

ANGLIA RUSKIN UNIVERSITY

Faculty of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences

Intercultural Competence and (Im)politeness During the
Intercultural Adjustment Period of Indonesian Students in the UK

Erizal Lugman

A thesis in partial fulfilment of the requirements of Anglia Ruskin University for
the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

Submitted: March 2022

Acknowledgements

From the bottom of my heart, I would like to say a special thank you to my supervisors, Dr Vahid Parvaresh and Professor Daniel Kádár, whose guidance and overall insights have made this study an inspiring experience. I would also like to thank all the students who participated in the study. The Indonesian Endowment Fund for Education (LPDP) deserves a special mention for awarding me a scholarship, enabling me to pursue a doctoral degree in the UK. Last but not least, I would like to thank my family - my mother, father, brothers, sister, wife and four *lovely* kids (Azzurra, Bianca, Zio and Yusuf) - for all your support, prayers and motivation during my studies.

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We now live in a globalised world where people can travel between countries more conveniently for various reasons, including furthering their education and gaining new experiences. The UK is now second in the global league table of international students, with these students contributing £25.8 billion to the UK economy each year (Universities UK, 2017; cited in Lomer and Mittelmeier, 2021). Indonesian students are one such group of international students that have chosen to further their education in the United Kingdom, one of the most popular locations for those seeking to further their education overseas.

International students must engage with people from various cultural backgrounds while studying in the host country. On the one hand, this engagement provides the student with the opportunity to gain new experiences while living in a multicultural country like the United Kingdom. On the other hand, intercultural encounters cannot be avoided and may have a negative impact on a student's academic achievement as a result of cultural differences. A multicultural society presents students with both opportunities and difficulties, so students need to prepare for, and gain, the necessary competence to deal with the environment in which they are living by appreciating and benefiting from cultural differences.

To achieve their academic goals whilst studying abroad, international students must successfully adjust to cross-cultural differences. As a result, they need to develop new abilities, including intercultural competence, to effectively communicate with people from different cultures. Evidently, one significant aspect of this intercultural competence is the awareness, understanding and application of (im)politeness norms, which is vital for effective intercultural interactions. This study seeks to examine Indonesian students at UK universities to determine the way in which they integrate different aspects of intercultural competence and (im)politeness. Solidly grounded in an ethnographic framework involving twelve student blogs and seven student interviews and observations, this study sheds light on why intercultural competence is required, how it is developed and how international students manage intercultural encounters involving (im)politeness during the intercultural adjustment period.

This study reveals that the intercultural competencies required by Indonesian students in the United Kingdom can be classified into two categories, namely, *attitudes and skills*. Necessary attitudes include *an active attitude, innovative thinking and the acceptance of cultural differences*, while necessary skills encompass the *skills required to learn new information* about a different culture and the *skills required to observe the host society's norms*.

This study has also established how intercultural competence can be utilised to manage intercultural encounters that involve the assessment of (im)politeness, including *acquiring new information about over-politeness, learning more about the beliefs of other cultures in terms of (im)politeness and re-evaluating the moral order*. By challenging some of the most widely held assumptions about intercultural competence and impoliteness, this study greatly advances our understanding of both these concepts and their importance in creating harmonious intercultural interactions.

Keywords: Indonesian international students, intercultural competence, intercultural adjustment, (im)politeness, ethnography, qualitative study

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Chapter One

Introduction

This chapter presents the rationale for the study and its context. It begins by providing background information, with a specific focus on Indonesian students in the UK, the focus of the study. Subsequent sections present the motivation behind the research, the rationale for the study, its aims and research questions. The chapter ends by detailing the overall structure of the thesis.

1.1 Background

Student mobility is a rapidly growing global, intercultural and institutional phenomenon in higher education. According to Schartner (2016), more than four million students recently enrolled in higher education outside of their native country, and this figure is growing. Zhang et al. (2016) provide more data, stating that the number of overseas students increased from 0.8 million in 1975 to 4.3 million in 2011. Furthermore, according to recent figures, over 4 million tertiary students travelled overseas in 2018 (Organization of Economic and Cultural Development (OECD), 2018). For example, the United Kingdom hosted over 300,000 non-EU students in 2017/18, accounting for 14% of the total higher education (HE) student population (Higher Education Statistics Authority 2019; cited in Lomer and Mittlemeier, 2021).

According to Ragavan (2014), this phenomenon is due to globalisation, and is a combination of economic, social and cultural components. People will now communicate in a single language, such as English, as a result of globalisation, but

“...cultures will remain diverse although each of the existing cultures changes and will change over time” (Mulyana, 2016, p. 2). This tendency towards globalisation is considered to be beneficial to host nations, since it attracts a large number of international students to their universities. As reported by Eldaba (2016), the growing number of international students provides various benefits to educational institutions as a result of the globalisation of economies and society. Furthermore, because of the diversity, prestige and income of international students, the expanding number of overseas students has substantial benefits for higher education institutions (Palacios et al., 2015).

The number of Indonesian students interested in studying abroad each year has continued to increase. According to a study conducted by the Indonesian International Education Consultants Association, more than 50,000 Indonesian students choose to study abroad each year (Kabar6.com, 2018). In Europe, the number of Indonesian students has increased by 51%, while interest in Canada has grown by 15%. Similarly, Asian countries are seeing an increase in demand. The number of Indonesian students in Malaysia has grown by 30%, while interest in Singapore has increased by 11%. (Kabar6.com, 2018). As a result, Indonesia is the most likely contender to lead the global education industry, as evidenced by Indonesia's attainment of a 32% higher education enrolment rate in 2016. This result is close to China's and Malaysia's higher education enrolment rates of 44% and 40%, respectively (Kabar6.com, 2018). Indonesian students increasingly choose to continue their education in the United Kingdom. The Netherlands, Germany, the United Kingdom and France are the top four destinations for Indonesian students; according to EU statistics, 3,210 Indonesian students chose to study in Germany in 2016, with 2,950 in the UK, 1,300 in France and 1,113 in the Netherlands (Eurostats Statistics; cited in Jakarta Post, 2016).

When studying abroad, international students cannot avoid engaging in a significant number of intercultural interactions in their host country. According to OECD (2018), international students live in an interconnected, diversified and fast-changing world, characterised by “emerging economic, digital, cultural, demographic and environmental” challenges, in which they engage in everyday intercultural interactions (p. 4). This global environment, which students experience when studying abroad, presents both opportunities and challenges. They must learn to engage in a more connected world, and to understand and learn from cultural differences (OECD, 2018).

As a result, international students need to develop their intercultural competence when studying abroad, in order to enhance their academic performance and to successfully adjust to cross-cultural differences. Sojourners must be prepared to communicate and engage successfully with people from diverse cultural backgrounds, while sharing the same thoughts and being supportive (Paige and Goode, 2009). OECD (2018) defines intercultural competence, or global competence, as a person’s competency to understand “.... local, global and intercultural issues, understand and appreciate different perspectives and world views” (p. 4). International students must therefore be able to effectively and appropriately adjust to cultural differences during intercultural interactions.

This study focuses on the intercultural competencies that are required to communicate and behave effectively and responsibly in intercultural interactions, in order to establish harmony among individuals from various cultural backgrounds. In this context, intercultural interactions can be classified in terms of the cultural disparity between participants, as viewed in some manner by at least one of the parties, and

which can have a “significant influence on interaction/communication” (Spencer-Oatey and Franklin, 2009; cited in Spencer-Oatey and Kádár, 2021, p. 6).

In the context of the current study, intercultural competence is examined to determine not just necessary competencies, but also those additional aspects that might play an important role. For example, the OECD (2018) defines intercultural competence as the “knowledge, skills, attitudes, and values” that can be used to communicate appropriately with people from diverse cultural backgrounds (p. 7). There is much discussion in the literature about what the term ‘intercultural competency’ actually means (Salisbury et al., 2013; Scharner, 2016; Paige and Goode, 2009). For example, Byram (1998) defines intercultural competence as “[k]nowledge of others; knowledge of self; abilities to understand and communicate; skills to explore and/or interact; appreciating others’ values, beliefs, and behaviours; and relativising oneself” (cited in Deardorff, 2006, p. 248). Furthermore, as the current study focuses on intercultural interactions, the term intercultural interaction competence is adopted, which is defined as the ability to “not only communicate (verbally and nonverbally) and behave effectively and appropriately with people from other cultural groups, but also to handle the psychological demands and dynamic outcomes” that such interactions entail (Spencer-Oatey and Franklin, 2009, p. 51).

In addition, as intercultural competence is a lifelong process (Deardorff, 2009), each sojourner must maintain their intercultural competence. Intercultural competence is not only developed from intercultural experience but also from cultural learning, which includes observing, listening to and asking individuals from other cultural backgrounds to assist in teaching, sharing experiences and conversing with newcomers (Deardorff, 2009).

One of the goals of the current research is to determine what level of intercultural competence is necessary and how international students, particularly Indonesian students, gain intercultural competence during the intercultural adjustment phase. The intercultural adjustment period for international students can be defined as the time during which students adjust to their new academic environment and cultural differences in daily life, such as “living conditions, housing, food, shopping, the cost of living, entertainment, and health-care facilities” (Robbie and Ryan, 1996, p. 515).

1.2 Motivation and rationale for the study

I started this journey with grave concerns about the challenges posed by intercultural encounters for non-native English speakers residing in Western countries, which can contribute to poor academic performance. Long before I came to study in the UK, I was interested in learning more about the intercultural competencies that are required for successful integration. After failing the first module of my Master’s degree at an Australian university, as a result of my inability to acclimatise to cultural differences, I began to consider how best to deal with multicultural interactions. I found it difficult to adjust to Western culture; therefore, I frequently misinterpreted my lecturers and other people. In addition, I experienced problems with my academic writing. Many of my friends were confronted with similar experiences. As a result of the cultural disparities they faced, misunderstandings arose between themselves and their superiors/lecturers.

Furthermore, based on my own personal experiences, many Indonesian students feel lonely throughout their stay in the host nation since they are unable to conduct harmonious intercultural interactions. As a result, many Indonesian students

do not complete their studies and accumulate a great deal of debt, including tuition fees and living expenses. Aisha and Mulyana (2019) investigated the intercultural communication experiences of Indonesian students studying abroad, to determine the factors that can lead to negative experiences. These factors included a lack of engagement with other people, problems transitioning to a new academic environment, an intense workload, 'expert' or 'boring' instructors, linguistic barriers and experiencing feelings of unease (p. 4). Therefore, throughout this study, I will consider how my Indonesian friends and myself could be better assisted in our attempts to adjust to a new cultural environment, the result of which could lead to better academic outcomes.

For the most part, the Indonesian government sponsors Indonesian students, allowing them to enrol in both undergraduate and postgraduate programmes. Furthermore, the Indonesian government introduced a new scholarship, known as the LPDP (Endowment Fund for Education), which has permitted many more Indonesian students to further their studies in countries like the UK. I was awarded an LPDP scholarship, and therefore I would like to use this study to help Indonesian students to complete their studies more successfully and achieve the highest possible academic outcomes. When studying overseas, many LPDP awardees struggle to adjust to their new cultural environment, which has a negative impact on their academic achievements. As a consequence of my research, I hope that Indonesian students studying abroad could achieve the best possible outcomes, so that when they graduate, they are in a position to make a significant contribution to Indonesia's social, economic and technological development.

Novera's (2004) qualitative study investigated the academic, social and cultural experiences of Indonesian students at universities in Victoria, Australia. She

discovered that students had difficulties using academic English, problems with other academic requirements and there was a lack of appropriate facilities for Muslim students. However, this study was conducted nearly twenty years ago, and, therefore, I believe that more up-to-date research should be undertaken. By doing so, I hope to glean other findings that were not discussed in Novera's study.

As previously stated, my first experience of living in a Western nation was rather unpleasant. On one occasion, I addressed a shop cashier in an underground station as 'sir'. I was surprised by his response, 'do not call me sir', which he said in an aggressive tone, and he appeared to be upset. I was trying to be respectful, but he appeared to have been offended by my words. Thus, recognising (im)politeness is essential to ensure that intercultural interactions are conducted harmoniously. As previously mentioned, another reason for undertaking this research is to identify the competencies that are needed to adjust to cultural differences, in order to sustain harmonious relationships between individuals from various cultural backgrounds; thus, I will also examine (im)politeness in the multicultural scene. This phenomenon is included in the current study because "[p]oliteness is a thoughtful way by which people work out and sustain interpersonal connections" (Kádár and Haugh, 2013, p. 1). Furthermore, because (im)politeness is an aspect of human behaviour, "it is culturally as diverse as the human race is: politeness has been addressed as a 'culture-specific phenomena' since its earliest studies" (Kádár and Bargiela-Chiappini, 2011, p. 2). As a result, "politeness is a matter of evaluation" (Eelen, 2001, quoted in Mills, 2011, p. 21), and each culture has its own definition of what constitutes polite or impolite behaviour.

1.3 Aims of the research

In line with the broad aims of this study as outlined in this chapter, the research questions are as follows:

1. Which intercultural competencies are required by Indonesian students, and how are these competencies developed during the intercultural adjustment period?
2. How do Indonesian students manage intercultural encounters involving (im)politeness as part of their intercultural competence during the cultural adjustment period?

