scale ranges from 1 point (Strongly Disagree) to 5 point (Strongly Agree). And this applies to all the items that are reversely scored, hence the result of which are reversely adjusted by using SPSS for the convenience of getting consistent score from the data.** Therefore, it can be interpreted as follows, more than 60% of the participants think they have problem with grammar when interacting with people from other cultures and facing difficulty in expressing their words clearly when communicating; and around 25% to 30% more expressed their uncertainty when reading these two items. That is why the means of 'Grammar' and 'Clarity of Expression' are the lowest, i.e. 2.449 and 2.409 respectively. This indicates that juniors and seniors are still not confident in both the use of English grammatically and a clear expression linguistically. Also, more than half of them are uncertain about whether they can express ideas cohesively when having intercultural interaction. Only 30% of them think they are able to do so. As for the assessment of fluency, more than 70% of the participants disagree or are uncertain about the statement, again indicating that they

think they're not fluent enough when speaking English. For the fact that grammar have been taught since junior high school in China, why respondents still generally give negative or ambivalent responses towards this item is worth our attention.

In general, the mean for 'Expression of ideas' is the highest as being 3.830 among the five indicators which demonstrates the possibilities that some students in the group are able to communicate well in English despite of their language deficiency as well as that students have realized communicating ideas is more important than being linguistically correct. However, for respondents who favor this statement, whether all of their language proficiency in English level up their willingness to communicate ideas with people from other cultures is unknown from the data. When taking into account the results of the other four items, the answer might be "no". And if they self-evaluate their level of language proficiency as being not satisfactory, this may consequently affect their motivation and confidence to actively communicate with people from other cultures. This result is consistent with the hypothesis about their language proficiency stated in Chapter 4, as quoted, *"...affected by the fierce competition under exam-oriented education system in the most populous country in the world, students are busy cramming knowledge into their head and have little time to practice spoken English before entering college. And this habit continues to influence their way of learning on college campus. Therefore, their language proficiency necessary for intercultural conversation is not satisfactory..."*(p. Chapter 4). But this result of course cannot generalize the situation in some of the most developed cities in China such as Beijing, Shanghai, Guangzhou, and Shenzhen, ect, as they are some of the most international cities in China where students have more international education since young age.

Overall, students moderately agree that their communicative competence is governed by their ability to express ideas (3.830) which should be read as moderate agreement with the statement, cohesion as an image of linguistic competence received support at the mean (3.11) which also indicates moderate agreement with the statement in the survey tool. On the other hand, what seems to be important in the students' opinion such linguistic categories as grammar and clarity of expression are ambivalent to the

functioning of linguistic competence in the students' opinion.

Question 2: How interculturally sensitive are they towards their own and other cultures?

2) Intercultural Sensitivity towards culture of their own and others in Respondents opinion

Table 5.6. Intercultural Sensitivity

| Dimension | Items | Mean | S.D. | Strongly Disagree | Disagree | Uncertain | Agree | Strongly Agree |
|---------------------------|-----------------------|-------|-------|-------------------|----------|-----------|-------|----------------|
| Intercultural Sensitivity | 8_1 -ethnocentric | 3.400 | 1.113 | 4% | 20.6% | 23.6% | 34.7% | 17% |
| | 8_2 -ethnocentric | 3.204 | 1.099 | 6.6% | 21.5% | 27.7% | 33.4% | 10.9% |
| | 8_3 -ethnocentric | 3.917 | 0.939 | 1.7% | 7.2% | 16.6% | 46.6% | 27.9% |
| | 8_4 -ethnorelative | 4.321 | 0.877 | 1.1% | 3.8% | 9.6% | 33% | 52.6% |
| | 8_5 -ethnorelative | 4.036 | 1.167 | 6.8% | 3.6% | 14.5% | 29.4% | 45.7% |

Analysis:As the statistics show, the means for the indicators of 'Ethnorelative'(8_4 and 8_5) are quite high(4.321 and 4.036), as well as the indicators of 'Ethnocentric' (8_3) as being 3,917(since this one is reversed coded, the higher the score, the less ethnocentric respondents are), even compared with all the other assessment items in the questionnaire. That means respondents are very likely to adopt an ethnorelative approach towards otherness, especially in face of cultural differences; since they generally very much agree with the idea that people of different cultures should learn from each each other and they have well-recognized the importance of treating each other equally and with respect. In addition, they seem interested in the values and

customs of other cultures. However, when asking specifically about what they think about their own culture and other cultures, half of them strongly disagree or disagree with the statement that "most cultures are backward compared with my culture", indicating the other half are uncertain or agree with such statement. And the percentage is similar when asking about the role of Chinese culture, again around half of them are uncertain or disagree with the statement that "the Chinese way of doing things are the best way in the world". This "other half" might be a sign to alert educators the necessity of putting intercultural sensitivity as one of their objectives as they might be struggling between "being ethnorelative" and "being ethnocentric".

To sum up, majority of those English major students support the ideas that people of different cultures should learn from each other and treat each other equally and with respect; and they are generally open and curious about the diverse cultures in the world. However, when asking about the role of their own culture and other cultures, about 28% of them agree or strongly agree with the statement that "Chinese way of doing things are the best way in the world" and another 27.7% of them are uncertain whether it's true or not. On the one hand, this result shows that the young generation in this day and age are confident on their own culture, which is surprisingly different from what the hypothesis assumed, in terms of the role of Chinese culture. On the other hand, it might indicate a tendency to become ethnocentric, which should be cautiously dealt with and consciously guided by their teachers and the society.

Question 3: How do they feel when interacting with people from different cultures?

3) Respondents attitude towards cultural differences and intercultural interaction

Table 5.7. Attitude of Tolerance and Openness

| Dimension | Items | Mean | S.D. | Strongly Disagree | Disagree | Uncertain | Agree | Strongly Agree |
|-------------|-------|-------|-------|-------------------|----------|-----------|-------|----------------|
| Attitude of | 9_1 | 3.813 | 0.928 | 2.1% | 6.6% | 21.5% | 47.4% | 22.3% |

| | | | | | | | | |
|------------|--------------|-------|-------|------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| openness, | -openness | | | | | | | |
| curiosity | and | | | | | | | |
| and | curiosity | | | | | | | |
| confidence | | | | | | | | |
| | 9_2 | | | | | | | |
| | -openness | 4.060 | 0.960 | 1.9% | 7% | 10.6% | 44% | 36.4% |
| | and | | | | | | | |
| | curiosity | | | | | | | |
| | 9_3 | | | | | | | |
| | -openness | 3.594 | 0.843 | 2.1% | 5.7% | 34% | 46.8% | 11.3% |
| | and | | | | | | | |
| | curiosity | | | | | | | |
| | 9_4 | | | | | | | |
| | -openness | 3.662 | 0.807 | 1.1% | 5.5% | 32.1% | 48.7% | 12.6% |
| | and | | | | | | | |
| | curiosity | | | | | | | |
| | 9_5 | | | | | | | |
| | -interaction | 3.415 | 0.864 | 1.3% | 11.3% | 42.1% | 35.3% | 10% |
| | confidence | | | | | | | |

Analysis: The mean of the indicator(9_2) for openness and curiosity stands out as the highest among other items in this dimension. Those participated students, as English language learners, generally display an attitude of openness towards intercultural interaction, as they disagree(44%) or strongly disagree(36.4%) with the statement that *"I don 't think its necessary to communicate with people of other cultures; its meaningless."* Also, majority of them disagree(47.4%) or strongly disagree(22.3%) with the statements that "I dislike interacting with people of other cultures", That's why the mean of 9_1 is relatively high as well. Nevertheless, it is the remaining more than one fourth of the students who 'agree' or are 'uncertain' that worth our attention.

If they tend to dislike interacting with people of other cultures, their motivation and enthusiasm of learning a foreign language effectively would be negatively affected, let alone further developing intercultural competence. Here it would be better if teachers could make efforts in arousing students curiosity in culture and communication, thus actively engage themselves in intercultural interaction. Whats more, on the bright side, around 60% of them "have a feeling of enjoyment towards differences between my culturally distinct counterpart and me.", the result of which adds more possibility in developing into friendly and harmonious relationship during their intercultural communication. Only 6.6% of the students disagree or strongly disagree with the statement "I always follow the world news on the internet." and more than 60% of them agreed that they always follow world news. This confirms again about their curiosity and interest in getting to know about the world. However, 42% of them are uncertain if they can confidently interact with people of other culture; and 12.6% more evaluated themselves being not confident at all. This might be explained by the data results on language proficiency and intercultural sensitivity. Cognitively, they may be confident in their own culture as well as curious and open to the outside world; but they are not confident in their language proficiency which consequently affect their ability to interact with people from other cultures when using English as the communicative language.

Question 4: How do they evaluate their performance in the interaction with people from other cultures?

4) Interaction Skills and the Role of Face(mianzi) in Respondents Opinion

Table 5.8. Interaction Skills and Facework

| Dimension | Items | Mean | S.D. | Strongly Disagree | Disagree | Uncertain | Agree | Strongly Agree |
|---------------------------------|----------------------------|-------|-------|-------------------|----------|-----------|-------|----------------|
| Interaction skills and facework | 11_1 -interaction skill | 3.068 | 0.876 | 2.3% | 23.6% | 43.4% | 26.2% | 4.5% |

| | | | | | | | |
|--------------|-------|-------|------|-------|-------|-------|------|
| 11_2 | | | | | | | |
| -interaction | 2.900 | 0.922 | 2.6% | 36.6% | 32.8% | 24.5% | 3.6% |
| skill | | | | | | | |
| 11_3 | | | | | | | |
| -interaction | 3.102 | 0.873 | 2.1% | 22.6% | 42.8% | 28.1% | 4.5% |
| skill | | | | | | | |
| 11_4 | | | | | | | |
| -facework | 3.532 | 0.845 | 1.3% | 9.8% | 33% | 46.4% | 9.6% |

Analysis: As shown from the Means in this table, the scores are relatively low on average which indicates that students are ambivalent or rather disagree with the statements given by the research. Compared with their willingness to communicate, it seems respondents are not so confident in their communicative competence. Only 30.7% of the students think that they don't avoid those situations where they will have to deal with culturally-distinct counterpart. 43.4% of them are uncertain whether they will avoid it or not, possibly because such situations are so rare in their real life and they're not sure what they will do in the actual scenario. And this may apply to the next statement "I don't know what to say when I'm with people from other cultures." Only 28.1% of the participants think they know what to say while the rest of them are either uncertain or don't know what to say when they are with people from other cultures. The Mean of this item is the lowest among the four which may lead to a negative cycle in which students would further avoid such situation and are thus less likely to actively engage in intercultural communication in the future. This might be the key reason why students don't actively look for opportunities of intercultural interactions because they'd rather stay in their comfort zone. As for whether they are "able to make friends with people of other cultures as well as maintain a harmonious and lasting relationship afterwards.", 42.8% of them expressed their uncertainty and 32.6% agree or strongly agree with the statement. As can be seen from the above data,

the choice of "uncertain" takes up a very high proportion in each of the three statements regarding their interaction skills while there are only around 30% of them think positively about their own interaction skills. The lack of intercultural opportunities might be one of the reasons, and their lack of confidence in their language proficiency might be another; plus that regular evaluation of their interaction skills is likely to be a missing link in their English language learning process.

The Mean for the last item that assessed facework is the highest in this dimension. Though there are still 33% chose "uncertain" when answering "I always try to avoid possible conflict in the first meeting with people of other cultures because I think protecting the face(mianzi) of both sides is more important.", this time 57% of the participants agree or strongly agree with this statement, confirming the assumption in the hypothesis that in Chinese culture, the avoidance of conflict is common in the first meeting and the face(mianzi) is very much valued in communication and it is quite likely that this tradition has not changed much even in young generations concept. The 33% uncertainty might be those who assume facing the conflict frankly instead of beating around the bush might be the best solution. This is also understandable since this is the type of communication style more and more business people favor. However, it is still worth people of other cultures attention when travelling to China or doing business with Chinese people.

Question 5: Do they have necessary cultural knowledge as basis for effective and appropriate intercultural communication?

5) Respondents Self-evaluation of Cultural Knowledge

Table 5.9. Cultural Knowledge

| Dimension | Items | Mean | S.D. | Strongly Disagree | Disagree | Uncertain | Agree | Strongly Agree |
|--------------------|--------------------|-------|-------|-------------------|----------|-----------|-------|----------------|
| Cultural Knowledge | 12_1 -Rules and | 3.545 | 0.707 | 0.6% | 6.2% | 35.7% | 53% | 4.5% |

| | | | | | | | | |
|--|-------|-------|------|-------|-------|-------|------|--|
| Taboos | | | | | | | | |
| 12_2 | | | | | | | | |
| -Traditions, Values and Religious Beliefs | 3.436 | 0.724 | 0.4% | 10% | 37.7% | 49.4% | 2.6% | |
| 12_3 | | | | | | | | |
| -Political, Legal and Economic Systems | 3.281 | 0.754 | 1.3% | 12.1% | 46.2% | 38.1% | 2.3% | |
| 12_4 | | | | | | | | |
| -Main Arts and Crafts | 3.274 | 0.758 | 0.9% | 14% | 44% | 38.9% | 2.1% | |
| 12_5 | | | | | | | | |
| -Rules for None-verbal Behaviors | 3.383 | 0.705 | 0.6% | 8.9% | 44% | 44.3% | 2.1% | |

Analysis: The assessment of cultural knowledge of major English-speaking countries includes aspects such as rules and taboos, traditions, values and religious beliefs, political, legal and economic systems, arts and crafts, and rules for non-verbal behaviors. The Means of this dimension indicates that participants are relatively confident in their storage of cultural knowledge, especially compared with their language proficiency and interaction skills.

When looking at the frequency statistics, a more detail picture appears. Though the proportion of "strongly Agree" for all the five items is very low (4.5%, 2.6%, 2.3%, 2.1%, 2.1%), yet the frequency of choosing "agree" is the highest on average, compared with all the other dimensions, i.e. 53%, 49.4%, 38.1%, 38.9% and 44.3%,

respectively. It clearly shows that students are more confident on the dimension of cultural knowledge compare with other four dimensions. To be more specific, by looking at the means in the table, it shows the students generally know more cultural knowledge about rules and taboo of intercultural communication and main traditions, cultural values, and religious beliefs than the other three aspects. However, there are still a large number of participants chose "uncertain" for each of the statement, and 35.7%, 37.7%, 46.2%, 44%, and 44% are the number. Again, "uncertain" seems a safe and easy choice for lots of students, yet it actually shows that those junior and senior English major students don't really have a clear evaluation on themselves regarding how much cultural knowledge they know. Whats more, despite of being the highest score averagely among all the dimensions, still there are only at most half of the students gave positive answers to each of the item, meaning that even majority of college English teachers in China stress on memorizing cultural knowledge and related words, the learning outcome is not as good as we expected.

Question 6: Are students willing to jump out of their comfort zone and actively participated in intercultural communicative activities both in class and in their daily life?

6) Respondents Willingness to Actively Engage in Intercultural Opportunities

Table 5.10. Intercultural Experience

| Dimension | Items | Mean | S.D. | Strongly Disagree | Disagree | Uncertain | Agree | Strongly Agree |
|--------------------------|-------|-------|-------|-------------------|----------|-----------|-------|----------------|
| Intercultural experience | 10_1 | 3.119 | 0.880 | 2.3% | 21.5% | 43% | 28.3% | 4.9% |
| | 10_2 | 2.355 | 1.001 | 18.7% | 44.7% | 21.1% | 13.4% | 2.1% |
| | 10_3 | 2.423 | 1.006 | 16.2% | 44.5% | 23.2% | 13.2% | 3% |
| | 10_4 | 2.979 | 1.039 | 6.2% | 28.9% | 33.2% | 24.3% | 7.4% |

Analysis: Though 'Intercultural experience will not be included in assessing the

overall intercultural competence of the participants, its role in helping students effectively developing intercultural competence is undeniable. Real life experience of encountering cultural differences and events deepens one's understanding of intercultural communication that could further stimulate the reflexive process and may thus be more likely to generate personal attributes such as mindfulness and intercultural sensitivity. However, the rarity of intercultural opportunities, as mentioned multiple times in previous paragraph, was proved by the Means in this table. The Means of 10_2 and 10_3 are the lowest of all, which confirms that respondents themselves have recognized the fact that they hardly have any friends from other cultures. While on the one hand, the statement of 10_4 (*It's almost impossible for me to meet people from other culture in the city I currently live.*) might be the objective reason; on the other hand, the negative answers of 10_1 (*I often look for opportunities to interact with people from other culture such as through online social media or internship in foreign companies.*) might be the subjective reason, i.e. students are not active and motivated enough to look for such opportunities.