1.4 Methodology

There is a lack of research on the intercultural competencies required of Indonesian students in the United Kingdom, which this study aims to address. It is exploratory in nature and utilises an emergent, qualitative and inductive methodology. The study adopts an ethnographic approach that involves collecting data from student blogs, interviews and observations of Indonesian students with a limited experience of intercultural exchanges prior to their arrival in the UK. By methodically finding, organising, and providing insights into patterns of meaning and themes in the data, the analysis combines ethnographic narrative discourse analysis (Oberhuber and Krzyzanowski, 2008) and thematic analysis (Braun and Clarke, 2012). Chapter Three discusses the data collection and data analysis in greater depth.

1.5 Significance of the study

Only a few studies have considered the experiences of Indonesian students when living abroad (i.e., Novera, 2004; Mukminin and McMahon., 2013; Samanhadi and Linse, 2017; Mulyana and Eko, 2017; Aisha and Mulyana, 2019). These students often experience significant differences between Indonesian and Western cultures. For example, Novera's (2004) qualitative study investigated the academic, social and cultural experiences of Indonesian students at universities in Victoria, Australia. She discovered that students had difficulties using academic English, problems with other academic requirements and there was a lack of appropriate facilities for Muslim students. Mulyana and Eko (2017) explored the intercultural adaptation experiences of Indonesian students in South Korea. This study found that participants experienced the four-stage model of cross-cultural adaptation, including the honeymoon, crisis, recovery and adjustment stages. In addition, Indonesian students in South Korea encountered "differences in language and friendship values, cross-cultural stereotypes, and prejudices that led to discrimination" (Mulyana and Eko, 2017, p. 144).

The field of study concerned with the intercultural competence acquired by international students studying in UK universities has been extensively researched, and includes contributions by Young et al. (2013), Schartner (2016), Swami et al. (2010) and Jackson (2011). However, none of these previous studies have explicitly investigated the intercultural competence that Indonesian students require when studying abroad, to enable them to adjust to cross-cultural differences effectively and appropriately. Therefore, further research is required to investigate this aspect of intercultural competence and to obtain other findings that are not discussed in previous studies. Furthermore, my research will make a significant contribution to the field of

intercultural communication because it draws on recent, cutting-edge theories in the field, thus filling a significant knowledge gap.

As previously mentioned, the current study is concerned with intercultural interactions between people from diverse cultural backgrounds in maintaining and managing harmonious relationships. It is, therefore, necessary to consider the concept of (im)politeness in this study. In pragmatics, (im)politeness embodies a “wide variety of interactional phenomena by means of which interactants build up, maintain, or challenge interpersonal relationships” (Spencer-Oatey and Kádár, 2021, p. 2). Moreover, although it is now widely believed that issues of (im)politeness are part and parcel of intercultural encounters, including those of international students, and invaluable studies have been conducted on politeness in the context of intercultural communication, including Kádár and Bargiela-Chiappini (2011), Mills and Kádár (2011), Parvaresh and Tayebi (2018) and Grainger (2011), the main contribution of the current study is that it goes a step further by providing empirical evidence of how Indonesian postgraduate students manage intercultural encounters involving (im)politeness as part of their intercultural competence during the intercultural adjustment period. Furthermore, this study aims to fill a substantial gap in the field, and this is the main motivation behind the current research.

1.6 Outline of the study

The study is divided into seven chapters, the first of which is this introduction. Chapter Two examines literature and research related to the research topic and identifies the many research gaps that have prompted this investigation. The methodological approach, study design, data collection and data analysis techniques are discussed in

depth in Chapter Three. The findings obtained from the examination of student blogs are presented in Chapter Four, while the results of the ethnographic analysis are presented in Chapters Five and Six. Chapter Seven summarises how the study relates to the larger fields of intercultural competency development and (im)politeness research. Finally, recommendations for further study will be presented.

Chapter Two

Literature Review

The purpose of this study is to examine the intercultural interactions, experiences, and competence required and how Indonesian international students in the United Kingdom manage impoliteness. This chapter reviews the major theories on identities within the contexts of international competence and (im)politeness that investigate these concepts, emphasising intercultural interactions during a stay abroad. Additionally, this chapter discusses the critical theory that underpins and guides the study and the concepts of intercultural communication competence and impoliteness that drive data analysis. Additionally, this chapter highlights prior empirical research on intercultural competence and (im)politeness, emphasising on intercultural interactions, and synthesises the reviewed literature and highlights knowledge gaps in this area.

To accomplish the goals of this academic research, it is critical to investigate the field in which this study intends to conduct research and develop a thorough awareness and understanding of current work and perspectives in the field so that this work can be positioned on the academic map of knowledge creation (Ridley, 2012). As a result, this chapter aims to provide a framework for succeeding research and acquire a sense of the range of current academic study.

The first section describes the globalisation era in an international students' journey in the destination country during their study abroad. As the students will face new cultures, they therefore need to adjust themselves to the cultural differences. Moreover, this section will explain the term 'intercultural encounters', which is

believed that this period is the time when issues are faced during an intercultural adjustment.

The second section explains the concept of *intercultural interactions* by outlining the definitions used in this study. The concept of intercultural competencies employed in this research is then discussed. Many scholars of intercultural competencies have created many definitions of this notion. Therefore, establishing a reference definition of intercultural competence becomes essential to work on this study. Then, the next part will continue to discuss theories around (im)politeness, which will be the main foundation of this study aiming to analyse the data of (im)politeness obtained in this research. The following section will briefly explain how this era of globalisation creates more opportunities to gain new experiences and knowledge when studying abroad.

2.1 The Impact of Globalisation When Studying Abroad

We live in a globalised world where individuals can readily move across borders. It has long been known that people travel between countries. However, developments in information and communication technology have resulted in a tremendous rise in the speed and volume of interaction in this period. The world is experiencing an unparalleled intensification of economic, cultural, political, and social interconnectivity (Jackson, 2010). This phenomenon influences the growing number of overseas students in developed countries like European countries, the United States, and Australia.

As a result of this globalisation trend, studying abroad is becoming a popular option for students who wish to broaden their horizons and obtain new experiences. One of the impacts is that student mobility in higher education is a fast-rising global,

intercultural, and institutional phenomenon (Schartner, 2016). As a response to this trend, institutions worldwide are capitalising on the influence of globalisation to increase the chances of students to study abroad by offering new experiences while remaining abroad. For instance, due to the impact of globalisation, universities have increased opportunities for students to gain international experiences, with an estimate that the number of international students will exceed seven million by 2025. (American Council of Education, 2006, cited in Jackson, 2011). Additionally, due to globalisation's influence, both students and institutions will see increased expansion and cultural diversity in the education sector, where intercultural competence will play a critical part in every intercultural interaction (Jackson, 2011).

The growing interest in international students due to the impact of globalisation is also marked by a wide range of studies that investigate both the students' and the institutions' experiences of facing cultural diversity (e.g., Schneider, 2013; Jackson, 2011; Lomer and Mittlemeier, 2021). In her exploratory study, Schneider (2013) examined the relationship between international higher education, transnationalism, and the structure-agency debate, focusing on the concept of social mechanism. This study discovered that social mechanisms might affect transnational students' views of and interactions with educational institutions and systems in their home country and England.

Furthermore, Jackson (2011) conducted a study on international students, particularly exploring intercultural citizenship in relation to intercultural education and study abroad. The study found that critical cultural awareness and experience learning, both at home and abroad, were critical components of the participants' path toward intercultural, global citizenship, and intercultural communicative competence in the host nation. From the institution's perspective, Lomer and Mettlemeier (2021)

discovered that overseas students are still expected to completely "adapt" to the presumed 'better' British style of teaching and learning in higher education. The impact of globalisation also influenced the increasing number of international students in the UK, and this will be discussed in the following section.

2.1.1 International Students in the UK and in the Western countries.

The rising number of overseas students is also seen at higher education institutions in the United Kingdom. Many higher education institutions have devised effective techniques to attract international students to continue their studies at British universities. As a result, the United Kingdom has risen to become the second most popular destination for international students (UNESCO, 2017, cited in, Lomer, 2018). Furthermore, UK institutions have blazed a trail in developing a comprehensive centralised education strategy for international higher education (Lomer, 2018).

Furthermore, Kani's (2015) study, which includes the following, reinforces the evidence of an increasing number of international students studying in the United Kingdom:

- Increasing the number of students in the worldwide student market by up to 70000 and increasing further education by 30000 in UK universities.
- Increasing the number of countries sending students to study at British institutions by a factor of two.
- Raising the overall satisfaction of international students studying in the UK.
- There has been a significant increase in cooperation between the United Kingdom and international organisations.

As shown in the table below (Table 4), several studies have been undertaken to explore the experiences of international students while studying abroad (e.g., Young et al., 2013; Swami et al., 2010; Wang and Hannes, 2003; Brisset et al., 2010). A quantitative study related to sociocultural adjustment was conducted by Swami et al. (2010). This study, which investigated Malaysian and Chinese students in the UK, found that Malaysian students experienced poorer sociocultural adjustment. Another finding was that family income, contact with local people, language proficiency, perceived cultural differences and discrimination also affected sociocultural adjustment.

In addition, students with higher levels of English proficiency adapt more quickly, that is, they experience better sociocultural adjustment, and, as a result, may enjoy improved health outcomes. Brisset et al. (2010) found that the majority of international students display higher psychological distress but experience better sociocultural adjustment.

Young et al. (2013) conducted a study which explores the psychosocial, intercultural and educational adjustments experienced by international students studying at universities within the UK. However, the factors associated with the adjustments require further research. Furthermore, another qualitative study (Wang and Hannes, 2013) discusses the experiences of Asian international students, by focusing on their academic and sociocultural adjustment. They found that the participants experienced challenges relating to academic adjustment in four domains: (1) academic activities, (2) academic resources, (3) languages and (4) time management. Table 4 provides an overview of previous empirical studies on the intercultural adjustment of international students living in a host country.

Hanada (2019) undertook a quantitative study to evaluate the development of intercultural competence, focusing on the experiences of 303 Japanese international students attending institutions in the USA and Canada. By using an instrument called the developmental model of intercultural sensitivity (DMIS) (Bennett, 1993), the key findings demonstrate that programme type, prior local language proficiency and pre-departure orientation are anticipated to have a substantial influence on intercultural competence (Hanada, 2019).

Xiao et al. (2019) employed a cross-sectional survey methodology to evaluate the influence of cultural distance on the cultural adjustment of 319 international students from various countries at the University of Macau. Their main finding was that students who endorse polyculturalism (i.e., the belief that cultures change constantly as a result of interactions, influences and exchanges among different racial and ethnic groups) adjusted better to cultural differences in the host country.

Table 4 Summary of previous empirical research on the intercultural adjustment of international students

Paper	Location	Sample	Design	Data collection	Core concepts
Novera (2004)	Australia	25 Indonesian postgraduate students	Qualitative	Open-ended questionnaire	Academic and sociocultural adjustment
Wang and Hannes (2013)	Belgium	5 Asian international students	Qualitative	A photovoice project	Academic and sociocultural adjustment
Swami et al. (2010)	UK	110 Malay and 139 Chinese international students	Quantitative – correlation		Sociocultural and psychological adjustment
Hanada (2019)	Canada and USA	303 Japanese international students	Quantitative	DMIS	Intercultural competence development
Xiao et al. (2019)	China	319 international students	Quantitative survey	Cross-sectional	Intercultural adjustment
Young et al. (2013)	UK	102 non-UK postgraduate students	Quantitative and qualitative (mixed methods)	Questionnaires and semi-structured interviews	Psychosocial, intercultural and educational adjustment

The following section will describe the contribution of Indonesian students to the number of international students in the UK. The increasing trend in the number of international students is also seen in the context of Indonesian students studying abroad to broaden their knowledge and gain new experiences living in other countries.

2.1.2 Indonesian Students in the UK.

Aside from the rising number of international students in various countries, including the UK, Indonesia also sends a number of students to study abroad. The UK has become the most popular destination country to study abroad, followed by the Netherlands, Australia, and the United States. The image below shows many Indonesian students studying abroad. Furthermore, provided by the financial ministry of the Indonesian government, namely LPDP, the number of Indonesian students now studying abroad has significantly increased, including UK universities as the destination (Koran Sindo, 2021). Moreover, figure 1 shows that in 2018, the number of Indonesian students has reached up to 7 million.



Figure 1. The increasing number of Indonesian students studying abroad (Koran Sindo, 2021)

A previous study focusing on Indonesian students studying abroad was conducted by Novera (2004), which took place in an Australian academic setting. Novera's (2004) qualitative study investigated the academic, social, and cultural experiences among Indonesian students studying in universities in Victoria, Australia. She discovered that the students had difficulties using academic English and other academic requirements, and that there was a lack of appropriate facilities for Muslim students.

Mukminin and McMahon undertook research with the objective of examining the experiences of Indonesian students studying abroad at American universities (2013). Using qualitative research involving semi-structured in-depth interviews, five

major findings regarding the academic engagement experiences of Indonesian doctoral students are uncovered: academic workload, unfamiliarity with classroom dynamics, unfamiliarity with the nature of faculty-student relationships, interpersonal problems with and unequal treatment from professors, and language barriers.