Specifically, There are 43% displayed uncertainty towards the first item "I often look for opportunities to interact with people from other culture such as through online social media or internship in foreign companies." and 23.8% more gave negative answers of either "disagree" or "strongly disagree". In addition, 63.4% of the students agreed with the fact that all of their friends are from their own culture and 21.1% were uncertain about it. Therefore, only 15% agreed that they have many friends of other cultures. As for the last statement "Its almost impossible for me to meet people from other culture in the city I currently live.", one third of the students were uncertain about it and another one third agreed that its almost impossible for them to meet people from other countries in their real life which makes them very difficult to acquire intercultural experience. To sum up, while intercultural experience helps students deepen their understanding on cultural differences and motivates them to reflect and improve their overall intercultural competence, evidence from the above data shows that its still difficult for most of the college students in China to get such real-life experience; and students themselves are not active enough to find such

opportunities online. Hence to a large extent, their effectiveness of developing intercultural competence is compromised.

5.2.1.3. Questionnaire 2-Survey on Intercultural Teaching of College English Teachers

Question 7: Do English teachers integrate intercultural learning/training into their class?

(1) Data results and analysis on IC-related Teaching

① Table 5.11. --IC Definition

| Intercultural competence for English language learning, as I understand, is, | Strongly Agree | Agree | Uncertain | Disagree | Strongly Disagree |
|---|-----------------------|--------------|------------------|-----------------|--------------------------|
| A Western concept that is irrelevant to my teaching. | 11(9.73%) | 14(12.39%) | 4(3.54%) | 31(27.43%) | 53(46.9%) |
| The ability to speak English fluently. | 40(35.4%) | 38(33.63%) | 13(11.5%) | 16(14.16%) | 6(5.31%) |
| A concept that mainly introduces cultural knowledge and cultural differences. | 36(31.86%) | 50(44.25%) | 7(6.19%) | 18(15.93%) | 2(1.77%) |

| | | | | | |
|---|------------|------------|----------|------------|------------|
| | | | | | |
| The attitude of openness, curiosity and respect towards other cultures that is not supposed to be taught in an English class. | 25(22.12%) | 31(27.43%) | 4(3.54%) | 27(23.89%) | 26(23.01%) |
| A set of interaction skills such as listening, observation, interpreting, relating and negotiating. | 51(45.13%) | 50(44.25%) | 4(3.54%) | 5(4.42%) | 3(2.65%) |
| An awareness that helps to reflect on one's own and others' cultural identity. | 53(46.9%) | 54(47.79%) | 2(1.77%) | 2(1.77%) | 2(1.77%) |
| The ability to communicate effectively and appropriately with people of other cultures. | 73(64.6%) | 33(29.2%) | 4(3.54%) | 1(0.88%) | 2(1.77%) |

Analysis: As shown in the above table, almost all the teachers agreed that intercultural competence should include a set of interaction skills(90%) and critical cultural awareness(94.6%), and it is the ability to communicate effectively and appropriately(93.8%). The number of teachers who think language skills(69%) and cultural knowledge(76%) are also part of intercultural competence is relatively smaller than those who chose interaction skills and critical cultural awareness; but it still accounts for the majority of the participants. However, when asking whether they agree or disagree with the statement that intercultural competence should includes “The attitude of openness, curiosity and respect towards other cultures that is not supposed to be taught in an English class.”, half of the teachers expressed their agreement, namely, 57 College English teachers(50%) think that such attitude is irrelevant to intercultural competence and its likely that such guidance on students formation of an open and tolerant attitude has been lacking in their daily teaching for a long time; hence in chain, the development of students' intercultural sensitivity would also be impeded.

In addition, 21% of them agreed with the statement that intercultural competence is “A Western concept that is irrelevant to my teaching.” Though the proportion seems low, its still noticeable for the fact that still there are one fifth of the college English teachers think intercultural competence has nothing to do with English teaching, not mention integrating intercultural learning into their class; especially under the current context when Chinese government and media have been vigorously advocating the importance of international cooperation and intercultural exchanges through platform such as "Belt and Road Initiative" as well as delivering "Chinese Stories" to the outside world by Chinese intercultural speakers, plus the national language policies have been responding to the current trends.

② **Table 5.12.--IC education for English Major students in China**

| IC education for English major students in universities of China, in my opinion, is, | Strongly Agree | Agree | Uncertain | Disagree | Strongly Disagree |
|---|----------------|------------|------------|------------|-------------------|
| Equal with linguistic competence such as speaking and listening. | 39(34.51%) | 49(43.36%) | 7(6.19%) | 12(10.62%) | 6(5.31%) |
| It should be acquired through intercultural experiences instead of in English class. | 16(14.16%) | 37(32.74%) | 18(15.93%) | 40(35.4%) | 2(1.77%) |
| It is useful only for those who plan to go abroad or work in foreign companies. | 9(7.96%) | 17(15.04%) | 4(3.54%) | 46(40.71%) | 37(32.74%) |
| It is an indispensable part in English Majors' curriculum. | 54(47.79%) | 45(39.82%) | 7(6.19%) | 4(3.54%) | 3(2.65%) |
| It helps students to have multicultural perspectives that prepare them to be global citizens. | 69(61.06%) | 36(31.86%) | 4(3.54%) | 3(2.65%) | 1(0.88%) |

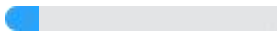
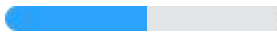
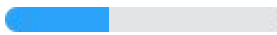
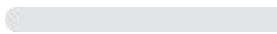
Analysis: 87% of the teachers agree that “It is an indispensable part in English Majors' curriculum”. and about 93% of the English teachers agree that "It helps students to have multicultural perspectives that prepare them to be global citizens"; however, do teachers guide students in such way? It is a question under doubt since 78% of the teachers agree or strongly agree with the view that IC education is equal with linguistic competence such as speaking and listening; This clearly shows that teachers assume if students are good at speaking and listening in English, they

automatically acquire intercultural competence. As for the ability to think from multiple perspectives, it is a problem remains unsolved even most of the teachers agree with the view that IC education helps students to become global citizens. Whats more, about 23% support the idea that IC education is "useful only for those who plan to go abroad or work in foreign companies", and nearly half of the participants agree that "It should be acquired through intercultural experiences instead of in English class", again confirms that quite a number of college English teachers at the present are lacking in thorough understanding in intercultural competence and IC education as being not so irrelevant to their English teaching.

③ Table 5.13.--IC-related teaching methods

| What teaching methods you may use when encountering culture-related content in your teaching material? | Always | often | Sometimes | Rarely | Never |
|--|------------|------------|------------|----------|-------|
| Introduce relevant cultural knowledge. | 49(43.36%) | 58(51.33%) | 6(5.31%) | 0(0%) | 0(0%) |
| To remember the relevant words and phrases is the key. | 20(17.7%) | 51(45.13%) | 35(30.97%) | 7(6.19%) | 0(0%) |
| Make comparisons between Chinese | 41(36.28%) | 62(54.87%) | 10(8.85%) | 0(0%) | 0(0%) |

| | | | | | |
|--|------------|------------|------------|------------|----------|
| culture and western culture. | | | | | |
| Simulation and reflection upon experience. | 33(29.2%) | 42(37.17%) | 34(30.09%) | 4(3.54%) | 0(0%) |
| Role play. | 20(17.7%) | 36(31.86%) | 42(37.17%) | 15(13.27%) | 0(0%) |
| Presentation. | 28(24.78%) | 50(44.25%) | 28(24.78%) | 6(5.31%) | 1(0.88%) |

| Time spent on IC-related teaching in a 45 minutes class | 小计 | 比例 |
|--|-----|---|
| 20 minutes | 14 |  12.39% |
| 10 minutes | 57 |  50.44% |
| 5 minutes | 42 |  37.17% |
| None | 0 |  0% |
| 本题有效填写人次 | 113 | |

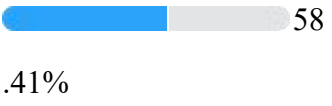
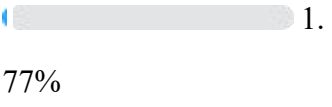
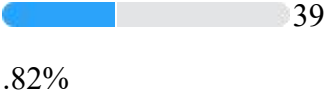
Analysis: Based on the statistics, introduction of cultural knowledge(43.36%-Always and 51.33% -Often) and comparison of cultural differences(36.2%-Always and 54.84%-Often) are the most commonly-used teaching methods ; then followed by presentation(24.78%-Always and 44%-Often), memorizing key words(17.7%-Always and 45.13%-Often), and simulation & reflection(29.2%-Always and 37.17%-Often). Comparatively speaking, the least used method is role play(17.7%-Always and 31.86%-Often). In general, introducing cultural knowledge and comparing cultural differences are still the major way to deal with cultural content in English class, and more than half of the teachers have used all the above six methods in their teaching. The remaining question would be how much time they spent on IC-related teaching which is answered in Table__. As the table shows, half of the teachers spend 10 minutes and 37.17% more only spend 5 minutes on IC-related teaching in a 45-minute

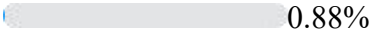
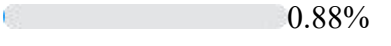
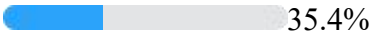

class. Despite of the variety of teaching methods they applied into their class, the time for intercultural learning is still too limited, given the fact that foreign language education nowadays has been transformed into intercultural foreign language education in order to keep up with the times. (Zhang Hongling, 2021)

④ Table 5.14.--Language skills v.s. intercultural competence

| How do you deal with the relationship between the training of language skills and the learning of intercultural competence? | Always | Often | Sometimes | Rarely | Never |
|---|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|
| Only care about their language skills | 2(1.77%) | 29(25.66%) | 21(18.58%) | 45(39.82%) | 16(14.16%) |
| Only care about the amount of cultural knowledge they master | 2(1.77%) | 23(20.35%) | 26(23.01%) | 47(41.59%) | 15(13.27%) |
| Equally important | 34(30.09%) | 55(48.67%) | 20(17.7%) | 4(3.54%) | 0(0%) |
| Language training as priority | 11(9.73%) | 45(39.82%) | 39(34.51%) | 18(15.93%) | 0(0%) |

| | | | | | |
|----------------------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|----------|
| IC cultivation as priority | 12(10.62%) | 31(27.43%) | 50(44.25%) | 19(16.81%) | 1(0.88%) |
|----------------------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|----------|

| Do you put intercultural competence into your lesson plan? | Number of respondents in each option | Proportions |
|---|--------------------------------------|---|
| Yes | 66 |  58.41% |
| No | 2 |  1.77% |
| Sometimes | 45 |  39.82% |
| Total Number of Respondents | 113 | |

| Do you often encourage your students to think critically about the relationship between language and culture as well as the cultural differences among different countries? | Number of respondents in each option | Proportions |
|--|--------------------------------------|---|
| Never | 1 |  0.88% |
| Seldom | 1 |  0.88% |
| Sometimes | 40 |  35.4% |
| Quite often | 71 |  62.83% |
| Total Number of Respondents | 113 | |

Analysis: When asking teachers how they think about the relationship between the

training of language skills and the development of intercultural competence, 78% of them think the two are equally important. This seems a good sign; however, inferred from the previous data results on their understanding on IC definition and IC education, it's possible many of them have misinterpret the nature of intercultural competence and confused IC learning as language training or imparting cultural knowledge. Therefore the data result regarding whether they put intercultural competence into their lesson plan may not be valid and reliable enough. The evidence can also be found from the following: half of them always or often put language training as priority and 1/4 of them only care about students language skills. The result again showed the common phenomenon of neglecting the cultivation of intercultural competence in the process of English language learning process. Zhang Hongling(2021) have stressed multiple times in different academic conferences that foreign language education, in nature, is intercultural education. Therefore, it is high time that more up-to-date teachers training on intercultural foreign language education be provided, which adopts an **intercultural perspective** (*language and culture as social practices; transformational engagement of the learner in the act of learning; emphasizes that learners own cultures as a fundamental part of engaging with a new culture.*) rather than the **cultural perspective** (*language as knowledge and information, learning about culture*).(Liddicoat, 2013). whats more, critical thinking is always indispensable in fostering students intercultural competence. As the table shows, 62.83% of the teachers encourage their students to think critically about the relationship between language and culture as well as the cultural differences among different countries quite often and 35.4% of them sometimes do it in their class. The figure takes up the majority of the participants which is beneficial for the development of students critical cultural awareness and intercultural reflection.

⑤ Table 5.14.--The role of Chinese culture

| Do you think knowing Chinese | Number of | Proportions |
|------------------------------|-----------|-------------|
|------------------------------|-----------|-------------|

| | | |
|---|----------------------------|--------|
| culture is equally important as knowing English culture for English major students in China? | respondents in each option | |
| Not important at all | 1 | 0.88% |
| A little important | 4 | 3.54% |
| Not sure | 0 | 0% |
| Equally important | 108 | 95.58% |
| Total Number of Respondents | 113 | |



| To be more specific, knowing Chinese culture for English major students is | Not Important | A Little Important | Not Sure | Important | Crucial for IC |
|---|---------------|--------------------|----------|------------|----------------|
| It helps to develop student's general knowledge of the world. | 20(17.7%) | 9(7.96%) | 3(2.65%) | 40(35.4%) | 41(36.28%) |
| It allows students to understand the complex structure of culture. | 21(18.58%) | 7(6.19%) | 3(2.65%) | 44(38.94%) | 38(33.63%) |
| It helps students to understand cultural differences | 24(21.24%) | 5(4.42%) | 2(1.77%) | 35(30.97%) | 47(41.59%) |
| It builds open attitudes toward one's own culture | 23(20.35%) | 4(3.54%) | 4(3.54%) | 32(28.32%) | 50(44.25%) |

| | | | | | |
|--|------------|----------|----------|------------|------------|
| and others' culture. | | | | | |
| It develops a sense of national/cultural identity. | 22(19.47%) | 8(7.08%) | 1(0.88%) | 35(30.97%) | 47(41.59%) |

Analysis: 95.58% of the participants, namely, 108 teachers agree that knowing Chinese culture is equally important as knowing English culture for English major students in China. Such result is predictable especially under the current background of constant propaganda from China's national media on the value of Chinese cultures and traditions, the delivery of "China Stories" to the world, as well as the promotion of IPE in China's higher institutions. To be more specific, about 70% of them think Chinese culture “ *helps to develop student's general knowledge of the world. allows students to understand the complex structure of culture. helps students to understand cultural differences, builds open attitudes toward one's own culture and others' culture and develops a sense of national/cultural identity*”. The proportion of the choices on "Important" and 'crucial for IC of the five statements is similar. It shows that at least majority of College English teachers have recognized the role of one's own culture in understanding others languages and cultures. The remaining choices are mostly Not Important or "A Little Important". what is noticeable is that there are still around 20% or so of the teachers opt for "Not Important" for all of the five statements, indicating that they think Chinese culture has nothing to do with English language learning.