The intercultural communication experiences of Indonesian students in the United Kingdom were explored in earlier research conducted by Aisha and Mulyana (2019). They investigated their academic difficulties throughout their time in the United Kingdom. According to the findings of the study, students are more involved in certain areas, such as using deep learning tactics by linking concepts. They are interested in others, such as communicating with academic staff, as a result of cultural differences and individual circumstances (Aisha and Mulyana, 2019). Samahadi and Linse (2019) conducted another study in the context of Indonesian students studying in the United Kingdom. They reported on the perspectives of Indonesian students with their challenges in writing a critical academic essay and the factors contributing to those challenges at a university in the United Kingdom. Considering the cultural differences that exist in an academic setting between Indonesian and host cultures, the findings indicate that four significant problems were encountered by the participants concerning critical thinking in their essay writing. These problems were clarity of ideas presented, lack of critical analysis, lack of critical evaluation, and a lack of precision (Samanhadi and Linse, 2019).

The above studies show how crucial intercultural competence is for international students to be able to deal with cultural differences effectively to improve their academic performance. More research is needed in this area to help Indonesian students who are studying abroad. This study aims to help them with any intercultural encounters they have, both in academic and social settings. According to prior studies,

international students, especially Indonesian students, would have their own experiences of living and learning in other countries, in different conditions, and with varied cultural backgrounds. As a result, as previously said, it is critical in this study to investigate intercultural interactions and follow students' pathways to discover the necessary intercultural competence.

After reviewing previous studies, there is a clear link between the emphasis on cultural differences between Indonesian culture and the host culture during intercultural communication. This leads to the overall goal of this study to investigate the intercultural competencies required to adjust effectively and appropriately to cultural differences in the host country. As previously stated, as a result of the impact of globalisation on the rising number of international students, students will communicate with people from different cultures and will experience the intercultural adjustment period discussed in the following section.

2.1.3 Intercultural Adjustment

As previously stated, in this age of globalisation, it is now more accessible for anyone, particularly international students, to continue their education overseas. As a result, international students will enter a phase in which they must adjust to the local culture to optimise their academic achievement. Intercultural adjustment is the process through which a person gets "well adjusted" to their surroundings and no longer feels stress or culture shock (Spitzberg and Changnon, 2009). Furthermore, according to Robbie and Ryan (1996), in the case of overseas students, cultural adjustment plays a critical role in supporting academic achievement. They noted several concerns concerning general intercultural adjustment, such as living circumstances, housing

conditions, food, shopping, the cost of necessities, entertainment, and health-care facilities.

Andrade (2006) argues that the adjustment of overseas students affects their academic success. He defined achievement as "proof of learning," which may be quantified by meeting unit requirements or maintaining a certain grade point average (GPA) (p. 134). This intercultural adjustment is also related to the probability of international students achieving their academic goals. This is consistent with the discovery by Morrison et al. (2005) that from 1995 to 2000, international students in the United Kingdom earned less "excellent marks" than domestic students (p. 335). Since this study is primarily concerned with intercultural adjustment, specifically with the creation of harmonious intercultural interactions during study abroad, the next section will define the term "intercultural interactions" as used in this study.

2.2 Intercultural Interactions: A Framework to Intercultural Communication

There are several frameworks to intercultural communication in literature (e.g., Jandt, 2018; Spencer-Oatey and Franklin, 2009; Samovar et al., 2014). Jandt (2018), for example, refers to intercultural communication as communication and culture, which implies that communication requires coding and symbols that must be learned, while culture is a code that we learn and share. The two must be studied in parallel, as culture cannot be understood without the study of communication.

Samovar and colleagues (2014) argued that intercultural communication could not be disconnected from the concepts of "globalisation," "global village," "culture," "communication," and "cultural diversity" as a long-standing component of human interaction (p 5). Furthermore, intercultural communication is an academic subject devoted to the study of how to communicate effectively with individuals from various

cultures. It integrates numerous components, including "perception, cognitive processes, verbal and nonverbal behaviours, and the influence of context" (Samovar et al., 2014, p. 12).

Some of the frameworks of intercultural communication that might be relevant to this study have been discussed in the previous paragraphs. However, this study focuses on human interaction or the activity of people talking to each other, emphasising the language used in multicultural contexts as an approach to intercultural communication. Using Spencer-Oatey and Franklin's (2009) term of an intercultural interaction as the framework for intercultural communication, this study refers to "the cultural distance between the participants is significant enough to have an adverse effect on communicative success, unless it is appropriately accommodated by the participants" (p. 3). Before explaining the details of the framework for intercultural interactions employed in this study, the next section discusses the idea of culture, to which this study refers.

2.2.1 Culture

There are many definitions of culture, especially in the field of anthropology, that studies the typical society in a particular area. In 1952, for example, two American anthropologists defined culture as 'patterns, explicit and implicit, of and for behaviours acquired and transmitted by symbols, constituting the distinctive achievements of human groups, including their embodiment in artefacts' (Kroeber and Kluckhohn 1952: 181 cited in Spencer-Oatey and Franklin, 2009, p. 14).

Furthermore, there are two types of culture: "capital C" culture, such as art and music, and "small c" culture, such as language and behaviour. This study uses the "small c" culture type to examine intercultural communication experiences, in which

the cultures themselves are less visible (Brooks, 2000, cited in Hua 2014, p. 5). In intercultural communication studies, the term 'culture' has been defined by several experts. Since its inception, it has been viewed as encompassing the shared values, beliefs, and behaviours of an entire human community (Gudykunst, 2004; Lustig and Koester, 2006 cited in Jackson, 2011). Generally, culture is a pattern of behaviour expressed in objects and symbols. These patterns of behaviour, both explicit and implicit, are the distinct achievements of human societies and are conveyed through symbols (Jackson, 2011).

As explained above, the term culture itself has a broad meaning. However, it is essential to discuss the concept of culture, which this study intends to draw upon to provide direction for this research and help make sense of the data. Due to this current study's emphasis on the intercultural interactions that occur during language use, the term culture will be employed in the context of applied linguistics. Borrowing Spencer-Oatey and Franklin's (2009) terminology, the culture in this study covers four aspects, as follows (p. 15):

- Culture is manifested in a variety of ways, some more explicit than others.
- Culture is related to social groups, but no two people are identical; members share the same cultural features within a group.
- Culture affects behaviour and perceptions of behaviour.
- Through interaction with others, culture is gained and/or constructed.

Culture may be defined in applied linguistics, which in this study stands as "accumulated, shared knowledge," that is connected between language and behaviour. (Seelye, 1997, p. 23; Jackson, 2010). Moreover, using the term 'culture' as defined by Spencer-Oatey and Franklin (2009), this study uses the term through the lens of

applied linguistics from two complementary perspectives: One on language use that may be valued differently across cultural groups, and another on the patterns or styles of language use that may exhibit varying mean frequencies across cultural groups.

After describing this study's position in understanding the term culture, as mentioned in the previous section, this study will focus on verbal and non-verbal interactions within various cultural backgrounds. The following section will describe the definition of intercultural interactions applied in this study.

2.2.2 Intercultural Interactions

As previously stated, due to the rising number of international students in the United Kingdom, they come from a variety of nations and backgrounds, meaning that intercultural contacts in host countries is unavoidable. Students engage in intercultural contact with classmates, lecturers, and staff on campus, and local residents. Universities are currently the most varied groups globally, with a wide variety of nationalities represented among students, teachers, and support staff (Harrison, 2012). Additionally, outside of an academic context, within their everyday lives, international students will engage across cultures in this era of globalisation, notably through the emergence of online platforms or social networks. Moreover, it is apparent that we will continue to live in a multi-ethnic, multicultural society for the foreseeable future and aim for the successful cohabitation of several cultures in social networks (Akhmadieva et al. 2020).

Intercultural interactions, or 'interactions between cultures,' occur when people from diverse cultures and backgrounds engage in a way that can occasionally result in possible conflicts or misunderstandings. Intercultural interactions are defined in this study as "a circumstance in which the cultural difference between the participants is large enough to have a detectable influence on the interaction/communication of at

least one of the parties" (Spencer-Oatey and Franklin, 2009, p. 3). This definition concentrates on the action of individuals conversing or more precisely, on the language or conduct of diverse cultural groups (Spencer-Oatey and Franklin, 2009).

The cognitive representation of culture, which influences behaviour, and understanding of behaviour, in intercultural interactions, is illustrated in Figure 2. This figure demonstrates the multiple layers of context that intercultural interactions need to be mindful of when forming intercultural interactions. This can be done by covering the elements of different norms of behaviour, values, and beliefs. As the figure below also illustrates, the dynamics of interactions with others may be impacted by group identities, cultural patterns, and individual personality characteristics, which may have been shaped through socialisation (Spencer-Oatey and Kadar, 2021).

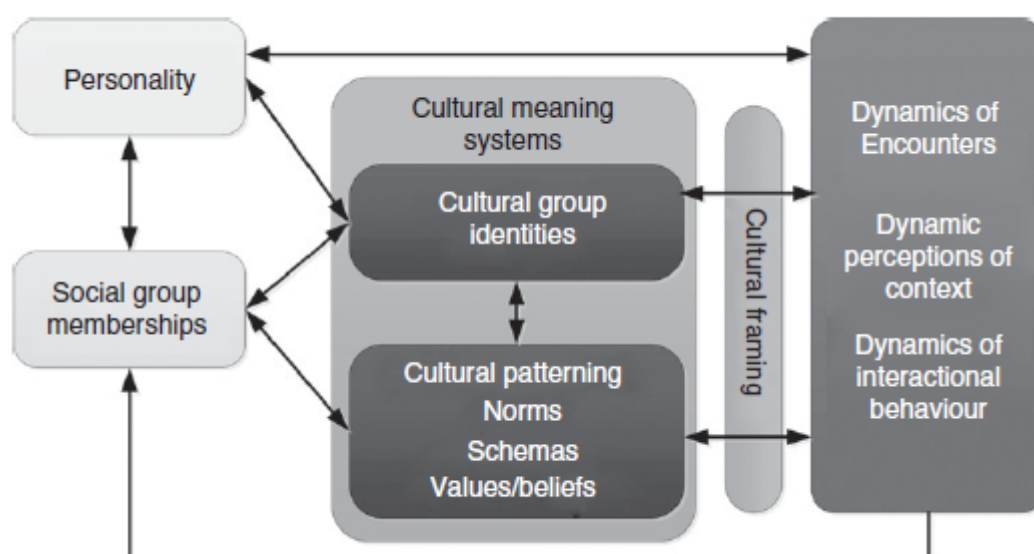


Figure 2. Overview of the influence of culture on interaction (Spencer-Oatey and Kadar, 2021)

In other words, intercultural interaction is defined in this study as an interaction in which an individual's impression of other social groups may be impacted by their own personal and group history (Spencer-Oatey and Kadar, 2021).

Additionally, to sustain harmonious intercultural interactions, it is critical to establish the sensitivity that “influences both our evaluative judgments of others and the ways in which we behave and communicate” (Spencer-Oatey and Kadar, 2021, p. 5). In general, mainstream literature (Spencer-Oatey and Franklin, 2009; Spencer-Oatey and Kadar, 2021) substantially influenced how the data obtained in this study was analysed since intercultural interaction is the primary focus of this study. As well as this, this study aims to investigate the intercultural competence necessary for students to form harmonious intercultural connections while studying abroad, which may have an effect on their academic performance.

2.3 Intercultural Competence

As explained earlier, it cannot be denied that international students will experience interactions where there are people from different backgrounds. As explained above, this study focuses on investigating the experiences of Indonesian students during intercultural interactions within the host country. As there are cultural differences between Indonesian and local cultures, intercultural encounters are inevitable, which can cause negative emotions of living in the host country. Therefore, this study will investigate the intercultural competence required to have harmonious intercultural interactions during their study abroad.

2.3.1 Empirical Literature on Intercultural Competence Among International Students

This research was initially concerned with investigating the intercultural competence required for international students, primarily Indonesian students, during their study in the United Kingdom. Numerous academics, including Root and Ngampornchai (2013), Schartner (2016), Garrett-Rucks (2014), Salisbury et al. (2013), and Young et al. (2013), have made an enormous contribution to studying the

experiences of international students living in a multicultural environment. For example, Root and Ngampornchai (2012), through reflective papers from students, investigated how they achieved intercultural competence when studying abroad and examined the necessity for pre-departure and post-departure workshops to develop their intercultural competence. Moreover, a previous study conducted by Young et al. (2013) investigated psychosocial aspects, intercultural competence, and educational adjustments experienced by international students studying at British universities. They found that strong relationships existed between academic achievement and "their satisfaction with life in their new environment, their psychological well-being, aspects of their intercultural competence, their contact with non-co-nationals, including hosts, and with their language proficiency" (p. 151). After reviewing a few empirical research studies, intercultural competence is an essential aspect of adjusting effectively to cultural differences, which will be discussed in the following section.

2.3.2 The Importance of Intercultural Competence

Travelling across countries has grown simpler in the modern world, and we now have more opportunities to meet with people from other cultures. It also encompasses the enormity of chances for students to pursue their education overseas, and the requirement for harmonious intercultural contact becomes critical for developing positive experience while living abroad. This global environment offers both opportunities and challenges, and students studying abroad today must not only learn to engage in a more interconnected globe, but also respect and profit from cultural differences (OECD, 2018). As a result, intercultural competence is necessary

for establishing a harmonious life in an intercultural setting. According to the OECD (2018), there are four reasons why young people living in multicultural environments need intercultural competence: To live harmoniously, to prosper in a changing labour market, to utilise media platforms effectively and responsibly, and to promote the Sustainable Development Goals (of the United Nations). The current study focuses on the first objective of intercultural competence, as defined by the OECD (2018), which is to foster harmonious intercultural connections between individuals of diverse cultural backgrounds, particularly Indonesian students studying in the United Kingdom. The next section will look at the theory of intercultural competence that has been formulated and discussed in previous literature, explaining the specifics of intercultural competence components.

2.3.3 Theorising Intercultural Competence

There is much debate regarding the meaning of the term 'intercultural competence' in associated literature (Salisbury et al., 2013; Scharfner, 2016; Paige and Goode, 2009). Moreover, many scholars in the field of intercultural communication have identified models of intercultural communication competence for specific contexts, such as educational, business, and international adjustment. They have applied these models to those situations. From a business perspective, intercultural competence is the ability to understand one's own cultural norms and expectations whilst also recognising cultural differences, and being open to new experiences and diversity, all of which serve to prepare one for living in a more globalised world (Hunter et al. 2006, cited in Sptizberg and Changnon, 2009). Byram (1997, 2003) and his colleagues (Byram et al., 2001), have developed an influential model of

intercultural competence in the context of teaching language. This model shares several characteristics with co-orientational models, including motivation (i.e., attitudes), knowledge, and skills that facilitate intercultural communication (Byram et al., 2001, cited in Spitzberg and Changnon, 2009).

Byram (1997) created one of the most frequently accepted definitions of intercultural competence regarding intercultural communication, particularly in the context of institutional internationalisation. Intercultural competence is described broadly in this study as "knowledge of others, understanding of oneself, abilities to interpret and communicate, abilities to discover and/or engage, appreciating others' values, beliefs, and behaviours, and relativising oneself (Byram, 1997, cited in Deardorff, 2006, p. 248). Byram (1997) created an influential paradigm that focuses on 'negotiating identity in space' within and between cultures (cited in Spitzberg and Changnon, 2009, p. 17).

Additionally, as stated previously in Chapter 1, the purpose of this study is to determine the intercultural competence required for Indonesian students to foster harmonious intercultural interactions. Therefore, this study focuses on the competencies necessary to manage intercultural relationships as a primary component. Inevitably, this research will also use Spencer-Oatey and Franklin's notion of intercultural interaction competence (2009). Intercultural competence during interactions refers to 'the ability to communicate (verbally and non-verbally) and behave effectively and properly with members of different cultural groups, as well as deal with "the psychological demands and dynamic outcomes" of such interactions (Spencer-Oatey and Franklin, 2009, p. 51). Furthermore, in this study, intercultural competence is defined not only in terms of the ability necessary, but also in terms of

aspects such as knowledge, skills, and values. In the same vein, intercultural competence is defined by the OECD (2018) as "knowledge, skills, attitudes, and values" which can be utilised to communicate effectively with people from various cultural backgrounds (p. 7). After reviewing the concept of intercultural competence used in this study, the next section will describe the components of the intercultural competence found in the literature

2.3.4 Components of Intercultural Competence

Many scholars have formulated the components within intercultural competence (Spitzberg and Changnom, 2009). Deardorff (2009), as shown in the figure below, classifies intercultural competence into components. This is to focus on the internal and external results of intercultural competence, resulting from specific attitudes, knowledge, and skills associated with intercultural competence.

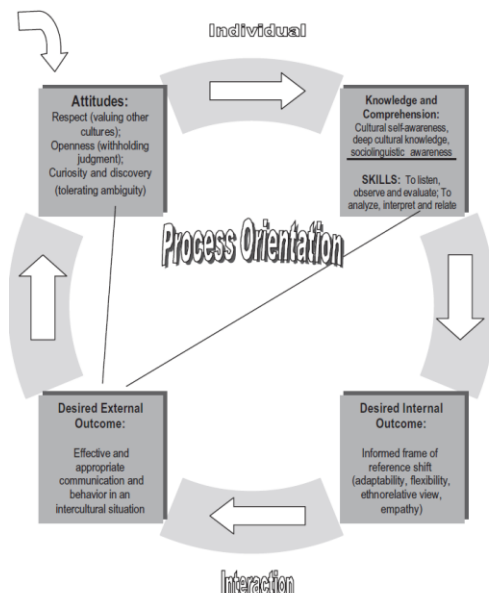


Figure 3. Process model of Intercultural competence proposed by Deardorff (2009)

As seen in the above module, Deardorff (2009) develops an influential model of intercultural competence that begins with required attitudes and knowledge that the sojourners need. Additionally, figure 3 displays the degree of intercultural competence at the interaction level, which is determined by the developed level of attitudes, knowledge, and abilities (Deardorff, 2009).

Furthermore, several components that form intercultural competency when managing harmonious intercultural interactions (i.e., Deardorff, 2006, Spencer-Oatey and Franklin, 2009; Meadenhall et al., 2010) had a significant role in informing the analysis of the data collected. As can be seen in the table below, Spencer-Oatey and Franklin (2009), propose a few elements of intercultural interactions competencies for rapport management, including 'contextual awareness, interpersonal attentiveness, social information gathering, social attuning, emotion regulation and stylistic flexibility". These frameworks explicitly identify relationship management as a core component of intercultural competence and unpack it with a great amount of detail.

Table 2. The role of intercultural competence in managing intercultural relations (Mendenhall et al., 2010; Spencer-Oatey and Franklin, 2009)

According to Spencer-Oatey and Franklin (2009, p. 102), intercultural competencies include the following:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contextual awareness: The roles of individuals, their rights and obligations, and the nature of communication activity • Interpersonal attentiveness: Understanding others' behaviour expectations to communicate effectively
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social information gathering: Learning new knowledge about the culture of the host country • Social attuning: Observing and understanding non-verbal communication • Emotion regulation: Accepting and feeling at ease with others who are different, such as those with opposing views or values. • Stylistic flexibility: Using a variety of strategies in a flexible way to accommodate people's rapport sensitivity.
Mendenhall and colleagues (Mendenhall et al.) characterise intercultural competences as follows: (2010, pp. 9-14)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relationship interest: The degree to which individuals are interested in and aware of their social surroundings. • Interpersonal engagement: The willingness and desire to form and sustain connections with individuals from other cultures. • Emotional sensitivity: The degree to which individuals are aware of and sensitive to other people's emotions and feelings. • Self-awareness: The extent to which individuals are aware of: 1) Their interpersonal talents and limitations, and 2) Their own ideologies

Moreover, intercultural competence is a process that develops over a lifetime (Deardorff, 2009). Therefore, each sojourner needs to develop their intercultural competence continually. The development of intercultural competence is achieved through intercultural experience and cultural learning development, which includes observing, listening to, and asking people from various cultural backgrounds to help teach, share experiences, and have conversations with newcomers (Deardorff 2009). This study explores the necessary level of intercultural competence and how it develops in international students, particularly Indonesian students, during the intercultural adjustment period. It aims to demonstrate a gap in previous work, highlighting the limitations and paucity of prior research on the intercultural competence required of international students, as well as how the current study intends to fill that gap. The following section will discuss previous works on the components of intercultural competence.

2.3.5. Empirical Literature on Components of Intercultural Competence Development

Focussing on empirical research of components within intercultural competence, this section reviews existing research on intercultural competence in diverse contexts, with which this current study intends to enrich by addressing knowledge gaps. Barrett (2018) examined how schools might increase the intercultural competence of young students. This study discovered that encouraging intercultural friendships, organising periods of study abroad, arranging for students to have internet-based intercultural contact, and encouraging critical reflection on their intercultural experiences can all help to improve intercultural competence amongst young people (Barrett, 2018).

Zhang and Zhou (2019) conducted another study that reveals effective techniques for assisting individuals in developing their intercultural competence. They discovered that culture-based educational materials, classroom activities, teaching methodologies, and integrated intercultural programmes are the most effective at developing intercultural competence (Zhang and Zhou, 2019). In another study, Trejo and Richard (2015) explore intercultural competency among military personnel in the workplace. They discovered that the essential information, skills, and abilities, as well as the function of emotion and optimism, might help to sustain efficient connection in a multicultural social environment (Trejo and Richard, 2015).

In the background of the use of English as a global language, Baker (2011) examined the relationship between languages and cultures in intercultural competence development. He found that intercultural awareness is required as a model of the knowledge, skills, and attitudes needed to communicate through English in diverse global contexts to enhance intercultural competence (Baker, 2011).

In the context of higher education in the UK, Lantz-Deaton (2017) examined the experiences of first-year British and non-British students studying on an internationally diverse campus and how they developed intercultural competence. This study revealed that even positive intercultural experiences alone could not lead to the development of intercultural competence. It also revealed that university policies need to be improved to produce graduates with higher levels of intercultural competence if internationalisation is to become a reality (Lantz-Deaton, 2017).

A few previous studies have used an ethnographic framework to investigate the experiences of international students within their host country (e.g., Holmes and O'Neil 2012; Jackson, 2008). For example, Jackson's (2008) research examined

foreign language students using an ethnographic study to look at the Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity (DMIS), which is related to the Intercultural Development Inventory (IDI). According to the study, those who developed higher degrees of intercultural sensitivity and sociopragmatic awareness progressed beyond superficial evaluations of differences in the host culture and demonstrated more empathy for others (Jackson, 2008).

Another study conducted by Holmes and O'Neil (2012) used an ethnographic approach to examine how students from various cultural backgrounds acquired and evaluated their intercultural competence. The findings revealed that developing intercultural competence includes acknowledging reluctance and fear, foregrounding and questioning stereotypes, monitoring feelings and emotions, working through confusion, and grappling with complexity (Holmes and O'Neil, 2012).

After reviewing the previous empirical studies on the components of intercultural competence to reveal gaps in knowledge across this topic, this study implies that managing (im)politeness is essential for intercultural competence. As a result, the next aspect covered in this study is managing (im)politeness during interactions, which is essential to achieving harmony in a multicultural setting.

2.4 (Im)Politeness in Intercultural Interactions

This study aims to explore the intercultural competence required when developing harmonious intercultural interactions in multicultural places, as mentioned in the previous section and provided by the OECD (2018) as one of the objectives of intercultural competence. As a result, the goal of this research is to discover how

international students in the UK deal with intercultural encounters, including (im)politeness in the host country. This aspect is included because "politeness is a key means by which humans work out and maintain interpersonal relationships" (Kádár and Haugh, 2013, p. 1). Moreover, because (im)politeness is part of universal human manners, "it is *culturally* as diverse as the human race is: since its earliest studies, politeness has been discussed as a 'culture-specific phenomenon'" ([Kádár and Bargiela-Chiappini](#), 2011, p. 2). Consequently, "politeness is a question of evaluation" (Eelen, 2001, cited in Mills, 2011, p. 21), and every culture has its own perspective on what is perceived as polite or impolite behaviour. To begin, the following section will discuss empirical research on (im)politeness across a variety of cultural contexts.

2.4.1 Empirical Research on (Im)Politeness in Multiple Cultural Backgrounds

This section summarises empirical research on (im)politeness amongst a group of people with diverse backgrounds. Numerous scholars have spent considerable efforts examining how (im)politeness is perceived in social group interactions across a variety of different cultures (Spencer-Oatey and Kadar, 2016; Spencer-Oatey, 2011; Tanaka et al., 2008; Kecskes, 2017, Haugh, 2010; Haugh and Chang, 2015). To begin with, building on these empirical findings, Spencer-Oatey and Kadar's (2016) study is intended to investigate the impact of cultural factors on people's judgement of (im)politeness based on moral foundations and general values. According to this study's findings, essential variables such as attitudes and ideologies, as well as pragmatics and psychology, need to be considered when evaluating politeness (Spencer-Oatey and Kadar, 2016).

Furthermore, consider Haugh's (2010) study, examining intercultural encounters between students and teachers via an email discussion who have different cultural backgrounds. The study discovered that by analysing both the lecturer and student's interpretations of the emails, as well as online evaluations on blogs and discussion boards, it becomes clear that the inherent discursivity of impoliteness emerges not only from differing perceptions of norms, but also from how the commentators position themselves (Haugh, 2010). Another study, conducted by Haugh and Chang (2015), examines the importance of politeness in “communication, particularly across cultures where misunderstandings” may result in unfavourable interpersonal outcomes (p. 389). They suggested that the participants' starting point of judging politeness is more appropriate for developing “sociopragmatic awareness about (im)politeness across languages and cultures”. Furthermore, by increasing “sociopragmatic awareness in this way”, the participants gain the ability to compare and contrast differences between what is considered polite in their first and second language domains (Haugh and Chang, 2015, p. 389).