⑥ Table 5.15.--Intercultural training or experience

| Do you think you have adequate intercultural experiences or intercultural training to assist your English language teaching? | Number of respondents in each option | Proportions |
|---|--------------------------------------|-------------|
|---|--------------------------------------|-------------|

| | | |
|-----------------------------|-----|--|
| Yes | 60 |  53.1% |
| No | 53 |  46.9% |
| Total number of respondents | 113 | |

Analysis: As described in the Section 1 of teachers questionnaire, about 50% of them once had weeks to years of overseas experience in a number of major English-speaking countries such as the United States, the United Kingdom, Australia and New Zealand, etc. The percentage coincides with the above result concerning whether teachers think they have adequate intercultural experience or training to assist their English language teaching, i.e. 53.1% chose "Yes". Based on the data results, it is very likely that those who have overseas experience are more confident in IC-integrated English language teaching hence the choice of 'yes' in the above table.

5.2.2. Language Policies

Question 7: Does the language policies in China put IC as one of the major objectives?

Language policies should always be in line with the nature and rules of language acquisition; of course this include its inseparable relationship with culture and communication, which also apply to the policies regarding foreign language education, except that intercultural components should be added when it comes to learning a foreign language. Besides, language policies update from time to time mostly in order to meet the demand of a country's development as well as to keep pace with the world. Therefore, a series of key policies are reviewed as follows with the focus on intercultural competence in foreign language education (some of them have already briefly introduced in Chapter 3). And those policies have had or will have pivotal impact on what and how college English teachers teach and what is the learning outcome of the students.

(1) English Syllabus for English Majors in Higher Education(2000), College English Teaching Requirements(2007), and English Curriculum Standards for Compulsory Education(2011)

In 2000, English Syllabus for English Majors in Higher Education was published, in which intercultural competence was mentioned as sensitivity, tolerance and flexibility towards cultural differences. In 2007, the Ministry of Education published the College English Teaching Requirements, which more clearly pointed out English language knowledge and skills and intercultural communication being the main content of English language learning. However, both 2000 and 2007 documents didn't provide guidance as to how to cultivate intercultural competence both in and outside classroom. In 2011, English Curriculum Standards for Compulsory Education stated even more clearly that the learning objectives should be divided into five dimensions, i.e. language skills, language knowledge, affect and attitude, learning strategies and cultural awareness. The content of cultural awareness was then explained as cultural knowledge, cultural comprehension, intercultural communicative awareness and competence. It can be seen from the above documents that the understanding of intercultural competence has developed from general to specific over years in China. However, none of them provide helpful methodology or methods as to how to effectively integrate intercultural learning into English language learning. Actually, in reality, many college English teachers rarely talk about it in class; and in most cases, intercultural communication is an isolated and separate course in the third year or the fourth college year(reference?).

(2) National Standard for Teaching Foreign Language Majors in Higher Institutions of China (2016)

In 2016, National Standard for Teaching Foreign Language Majors in Higher Institutions of China was proclaimed, in which the cultivation of intercultural competence was mentioned multiple times. The documents clearly stated that the goal of foreign language education in higher institutions is to graduate students with the knowledge of their own culture and others, the ability of intercultural critical thinking and a global vision, etc., and all of the above is related to IC education. It provides a clearer direction to foreign language teachers in colleges and universities. According to the Standard(2016), foreign language majors should be graduated with professional

knowledge and abilities, along with humanistic attainment. Professional knowledge covers areas such as linguistics, literature, translation, international and regional studies, and Chinese language culture; professional abilities includes the ability to apply the foreign language into daily practice, the ability to appreciate literature works, the ability to research and innovate, the ability to utilize information technology as well as intercultural critical thinking ability; and humanistic attainment refers to the cultivation of moral ethics, social responsibility, global vision, and cooperative and innovative spirit, etc. Professor Feng Yihan(2016) said nowadays interdisciplinary has become the trend, and English major is turning into English-related majors, which indicates a higher requirement for College English teachers and their students. Sun Youzhong(2016) also said the requirement of the Standard is calling for an upgrade of the traditional way of English language teaching, mainly in two aspects, i.e. intercultural competence and critical thinking ability. Therefore, college English teachers should actively respond to new changes and equip themselves with such skills and capabilities.

(3) Declaration on the Construction of New Liberal Arts (2020)

The concept of New Liberal Arts was first proposed in Hiram College of the United States, the meaning of which was to restructure different disciplines in traditional liberal arts, stress the necessity of inter-disciplinary learning and research between Liberal arts and science, as well as to integrate latest technology into traditional subjects such as philosophy, literature and linguistics, etc(Guo, 2021). This concept was then welcomed and applied by many countries across the world, including China. On November 3 of 2020, *Declaration on the Construction of New Liberal Arts (2020)* was released by Ministry of Education in China, with the purpose of upgrading the educational structure in humanities and social sciences to meet international standards with Chinese characteristics(MOE, 2021). According to Chen and He(2020), the nature of 'New Liberal Arts' in China is to help students understand what happened in China culturally and historically, especially since its reform and opening-up four decades ago, meanwhile rationally absorbing and comprehending knowledge

worldwide, in the process of which their cultural identity and cultural confidence will be enhanced.

Foreign language learning, as part of humanities and social sciences, could serve the goal of the New Liberal Arts construction perfectly if intercultural competence is integrated as one of the major objectives in China's foreign language education. Just as Zhang Hongling(2021) said multiple times, *'The nature of foreign language education is intercultural education, which complies with the requirement and goal of New Liberal Arts in cultivating students' competence in critical thinking, intercultural communication, global governance and the awareness of humankind with a shared future.'*

(4) Ideological and Political Education(IPE) (2020)

Guiding Outline of Ideological and Political Education in Colleges and Universities was formulated in 2020. This Outline is intended to be implemented by integrating Ideological and Political Education(IPE) into the curriculum of all the disciplines in colleges and universities, instead of only in Politics-related or Morality-related courses, just like what it was used to be. According to China's Ministry of Education(2020), the reason for IPE is to answer the question of what types of people does China want to cultivate in higher education? How and for whom that they are being cultivated? It is even a matter that impacts on the choice of future leaders of China, on the lasting stability and peace of the country, as well as on the realization of national rejuvenation(Sun, 2020). And the purpose of IPE is to help the young generation in China with the formation of correct values and views of life and the world. The Outline has brought heated discussions in the fields of foreign language education as the purpose and content are very much relevant to the cultivation of intercultural competence. Sun Youzhong(2020) said the goal of IPE can be effectively realized because "Foreign language courses generally involves a lot of knowledge about the target country, especially the values, lifestyle, religious belief, political system, ideology and so on. They always requires students to be immersed in the language and culture of the target country in order to acquire the foreign language

effectively. This may sound like a challenge to IPE integration. However, from another perspective, it has a unique advantage to carry out IPE in that the knowledge of the target country and the world's diverse cultures provides rich resources for cross-cultural comparison and reflection. When foreign language teaching is carried out from a cross-cultural and inter-cultural perspective, foreign language learning becomes a course of Ideological and political process that can cultivate students' humanistic attainment, value orientation, global vision, cultural self-confidence and even the sense of community of shared future for all mankind.”(Sun, 2020)

When reviewing those policies, signs can be easily traced from those documents that the role of intercultural competence in China's foreign language education has been gradually moving from sideways to the center and this is largely due to the dynamic changes happened within and outside China in recent decades. It is evident that the overall context of China and the whole world are calling for more attention to intercultural competence of the young generation.

5.2.3. Summary

(1) **Summary 1**-How interculturally competent are the English majors in Chinese universities at present based on the above data results and analysis?

Table 5.16. A General Summary of the Assessed Components of Intercultural Competence

| | N | Min | Max | Mean | S.D. | Skew. | Kurt. |
|------------------------------------|-----|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|--------|
| Language proficiency | 470 | 1.000 | 5.000 | 2.739 | 0.533 | 0.533 | 0.089 |
| Intercultural Sensitivity | 470 | 1.750 | 5.000 | 3.711 | 0.707 | 0.707 | -0.074 |
| Attitude of openness and curiosity | 470 | 2.200 | 5.000 | 3.709 | 0.527 | 0.527 | 0.086 |
| Intercultural experience | 470 | 1.000 | 5.000 | 2.771 | 0.774 | 0.774 | 0.296 |
| Interaction skill | 470 | 1.000 | 5.000 | 2.984 | 0.736 | 0.736 | 0.277 |
| Cultural knowledge | 470 | 1.000 | 5.000 | 3.384 | 0.573 | 0.573 | -0.373 |

| | | | | | | | |
|-------------|-----|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| Total score | 470 | 13.05 | 28.00 | 19.29 | 2.020 | 0.772 | 1.912 |
| | | 0 | 0 | 8 | | | |

Table 5.17.A Detailed Summary of the Assessed Items of Intercultural Competence

| Dimension | Items | N | Min | Max | Mean | S.D. | Skew. | Kurt. |
|------------------------------------|-------|-----|-------|-------|-------|-------|--------|--------|
| Language proficiency | 7_1 | 470 | 1.000 | 5.000 | 2.449 | 0.884 | 0.798 | 0.483 |
| | 7_2 | 470 | 1.000 | 5.000 | 2.409 | 0.848 | 0.646 | 0.548 |
| | 7_3 | 470 | 1.000 | 5.000 | 3.117 | 0.793 | -0.160 | 0.168 |
| | 7_4 | 470 | 1.000 | 5.000 | 2.983 | 0.821 | -0.108 | -0.041 |
| | 7_5 | 470 | 1.000 | 5.000 | 3.830 | 0.929 | -0.731 | 0.482 |
| Intercultural Sensitivity | 8_1 | 470 | 1.000 | 5.000 | 3.400 | 1.113 | -0.269 | -0.835 |
| | 8_2 | 470 | 1.000 | 5.000 | 3.204 | 1.099 | -0.218 | -0.742 |
| | 8_3 | 470 | 1.000 | 5.000 | 3.917 | 0.939 | -0.857 | 0.515 |
| | 8_4 | 470 | 1.000 | 5.000 | 4.321 | 0.877 | -1.398 | 1.814 |
| | 8_5 | 470 | 1.000 | 5.000 | 4.036 | 1.167 | -1.244 | 0.799 |
| Attitude of curiosity and openness | 9_1 | 470 | 1.000 | 5.000 | 3.813 | 0.928 | -0.763 | 0.521 |
| | 9_2 | 470 | 1.000 | 5.000 | 4.060 | 0.960 | -1.121 | 0.994 |
| | 9_3 | 470 | 1.000 | 5.000 | 3.594 | 0.843 | -0.554 | 0.656 |
| | 9_4 | 470 | 1.000 | 5.000 | 3.662 | 0.807 | -0.437 | 0.399 |
| | 9_5 | 470 | 1.000 | 5.000 | 3.415 | 0.864 | -0.094 | -0.157 |
| Intercultural experience | 10_1 | 470 | 1.000 | 5.000 | 3.119 | 0.880 | -0.008 | -0.327 |
| | 10_2 | 470 | 1.000 | 5.000 | 2.355 | 1.001 | 0.563 | -0.290 |
| | 10_3 | 470 | 1.000 | 5.000 | 2.423 | 1.006 | 0.564 | -0.214 |
| | 10_4 | 470 | 1.000 | 5.000 | 2.979 | 1.039 | 0.111 | -0.647 |
| Interaction skill | 11_1 | 470 | 1.000 | 5.000 | 3.068 | 0.876 | 0.058 | -0.337 |

| | | | | | | | | |
|--------------------|------|-----|-------|-------|-------|-------|--------|--------|
| | 11_2 | 470 | 1.000 | 5.000 | 2.900 | 0.922 | 0.282 | -0.719 |
| | 11_3 | 470 | 1.000 | 5.000 | 3.102 | 0.873 | 0.013 | -0.375 |
| | 11_4 | 470 | 1.000 | 5.000 | 3.532 | 0.845 | -0.430 | 0.078 |
| cultural knowledge | 12_1 | 470 | 1.000 | 5.000 | 3.545 | 0.707 | -0.577 | 0.526 |
| | 12_2 | 470 | 1.000 | 5.000 | 3.436 | 0.724 | -0.539 | -0.089 |
| | 12_3 | 470 | 1.000 | 5.000 | 3.281 | 0.754 | -0.366 | 0.055 |
| | 12_4 | 470 | 1.000 | 5.000 | 3.274 | 0.758 | -0.328 | -0.263 |
| | 12_5 | 470 | 1.000 | 5.000 | 3.383 | 0.705 | -0.441 | 0.071 |

Analysis:The data result is categorized into three levels, namely, low level of IC(1-2.4), intermediate level of IC (2.5-3.8) and high level of IC (3.9-5). Based on the overall result as shown above, the intercultural competence of the sample students is **in an intermediate level with an average score of 3.3**(the mean of 'intercultural experience' was excluded when calculating the average). Specifically speaking, the dimension of intercultural sensitivity has the highest score of 3.711, followed by attitude of openness, curiosity and confidence (3.709), cultural knowledge (3.384), interaction skills and facework (2.984) and language proficiency (2.739); the score of the five dimensions all fall into the category of intermediate level of IC. However, when it comes to the specific items within the five dimensions, the indicators of grammar(2.449) and clarity of expression(2.409) are in the lowest level while students attitude of willingness to communicate(4.060) and the intercultural sensitivity in term of their positive affirmation in their interest in others culture(3.917), mutual learning(4.321), equality and respect(4.036) towards different cultures are in in the highest.

From the data results listed above, **summary** can be made as follows.

First of all, the investigated students generally hold open and curious attitude towards cultural differences, but lacking in interaction confidence, the reason of which may partly come from their problem in the use of grammar, clarity of expression, cohesion and fluency. Consequently, When evaluating their own interaction skills, the choice

for "uncertain" was very common. Apart from the reason that they are not confident linguistically, their uncertainty may also indicate that students seldom evaluate their own interaction skills hence have no idea about it. Another reason for their lack of interaction competence and confidence is their very limited real life intercultural practice, the evidence of which can be seen from the data on 'intercultural experience', especially majority of them claimed that all of their friends are from their own culture. Nevertheless, the author/I cannot help but wonder: if a scarcity of a multicultural environment is the reality in most cities of China, why don't the students looking for other solutions, such as through online social media and platform, or even just practice their spoken English and communicative competence with their classmates and friends? College English teachers may play a role here in more actively encouraging students to look for such opportunities outside class and campus.

Second, despite of being the highest average among the five dimensions, the level of participants' intercultural sensitivity is still in the category of intermediate level. On the one hand, respondents generally acknowledged the necessity of mutual learning among diverse cultures and the importance of equality and respect in intercultural communication. On the other hand, quite a number of them meanwhile supported the idea that "Most cultures are backward compared with my culture." and "The Chinese ways of doing things are the best in the world." The result shows a tendency from the participants to be ethnocentric, which is not so consistent with the hypothesis that if 'Western culture invasion' and 'Chinese Culture Aphasia' are the case, students may not confident enough on their own culture. Their confidence may come from the vigorous propaganda nationally from media channel; yet this confidence, for English major students, neither does it mean they know how to express Chinese culture in English, nor realize the importance of their own culture to the development of their intercultural competence.

Lastly, the result of the Cultural Knowledge Dimension is also worth noticing, the Mean of which is comparatively good but not good enough. Given that learning cultural knowledge by memorizing and reciting for exams is the common routine for English major students, the large amount of 'uncertain' in their choice when assessing

the five aspects of cultural knowledge is unexpected. And it clearly shows a lack of regular assessment from teachers or self-evaluation in their daily learning. Besides, more interpreting, relating, analyzing and reflecting should be integrated so as to help students internalize and consolidate the cultural knowledge they've learned.

(2) **Summary 2**-What are the major factors that may constrain students from developing intercultural competence?

Factors that may affect the development of students' intercultural competence are discussed as below from the aspects of the students themselves, College English teachers and China's language policies.

① **Students**

Students' intercultural competence has been discussed and analyzed in answering the first main research question. And it is not difficult to deduct from the above analysis from students' side what has prevented them from effectively developing intercultural competence. Students' problems in language proficiency, the lack of regular assessment in language interaction skills and cultural knowledge, along with the very limited **intercultural experience and self-motivation in actively looking for such opportunities, plus a potential to become ethnocentric might be some of the obstacles.**

② **Teachers**

According to the data result from teachers' questionnaire, the rather **limited knowledge about intercultural competence** is the most obvious constraint. Especially that 20% of the teachers think intercultural competence is an irrelevant topic to English class, and half of them think the component of an intercultural attitude is not a part of intercultural competence and has nothing to do with English language learning. What's more, 78% assume that IC education is equivalent with language training, therefore when asking about the relationship between language skills and IC learning, many confuse the two concepts as one, namely, they assume that if students are good at speaking and listening, along with memorizing some cultural knowledge, they have automatically gained intercultural competence. The

result attests Fantini's view that English teachers often regard themselves as language teachers, not teachers of intercultural competence, which neglecting the fact that language and communication can never be separated. And this misconception from teachers, of course, will

The way of teaching culture-related knowledge might be another constraint. As the data shows, the introduction of cultural knowledge and comparison of cultural differences are the most commonly used ways to deal with culture-related content in class. Methods that could motivate students active thinking and develop an intercultural mind such as critical analysis and reflection are not well-integrated, along with a lack of regular assessment of students learning outcome. Not mentioned that half of them spend 10 minutes and 37% more of them only spend 5 minutes on IC learning in their class. As Byram said, "*The lifelong process of experiencing and acquiring new language is unique to the individual for whole experience and language are one. This view then supports a pedagogical approach that goes beyond the teaching of discrete facts and instead helps students to explore the relationship between their previous experience in one (or more) languages and those acquired in new languages*" (Byram, 2018). Only by doing so can students acquire true competence that prepare them to survive better in the present society.

As for the role of Chinese culture in English language class, the data shows it is well-acknowledged among teachers about the equal importance of the understanding of ones own culture and that of the target language culture, while there are around one fifth of them who think Chinese culture is not important at all, the figure of which should not be neglected and worth our attention. Since if teachers cannot help students identify themselves culturally in the first place, it would be even harder for them to comprehend other cultures.

According to Steve J. Kulich in his online MOOCs course *Intercultural Communication* for English language learners on the platform of Futurelearn.com, the learning objectives of this course are as follows, '(1) to develop **intercultural sensitivity**, and awareness, learning to look at, analyse, and resolve problems from the

perspective of cultural differences; (2) to cultivate intercultural attitudes, which include being tolerant, respectful, curious, and empathetic towards other cultures. (3) to acquire cultural knowledge, both culture general and culture specific, paying special attention to the invisible cultural elements, which are like the hidden part of an iceberg. And the ultimate goal of intercultural learning is to transform our awareness, attitudes, and knowledge into competence, and to develop flexibility and adaptability in intercultural communication'(Kulich, 2020). Those are something College English teachers could refer to when designing their teaching objectives and planning their English lesson, since at least from the data result in this study, there is still a long way to go before intercultural education is fully integrated into foreign language education.

③ National language policies

One of the earliest national-level document released by the Ministry of Education that mentioned bits and parts of intercultural competence was *English Syllabus for English Majors in Higher Education(2000)* which said students majored in English should be sensitive, tolerant and flexible towards cultural differences. Its more attitude-oriented without further explanation on what is intercultural competence, hence no specific instruction was provided. It was until 2007 that *College English Teaching Requirements(2007)* clearly stated intercultural communicative competence as an important part of English language learning, though still without clear guidance , and then followed by English Curriculum Standards for Compulsory Education(2011) that further extended the dimensions of English language learning to language knowledge, language skills, affect and attitude, learning strategies and cultural awareness. This time more IC-related components were included into the document; however for teachers, the awareness of consciously integrating IC into English class was not then popularized. Later, National Standard for Teaching Foreign Language Majors in Higher Institutions of China (2016) was released in which the term 'intercultural competence' appeared multiple times and the scope of cultural knowledge is clearly identified, i.e. the importance of knowing cultural knowledge of one's own and others

was clearly stated in the document (which the author thinks was a measure to cope with the phenomenon of Chinese Culture Aphasia back then) so that students could be more culturally aware as well as more culturally confident. In 2020, Declaration on the Construction of New Liberal Arts (2020) and Ideological and Political Education(IPE) (2020) were formulated and widely promoted in China's higher institutions. Both of the documents, as discussed previously, are very much relevant to IC cultivation. That's why heated discussions have been aroused in the field of foreign language education on how to practically implement the policies.

From 2000 till now, those policies have clearly show that the trend of transforming Foreign language education into intercultural foreign language education is inevitable, with the definition of intercultural competence more holistic, the requirement more specified, and the importance of IC more stressed. The next question would be how is the execution of those policies in higher institutions across China. From the data collected by the author, in this case particularly for English language education, it seems more time and feasible measures are needed before university and college teachers and students update their way of learning as well as become more IC-aware.

5.3. Discussions

5.3.1. Correlation Analysis of the Variables

Respondents general intercultural competence as well as the specific dimensions have been evaluated and discussed in the first part of this chapter while the correlation among those dimensions is yet to be illustrated. Therefore, a matrix is constructed through SPSS as below to demonstrate their correlation.

Table 5.18. Correlation Analysis of the Variables

| Variables | 1. | 2. | 3. | 4. | 5. | 6. | 7. | 8. | 9. |
|--------------------------------------|---------|--------|--------|---------|---------|--------|--------|-------|----|
| 1.Gender | 1 | | | | | | | | |
| 2.Grade | 0.071 | 1 | | | | | | | |
| 3.Languages | -0.032 | 0.004 | 1 | | | | | | |
| 4.Language proficiency | 0.180* | 0.002 | 0.147* | 1 | | | | | |
| | ** | | * | | | | | | |
| 5.Intercultural Sensitivity | -0.108* | -0.061 | 0.042 | -0.091* | 1 | | | | |
| 6.Attitude of curiosity and openness | -0.066 | -0.009 | 0.073 | 0.046 | 0.387* | 1 | | | |
| | | | | | ** | | | | |
| 7.Intercultural experience | 0.087 | 0.022 | 0.160* | 0.297* | -0.227* | 0.084 | 1 | | |
| | | | * | ** | ** | | | | |
| 8.Interaction skill | -0.031 | -0.037 | 0.086 | 0.252* | 0.261* | 0.281* | 0.021 | 1 | |
| | | | | ** | ** | ** | | | |
| 9.Cultural knowledge | 0.049 | -0.010 | 0.188* | 0.188* | -0.067 | 0.262* | 0.353* | -0.04 | 1 |
| | | | ** | ** | | ** | ** | | |

Note: * $p < 0.05$ ** $p < 0.01$ *** $p < 0.001$

Analysis: First of all, Gender(female=0, male=1) has a positive correlation with Language Proficiency meanwhile has a negative correlation with Intercultural Sensitivity. It means that male students in the sample are generally better in language proficiency yet are relatively weaker in intercultural sensitivity than female students. Besides, no correlation can be found between Grade and other variables, i.e. the level of students intercultural competence seems no difference whether they are juniors or seniors.

Second, there are significant correlations among the five dimensions and intercultural experience. To be more specific, Language Proficiency has a significant negative correlation with Intercultural Sensitivity, while it has a significant positive correlation

with Interactive Experience, Interaction Skill and Cultural Knowledge. This positive correlation could be easily understood and interpreted, and it is also a proof of what Fantini(2009) argued on the importance of language proficiency to intercultural competence, *“Proficiency in a second language at any level enhances all other aspects of intercultural competence in quantitative and qualitative ways: For example, grappling with a second language causes us to confront how we perceive, conceptualize, express, behave, and interact. It promotes alternative communication strategies--and on someone else 's terms. And it helps expand and transform our habitual view of the world. Conversely, the lack of second language proficiency, even minimally, constrains us to think about the world and act within it in our native system, a decidedly ethnocentric approach.”* This is also why the negative correlation of the language proficiency with intercultural sensitivity is worth our pondering in that it seems contradictory to common sense. Nevertheless, when reflecting on the data results of students and English teachers questionnaires, what caused this might be explained. Students assessment in language proficiency being the lowest of all dimensions, along with teachers lack of knowledge in the definition and integration of intercultural competence into language learning might lead to the result that intercultural sensitivity be completely separated from English language learning, hence the fostering of an ethnorelative attitude seems nothing to do with English language class. Therefore, it is likely that this negative correlation is just a sign of no correlation at all. Too much emphasis has been put on the mechanic repetition of linguistic knowledge while intercultural education is seldom involved. If teachers understanding of being bilingual has little to do with being bicultural, then students would be further away from being intercultural.

In addition, intercultural sensitivity has a significant positive correlation with attitude of curiosity&openness and interaction skill. Namely, if students are open, curious, and tolerant towards cultural differences, their intercultural sensitivity would be more likely to be in the ethnorelative stages of acceptance, adaptation or even integration. As Bennett said (2011), acceptance of cultural differences does not mean agreement,

yet it produces curiosity and respect when making judgement. And those who are interculturally sensitive would be more motivated and willing to embrace opportunities of intercultural communication, hence enhancing their interaction skills. Whats more, the attitude of curiosity and openness has a significant correlation with interaction skills as well as with cultural knowledge. As discussed in the first part of this chapter, respondents generally hold an attitude of curiosity and openness towards cultural differences, hence are more likely to be more attentive and mindful when learning cultural knowledge or carrying out intercultural conversation.

Finally, as for intercultural experience, a positive correlation can be found with cultural knowledge. This is quite self-evident as when someone has more intercultural experience, his/her relevant cultural knowledge accumulates and consolidates. However, as for the sample students in this study, the lack of intercultural environment and opportunities is the reality and its very necessary that teachers and students themselves do something about it.

5.3.2. Profiles v.s. Dimensions

We then further conducted a differential analysis between the six profiles and the five dimensions plus intercultural experience, i.e. the variables, the result of which are shown in the table below.

Table 5.19. Profiles v.s. Dimensions

| Variables | Profile | Profile | Profile | Profile | Profile | Profile | F | LSD |
|---|------------|------------------|------------------|------------|------------------|------------|----------|-------|
| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | | |
| 1.Language proficiency | 2.58±0.63 | 2.91±0.47 | 2.80±0.58 | 2.73±0.49 | 2.70±0.52 | 2.90±0.57 | 3.317** | 2 > 4 |
| 2.Intercultural Sensitivity | 3.71±0.74 | 3.51±0.73 | 3.69±0.45 | 3.67±0.72 | 3.81±0.71 | 3.57±0.65 | 2.356* | 5 > 2 |
| 3.Attitude of curiosity and openness | 3.69±0.45 | 3.53±0.60 | 3.65±0.68 | 3.66±0.47 | 3.83±0.51 | 3.50±0.45 | 5.008*** | 5 > 4 |
| 4.Intercultural experience | 2.75±0.86 | 2.89±0.69 | 2.67±0.93 | 2.82±0.74 | 2.73±0.79 | 2.74±0.67 | 0.582 | n.s. |
| 5.Interaction skill | 2.93±0.75 | 3.04±0.66 | 3.31±0.97 | 2.88±0.63 | 2.97±0.76 | 3.05±0.77 | 1.326 | n.s. |
| 6.Cultural knowledge | 3.22±0.62 | 3.35±0.55 | 3.09±0.81 | 3.33±0.55 | 3.48±0.54 | 3.41±0.52 | 3.557 | n.s. |
| 7.Total score | 18.89±2.18 | 19.23±2.09 | 19.20±2.00 | 19.10±1.84 | 19.52±1.98 | 19.18±2.26 | 1.171 | n.s. |

The scores of the respondents in Profile 5 exceed those of other profiles in dimensions of **Intercultural Sensitivity, Attitude of curiosity and openness** as well as **Cultural knowledge** (though not calculated as 'significant' in this dimension in statistics), which to some extent indicates that having the mindset of global citizens does help in fostering intercultural sensitivity and attitude, and their good performance in cultural knowledge is definitely complementary to the above two dimensions. However, its worth mentioning that the scores of Profile 5 in Language Proficiency and Interaction Skills are the second lowest and third lowest, which may indicate that having a global mindset doesn't guarantee their competence in language proficiency and interaction skills which needs actual practice regularly instead of mere global mentality.

Compared with Profile 5 in terms of the high score in **Intercultural Sensitivity and Attitude of Curiosity and Openness**, a contrast is detected in Profile 2, the respondents of which hold a Non-Preferential attitude towards the six identities whose scores are very low in these two dimensions. The contrast again proves the positive correlation between a global identity awareness and the intercultural sensitivity and attitude.

5.3.3. Intercultural Foreign Language Education as the Way out

Intercultural foreign language education is based on the concept that foreign language acquisition will be more naturally and effectively achieved, and more often than not, in an implicit way, when discussions, analysis, simulations, and reflective activities are organized through utilizing culture materials. In this whole process, students are using English to articulate, argue or debate over diverse cultural issues of different countries, nations and ethnic groups, thus their language proficiency will be improved implicitly along the way of understanding cultures more deeply. Intercultural teaching encourages students to think, reflect, empathize so as to internalize the knowledge and develop intercultural awareness. This concept challenged the traditional way of teaching English in China, in which language learning mainly involves vocabulary, grammar, sentence patterns and repetitions, etc., and cultural information is provided randomly and superficially. Just as what Prof.Sun Youzhong and Prof.Janet Bennett discussed and agreed in an interview (2016), *Many people would say, 'I know Chinese people use chopsticks'. Well, this is just cultural information and it is rather superficial. Such information is so easily-accessible online--just one click away, yet this type of learning doesn't guarantee real comprehension, neither does it produce empathy towards other cultural groups nor developing intercultural flexibility.* For this reason, specific teaching and learning strategies for the purpose of developing students intercultural competence will be discussed within the framework of foreign language education. Hopefully, they will be the down-to-earth solutions for the existing problems, especially those that were detected in this study.

To begin with , Liddicoat, A., & Scarino, A. (2013) 's 5 core teaching principles could be used as a general guideline for teachers to plan their English class in a gradual and

step-by step process from intercultural perspectives. They are Active Construction, Making Connection, Social Interaction, Reflection and Responsibility. Specifically, teachers first of all should help students structure the idea of second/foreign language learning from intercultural perspective, its relationship with cultures and communication, as well as the importance of engagement and reflection in the whole process of learning. After having the general understanding of how foreign language learning should be constructed in mind, it's time for learners to make connections between languages and cultures, between their known knowledge and past experience with the new, and between cultural differences and similarities. The connections produce new understanding of one's own identity and that of others. Social interaction then is the best way for learners to build the above connections, since interaction is a process of "negotiating meaning across variable perspectives held by diverse participants, and continuously learn from and build upon experience"(p57, Liddicoat & Scarino, A., 2013). This is when foreign language learners become real language users and intercultural learning naturally become part of language learning.

Reflection is encouraged at any point of the learning process and it could even be considered as the most effective way of developing intercultural competence. Cognitively, reflection makes learners more aware of what they learned or experienced, hence produce deeper understanding. Affectively, positive or negative emotion may arise in face of cultural differences and similarities, which will then be dealt with by 'decentering'"a capacity to understand multiple perspectives and a willingness to search for and accept multiple possible interpretations."p59, Liddicoat & Scarino, A., 2013, then followed by a sense of empathy, mindfulness, tolerance, and openness, etc. To become an intercultural speaker, one should be aware of his/her Responsibility of actively making efforts to understand others, in the process of which, his/her intercultural sensitivity and intercultural understanding will also be also enhanced. As Liddicoat(2013) said, this is 'an ethical position' of acceptance and valuing diverse languages and cultures.