In addition, a study conducted by Kecskes (2017) investigated the relationship between context dependency and impoliteness in several intercultural interactions with multiple cultural backgrounds (e.g., Chinese and Australian, French and English, etc.). This study found that “limited shared knowledge and common ground” may cause an increase in the situational context-creating power of utterances. As a result, interpretation generally depends on what the utterance says rather than what it communicates. As a consequence of taking the propositional meaning for the actual meaning of an utterance, interlocutors are sometimes unaware of the impoliteness conveyed (Kecskes, 2017, p. 7).

Additionally, Spencer-Oatey (2011) completed a study examining the emotions and (im)polite actions that people recount in metapragmatic observations made in the context of a British and Chinese work project at a university. This study discovered that controlling politeness in intercultural contacts has theoretical and practical value, which is critical given how difficult it is to handle well. Additionally, one of the most noticeable findings from the metapragmatic remarks with emotion labels is that the study's participants struggled with a lack of communication (Spencer-Oatey, 2011).

Another example of (im)politeness miscommunication in different cultural contexts in the academic setting was conducted by Tanaka et al. (2008). This study compared the Chinese and Japanese behaviour of apologising with that of Western behaviour of apologising and discovered that there was a mismatch between the stereotypical understanding of apologies as perceived by English speakers. Furthermore, a study conducted by Grainger (2011) discussed the intercultural exchanges between Zimbabwean English speakers and British English speakers, particularly with regards to indirectness and politeness.

Few empirical investigations on (im)politeness have been conducted in an Indonesian cultural background. Norwanto (2016), for example, sought to elucidate gender and (im) politeness trends in Javanese (a traditional language in Indonesia). This study discovered that the way in which (im)politeness is evaluated varies across social acts that involve intention, identity, moral orders, and utterances or actions (Norwanto, 2016). Petraki and Ramayanti (2018) conducted another study in which they examined Indonesian managers' use of humour as a polite tactic in the setting of Indonesian business meetings. This study discovered that male and female managers

alike frequently used humour to foster group unity and cohesiveness. Additionally, female managers used humour to soften their criticism of male employees and to assert their control and authority (Petraki and Ramayanti, 2018).

Numerous studies demonstrate that (im)politeness is a necessary component of harmonious intercultural relations. Through reviewing empirical studies described in the previous section, particularly in a multicultural society, norms, morals, and social pragmatics play a key role in evaluating (im)politeness. However, the lack of empirical evaluative studies on how international students manage intercultural encounters, including (im)politeness, was the motivation behind the research carried out as part of this study. The empirical literature illuminates what is currently known and identifies knowledge gaps across multiple contexts. The next section will cover the theory of politeness, beginning with Brown and Levinson's (1987) theory, which is thought to be the starting point for politeness theory. A later section will conclude the theory of politeness considered as the foundation within this current study.

2.4.1 Theorising (Im)Politeness

This section will describe some of the foundations of a politeness theory that have been established by scholars in the field of politeness, before beginning the explanation of the basis of theory of politeness that will be employed in this study. To begin with, Brown and Levinson's (1987) work on linguistic politeness may be regarded as the earliest and most extensive comparative study of linguistic politeness. Brown and Levinson's model highlights the significance of politeness phenomena in social interactions and describes some of the tactics employed to transmit politeness.

The critical point of their argument is that "politeness occurrences are universal" (1987, p. 2). They conclude that politeness implicatures would likely originate in the same manner as all other implicatures.

One of the terms famously coined by Brown and Levinson (1987) is known as 'Face Threatening Acts (FTAs). They asserted that pragmatic activities such as requests and apologies may be divided into two categories: Those with a "negative face" and those with a "positive face". Individuals are in danger of losing their negative face when they are unable or unwilling to avoid the obstruction of their speaker's freedom of action. Conversely, individuals are put in danger of losing their positive face when they do not care about their interactor's feelings, wants, or does not want what their interactor wants (Brown and Levinson, 1987). Furthermore, face danger may be minimised, and Brown and Levinson argue that the more indirectly an FTA is done, the less likely it is to constitute a threat to the other's face.

However, the study did not employ the initial premise made by Brown and Levinson (1987) that comprehending politeness is universal or the same in its application across cultures. According to Brown and Levinson, this politeness operation is applicable in every language and culture (Spencer-Oatey and Kadar, 2021).

Building on this, a few empirical studies have criticised the use of the theory of Brown and Levinson (1987) (e.g., Locher and Watts 2005; Locher, 2006; Terkourafi, 2011; Van der Bom and Mills, 2015). To begin, Locher and Watts' (2005) study suggests that politeness cannot be simply analysed using FTA-mitigation, Brown and Levinson's theory. This is because politeness is a discursive phenomenon, which means that analysts should not be able to predict what is polite or impolite.

Instead, researchers should pay more attention to the discursive context in which people talk to each other (Locher and Watts, 2005).

Similarly, Locher's (2006) work provided an alternate method for analysing (im)politeness. This study proposed a method for analysing (im) politeness by examining the interactants' judgements of linguistic behaviour concerning social interaction norms, which are regarded to be at the heart of polite consideration, rather than knowledge of fundamental linguistic devices (Locher, 2006).

Terkourafi (2011) conducted another study that contributed to an option of Brown and Levinson's concept by involving norms that are vital to the preservation of social order, reflecting religious and moral principles in this regard. For example, "what is proper is morally right, and what is morally right is suitable" had to be included in the element of evaluating (im)politeness, especially in multicultural interactions (Terkourafi, 2011, p. 179).

Additionally, Van der Bom and Mills (2015) conducted a case study on an interaction with people of Dutch and Italian origin, demonstrating that as the field of (im) politeness develops, discursive approaches have evolved beyond a critique of Brown and Levinson's model of politeness and should be viewed as constituting an approach to politeness analysis as well. Additionally, they suggest that the discursive approach is a viable mode of analysis; while this approach does not rely on a simplistic analysis of linguistic features (Brown and Levinson's analysis), it is possible to ground the analysis of the interactants' judgements and focus on linguistic elements (Van der Bom and Mills, 2015). Chapter three will detail how this study used a discursive approach to look at the data it gathered.

Building from the empirical studies in the previous sections, this study will use "evaluative moments" to examine (im)politeness in international encounters (Eelen, 2001, cited in Kadar and Haugh, 2013). Furthermore, to borrow Spencer-Oatey and Kadar's (2021) key point, being polite may imply different things to different participants in the interaction who generate and assess utterances since they may perceive each other's behaviours differently. The following section will elaborate on how to make evaluative judgments while analysing the politeness data in this study.

2.4.2 Understanding (Im)Politeness as a Process of Evaluation

The politeness data will be analysed using an evaluative process in this study. Eelen (2001) stated that it is critical to investigate politeness using an evaluation approach (cited in Spencer-Oatey and Kadar, 2021). Furthermore, by borrowing Eelen's language, researchers need to focus more on the perception of politeness, not just linguistic forms and strategies used by speakers, in understanding (im)politeness (Citen in Kadar and Haugh, 2013). The most crucial feature of assessing politeness in longer stretches of interactions is that when evaluated in the larger context, they occur in the interaction (Kadar and Haugh, 2013).

An evaluation is a multifaceted process that relies on a variety of factors. There is no such thing as polite or impolite words or phrases, as Fraser and Nolan (1981: 96) asserted, but instead, participants perceive them to be that way (Cited in Spencer-Oatey and Kadar, 2021). Furthermore, one of the most critical aspects of the evaluation process is using one's own interpretations to gain a better knowledge of intercultural behaviour (Spencer-Oatey and Kadar, 2021). In this study, as can be seen in the figure below, Spencer-Oatey and Kadar (2021) used an evaluation procedure to analyse (im)politeness in intercultural encounters.

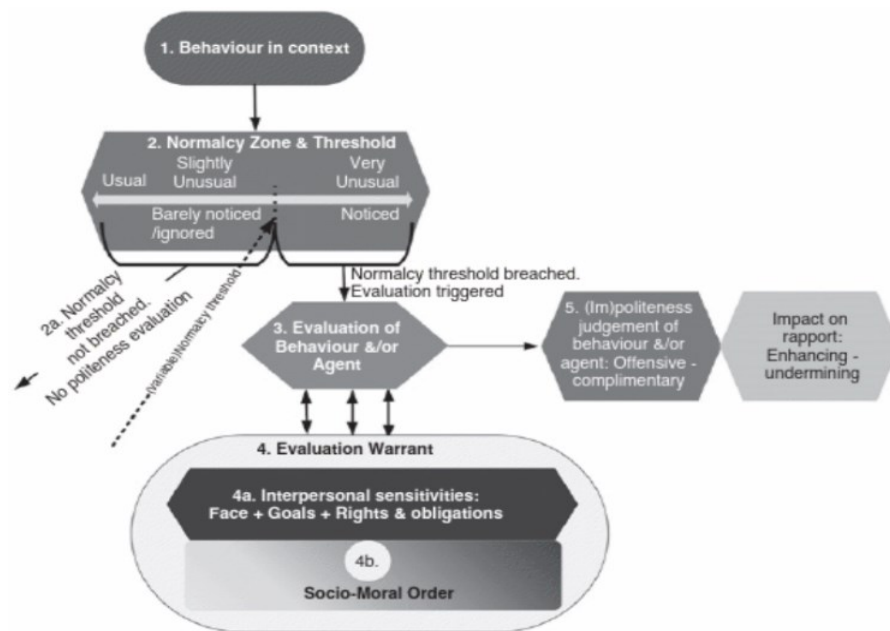


Figure 4. Evaluation process (Spencer-Oatey and Kadar, 2021)

According to the figure 4, based on the Spencer-Oatey and Kadar's (2021) model, this study in reviewing (im)politeness implies that the assessment process is possibly initiated when an instance of contextualised interpersonal behaviour takes place, which is supported by the data. Many different types of behaviour may be seen, including verbal and nonverbal behaviour. All this behaviour takes place in a specific “situational context”, and how they perceive that situational context plays a significant role in “the evaluation process” (Spencer-Oatey and Kadar, 2021, p. 78). More importantly, over time, the participants in the interaction may gather background information on a wide variety of situational contexts, forming schematic-type knowledge and norms about what generally occurs, who says what, and how to behave, among other things (Spencer-Oatey and Kadar, 2021).

Evaluation, as previously stated, is a complicated process. Previous research has been undertaken to examine (im)politeness using an evaluation process (e.g., Spencer-Oatey and Xing, 2019; Spencer-Oatey and Kadar, 2019; Mitchell and Haugh

2015). Spencer-Oatey and Xing (2019), for example, explored interpersonal connections and evaluative assessment in Chinese-British business encounters. They discovered that norms and moral order/moral foundations in pragmatics, moral psychology, and cross-cultural psychology can aid in the identification of (im)politeness in specific intercultural encounters. Another example, Mitchell and Haugh (2015) investigated interactions between Australians and Americans in Australia. They discovered that perceptions of impoliteness vary between speakers, which may be related to how different members interpret the intentions of the speakers or how social norms, or expectations assumed by certain participants may differ from those assumed by others. The next section will briefly discuss one of the evaluation components, namely, the norms and expectations encountered during intercultural contacts.

2.4.3 Subjective Behavioural Expectations

Before delving into the concept of a norm, this section will address the role of subjective behavioural expectations in perceiving (im)politeness during interactions. According to Spencer-Oatey and Kadar (2021), perceiving another person's behaviour during interactions may be a "subjective expectation" (p. 67). Additionally, they distinguish between "descriptive norms" and "injunctive norms" regarding behavioural expectations and norms. The former refers to behaviour that is "frequently or typically performed," while the latter refers to "behaviour that is approved." In other words, behaviour that people believe "ought to be" performed. Both concepts of norms are intimately connected to expectations and a sense of "rights and responsibilities" (Spencer-Oatey and Kadar, 2021, p. 67).

As discussed in the previous section, this study will employ an evaluation to analyse politeness data (see section 2.4.2). Using Eelen's (2001) idea of comprehending (im)politeness, there is variation in the evaluations of norms and expectations and fundamental assessments of behaviour as polite, impolite, or overly polite. Grasping politeness requires an understanding of context, to borrow from Kadar and Haugh (2013), given that the interactants are expected to comply with specific expectations. Moreover, while in these types of settings, politeness usually follows a set of established schemata, 'an organised pattern of thought and behaviour' (Kadar and Haugh, 2013, p. 7). Additionally, Culpeper (2011) argues that impoliteness may entail a 'conflict with expectations, particularly with behaviour associated with circumstances'. Additionally, expectations may involve a sense of appropriacy, which contributes to impoliteness (Culpeper, 2011). Consequently, numerous evaluation components, including the participants' subjective behavioural expectations, will be used to analyse the data in this study.

This current study will analyse (im)politeness data based on what the participants expect, based on their knowledge and their own cultural background, when perceiving the level of (im)politeness they encounter during intercultural interactions. As Tayebi (2016) points out, expectations may be created due to the collection of diverse experiences and/or knowledge about the situation or behaviour in question. Following the explanation of how subjective expectation and norms are involved during the evaluation of politeness to analyse the data, the next factor to consider is how the 'norms' aspect is also underlying in the evaluation of politeness to analyse the data in this study, which will be discussed in the following section.