Besides, Byram 's notion on the relationship of intercultural competence with the

education for intercultural/global citizenship is very much relevant to my study since it echoes with what Chinese government has promoted in recent years, such as the integration of IPE to the curriculum of higher education, the propaganda to all the citizens of the importance of sharing Chinese cultures and stories to the world in a way that people from other cultures and nations can understand. As quoted from Byram, *"If language educators collaborate to develop their students skills and attitudes--the "knowing how" and "can-do" approach-related to intercultural competence rather than promoting "knowledge about" national cultures, then they facilitate their students development of skills that are relevant to every aspects of their lives. Students then come to value language education as an education for developing their identity rather than as the learning of a code that can only be used in some restricted environment"* (Byram, M., & Wagner, M. ,2018, P147). What Chinese government does is actually within the sphere of intercultural communication by encouraging its people to become intercultural speakers/citizens. It is a measure taken under the context that, domestically, to cure the phenomenon of 'Chinese Culture Aphasia' and raise people's awareness of cherishing their own cultural heritage and values; and globally, most countries at present still know so little about China and Chinese culture which to a large extent becomes obstacles for deep cooperation in a long run. Also, Byram's model within the framework of foreign language education helps foreign language teachers specify objectives and include intercultural competence in their teaching plan, i.e. attitudes, knowledge, skills and critical cultural awareness, as shown in this IC model. For example, He put 'critical cultural awareness' at the center of his model, explicitly stating the aim of cultivating critical cultural awareness as follows, *'with its aim of encouraging learners to reflect critically on the values, beliefs, and behaviors of their own society. In foreign language education, this is done through a comparative study of other societies'* (p323, Deardorff, 2009). Besides, his theory particularly reminds foreign language learners of the right direction in learning a foreign language, i.e. becoming 'intercultural speaker' instead of 'imitators of native speakers'. Also, Byram(Byram, M., & Wagner, M. ,2018, P147) recommended 'Content-based instruction' which shows *'how world*

language can be acquired more effectively by using them to teach other subjects.' For example, students are asked to study a certain topic of concern and collect information in English on their own before class and then discuss or debate about it in English during class. In this process, language proficiency is improved more self-motivatedly, cultural knowledge "know that" and "know how" is acquired simultaneously; meanwhile critical cultural awareness and intercultural sensitivity will also be developed. Yet it didn't provide sufficient instructions as to how to achieves those objectives systematically. Here what Peng(2020) proposed may supplement this limitation.

Peng Renzhong is a professor working in the School of Foreign Languages in Huazhong University of Science and Technology, China; and he has been quite active in recent years in the field of IC research and its application to foreign language learning in higher education. In 2020, Peng published a paper in which he systematically classify the study of IC foreign language education into three categories: Competence-oriented, Method-oriented and Platform-oriented, as shown in the Model 1 below. In this model, online and offline foreign language courses are the the basic platform for cultivating intercultural competence, through which teachers could explore, research and practice IC teaching in order to seek the best way of integrating IC learning into foreign language learning. Methods such as experiential learning, reflective learning and interactive learning are so far proved effective in developing students language skills meanwhile integrating intercultural elements into the who process. Competence-oriented level is the core in this model that includes six dimensions, i.e. cultural knowledge of ones own country and that of others, attitude, intercultural cognitive skills, intercultural communicative skills and critical intercultural awareness.

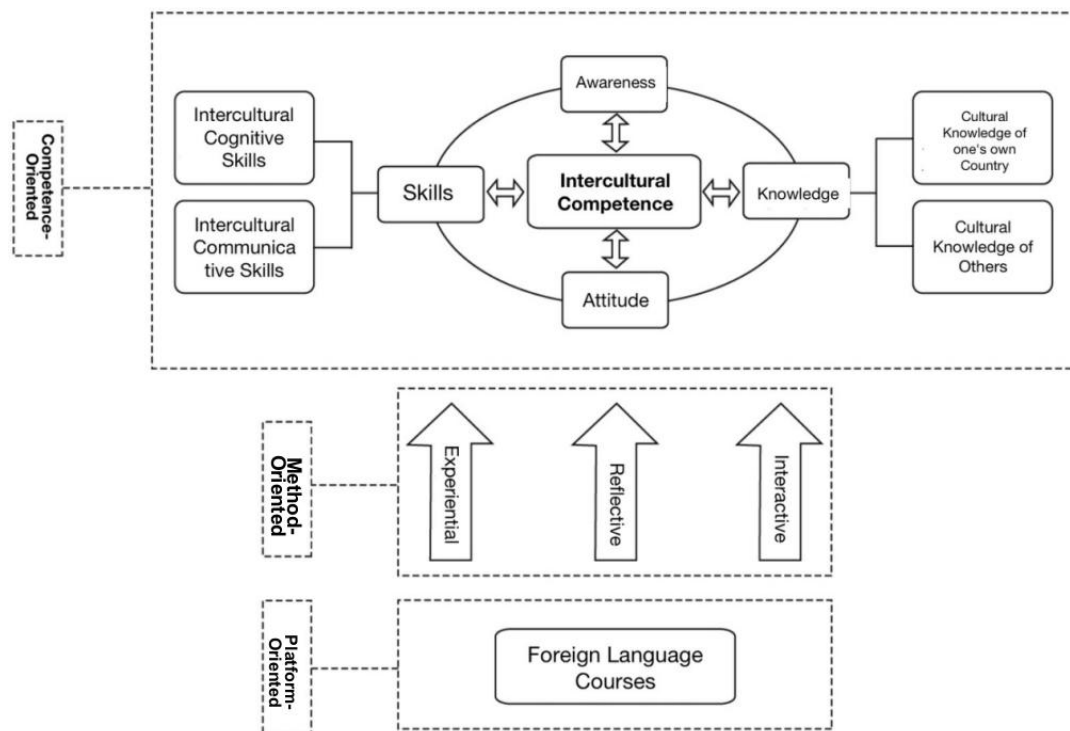


Table 5.20. Model 1 A Theoretical Model of IC Foreign Language Education (translated from the Chinese Version, Peng, 2020)

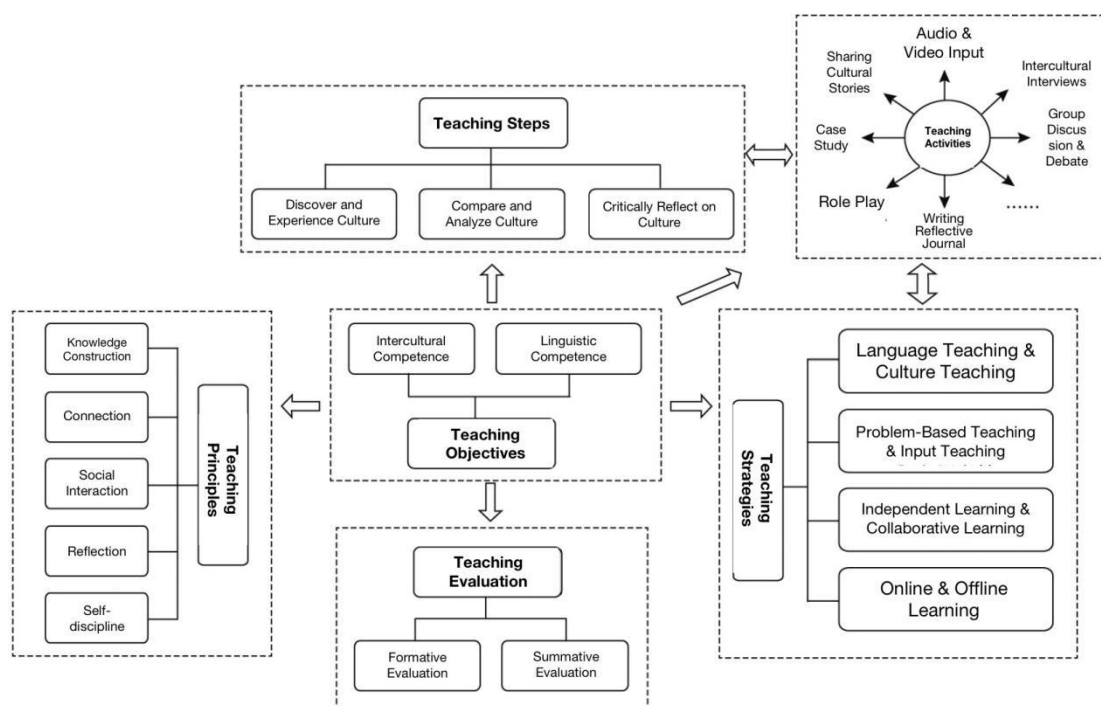


Table 5.21. Model 2 A Practical Model of IC Foreign Language Teaching (translated from the Chinese Version, Peng, 2020)

Based on this three-level theoretical model as well as by referring to Liddicoat(2003)s five teaching principles, Peng(2020) designed a Practical Model of IC Foreign

Language Teaching (see Model 2). It serves well as a relatively holistic guideline for college English teachers to design their lesson plans from setting their teaching objectives, principles and strategies to designing teaching steps, activities and finally evaluation. According to Peng(2020), linguistic competence and intercultural competence are the two equally important teaching objectives. And then five teaching principles are listed as follows, knowledge construction, connection, social interaction, reflection and self-discipline. These are largely borrowed from Liddicoat(2003)s five core teaching principles which have been elaborated in previous paragraphs. Then Peng(2020) continued to provide specific teaching strategies for foreign language teachers: (1) a combination of language teaching and culture teaching; (2) a combination of problem-based teaching and input teaching; (3) a combination of independent learning and collaborative learning; (4) a combination of online and offline learning. Furthermore, teaching steps starting from discovering and experiencing culture, comparing and analyzing culture, to critically reflecting on culture are recommended as step-by-step instructions in helping students become interculturally competent. Moreover, teaching activities such as sharing of cultural stories, case study, role play and writing reflective journals could be organized as ways of experiential, reflective or interactive learning. Last of all, teaching evaluation is also an indispensable link in the model. Formative evaluation in forms of reflective journal, learning portfolio or teachers observation could help to check students developmental stage while summative evaluation in form of final exam and assessment scale helps to check the learning result over a semester. Pengs model is instructive, operable and systematic in solving the detected problems from my study. For example, intercultural topics could be led in to English class naturally by following the five teaching principles; students curiosity and interest could be stimulated if teachers adopt problem-based teaching strategy; students intercultural sensitivity, knowledge and attitude will improve when teachers encourage them to discover and experience culture, and cognitive and communicative skills will improve when comparing and analyzing culture, and critical cultural awareness will be sharpened when critically reflecting culture. Even a series of teaching activities are

recommended as effective ways of IC learning. When all of the above happens in English class, students will get sufficient opportunities to speak out, hence improving their language proficiency simultaneously. In a word, Peng's Model 2 is clearly and logically organized hence can be easily interpreted and conveniently applied into English class.

5.4. Conclusion

The goal of this chapter is to answer all of the research questions through interpreting the data results and analyzing the possible causes behind the findings. Generally speaking, a picture showing a glimpse of the intercultural competence of English Major students in China has been laid out in forms of analysis and discussions. Specifically speaking, detailed problems have been diagnosed in the five dimensions which are of great help especially to educators and teachers in putting forward feasible solutions. Also, recommended IC teaching principles, concepts and models are explored as possible solutions for the existing problems. Here what Byram(2018) said may perfectly remind teachers of the reason why their ways of teaching a foreign language needs to be updated, *'We have so far demonstrated that intercultural competence is not an automatic byproduct of language teaching. Rather, language educators need to make a conscious decision to teach languages for intercultural communication. This in turn requires both a theoretical framework and a learning theory that take into account the dynamic nature of languages and cultures and of all communication and interaction. Rather than focusing exclusively on the linguistic aspects of language, language educators should plan their teaching ...to help their students acquire and use linguistic and intercultural competence in their relationships with others in their immediate community, in their national community, or at the international level, applying what they learn in the classroom to the here and now.'* (p147, Byram and Wagner, 2018).

Of course, there are limitations concerning the operations and the data results of this empirical research. First and foremost, it is such a complex topic and some of the elements within intercultural competence are dynamic and may be extremely difficult

to be assessed accurately. That's why there are a number of IC scholars who support the argument that intercultural competence cannot be assessed. I, myself, also realize the complexity during the operation of conducting the assessment and that's why I regard this findings only as a beginning of a continuous project. Second, When it comes to cultural knowledge, the assessment items have limitations in that the statements are still general aspects of cultural information and may not produce very accurate result. therefore, it would be better if a cultural test is added which produce qualitative data to show how students interpret, analyze or comprehend cultural content critically. Then it would be a more scientific assessment by combining 'know that' and 'know how'. According to Byram, M., & Wagner, M. (2018), 'know that/propositional knowledge' regards cultural content as static such as a brief introduction of a country, its people and its art and literature, etc.; while 'know how/procedural knowledge' is a competence of critically reflecting on culture and seeing it as dynamic. Keeping this in mind, it is recommended that teachers leave more 'thinking and discussion time' during and after class when dealing with cultural content.

Nevertheless, the findings and discussions in this study at least reveal some of the weak links in English language education, or foreign language education at large in China, hence may provide some clues on what aspects we should pay special attention to, especially when cultivating students' intercultural competence is becoming one of the major goals.

Chapter 6 Conclusion

6.1. Conceptualizing the PhD program

When I initially started to explore the possible topics for my PhD program in 2019, intercultural competence was the first thing in my head as I had been always interested in different cultures and I, myself, wanted to be an intercultural speaker. This could even trace back to my childhood when I first learned English; as the child of an English teacher working in junior high school, I immediately fell in love with this language and was eager to find opportunity to talk to an English native some day. Of course, it was not possible back then in 1990s when no single foreigner can be found in my hometown. As I grew up and went to college, I chose English as my major without a second thought and applied for a university in the UK for Master's Degree because my eagerness to contact and immerse into an exotic culture was still there. I guess it was still the same inner longing that drove me to Poland for PhD, so that I could be in contact with another culture. This was my original motivation to conduct this research on intercultural communication and intercultural competence. Of course, four years ago, the context of China as a fast-growing economy and the whole world as a global village also demonstrate its significance. Back then, the world was relatively peaceful, without Covid-19, without fierce trade wars between China and the US, without the breakout of protests against racial discrimination worldwide, and definitely without the unexpected war between Russia and Ukraine, and then sanctions to Russia followed afterwards from the so called 'western allies' led by the US. The once 'global village' is on the edge of being tattered. When how scholars and experts define intercultural competence is always positive and ideal, the reality proves to be more ruthless. It makes me more asserted to study intercultural competence as my future direction and what is happening now in the world adds even more significance to the study of intercultural communication and how to become intercultural competent given the current tensions among regions and countries. Besides, as a college English teacher in China, I'm very much concerned about the

development of students' intercultural competence as English majors. I assume an IC assessment should be the first step to get to know the actual situation and then position the problems. That is how I conceptualized my research program as 'A Study on the Intercultural Competence of English Majors in Chinese Universities'.

6.2. Reviewing the Thesis

My **original expectation** towards my thesis was that it should be a well-structured and clear-cut article which provides helpful and practice reference for College English teachers and those who are interested in intercultural studies, by not only including comprehensive introduction to previous major IC theories and frameworks, but also putting the assessment and cultivation of intercultural competence into Chinese/Oriental context, and hopefully coming up with useful suggestions for foreign language learning in China. I believe by now I have reached my expectation in these respects. The **structure of my thesis** was laid out by being divided into 6 chapters with clear signposts as follows, Chapter 1-Introduction, Chapter 2- Literature Review, Chapter 3 -The Exploration of Key Concepts, Chapter 4 - Research Design and Methodology, Chapter 5 - Findings and Discussions, and Chapter 6 - Conclusion. As mentioned multiple times, my study on intercultural competence happened against **the backdrop** of the dynamic changes and upheaval worldwide, such as pandemic, wars, disputes and mistrust between countries, along with sanctions against one another; smooth and friendly intercultural communication has now become rather difficult. Young generation hence bear more responsibility to restore peace and harmony with their wisdom and competence in the future; while intercultural competence is definitely indispensable.

The main focus in my study is the operation of the assessment along with the interpretation of the data results in order to answer two research questions, namely, '*How interculturally competent are the English majors in Chinese universities at present?*' And '*What are the major factors that may constrain students from developing intercultural competence?*' Before doing that, a comprehensive **literature review** is extremely vital in helping me clarifying the definition and components of intercultural competence, as well as comprehending this issue from multiple

perspectives. For example, **from Hofstede(2011)**, we are on the 'expressway' to quickly browse the features of more than 90 national cultures around the world with categorization of the six cultural dimensions. **From M.J. Bennett(2003)**, we learn to consciously evaluate ourselves by using the Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity from the Ethnocentric stages of Denial, Defense, Minimization, to the Ethnorelative stages of Acceptance, Adaptation and Integration. From **Stephen Bochner(2003)**, we know that discomfort that happened during or after intercultural experience is not necessarily a bad thing. If coped with this feeling properly with reflection and possible solution, effective adaptation may happen. And it could stimulate people to become more interculturally aware. From **Michael Byram(1997, 2009 and 2018)**, we see this topic from foreign language education and learned about his understanding of intercultural competence as one of the most recognizable theory in IC field, which includes the attitude of openness and curiosity, knowledge, skills of interpreting and relating, skills of discovery and interaction. **From Kim(2001)**, we know how to perceive intercultural competence from sojourners' perspective that includes the following six aspects: Personal communication, Social communication, Ethnic communication, Environment, Predisposition and Intercultural transformation. **From Ting-Toomey(1998)**, we expand our horizon in this field by knowing a new term-facework, along with its essential role in maintaining a harmonious relationship. Then from **X.S.Xiao &G.M.Chen(2009)**, the importance of moral and ethical aspects are added to the theory of intercultural competence, which seems more valuable in today's world. It's necessary to keep certain moral and ethical rules in mind when dealing with intercultural issues. **X.D.Dai &G.M.Chen(2015)** also put moral competence into their model, stressing the importance of equal discourse power in intercultural conversation, and this sometimes needs rules to regulate. Therefore moral ethics come into play. **From Takai & Ota(1994)**, we learn intercultural competence from a Japanese perspective, in which five dimensions are included, i.e. the perceptual competence, self-restraint, social appropriateness, interpersonal sensitivity and tolerance to ambiguity. It is helpful to people from Western countries who travel to Japan for the first time in understanding what matters in Japanese

culture when communicating with them, especially dimensions such as self-restraint and social appropriateness which display quite distinct cultural differences (i.e. harmony and hierarchical relationship) from western culture. Observing **from J.O.Yum's(2012)** Intercultural Competence Theory, we could have a glimpse of the characteristics of Korean culture, i.e. the value of "we-identity" is quite obvious, and it is even concerned with one's survival in the society. Also, the ability of comprehending others' unspoken languages is also indispensable especially when the other sides is being euphemistic and silent. All of the above is useful information in understanding intercultural communication when involving Korean culture.

Then a number of assessment methods are also reviewed. **Deardorff's(2008 and 2009)** study on IC assessment is instructive in guiding me to construct my assessment planing the early stage by clarifying the definition of intercultural competence and what is to be assessed within a particular scope. Also, her "Checklist for Evaluating Assessment Efforts" is considerate enough to guarantee a feasible and effective assessment procedure. Questions such as "Are goals, objectives, and assessment measures aligned? Have the results been used for program improvement as well as for learner feedback? Has the assessment process and strategy been reviewed on a regular basis and improved upon?..."is easily to be neglected when designing questionnaires and interviews. Besides, **Fantini's(2009)** assessment put language proficiency into the dimensions of intercultural competence which is especially relevant to my study. A Chinese IC scholar **Wu Weiping(2015)** from Wuhan University of Technology also designed an IC scale targeted at Chinese college students, but the description of each item is too brief and general, despite that it covers six aspects of intercultural competence.

Afterwards, some **key concepts** were explored. The trinity relationship among language, culture and communication was discussed for the understanding of why (foreign) language learning should go hand in hand with culture learning and communicative competence; and then background knowledge such as the development of intercultural teaching of China and the West, the modernization of China's education, and English language education in China since 1949 were

reviewed for the convenience of better comprehending the historical context for Chinese students. In the cultural aspect, the huge influence of Confucianism was briefly discussed, in which the connotation of *Ren* and *Li* were explained, in addition to the inherited exam-oriented tradition from the ancients as well as the debated stereotype of Chinese students today. The purpose of this chapter is to assist readers in understanding the context of this study more holistically.

When having a relatively thorough understanding of this topic, it's time to conduct **research design and methodology**. With the help of pilot interviews beforehand, research questions were again confirmed and hypothesis stated, based on which, definition and components of intercultural competence particularly for this study were clarified, followed by setting the specific indicators for assessment, namely, language proficiency, attitude of openness, curiosity, and confidence, cultural knowledge of major English-speaking countries, skills of interaction and facework management. Besides, in order to assist the interpretation of the assessment result, the question concerning students' intercultural experience and teachers' cognition on intercultural competence and their teaching methods in practice are also taken into consideration.

Therefore, two questionnaires were designed: Questionnaire 1-*Intercultural Competence Assessment Scale for English Major Students in China*, and Questionnaire 2-*A Survey on Intercultural Teaching of College English Teachers*. Junior and senior English major students were targeted as the sample group for Questionnaire 1 while college English teachers for Questionnaire 2. One thing worth noting is that originally a cultural quiz was also part of the assessment for evaluating students' understanding and interpretation of cultural knowledge; however it was prove to be too time-consuming when in trial hence is extremely hard to operate in large scale. It would be more practical if it is part of formative or summative evaluation of students over one or two semesters which I will definitely promote when going back to work as a college English teacher. Besides, moral ethics such as sincerity, honesty, mutual respect, responsibility and a sense of equal discourse power were also regarded as part of intercultural competence yet left unchecked in this study due to its complexity in assessment which also needs long-term observation and

should be cautiously dealt with. It is definitely something worth further research in a long run.

Nevertheless, the whole operation process of the empirical investigation went well; **findings and discussions** were made according to the collected data. The first main research question “*How interculturally competent are the English majors in Chinese universities at present ?*” was answered by summarizing the data result from the five assessed dimensions mentioned in the previous paragraph. Then the second main research question ‘What are the major factors that may constrain students from developing intercultural competence?’ was answered from the aspects of the students themselves, college English teachers and China's language policies. In a word, the respondents' intercultural competence are in an intermediate level with a mean of 3.3, and the major **detected problems** are as follows,

- (1) Students' under-performance in language proficiency has largely affected their interaction confidence and skills, plus that the acquisition of the English language should be integrated with the development of intercultural sensitivity.
- (2) Student's unclear self-evaluation about their own interaction skills and cultural knowledge has impeded their effective learning, thus measures needs to be taken with the help of their teachers in terms of regular assessment on students' periodical learning outcome;
- (3) Attention needs to be paid to the problem of students' tendency to be ethnocentric which is actually inconsistent with the hypothesis of students' inconfidence in their own culture;
- (4) The problem in teachers' lack of knowledge on IC definition, of professional training in IC teaching methods may lead to the result that the language policy concerning the cultivation of student's intercultural competence in foreign language majors cannot be well implemented in higher education. As quoted from Byram(2018), ‘*...in this new context, language teaching must include intercultural communicative competence as its aim, and this means that language teaching professionals must accept their social and political responsibilities and change their professional identity.*’ However, as the data result shows, particularly of the

Questionnaire 2 for College English teachers, reveals the realistic problems in China, i.e. most teachers participated in the survey equaled intercultural competence to language competence.

When recalling the **hypotheses** in this study and comparing them to the survey result, it can be found that the assumptions about students' language proficiency, interaction skills, attitude of openness and curiosity, cultural knowledge, students' willingness to engage in intercultural opportunities, and teachers' cognition and practice in IC teaching are all largely consistent with the findings. Except that, respondents still value the role of 'mianzi'(facework) in intercultural communication despite of the Western influence; and that contradictory result in students' intercultural sensitivity--being ethnorelative in respecting cultural diversity while being ethnocentric in regarding their own culture being the best. Also, language policies regarding IC education was investigated and proved to be optimistic, with more stress and more detailed instructions appearing in documents. A new problem detected out of expectation is the lack of regular self-evaluation and assessment by teachers during the process of foreign language learning.

As for the **Discussion** section, correlations among the variables are discussed, the result of which showcases some of the significant positive correlations among them meanwhile revealing the realistic problems in foreign language education of China that some of the key elements such as intercultural sensitivity being considered irrelevant to English language learning. Also, the correlation between identification profiles and the five dimensions of intercultural competence plus intercultural experience is also presented, which confirms our perception that having a global mindset does positively help students developing their intercultural competence on the whole. Moreover, specific strategies within the framework of intercultural foreign language education are also discussed in the hope of finding solutions for the questions and problems detected in this study. Specifically speaking, Byram(2018)'s point of view helps teachers and students realize the necessity of integrating intercultural competence into foreign language learning responding to the current context; Liddicoat, A., & Scarino, A. (2013)'s five core teaching principles guided

them to introduce the concept of intercultural learning into language class step by step; while Peng(2020)'s model provides specific pedagogical instructions on how to cultivate students' intercultural competence through the platform of foreign language courses.

6.3. Reflecting on the Program

A brief review of the structure and content of my thesis was made as above. When reflecting on the whole process of my thesis writing, there are of course regrets and limitations.

To begin with, the literature review covers the major IC studies both from Western countries and Oriental countries for the purpose of a holistic understanding of my research topic. While the empirical survey was conducted in a Chinese context, with my original intention of taking Chinese culture into consideration when designing the assessment and interpreting the result. That's why the role of mianzi in Chinese culture was put into the assessment; this was also partly inspired by Ting-Toomey(1998)'s Facework theory in which the importance of maintaining 'face' during intercultural communication was discussed. Actually the differentiation between Chinese 'mianzi' and Ting-Toomey's 'face' is also worth researching yet was not covered in this study. Besides, factors such as Confucianism, exam-oriented system and Chinese learning traditions, etc, are not well integrated into the research design and and data analysis. This is something needs to be worked on in the future, from which more Chinese-oriented IC theory and models might be constructed.

In terms of the assessment, first of all, larger sample sizes of English-major students and college English teachers would make the data result more reliable and convincing, given the large population and diversity within China. Second, a Culture Quiz covering both Chinese culture and cultures of other countries would definitely help me comprehend better about how respondents interpret cultural differences hence explore deeper on their attitude, intercultural awareness and sensitivity, not mention that the real master of cultural knowledge should include surface culture & deep culture, as well as culture-general and culture-specific. Yet in this study, the cultural knowledge only refers to that of major English-speaking countries; this is something

needs to be revised if redoing the assessment. Students learning English as an international language need to have some knowledge about the whole world, instead of confining their knowledge scope to developed countries which is not even beneficial for developing intercultural sensitivity. Yet the problem concerning how to operate such test with both objective answers and subjective opinions in large scale across universities is awaited to be solved. Besides, as stated in defining the components of intercultural competence, moral ethics and critical cultural awareness are also included yet were not assessed in this study which provides direction and goals for my second stage of assessment after the PhD program. Last but not the least, assessment tools such as the scale used in this study are in the form of self-evaluation, sometimes the result might be inaccurate when respondents' answers are affected by their self-esteem; and this has always been the challenge facing researchers. Multidimensional assessment combining scales, self-reported survey, interviews, observation and written tests would of course produce more reliable result, yet a time span of two to three years assisted by a whole team of researchers might be needed to implement such research plan which is rather difficult to be realized by the majority of researchers.

6.4. Inviting for Further Research

With intercultural competence being such a complex concept, readers of interest are warmly invited for the use of this study for different purposes as well as for further research. Questions such as '*What other important skills/components that are not illustrated in detail in this paper?*', and '*What aspects should we take into consideration in terms of intercultural expectation or adaptation?*'...are worth exploring. Answers might involve terms such as cultural shock, values, Individualism and Collectivism, silence, high and low context culture, the concept of time--Mono-chronic and poly-chronic, and the role of proxemics, etc., are all important topics within IC studies. Especially if considering the the context of studying intercultural competence and communication being so dynamic at present, IC researchers and educators bear the responsibility to enrich the meaning of IC and popularize its importance to the general public under the current turbulence and

tensions around the world.

6.5. Concluding the Conclusion

If we move beyond the narrow discussions about the intercultural competence of China's young English language learners to consider its significance within or beyond intercultural disciplinary area, I'd like to conclude my thesis by quoting what President Xi Jinping said in 75th UNGA General Debate, *"First, COVID-19 reminds us that we are living in an interconnected global village with a common stake. All countries are closely connected and we share a common future. No country can gain from others' difficulties or maintain stability by taking advantage of others' troubles. To pursue a beggar-thy-neighbor policy or just watch from a safe distance when others are in danger will eventually land one in the same trouble faced by others. This is why we should embrace the vision of a community with a shared future in which everyone is bound together. We should reject attempts to build blocs to keep others out and oppose a zero-sum approach. We should see each other as members of the same big family, pursue win-win cooperation, and rise above ideological disputes and do not fall into the trap of "clash of civilizations". More importantly, we should respect a country's independent choice of development path and model. The world is diverse in nature, and we should turn this diversity into a constant source of inspiration driving human advancement. This will ensure that human civilizations remain colorful and diversified"*.

Bibliography

ACTFL (The American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages). (1996). *Standards for Foreign Language Learning: Preparing for the 21st Century*. Yonkers, NY: National Standards in Foreign Language Education Project.

Alred, G., & Byram, M., & Fleming, M. (2003). *Intercultural Experience and Education*. Clevedon: Multilingual Matters.

Arasaratnam, L.A., & Doerfel, M. L. (2005). Intercultural communicative competence: Identifying key components from multicultural perspectives. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*. 29(2): 137-163.

B&R interconnection witnesses great breakthroughs in 5-year development.(2018). Retrieved from <https://eng.yidaiyilu.gov.cn/qwyw/rdxw/69500.htm> (January 2019)

Baxter, M. (2004) *Knowing and Reasoning in College: Gender-related Patterns in Student' Intellectual Development*, San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 351.

Baxter, M. (2004). Self-authorship as the Common Goal of 21st Century Education. *Learning Partnerships: Theory and Models of Practice to Educate for Self-authorship*, (ed.). Patricia King, Sterling, VA: Stylus, 1-35.

Beebe, S.A., Beebe, S.J., & Redmond, M. V. (1999). *Interpersonal communication*. Boston: Allyn & Bacon.

Bennett, J. M. (2003). Turning frogs into interculturalists: A student-centered development approach to teaching intercultural competence. In N. A. Boyacigiller, R. A. Goodman, & M. E. Phillips (Eds.), *Crossing cultures: Insights from master teachers*. New York: Taylor & Francis, 157-170.

Bennett, J. M. (2009). Cultivating intercultural competence: A Process perspective. In Deardorff, Darla K., *The Sage Handbook of Intercultural Competence*. California: Sage Publications, Inc, 121-140.

Bennett, J. M. (ed). (2015). *The Sage Encyclopedia of Intercultural Competence*. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE.

Bennett, J. M., & Bennett, M. J. (2004). Developing Intercultural Sensitivity: An Integrative Approach to Global and Domestic Diversity. In Landis, D. R. (Eds.), *Handbook of Intercultural*

Training. Thousand Oaks: SAGE. 147-165.

Bennett, M. J. (1993). Towards ethnorelativism: A Developmental model of intercultural sensitivity. In Page, R. M. (ed.). *Education for the Intercultural Experience* (2nd edition). Yarmouth, ME: Intercultural Press, 21-71.

Berry, J.W. et al. (1998). Acculturation in plural societies. *Applied Psychology: An International Review* 38, 2, 185-206.