2.4.4 Norms

In addition to expectations, norms will be included in this study's analysis of data (im)politeness. It is believed that understanding norms is exceptionally significant in the understanding of evaluating politeness. As previously stated, an individuals' knowledge and experience might impact their expectations of others' behaviour; yet cultural norms can also influence behaviour displayed when people from different cultures engage with one another. Since Spencer-Oatey and Kadar (2021) propose, it is critical to include norms in the analysis of (im)politeness in international interactions as 'people's subjective perceptions of both types of norms affecting their behaviour and their evaluation of other people's behaviour' (p. 110).

Norms are unwritten but should be understood by individuals when interacting, to foster harmonious interactions. Kadar (2020) describes norms in as 'an abstract entity for pragmatics since it embodies the agreed rules and principles that serve as the foundation for comprehending what 'is (dis)approved of in an interactional context' (p.20). Additionally, in the context of intercultural interactions, norms refer to what is commonly done in a culture or community and “what is typically approved/disapproved” of within that culture or society (Spencer-Oatey and Kadar, 2021, p. 111). Furthermore, "norms" do not have to be shared; rather, they must only be thought to be shared (Terkourafi, 2011, p. 162).

When it comes to meeting expectations, most individuals expect to be treated with respect and the proper social norms whenever they engage in social interactions. An interaction is anticipated to be acceptable and valued in the collection of linguistic resources because perceptions and norms are the factors that are expected to be acceptable and valued (Georgakopoulou, 2013). Furthermore, there are norms that people expect to 'be there,' and we tend to view breaches of these expectations as

grounds for judgment as 'impoliteness,' 'rudeness,' 'improperness,' and so forth (Kadar, 2013, p. 42).

Previous empirical studies have investigated the influence of social norms and expectations in determining what constitutes as impolite behaviour (e.g., Terkourafi, 2011, Isosavi, 2020). For example, Isosavi's (2020) study looked at the differences in intercultural politeness between French and Finnish cultures. The study discovered that people who adhered less to the polite norms of their culture of origin found that their behaviour was more in line with the expectations of the target culture, and they avoided negatively marked behaviour judged as impolite/inappropriate (Isosavi, 2020). Terkourafi (2011) also did prior research in which he suggested that norms with an underlying morality should be put at the centre of an empirically based theory of politeness since individuals regularly justify their interpretations of this or that social norm. The next component of this research to understand impoliteness in intercultural settings would be moral order, which will be discussed in further detail in the next section.

2.4.5 Moral Order

Suppose we include elements of norms with the aim of devaluing impoliteness. In this case, we cannot separate moral order into a component as a part of the evaluation process. The link between moral order and norms is significant because morality provides standards for how individuals 'should treat one another' (Decety and Cowell, 2014, cited in Parvaresh, 2019, p.81). In other words, to borrow Culpeper's (2011) language, the breach of social norms of behaviour result in 'the attribution of immorality' (p. 37). According to Domenici and Littlejohn (2006), moral order is a socially created system of 'understandings that we carry with us from situation to

situation' (cited in Culpeper, 2011, p. 38). Furthermore, it is moral because it informs 'our sense of right and wrong' and is represented in a structured set of personal activities (Domenici and Littlejohn 2006, cited in Culpeper, 2011, p. 38).

As previously stated, this research focuses on examining the intercultural competence necessary to establish harmonious intercultural contacts (see 2.3), where managing politeness is an essential element of generating well-behaved communication. Furthermore, politeness is "a social practice" that entails judgment that (implicitly) appeals to a "moral order: as a set of expectations through which social acts and meanings" are recognised in a moral evaluation (Kadar and Haugh, 2013, p. 6). As a result, moral order is critical to maintaining excellent communication in our daily lives, especially when it comes to cross-cultural communication. In addition, moral order can be perceived both openly and implicitly, including "institutional rules, laws, moral codes, and the like" (Davis, 2008, cited in Parvaresh and Tayebi, 2018, p. 92). In addition, moral order is considered while determining if the action is something good, suitable, or inappropriate. As Parvaresh's (2019) argues, moral order entails assumptions, expectations, and a set of views of "what is right and what is wrong" (p. 82).

As stated in an earlier section (see 2.2.2), intercultural interactions in this study are characterised as exchanges in which there is a considerable difference in cultural background, and the possibility of a misunderstanding is relatively high. As moral order is ethically loaded, morality is relevant in every relationship, including intercultural interactions, which becomes crucial "in social interaction as conflict emerges and takes over the ordinary flow of events" (Kadar, et al. 2019, p. 10). The figure below provides information on how moral order has a critical role in any interactions

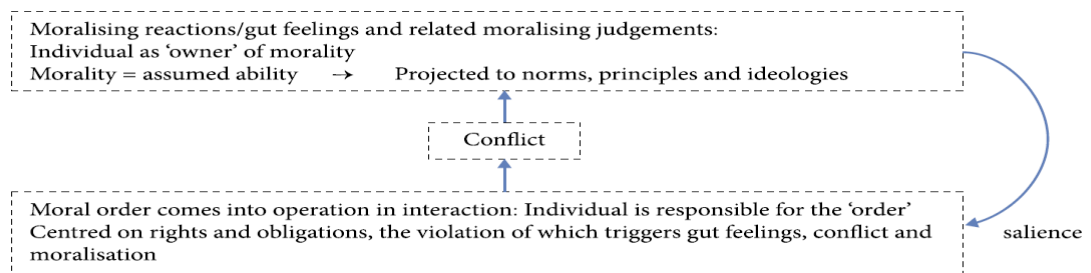


Figure 5. The role of moral order in interactions. (Kadar, Parvaresh and Ning, 2019)

This study, which draws on the Kadar et al. (2019) module on how the moral order will be one of the components in understanding (im)politeness, demonstrates how moral order has a significant role in interactions and how when participants do not follow moral order as expected, this can result in conflict. Some conflicts cause strong moral reactions, according to Kadar and colleagues (2019), and these moral reactions may present 'themselves in interactional engagement with a conflictive interactional and moral order' that vary greatly across participants in any interactions (p. 11). Furthermore, people who break "the interactional moral order," which is seen as unfavourable, can cause harm to other people as well as conflict and subsequent moral judgments (Kadar et al. 2019, p. 11).

2.4.6. Empirical Literature on Moral Order

This section provides a review of empirical research on the role of moral order in interactions. For example, previous studies have looked at the function of moral order in (im)politeness research (e.g., Spencer-Oatey and Xing; 2019, Parvaresh,

2019; Parvaresh and Tayebi, 2018). To begin with, Parvaresh (2019), investigated the use of impolite language on social media platforms. He discovered that a foundational moral perspective and other circumstances play critical roles in the interaction, resulting in a judgment of impolite language being expressed. Furthermore, another study, done by Parvaresh and Tayebi (2018), looked at the relationship between impoliteness and moral order in intercultural interactions on a Facebook page between an Iranian actress and other users. According to the findings of the study, the impolite language and violent remarks that emerged on the Facebook page result from assumptions and mismatched expectations that are considered part of moral order. The next section will provide a brief overview of the role of intercultural competence, which aims to facilitate harmonious interaction across cultural contexts.

McConachy (2019) investigated the function of social and moral order in connection to sociocognitive perspectives on pragmatic interpretation in the English language learning contexts to identify the role of pragmatic awareness for second language acquisition. By focusing on Japanese students studying English, the study demonstrated that, from a pragmatic awareness perspective, the evaluation used to determine whether language use is "appropriate" or not is generated by "social action" read through the lens of moral order (McConachy, 2019). These findings corroborate those of Haugh and Sinkiviciute (2019), who investigated the role of morality in disagreements and conflict in interactions involving disagreement or opposition. According to their case studies and analysis of the interactions, they discovered that conflict occurs as a result of several factors, including a 'perceived' moral breach or transgression and a 'complex moral emotion' triggered by (perceived) transgressions that are morally charged, as they both imply and are subject to moral evaluation (Haugh and Sinkiviciute, 2019, p.3).

Additionally, Davies (2018) investigated the ideological basis behind an individual's view of politeness and why individuals should behave in this way, particularly in connection to the usage of moral order. Through online inquiries based on a comment in a Daily Mail article, this published study discovered that the rationale behind an individual's judgment offers an argumentation link between metapragmatic behaviour and the social or moral order.

Moreover, Spencer-Oatey and Xing (2019) conducted previously published work in the context of intercultural interactions, which explored interpersonal relations and evaluative judgements, particularly in relation to intercultural interactions, by drawing on norms and moral order/moral foundations in pragmatics. This study discovered that in terms of the relationship between norms and moral order, the data supports the two being differentiated. Norms are related to "behavioural regularities or patterns and are either descriptive or prescriptive" (p. 151). However, the findings do not offer any definitive new insights into the potential distinction between social standards and moral norms. However, none of the breaches appear to be clearly morally wrong, but they are also not "simple breaches of conventions," which appears to lend tentative support to the continuous viewpoint (Spencer-Oatey and Xing, 2019, p. 151). Following an explanation of the factors evaluating (im)politeness in interactions employed in this study and reviewing previous empirical studies, the following section will describe the relationship between intercultural competence and managing (im)politeness as the focus of this current study.

2.4.7 Intercultural Competencies Involving the Ability to Manage (Im)Politeness

Following the previous explanation of the aspects used as the basis of analysis in investigating (im)politeness in intercultural interactions, this section will explain how intercultural competence plays a role in building good relationships that involves managing (im)politeness. As previously stated, when two members of a group have a differing cultural background, the possibility of misunderstandings including impoliteness is quite considerable. As a result of the objectives of this current study (see 2.3.1) and the OECD's (2018) definition of intercultural competence, which fosters harmonious intercultural connections between people from diverse cultural backgrounds, another function of intercultural competence is to minimise misunderstandings and promote harmonious relationships.

Since it has already been shown that politeness is a critical component in creating harmony in a relationship (see 2.4), it is included because "politeness is a vital aspect by which humans work out and sustain interpersonal connections and managing (im)politeness is a significant way by which people work out and maintain interpersonal relationships" (Kadar and Haugh, 2013, p. 1). It also becomes an essential aspect when impoliteness is involved in intercultural interactions. Managing relationships across cultures is an crucial aspect of our lives, including our social, professional, and personal lives, so relating across multiple types of intersecting cultural boundaries is important (Spencer-Oatey, 2021).

Research shows that politeness is an essential factor in maintaining harmony in relationships (see 2.4). Therefore, it has been added because managing impoliteness is an essential way in which individuals maintain interpersonal connections (Kadar and Haugh, 2013). Furthermore, when impoliteness is engaged in intercultural relations, it becomes critical. As given the importance of managing politeness in our

interactions with people of different cultural backgrounds, including "our social and professional lives as well as our personal lives," it is also important to consider how we relate this aspect when interacting with people of different cultural backgrounds (Spencer-Oatey and Kadar, 2021).

Understanding Language comprehension, or more precisely, interpersonal pragmatics, is critical for sustaining harmonious relationships and minimising misunderstandings in intercultural interactions. The term "interpersonal pragmatics" refers to the study of how "social actors utilise language to shape and construct relationships in situ" (Loacher and Graham, 2010, Cited in Haugh, Kadar and Mills, 2013, p. 2). In other words, in addition to examining the intercultural competence necessary in the host nation during an intercultural adjustment, this study examines language use during interactions in detail.

In accordance with the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (2018), intercultural competence is defined as the ability to 'understand cultural norms, interactive styles, and degrees of formality of intercultural contexts, and to flexibly adapt their behaviour and communication to suit' (p. 10). Another goal of this competency is to respect the expected cultural norms of both parties (OECD 2018, p. 10). As previously stated, the significance of "norms" (see 2.4.4) when interpreting (im)politeness in intercultural encounters plays a critical part in determining how to behave appropriately. Consequently, considering intercultural competence from these pragmatic viewpoints would contribute to the understanding of intercultural competence that will be employed in this study.

To summarise this section, politeness and intercultural competence have a close correlation to achieving harmonious intercultural interactions between people

from different cultures. Referring to Kadar and Haugh (2013), (im)politeness is defined as a phenomenon through which individuals work out and sustain interpersonal relationships. According to the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (2018), intercultural competence strives to promote harmonious intercultural interactions between people from varied cultural backgrounds. In conclusion, these two themes, intercultural competence and managing politeness, have been linked together to fulfil the purpose of this current study, which is to have a positive feeling about living in the host nation by gaining the required competence.

Furthermore, as indicated in the previous section (see 2.4.2), understanding politeness in this study would be part of the evaluation process. Spencer-Oatey and Kadar (2021) argued that in the intercultural field, and particularly in intercultural relations, (im) politeness is more focused on "explaining differences" and/or anticipating differences with others as part of the evaluation process, rather than on "explaining similarities" and/or anticipating similarities with others. The evaluation process might be used for more than just determining "what one should do or say," but it could also be used to emphasise individual opinions about whether a specific behaviour or expression is suitable (Spencer-Oatey, 2021, p. 3).