Bi J-W. (1998). A Study on Intercultural Communication and Second Language Teaching. *Language Teaching and Research*, 1998(1), 10-24. (in Chinese)

Bochner, S. (2003). Culture Shock Due to Contact with Unfamiliar Cultures. *Online Readings in Psychology and Culture*, 8(1).

Boris Johnson at the 75th UNGA General Debate. Retrieved from: https://mp.weixin.qq.com/s/Ra2aaD3zUO9-KKCx_QdWiA, (2020/09/28)

Byram M. (2008). *From Foreign Language Education to Education for Intercultural Citizenship: Essays and Reflections*. Clevedon: Multilingual Matters. .

Byram, M. & Fleming, M. (1998). *Language Learning in Intercultural Perspective: Approaches Through Drama and Ethnography*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Byram, M. (1989). *Cultural Studies in Foreign Language Education*. Clevedon: Multilingual Matters.

Byram, M. (1993). *Teaching and Assessing Intercultural Communicative Competence*, Clevedon, Philadelphia: Multilingual Matters, 31-43.

Byram, M. (2009). Intercultural competence in foreign language education- The intercultural speaker and the pedagogy of foreign language education. In D.K. Deardorff (ed.). *The SAGE Handbook of Intercultural Competence*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 321-332.

Byram, M. (2014). Conceptualizing Intercultural (Communicative) Competence and Intercultural Citizenship. In J. Jackson (ed). *The Routledge Handbook of Language and Intercultural Communication*. New York, NY: Routledge. 85-97.

Byram, M., & Nichols, A. & Stevens, D. (2014). *Developing Intercultural Competence*. Shanghai: Shanghai Foreign Language Education Press.

Byram, M., & Wagner, M. (2018). Making a difference: Language teaching for intercultural and international dialogue. *Foreign Language Annals*, 51(1), 140–151.

- Byram, M., Holmes, P., & Savvides, N. (2013). Intercultural communicative competence in foreign language education: Questions of theory, practice and research. *The Language Learning Journal*, 41(3), 251–253.
- Carse, J. P. (1986). *Finite and Infinite Games*. New York: Ballantine.
- Chen, G.M., & Starosta, W.J. (1996). Intercultural Communication Competence: A Synthesis. *Communication Yearbook*, 1996(19), 253-384.
- Chen, SH. (1999). *Cultural Teaching in Foreign Language Education*. Beijing: Beijing Language and Culture University Press.(in Chinese)
- Chi, R. B., Zhang, H. L., & Gu, L. X. (2016). From traditional courses to MooCs--with the course Intercultural Communication as the example. *Technology Enhanced Foreign Language Education*, 6, 29-34.
- Child Welfare League. (1993). *Cultural Competence Self-assessment Instrument*. Washington, D.C. Child Welfare League of America.
- Council of Europe.(2003). *Guide for the Development of Language Education Policies in Europe: From Linguistic Diversity to Plurilingual Education (Executive Version)* Strasbourg: Council of Europe.
- Creswell, J.W., & Clark, V.P. (2011). *Designing and Conducting Mixed Methods Research*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Cronjé, J. C. (2011). Using Hofstede's cultural dimensions to interpret cross-cultural blended teaching and learning. *Computers & Education*, 56(3), 596–603.
- Dai, X. D., & G. M. Chen. (2015). On Interculturality and Intercultural Communication Competence. *China Media Research*, 11 (3), 100-113.
- Dai, X-D.(2018). *A Study on Intercultural Competence*. Shanghai: Foreign Language Teaching and Research Press.
- Deardorff, D. K. (2006). The identification and assessment of intercultural competence as a student outcome of internationalization at institutions of higher education in the United States. *Journal of Studies in International Education*, 10(3), 241-266
- Deardorff, D. K. (2008). Intercultural Competence: A Definition, Model and Implications for Education Abroad. *Developing Intercultural Competence and Transformation: Theory, Research, and Application in International Education*, Victor Savicki(ed.).. Sterling, VA: Stylus, 32-52.

- Deardorff, D. K. (ed.). (2009a). *The Sage handbook of intercultural competence*. Sage Publications.
- Deardorff, D. K., & Unesco. (2020). *Manual for developing intercultural competencies: Story circles*.
- Deardorff, Darla K. (2010). *A Comparative Analysis and Global Perspective of Regional Studies on Intercultural Competence*. Paris: UNESCO
- Deardorff, Darla K. (2011). Assessing Intercultural Competence. *New Directions for Institutional Research*. (published online in Wiley Online Library, no. 149, spring 2011). 65-79.
- Deng, Z. (2011). Confucianism, modernization and Chinese pedagogy: An introduction. *Journal of Curriculum Studies*, 43(5), 561–568.
- Deng, Z. (2011). Confucianism, modernization and Chinese pedagogy: An introduction. *Journal of Curriculum Studies*, 43(5), 561–568.
- Deng, Zongyi,(2011). Confucianism, Modernization and Chinese Pedagogy: An Introduction. *Journal of Curriculum Studies*, 43:5, 561-568.
- Ding, Huiling, (2014). *Rhetoric of a Global Epidemic: Transcultural Communication About SARS*. Carbondale: Southern Illinois Press.
- Fan, W. W., Wu, W. P., & Peng, R. Z. (2017). A survey on self-evaluation of Chinese students' intercultural competence. *Foreign Language Teaching and Research*, 45(4), 581-593.
- Fantini, A. E. (1995). Introduction-language, culture and world view: Exploring the nexus. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, 19(2), 143–153.
- Fantini, A. E. (1997). A survey of Intercultural Communication courses. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, 21(1), 125–148.
- Fantini, A. E. (2009). Assessing intercultural competence: Issues and tools. In Deardorf, D. K. (ed.). *The SAGE Handbook of Intercultural Competence*. London: Sage Publications, 456-476.
- Fantini, A. E. (2012). Multiple strategies for assessing intercultural communicative competence. In Jackon, J. (ed.). *The Routledge Handbook of Language and Intercultural Communication*. Abingdon, UK: Routledge, 390-405.
- Fantini, A. E. (2020). Reconceptualizing intercultural communicative competence: A multinational perspective. *Research in Comparative and International Education*, 15(1), 52–61.
- Fraenkel, J.R., & Wallen, N.E. (1993). *How to Design and Evaluate Research in Education*.

New York: McGraw-Hill.

Fu, X. Q., & Zhang, H. L. (2017). The design and practice of intercultural teaching in the course of Comprehensive English. *Foreign Language World*, 1, 89-95.

Gall, M.D., Borg, W.R., & Gall, J.P. (1996). *Educational Research: An introduction*. White Plains, NY: Longman.

Gao, Y. C. (2014). The construction of a theoretical framework of the assessment system of the college students' intercultural competence in China. *Foreign Language World*, 4, 80-88.

Gao, Y-H. (2000). *Understanding and Transcending Linguistic and Cultural Differences*. Beijing: Foreign Language Teaching and Research Press.(in Chinese)

Gao, Y-H. (2002). The Cultivation of Intercultural Competence: Going Cross and Going Beyond. *Foreign Languages and Teaching*. 10, 27-3. (in Chinese)

Gardiner, L.F., Anderson, C., & Cambridge, B.L. (Eds.). (1995). *Learning Through Assessment: A Resource Guide for Higher Education*. Washington, D.C.: American Association for Higher Education.

Greenall, S. (2014). *Culturally Speaking*. Beijing: Foreign Language Teaching and Research Press

Gu, X. L. (2017). The theoretical and the Practical Models of intercultural competence in foreign language teaching. *Foreign Language World*, 1, 79-88.

Gudykunst, W. B. (1994). *Bridging differences: Effective intergroup communication (2nd ed.)*. London: Sage.

Guo, Y. J. The development of New Liberal Arts and foreign language majors. *Contemporary Foreign Language Studies*, 3, 29-34.

Hammer, M. R., Bennett, M. J., & Wiseman, R. (2003). Measuring intercultural sensitivity: The intercultural development inventory. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, 27(4), 421-443.

Han, G. C. (2019). The strategies of developing intercultural competence in English language teaching of higher education under the context of Belt and Road Initiative. *English Square*, 1(97), 30-31.

Han, Y. (2000). A Review of the Theory and Practice of Multicultural Education in the United States in the 1990s. *International and Comparative Education*, 46-50.

Higher Education Division of the Ministry of Education. (2007). *College English Teaching Requirements*. Shanghai: Shanghai Foreign Language Education Press.

Hofstede, G. (2011). Dimensionalizing Cultures: The Hofstede Model in Context. *Online Readings in Psychology and Culture*, 2(1).

Hu, W. Z. (2013). How to define the role of intercultural competence in foreign language teaching. *Foreign Language World*, 6, 2-8.

Hu, W. Z. (2014). On the cultivation of English professionals in China: review and outlook. *Foreign Language Teaching and Research*, 46(1), 111-117.

Hu, W-ZH. &Gao, Y-H. (1997). *Foreign Language Education and Culture*. Changsha: Hunan Education Press. .

Huang, ZH-CH. &Wei, X-M. (2007). Intercultural Education—New Trend in International Education. *Global Education*. 2007(11), pp58-64. (in Chinese)

Huber, J., & Reynolds, C. (Eds). (2014). Developing intercultural competence through education. Strasbourg: Council of Europe. Retrieved from <https://book.coe.int/eur/en/pestalozzi-series/6968-pdf-dveloper-la-competence-interculturelle-par-l-ducation-srie-pestalozzi-n-3.html> (20170909).

Jin, H. (2013). On the Significance of Chinese Culture in English Language Teaching. *Curriculum, Teaching Material and Method*, 8, 77-82.(in Chinese)

Jin, L., & Cortazzi, M. (2002). English Language Teaching in China: A Bridge to the Future. *Asia Pacific Journal of Education*, 22(2), 53–64.

Kegan,R. (1994). *In over our Heads: The Mental Demands of Modern Life*, Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 181-363.

Kim, Y.Y. (1991). Intercultural Communication Competence: A System-theoretic View. *Cross-cultural Interpersonal Communication*. Newsbury Park: Sage, 1991, pp262-263.

Kim, Y.Y. (2001). *Becoming Intercultural: An Integrative Theory of Communication and Cross-cultural Adaptation*. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE.

King, P.M. and Baxter, M. (2005). A Developmental Model of Intercultural Maturity. *Journal of College Student Development*, 6, 571-592.

Kramsch C. (1993). *Context and Culture in Language Teaching*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Li, Y. (2015). Cultural Identity in Intercultural Communication. *Social Sciences*, 4(2), 23.

Liddicoat, A. J. et al. (2003). Report on Intercultural Language Learning. Retrieved from: https://www.researchgate.net/publication/276060725_Report_on_intercultural_language_learning_Report_to_the_Australian_Government_Department_for_Education_Science_and_Training_DEST.

Liddicoat, A. J., & Scarino, A. (2013). *Intercultural Language Teaching and Learning*. Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell.

NCSSFL and ACTFL. (2017). NCSSFL-ACTFL Can-Do Statements. Retrieved September 27, 2019, from <https://www.actfl.org/publications/guidelines-and-manuals/ncssfl-actfl-can-do-statements>

Neuman, W. L. (2014). *Social Research Methods: Qualitative and Quantitative Approaches (7th Edition)*. Edinburgh: Pearson Education Limited.

Nwosu, P. O. (2009). Understanding Africans' Conceptualizations of Intercultural Competence. In Dearsdorf, D. K. (ed.). *The SAGE Handbook of Intercultural Competence*. London: Sage Publications, 158-178.

Olebe, M., & Koester, J. (1989). Exploring the Cross-cultural Equivalence of the Behavioral Assessment Scale for Intercultural Communication. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, 13(3), 333-347.

Peng, R. Z., Fu, R. R., & Wu, W. P. (2020). A study on the theoretical and the practical models of intercultural foreign language teaching against the background of the New Era. *Foreign Language World*, 4, 45-53.

Peng, Ren-Zhong, Wu, Weiping and Fan Weiwei, (2015). A Comprehensive Evaluation of Chinese College Students' Intercultural Competence. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*. (47, 2015) 143-157.

Peng, Y-P. (2012). *Intercultural Competence in Medical Context*(PhD Thesis). Shanghai International Studies Universities. 2012: pp19-131.

Phuong-Mai, N., Terlouw, C., & Pilot, A. (2005). Cooperative learning vs Confucian heritage culture's collectivism: Confrontation to reveal some cultural conflicts and mismatch. *Asia Europe Journal*, 3(3), 403-419.

- Poole, A. (2016). 'Complex teaching realities' and 'deep rooted cultural traditions': Barriers to the implementation and internalisation of formative assessment in China. *Cogent Education*, 3(1).
- Porto, M. (2013). Language and intercultural education: An interview with Michael Byram. *Pedagogies: An International Journal*, 8(2), 143–162.
- Qi, W. X. (2009). Cultural Confusion and Cultural Choice in Current Chinese Moral Education. *Educational Research*. 10, 23-29. (in Chinese)
- Sercu, L. (1995). *Intercultural Competence: A New Challenge for Language Teachers and Trainers in Europe*. Aalborg: Aalborg University Press.
- Shi, L. (2006a). The Successors to Confucianism or a New Generation? A Questionnaire Study on Chinese Students' Culture of Learning English. *Language, Culture and Curriculum*, 19(1), 122–147.
- Shi, L. F., & Jiang, Y. J. (2020). Reflection on English education of China in the past four decades and its enlightenment to the development of English majors in the context of New Liberal Arts. *Foreign Language Education*, 41(3), 61-66.
- Shi, L. J. (2006). The Successors to Confucianism or a New Generation? A Questionnaire Study on Chinese Students' Culture of Learning English, *Language, Culture and Curriculum*, 19(1), 122-147.
- Silk Road. (2019). Retrieved from <https://baike.baidu.com/item/丝绸之路/434?fr=aladdin> (April 2019)
- Spitzberg(2000). B.H. A Model of Intercultural Communication Competence. *Intercultural Communication, A Reader*. 2000(9), pp379-391.
- Spitzberg, B. H., & Changnon, G. (2009). Conceptualizing intercultural competence. In Deardorf, D. K. (ed.). *The SAGE Handbook of Intercultural Competence*. London: Sage Publications, 2-52.
- Spitzberg, B.H., & Cupach, W.R. (1984). *Interpersonal communication Competence*. London: Sage.
- Sun, Y. Z. (2016). Foreign language education and the development of intercultural competence. *Foreign Languages in China*, 3(1), 17-22.
- Sun, Y. Z., & Bennett, J. (2017). Heading towards intercultural education: an academic

dialogue between Prof. Sun and Doctor Bennett. *Foreign Languages and Their Teaching*, 2, 1-8.

Sun, Y. Z., Wen, Q. F., Wang, L. F., Feng, Y. H., Gu, P. Y., & Zhang, H. (2006). Actively promoting teachers' development by accurately understanding the National Standard. *Foreign Language World*, 6, 9-15.

Taikai, J. & H. Ota. (1994). Assessing Japanese Interpersonal Communication Competence. *The Japanese Journal of Experimental Social Psychology*. 33(3), 224-236.

Ting-Toomey, S. & A. Kurogi. (1998). Facework Competence in Intercultural Conflict: An Updated face-negotiation theory. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*. 22(2): 187-225.

Ting-Toomey, S. (1993). Communicative Resourcefulness: An Identity Negotiation Theory. In R.L. Wiseman & J. Koester (eds.). *Intercultural Communication Competence*. Newsbury Park, CA: SAGE. 72-111.

Tsung, L., & Clarke, M. (2010). Dilemmas of identity, language and culture in higher education in China. *Asia Pacific Journal of Education*, 30(1), 57-69.

Wang, J. (2003). Multicultural Education: Practice and Enlightenment of Western Ethnic Education. *Ethnic Education Study*. 2003(6), pp5-12. (in Chinese)

Wang, Y. (2012). The interpretation of Hofstede's cultural dimension theory. *Bridge of Century*, 1, 35-36.