Overall, both the evaluation process and pragmatic ideas play a significant role in informing the analysis of the data collected in this current study. From the perspective of Spencer-Oatey and Kadar (2021), pragmatics, and in particular, politeness theory, can provide significant insight into the nature of intercultural competence, particularly in terms of intercultural interactions. So, this evaluation process of (im)politeness, together with the pragmatic ideas, would be the framework

used in this study to investigate the intercultural competence required to effectively communicate across multiple cultures.

This study also seeks to fill a gap recognised by Spencer-Oatey and Kadar (2021), who believes that "intercultural relations" are rarely explicitly included in conceptualisations of intercultural competence (e.g., Spencer-Oatey and Franklin, 2009; Spitzberg and Changnon, 2009) that are more focused on the "key facets of intercultural competence, and communication is listed by almost all theorists" (p. 332). Furthermore, as Deardorff (2009) suggests, a greater emphasis should be placed on intercultural relations, particularly in non-Western settings, as reflected in this current study.

2.5 Conclusion

To guide this study, this chapter evaluated literature focussing on concepts, theories, and empirical literature relevant to this topic. It demonstrates the necessary intercultural competence to sustain harmonious intercultural interactions in the host nation. Similarly, regulating (im)politeness serves the same function of fostering harmonious interpersonal relationships. This study is based on the concepts of intercultural interactions, intercultural competence, and (im)politeness.

The empirical literature sheds light on what is currently known while also revealing gaps in knowledge across several dimensions of context. According to evidence from empirical literature, intercultural competence has been explored among researchers, based explicitly on the notion of intercultural concepts within intercultural communication. However, within the pragmatic study, managing harmonious intercultural interactions is rarely explicitly included in the different

conceptualisations of intercultural competence, which have become this current study's objectives. This study's methodology approach and design will be discussed in the next chapter.

Chapter Three

Methodology

3.1 Introduction

This chapter describes the study's goals, research questions and research design, and details the methodological approach that is adopted to investigate the research questions outlined in Chapter One. This is followed by a description of the qualitative approach to research, upon which the design of the study is based. A summary of the pilot study is then presented, followed by an overview of the study's ethnographic framework and a detailed description of the data collection and data analysis. Finally, I will address the broader issues of ethics and credibility by drawing on my own experience as a researcher.

3.2 Research questions

Significant cultural disparities exist between Western and Indonesian culture, as outlined in Chapter One, and, therefore, the research questions are as follows:

1. Which intercultural competencies are required by Indonesian students, and how are these competencies developed during the intercultural adjustment period?
2. How do Indonesian students manage intercultural encounters involving (im)politeness as part of their intercultural competence during the intercultural adjustment period?

The following sections will briefly explain the research philosophy (Section 3.3) and how this study intends to answer the above research questions by adopting a qualitative approach (Section 3.4).

3.3 Research philosophy

The philosophical orientation of the current study or ‘research paradigm’, which indicates the researcher’s worldview or perspective, is discussed here to clarify how the study was organised to address the research questions (Biklen, 2010; Creswell, 2013). The constructivist paradigm was selected as the philosophical orientation of the study, since it gives an understanding of how the study was designed to answer the research questions. This paradigm is predicated on the concept that knowledge is relative and generated via the subjective interpretations, interactions and sense-making of human beings (Creswell, 2013).

Before presenting the selected paradigm in depth, this section will explain the terms ‘ontology’ and ‘epistemology’ to help understand this study. Ontology is the study of the nature of being and the structure of reality (Creswell, 2014). This study employs the constructivist ontological assumption since it seeks to comprehend a social reality (i.e., Indonesian international students studying abroad) via the perspectives and experiences of the participants. This indicates that the study is consistent with the philosophical concept that social realities and meanings are produced through subjective interpretations and interactions.

Epistemology refers to “how we know what to know” (Cresswell, 2014, p. 54). In other words, epistemology addresses the question, “How can I know reality?”.

Crotty (1998) provided a useful structure for tying together the many epistemological issues, theoretical perspectives, methodology and methods of social research (cited in Creswell, 2014). In intercultural studies, the main aim of epistemology involves understanding participatory and intercultural relations. As a constructivist paradigm is adopted in this study, the following three assumptions are made (Crotty, 1998; cited in Creswell, 2014):

- A. Human beings generate meanings when they engage with the reality they are attempting to understand. Qualitative researchers like to employ open-ended questions so that the participants can share their ideas.
- B. Humans interact with and make sense of their reality depending on their historical and social views; we are all born into a world which our culture has endowed with significance. Consequently, qualitative researchers aim to comprehend the context or setting of the participants by visiting this context and directly collecting data. In addition, people interpret their findings based on their personal experiences and backgrounds.
- C. Meaning is always generated in a social context, via contact with human society. The qualitative research approach is predominately inductive; the researcher derives meaning from the facts gathered in the field.

“The constructivist paradigm aims to find the reality, but it cannot be measured directly, only perceived by people, each of whom views it through the lens of his or her prior experience, knowledge and expectations” (Rubin and Rubin, 2012, p. 15). Constructivists seek to understand the environment in which they live by widening their experiences. They focus as much as possible on the participants’ perspectives on

the topic being investigated (Creswell, 2014). Furthermore, one of the characteristics of the constructivist research paradigm is the researcher's ability to understand the context or setting of the participants, by personally visiting the location, acquiring information, and interpreting and analysing the findings based on his or her own experiences and background (Creswell, 2014). In the current study, an in-depth understanding of the intercultural competencies that are required by Indonesian students when interacting in multicultural situations was developed based on the researcher's own personal experiences. This paradigm also appears to be compatible with the theoretical framework of the study, which is discussed in Chapter Two, and emphasises the role of contextual variables in the construction of knowledge relating to intercultural competence and (im)politeness theory.

The above characteristics of the research paradigm explain why this study is qualitative in nature: it is dependent on the researcher's subjective perceptions and focuses on people's interactions in a multicultural situation. Constructivism is one such perspective, and it is frequently viewed as a form of qualitative research (Creswell, 2014). Therefore, the current study adopts a qualitative approach to achieve its objectives and to prove its philosophical assumptions. The research approach and method used in the study, which will be described and explained in further detail later in this chapter, provide additional evidence for the qualitative approach being adopted.

3.4 Adopting a qualitative approach

As explained in the previous section, the constructivist paradigm used in this study had a direct impact on the qualitative approach that was adopted to answer the research questions. As qualitative research aims to investigate the "complexity of everyday life,

any discussion of evidence must address the complications involved in representing complexity” (Biklen, 2010, p. 488). A qualitative method is one that relies on texts and images, and has unique ways of analysing the data (Creswell, 2013, p. 234). According to Creswell (2013), a qualitative study is defined by the researcher as a “key instrument” that collects data by “investigating documents, observing behaviours, or interviewing participants”, instead of conducting questionnaires or surveys (p. 234).

A qualitative approach was selected as the primary approach of this study. My intention was to conduct an in-depth study of the participants’ subjective experiences of a new place and culture, and then to identify common patterns shared by the participants. The process of intercultural adjustment is a journey whose destination is unknown to sojourners at the outset. Therefore, at the beginning of the study, I was not fully aware of all the themes that would emerge during the participants’ intercultural adjustment journey. Generally, qualitative researchers enter the research process by uncovering their assumptions and setting them aside. “Qualitative *methods* are ways of studying people and their social worlds by going there, observing them, in their natural setting, and learning how they understand their situations and account for their behaviour” (Richards, 2014, p. 1). In addition, “qualitative research aims to create a naturalistic setting to explore the daily lives of individuals, groups, societies and organisations” (Miles et al., 2014, p. 9). “Through qualitative data, researchers have more chance to concentrate on people’s lived experiences by relating the topic to the social world surrounding them” (Miles et al., 2014, p. 11). Furthermore, in the case of the current study, the researcher and participants share the same cultural background, that is, Indonesian, and therefore the findings could be affected by their cultural background. According to Creswell (2013), one of the characteristics of a

qualitative study is “reflexivity”, in which the researchers reflect on how their role in the study and their personal background, culture and experiences have the potential to shape “their interpretations, such as the themes they advance and the meaning they ascribe to the data” (p. 235).

In summary, a qualitative approach is the most appropriate form of research for the current study, and this methodology lays the foundation for data collection. Invaluable insights can be obtained from the participants’ views of their own experiences. Moreover, a qualitative approach can be appropriately applied in this study, as it implicates a natural phenomenon that is interconnected and related to the Indonesian student participants and which is characterised by various behaviours. According to Creswell (2013), during the qualitative research process, the investigator must remain focused on the participants’ perceptions of the problem or issue at hand. To obtain some preliminary findings and recruit participants, I decided to conduct a pilot study. By conducting a student blog competition, the pilot study was used to gain an insight into the students’ experiences of the host country (UK), which will be discussed in Chapter Four.

3.5 Pilot study

To ensure that I was ready to undertake the study in advance of collecting the primary data, I undertook a pilot study to establish some preliminary findings. Moreover, a further aim of this pilot study was to recruit participants for the later ethnographic study. This preparation also gave me, as the researcher, confidence to proceed with the project.

3.5.1 Student blogs

The aim of the pilot study was to assess the intercultural competencies required by Indonesian students studying in the UK during the intercultural adjustment period. Initially, data were collected from their blogs, where they shared their own personal experiences or stories about their life in the UK. One reason why personal blogs were used for the data collection was that “many students talk enthusiastically in blogs and online education abroad magazines about the things they have done and learned” (Vande Berg et al., 2012, p. 4). In this digital era, students commonly share their activities on social media platforms, including on their blogs. During the early stages of their time abroad, i.e., the honeymoon period, students are generally more likely to share their experiences on their personal blogs or other social media.

In order to collect data, a blog competition was devised to enhance its attraction and to encourage students to share their experiences during the period of intercultural adjustment. This idea was inspired by Deardorff. She describes one method currently being employed to assess intercultural competencies, namely, the use of E-portfolios. She claims that by using E-portfolios, the researcher is able to gather direct evidence of the students’ intercultural or global learning, including “reflection papers, term papers, photographs, and other documentation of student learning” (Deardorff, 2006, p. 128).

However, I decided not to use E-portfolios; instead, I chose to use blogs, to increase familiarity with the student while still having the same function of communicating and showcasing the students’ skills, experiences and learning during the intercultural adjustment period (see Appendix 12, 13, 14). Elola and Oskoz (2008) claim that students use blogs regularly to communicate or share experiences of their life abroad with their family and friends. Also, one of the advantages of using blogs is that they are more interactive, which can encourage other people to post comments on

them. Participants have more freedom to share their personal opinions and to showcase their thoughts by adding pictures or videos.

3.5.2 Participant selection

As the study focuses solely on Indonesian students, an invitation to participate in the investigation of intercultural competence was advertised by PPI UK (the Indonesian Student Association of The United Kingdom) (see Figure 6). When considering the first research question, the initial stage of the study followed Deardorff (2006), and so a group of Indonesian students living in the UK was invited to write about their experiences of living in the UK on a blog post facilitated by the Indonesian Student Association. The participants were asked to post their blogs on the internet and to make them available to the public. To make this process more attractive, it was run as a competition and a raffle prize was offered, which included Amazon vouchers. This stage was facilitated, broadcast and supervised by the Indonesian Student Association. After the blog competition was published by the Indonesian Student Association, 12 volunteers took part between September 2018 and January 2019.

The twelve blogs were analysed with regards to the students' experiences during the period of intercultural adjustment. The following table (Table 3) presents the demographics of the participants, which shows that they are studying at a range of universities and are undertaking a range of study programs across the UK

Table 3. The study programs of each participant in the web blog competition

No	Sex	Study Program
1	Male	Social and Political Thought
2	Female	Contemporary Media Culture
3	Male	MSc Islamic Finance and Management
4	Female	Advanced Nursing Practice
5	Female	Chemical Engineering
6	Female	Population Health
7	Male	Mechanical Engineering
8	Male	Economic Studies
9	Female	Applied Linguistics
10	Male	TESOL
11	Male	Human Resources
12	Female	Computer Science



Figure 6. Advertisement on the Indonesian Student Association's Instagram account

3.5.3 Data analysis

To analyse the data obtained from the pilot study, I conducted thematic analysis. As the starting point for the data analysis, I fully immersed myself in the data; I transcribed the blogs to familiarise myself with the collected data. Thematic analysis is a data analysis process that objectively identifies, organises and provides insights into the patterns of meaning (themes) throughout a data collection, allowing the researcher to investigate and build an idea of “shared meanings and experiences” (Braun and Clarke, 2012, p. 57). Furthermore, thematic analysis is an approach to analysing and describing visual and textual data. It refers to the topics that emerge from the collected data without the active involvement of the researcher (Howitt, 2010, p. 163). It is reasonably “straightforward” and a useful “starting point” for undertaking a qualitative study (Howitt, 2010, p. 163). I coded the data by selecting aspects that I found both interesting and relevant to the research questions and phenomenon under investigation. “All qualitative data are combined into meaningful groups and coded based on themes or keywords” (Gibson and Hua, 2016, p. 191), which is then followed

by the construction of a concept for data interpretation. NVivo (version 12), a qualitative data analysis computer software package, was used to conduct a thematic analysis as described in the following section.

3.5.4 The use of NVivo

After transcribing all the blogs from Indonesian into English, I began the initial coding process by selecting data that I found both interesting and relevant to the research questions via NVivo.