Wang, Z. R., & Lu, X. L. (2018). *Introducing Chinese Culture in English*. Beijing: Foreign Language Teaching and Research Press.

Xi Jinping addresses via video link in the World Political Parties Summit. (2021). Retrieved from: <https://mp.weixin.qq.com/s/2vuG9yZExPsnWC5NGM7bwQ>

Xi, J. P. (2014). A Speech Delivered in the UNESCO Conference. Retrieved from http://www.xinhuanet.com/world/2014-03/28/c_119982831_2.htm (February 2019)

Xi, J. P. (2020). Addresses at 75th UNGA General Debate. Retrieved from: https://mp.weixin.qq.com/s/_BunNfWATiFuFiCZc91tHw (2020/09/28)

Xiao, X., & Chen, G.-M. (2009). Communication competence and moral competence: A Confucian perspective. *Journal of Multicultural Discourses*, 4(1), 61-74.

Xu, J. L. (2015). Third International Symposium on Xushen Culture. Retrieved from <http://www.rmzxb.com.cn/c/2015-12-07/642564.shtml> (March 2019)

Xu, L. S., & Sun, S. N. (2013). Constructing a progressive-interactive model of intercultural

competence. *Journal of Zhejiang University(Humanities and Social Sciences)*, 4, 113-121.

Yang, J and Frick, W. (2009). Will the Leadership of Chinese Education Follow the Footsteps of American Education: A Brief Historical and Socio-political Analysis. *Journal of Thought*, 44(3&4), 23-48.

Yang, J. L. (2012). The Training Objectives of Foreign Language Talents and the Training Model of Intercultural Communicative Competence. *Intercultural Foreign Language Teaching: Research and Practice*. Shanghai: Shanghai Foreign Languages Education Press, 12-21.

Zeng, Y. (2005). Enlightenment of the US Multicultural Education. *Journal of Yunnan Normal University(Humanities and Social Sciences)*, 4, 117-119. (in Chinese)

Zhang, H. L. (2007). *Intercultural Approach to Foreign Language Teaching*. Shanghai: Shanghai Foreign Language Education Press.

Zhang, H. L. (2012). Intercultural-oriented foreign language teaching: History, present and future. *Foreign Language World*, 2, 2-7.

Zhang, H. L. (2019). Conference: *Intercultural Teaching and The Development of Internationalization Talents*. China: Chengdu.

Zhang, H. L., & Yao, C. Y. (2020). Constructing integration model for the development of Chinese students' intercultural competence. *Foreign Language World*, 4, 35-53.

Zhang, H. L., & Zhao, H. (2018). The design, implementation and evaluation of an ethnography project in intercultural foreign language teaching. *Foreign Language World*, 3, 2-9,45.

Zhang, L. (2013). The constraints of college teachers' professional development and the countermeasures: A case study. *Foreign Languages in China*, 10(1), 81-102.

Zheng, X., & Zhao, M. Y. (2016). An action research on the model of reflective intercultural teaching. *Foreign Languages in China*, 3, 4-11.

Zhong, M. (1998). Perceived intercultural communication competence in cross-cultural interactions between Chinese and Americans. *Critical Studies*, 12, 161-179.

Zhou, Y., & Zou, L. (2017). On Development History of Australia's Language Policy and the Enlightenment to China's Foreign Language Education. *Theory and Practice in Language Studies*, 7(5), 366.

Zhuang, E. P. & Sussman, N. M. (2014). *Intercultural Communication*. Beijing: Foreign

Language Teaching and Research Press.

Appendix 1: Questionnaire for College English Major Students

Intercultural Competence Assessment Scale for English Major Students in China

Dear Participants,

I'm conducting a study on the intercultural competence of English Major students in China. In order to do this, I need your help with this questionnaire. I'll be very grateful if you could take some time to complete it (it will take about 10 minutes).

Your answer will provide me with some extremely helpful information in getting to know the current situation of English Majors' intercultural competence in China. There are no right or wrong answers to any of these questions, and I'm very interested to find out exactly how you feel and think. If you do not know how to answer a particular question, do not worry about it; please leave it blank and move on to the next question.

If you have any question about this research project, you can contact me by email on 693285407@qq.com.

All of the collected information from this questionnaire is anonymous and will be kept in strict confidence. You will not be identified in any way in the reports resulted from this research.

How to fill in the questionnaire

All of the items in this questionnaire have a box for your answer. All you have to do is to read each statement and tick the corresponding score ranging from 1 to 5 by marking “√”. If you do not know the answer to a question, leave it blank and move on to the next question.

The last section of the questionnaire ask you to write down your answer on a line; please write them in English.

Thank you very much for participating in this research!

Section 1

6. Are you male or female? Male Female
7. Where were you born? City/Town _____ Country _____ (中英文分别填写)
8. Which university are you from? _____ (中英文分别填写)
9. Which grade are you in? Freshman Sophomore Junior Senior
10. Which language do you speak?
- Language 1 _____
- Language 2 _____
- Language 3 _____
- Language 4 _____
11. How much do you feel when describing yourself. Please address each given category on a five-point scale, when **1 means-I don't feel this way at all; 2- I feel this way a bit; 3-it is hard to say; 4-I feel so generally; 5-I always feel this way;**

| How much do you feel when describing your identity? | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| The member of the world | | | | | |
| Asian | | | | | |
| Chinese | | | | | |
| Inhabitant of the province/region | | | | | |
| Inhabitant of my city/town/village | | | | | |
| Member of the family | | | | | |

Section 2

Please read the following statements and address each item on a five-point scale by marking “√”.

- Note: 1-Strongly disagree
 2-Disagree
 3-Uncertain
 4-Agree.
 5-Strongy agree

12. When I'm speaking English,

| Scale | 1 Strongly Disagree | 2 Disagree | 3 Uncertain | 4 Agree | 5 Strongly Agree |
|-------|---------------------------|---------------|----------------|------------|------------------------|
| | | | | | |

| | | | | | |
|--|--|--|--|--|--|
| I have problem with grammar when interacting with people of different cultures. | | | | | |
| I know enough English grammar knowledge but facing difficulty when putting them together in order to express my thoughts. | | | | | |
| I am able to express my ideas cohesively when interacting with people of different cultures. | | | | | |
| I am able to answer questions fluently and effectively when interacting with people of different cultures. | | | | | |
| I know I have problem in grammar; but I also know that it is more important in communication to express ideas than to do it properly linguistically. | | | | | |

13. What's your attitude towards your own culture and other cultures?

| Scale | 1 Strongly Disagree | 2 Disagree | 3 Uncertain | 4 Agree | 5 Strongly Agree |
|--|---------------------------|---------------|----------------|------------|------------------------|
| Most cultures are backward compared with my culture. | | | | | |
| The Chinese ways of doing things are the best way in the world. | | | | | |
| I'm not interested in the values and customs of other cultures | | | | | |
| People of different cultures could learn from each other. | | | | | |
| I treat people of different color, race and cultures equally and with respect. | | | | | |

14. How do you feel when interacting with people from different cultures ?

| Scale | 1 Strongly Disagree | 2 Disagree | 3 Uncertain | 4 Agree | 5 Strongly Agree |
|--|---------------------------|---------------|----------------|------------|------------------------|
| I dislike interacting with people of other cultures. | | | | | |
| I don't think it's necessary to communicate with people of other cultures; it's meaningless. | | | | | |
| I have a feeling of enjoyment towards differences between my culturally | | | | | |

| | | | | | |
|--|--|--|--|--|--|
| distinct counterpart and me. | | | | | |
| I always follow the world news on the internet. | | | | | |
| I feel confident when interacting with people of other cultures. | | | | | |

15. Do you actively look for opportunities to develop your intercultural competence in your daily life?

| Scale | 1 Strongly Disagree | 2 Disagree | 3 Uncertain | 4 Agree | 5 Strongly Agree |
|---|---------------------------|---------------|----------------|------------|------------------------|
| I often look for opportunities to interact with people from other culture such as through online social media or internship in foreign companies. | | | | | |
| All of my friends are from my own culture. | | | | | |
| I have many friends from different cultures. | | | | | |
| It's almost impossible for me to meet people from other culture in the city I currently live. | | | | | |

16. When I'm having intercultural conversation,

| Scale | 1 Strongly Disagree | 2 Disagree | 3 Uncertain | 4 Agree | 5 Strongly Agree |
|---|---------------------------|---------------|----------------|------------|------------------------|
| I avoid those situations where I will have to deal with culturally-distinct counterpart. | | | | | |
| I don't know what to say when I'm with people from other cultures. | | | | | |
| I'm always able to make friends with people of other cultures as well as maintain a harmonious and lasting relationship afterwards. | | | | | |
| I always try to avoid possible conflict in the first meeting with people of other cultures because I think protecting the face(mianzi) of both sides is more important. | | | | | |

17. How do you evaluate the amount of knowledge you have that is related to intercultural communication?

| Scale | 1 Strongly Disagree | 2 Disagree | 3 Uncertain | 4 Agree | 5 Strongly Agree |
|--|---------------------------|---------------|----------------|------------|------------------------|
| I know the basic rules and taboos of intercultural communication. | | | | | |
| I'm able to briefly illustrate the main traditions, cultural values and religious beliefs of major English speaking countries. | | | | | |
| I'm able to briefly illustrate the political, legal and economic system of major English speaking countries. | | | | | |
| I'm able to briefly illustrate the characteristics of the main arts and crafts of major English-speaking countries. | | | | | |
| I know the general rules(including taboos) for expressing non-verbal behaviors in the major English-speaking countries. | | | | | |

Thank you again for sparing time taking part in this research. Your contribution is very much appreciated. If you have any comment concerning the content of this questionnaire, please write them in the space below.

Appendix 2: Questionnaire for English Teachers

A Survey on Intercultural Teaching of College English Teachers

Dear Teachers,

Thanks for sparing your precious time for this questionnaire. This purpose of this survey is to investigate the role of intercultural communicative competence in English language teaching.

Please feel free to contact me by email haolu0504@qq.com if you're also interested in this field of research.

Thank you very much for your time and patience!

Part 1 Personal Information

1. University: _____
2. Gender: _____
3. Age: _____
4. Degree: _____
5. How many years have you been working as an English Teacher? _____
6. Do you have any overseas experience? _____; if yes, which country is it and how long did you stayed there? _____

Part 2 Intercultural-competence-related Teaching

1. Intercultural competence for English language learning, as I understand, is

| | Strongly agree | Agree | Uncertain | Disagree | Strongly disagree |
|---|----------------|-------|-----------|----------|-------------------|
| A Western concept that is irrelevant to my teaching. | | | | | |
| The ability to speak English fluently. | | | | | |
| A concept that mainly introduces cultural knowledge and cultural differences. | | | | | |
| The attitude of openness, curiosity and respect towards other cultures that is not supposed to be taught in an English class. | | | | | |
| A set of interaction skills such as listening, | | | | | |

| | | | | | |
|---|--|--|--|--|--|
| observation, interpreting and relating and negotiating. | | | | | |
| An awareness that helps to reflect on one's own and others' cultural identity. | | | | | |
| The ability to communicate effectively and appropriately with people of other cultures. | | | | | |

2. IC education for English majors in universities of China, in my opinion, is,

| | Strongly agree | Agree | Uncertain | Disagree | Strongly disagree |
|--|----------------|-------|-----------|----------|-------------------|
| Equal with linguistic competence such as speaking and listening. | | | | | |
| It should be acquired through intercultural experiences instead of in English class. | | | | | |
| It is useful only for those who plan to go abroad or work in foreign companies. | | | | | |
| It is an indispensable part in English Majors' curriculum. | | | | | |
| It helps students to have multicultural perspectives that prepare them to be globe citizens. | | | | | |

3. What teaching methods you may use when encountering culture-related content in your teaching material?

| | Always | Often | Sometimes | Rarely | Never |
|--|--------|-------|-----------|--------|-------|
| Introduce relevant cultural knowledge | | | | | |
| To remember the relevant words and phrases is the key | | | | | |
| Make comparisons between Chinese culture and western culture | | | | | |
| Simulation and reflection upon experience | | | | | |
| Role play | | | | | |
| Presentation | | | | | |

4. How do you deal with the relationship between the training of language skills and the learning of intercultural competence?

| | Always | Often | Sometimes | Rarely | Never |
|--|--------|-------|-----------|--------|-------|
| Only care about their language skills | | | | | |
| Only care about the amount of cultural knowledge they master | | | | | |
| Equally important | | | | | |
| Language training as priority | | | | | |
| IC cultivation as priority | | | | | |

5. Do you think knowing Chinese culture is equally important as knowing English culture for English major students in China?

- a. Not important at all
- b. A little important
- c. Not sure
- d. Equally important

6. To be more specific, knowing Chinese cultural for English major students is:

| | Not important at all | A Little important | Not sure | important | Crucial for IC |
|--|----------------------|--------------------|----------|-----------|----------------|
| It develops the student's general knowledge of the world. | | | | | |
| It allows students to understand the complex structure of culture. | | | | | |
| It helps to understand cultural differences | | | | | |
| It builds open attitudes toward one's own culture and others' culture. | | | | | |
| It develops a sense of identity. | | | | | |

7. Do you often encourage your students to think critically about the relationship between language and culture as well as the cultural differences among different countries?

- a. Never
- b. Seldom
- c. Sometimes
- d. Quite often

8. Do you think you have adequate intercultural experiences or intercultural training to assist your English language teaching?
 - a. Yes
 - b. No

9. How long do you usually spend on IC-related teaching in a 45-minute class?
 - a. 20 minutes
 - b. 15 minutes
 - c. 10 minutes
 - d. None

10. Do you put intercultural competence into your lesson plan?
 - a. Yes
 - b. No
 - c. Sometimes

Appendix 3: Pilot Interview for English Major Students

1. Are you familiar with the term intercultural competence? How do you understand it?
2. Do you have any intercultural experiences to assist your language learning? If you have, what are they?
3. What's your desirable goal after four years of learning English?
4. Do you think you have adequate linguistic competence (such as speaking, listening, and writing etc.) and communicative skills (such as listen, observe, interpret, and analyze, and interaction etc.) as basis for effective intercultural communication? Any evidence?
5. As an English major, do you have adequate cultural knowledge of the major English-speaking countries and that of your own country? Which do you think is more important in the process of intercultural communication? Knowledge and Awareness
6. When encountering different, strange or even unbelievable foreign cultural phenomenon, will you respect, tolerate or appreciate it instead of holding prejudice against it? Can you give an example?
7. Do you have the habit or the skill to think critically in the process of learning English language or communicating with people from other cultures, or watching some culture-related news/events happening in other cultures from social media? Example?
8. Are you willing to jump out of comfort zone both in and after class and look for opportunities to improve your intercultural competence? Have you been doing this? (Attitude and possible obstacles that prevent participants from doing so)
9. Do you think the curriculum design of your major along with teachers' teaching methods/strategy can effectively help you to become an interculturally competent graduate that could meet the demand of our times? Why or why not?

Appendix 4: Pilot Interview for College English Teachers

1. Have you ever taught any course that is closely related to intercultural competence?
2. What's your understanding of the role of IC in language learning/teaching process?
Important or not important?
3. Do you think you have adequate intercultural experiences or intercultural training to assist your English language teaching?
4. Do you think having good speaking and listening skills can guarantee successful intercultural communication? Why or why not?
5. Please talk about the content and teaching methods you applied in the classroom for intercultural teaching.
6. Do you often encourage your students to think critically in class when teaching them cultural knowledge?
7. What do you think about the role of Chinese culture for the English major students?
Is it necessary for them to be familiar with their own culture when learning a foreign language? Maybe The importance of native culture is neglected??
8. Do you think the way you teach is somehow confined by any exterior factors when you want to integrate intercultural teaching into your class?? If yes, what are they?