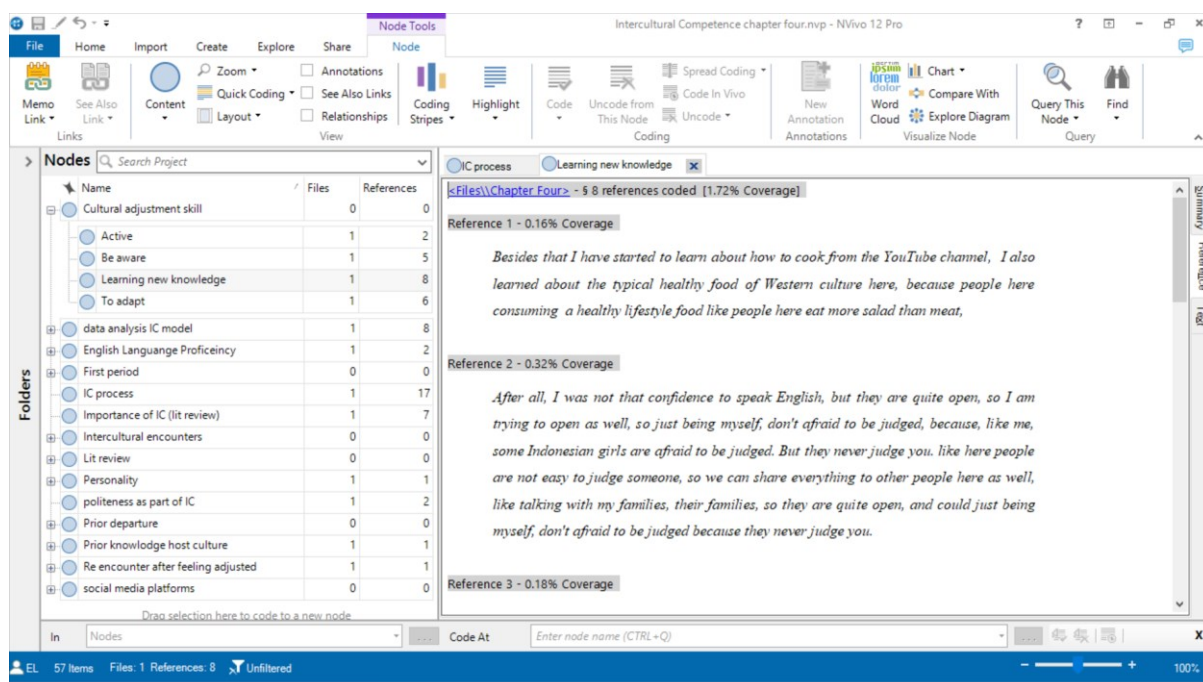


Figure 7. Thematic data analysis using NVivo

Figure 7 depicts one of the results obtained when addressing the first study question, which explores the intercultural competencies that are necessary over the intercultural adjustment phase. The NVivo documentation presented above enabled me to follow and re-run queries at a later date, particularly if codes or themes needed further tweaking during the course of my data analysis. As all quotations were kept in one

location in NVivo, it was possible to retrieve them at a later date without having to open the source files. All quotations and field notes were thoroughly reviewed and cross-referenced with other indicated codes.

3.6 The main study: linguistic ethnographic research

The ethnographic approach to data collection that was adopted in the main study involved two methods, namely, interviews and observations. An ethnographic approach has recently gained popularity with applied linguists and interculturalists who wish to conduct studies on international students living abroad on a long-term basis (Jackson, 2006; Jackson, 2010; Covarrubias, 2008). An ethnographic study aims to gain a deeper understanding of some form of behavioural activity for a specific group at a specific time (Jackson, 2006).

After completing my pilot study, it became clear that an ethnographic approach was the most suitable way of capturing the adjustment experiences of international students, as it offers access to informants on a daily basis in their natural setting over an extended period of time. By observing the participants and conducting extensive interviews with them over an academic year (my primary form of data collection), I was able to obtain and develop a deeper understanding of their experiences in the host country and culture at a particular time. Ethnography is the study of people in naturally occurring settings or 'fields' through the use of methods that capture their social meanings and ordinary activities. The researcher participates directly in the setting, and also in the activities in some cases, to collect data systematically, but without meaning being imposed on them from external sources (Brewer, 2000; cited in Jackson, 2006, p, 78).

As previously stated, since this study focuses on intercultural interactions between Indonesian students in the United Kingdom, linguistic ethnography was employed to investigate language use, in order to gain a better understanding of the social and communicative processes that occur in intercultural settings and contexts. According to Shaw et al. (2015), linguistic ethnography encompasses a growing field of research which merges linguistic and ethnographic methodologies, to form a better understanding of how social and communicative processes function across various locations and circumstances. Linguistic ethnography combines ethnographic and linguistic methodologies to investigate language use in a variety of social contexts. It is defined by overlapping interests and connections among individuals who share an interest in using ethnographic approaches to address linguistic and social issues (Maybin and Tusting, 2011). It draws its disciplinary framework not from anthropology, but from linguistics and sociolinguistics, which is broadly defined to encompass the ethnography of communication with “a more formalist framework from linguistics, with its powerfully precise procedures and terminology for describing patterns within communication” (Rampton et al., 2004; cited in Maybin and Tusting, 2011, p. 517). The aim of the linguistic ethnographic approach in this study is to assess the intercultural competencies that Indonesian students need to achieve, and, to fulfil this aim, the researcher investigated the students’ intercultural interactions during their stay in the UK in both academic and non-academic settings.

3.6.1 Data collection

After planning and finalising the research design and obtaining ethical approval to conduct the research, the first stage in the collection of ethnographic data involved student interviews, observations and field notes, which were conducted between

January 2019 and November 2019. During this period, the primary data were collected by observing the activities of the students during the intercultural adjustment period and by conducting informal conversations and in-depth interviews. During this phase, all information obtained from observations and interviews was kept in the researcher's field notes for data analysis purposes. In addition to in-depth interviews and observations, images were also captured with the intention of documenting a visual representation of the participants' experiences (Brewer, 2000; Jackson, 2006). Therefore, supplementary information was collected during data collection by taking relevant photographs, including digital photographs, in the multicultural scene, to shed further light on the participants' journeys towards intercultural competence.

Data collection involved two different methods: namely, fieldwork observations and in-depth interviews. Over the course of the project, I devoted 12-15 hours each week to observing the participants, conducting interviews and having informal conversations with them, to obtain their stories about intercultural encounters and their experiences of intercultural interactions. Fieldwork observations not only took place in student accommodation, but also in other locations where there was the potential for intercultural communication, including coffee shops, bars, supermarkets, public transport and city centres. Furthermore, interactions were observed in academic situations, such as teaching activities inside the classroom and student union activities outside the classroom. In keeping with Jackson (2006), during the data collection stage, participants were asked to reflect on their own experience of intercultural communication, including how they interacted with people from other cultural backgrounds and how they engaged with a new social identity.

A. Recruitment of participants

All participants were recruited by purposive sampling (purposeful sampling), so that I could explore their experiences of studying in the UK as part of my research. In an ethnographic study, selecting participants is an essential aspect as it is important to find participants with characteristics that are relevant and appropriate for the study (Jackson, 2016). The purposive sampling technique is used to choose participants according to their qualities and characteristics (Bernard, 2002; Lewis and Sheppard, 2006; cited in Tongco, 2007). This method is not a random technique, and does not require underlying theories or a set number of informants. In simple terms, I decided what attributes were important, and it was my responsibility to find people who were willing and able to provide information, knowledge or experience (Bernard, 2002; Lewis and Sheppard, 2006; cited in Tongco, 2007). Moreover, the purposeful sampling approach can be helpful to data collection involving many different forms of recording (i.e., interviews, observations and digital materials (Creswell, 2014)).

Seven participants, who had previously participated in the blog competition, were selected for the ethnographic study as they had created interesting and meaningful blogs which were relevant to the study. Then, I contacted some potential participants directly via emails and phone calls, and they agreed to participate in the study. As indicated in the table below, the study's participants are representative of all educational levels, including undergraduates, postgraduates and doctoral students. The participants were given pseudonyms to conceal any identifying information.

Table 4. The study levels of each participant in the ethnography study.

No	Name	University Degree Level
1	Ino	Undergraduate
2	Cecep	Postgraduate (Master's student)
3	Arif	Doctoral student
4	Via	Postgraduate (Master's student)
5	Sulis	Doctoral student
6	Dibyو	Doctoral student
7	Febry	Doctoral student

The following section explains one of the data collection methods that formed part of my ethnographic approach.

B. In-depth interviews

In-depth interviews were conducted with the Indonesian students to gain an insight into their intercultural and politeness encounters during the cultural adjustment period, and these interviews were centred on their social and intercultural interactions. By conducting in-depth interviews or face-to-face interviews, the researcher is able to gather data that helps in “understanding informants’ perspectives on their lives, experiences, or situations as expressed in their own words” (Taylor et al., 2016, p. 102). Furthermore, in-depth interviews are focused on “an interest in understanding the lived experience of other people and the meaning they make of that experience” (Seidman, 2013; cited in Taylor et al., 2016, p. 102). By employing this method, the researcher aims to observe the participant, and s/he might begin by asking a non-direct

question to obtain relevant information, before then focusing on the research topic (Taylor et al., 2016).

Moreover, the aim of the in-depth interviews was to discuss further the students' experiences, which was not possible on their blogs. The purpose of these interviews was to complement the blogs, and to discover interesting aspects and stories that the students had not yet revealed. Furthermore, these interviews were used to gain further information relating to personal experiences and motivations, which were not explained in detail on the blogs. As part of qualitative research, this is "a relatively unstructured approach where the aim is to invite informants to talk at length about matters that are broadly relevant to the research, with the interviewer following to encourage more elaboration, detail, or exemplification where necessary" (Hammersley, 2012, p. 12).

While the questions addressed similar concerns, each participant received a unique set of questions to represent their unique experiences. These questions helped to explore each participant's various and subjective views. As can be seen in the findings reported in Chapters Five and Six, interviews are a significant data gathering source. While all data sources contribute to a study's dense dataset, interviews are the primary source of insights. Interviews are significant since they provide first-hand evidence for the topic being investigated, which is why they are a primary source of data. The following section explains another data collection method that formed part of my ethnographic approach, namely, observations and post-recording interview.

C. Observations and Post-Recording Interview

Besides in-depth interviews, observations and post-recording interviews were also a vital part of the data collection stage of this study. Participant observations are

probably the most relevant data collection technique in an ethnographic study, as the researcher is directly involved in the participants' daily lives, "watching, observing and talking to them in order to discover their interpretations, social meanings and activities" (Brewer, 2001, p. 59).

During observations, I recorded in my field notes any interesting moments that were relevant to my research (see Appendices 9, 10 and 11). For example, when living in the host country, interesting moments refer to those situations during which participants might experience anxiety, fear, a shift in attitude or any other social implications that are believed to be sufficiently significant to be written down in field notes (Brewer, 2001).

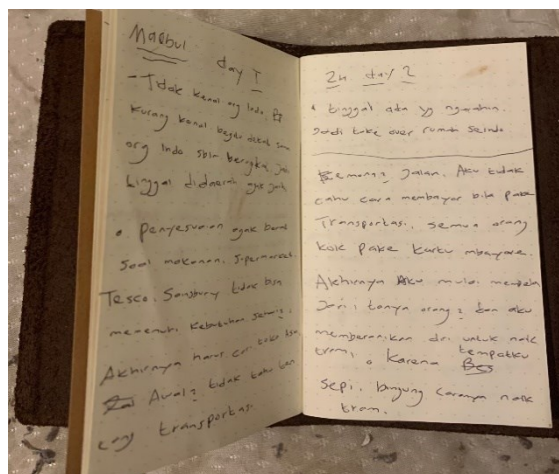


Figure 8. Field notes relating to interesting situations that were recorded during data collection

Field notes are one of the most important components of ethnographic research. They are a tool that allows researchers to write down everything they observe, think and feel while collecting and later reflecting on data (Jackson, 2010). Furthermore, I discovered that my field notes proved indispensable for documenting any interesting

moments throughout my ethnographic study. Photographs were also collected when observing the participants to support and reflect the findings.

In addition to observations, an interview was undertaken to supplement the data. This type of interview is known as a '**post-recording interview**'. Interviewees are asked to "reconstruct their state of mind during [...] interactions" involving the misunderstanding of impoliteness, so that they can more easily relate to their experience of the intercultural interaction (Spencer-Oatey, 2008; cited in Kádár and Haugh, 2013, p. 54). The participants were encouraged to focus on any uncomfortable or challenging situations they had experienced with other people during the intercultural adjustment period in the UK by relying on field notes. Moreover, to ensure that the interview environment was as natural as possible for the participants, all conversations were conducted in Bahasa (the official language of Indonesia). During this stage, all information collected from observing the participants and post-recording interviews was kept in the form of field notes by the researcher for data analysis purposes. The following section details the data analysis technique that was employed in the study.

D. Place, duration, and the language of the interview

Data collection involved two different methods: namely, fieldwork observations and in-depth interviews. Over the course of the project, I conducted interviews and had informal conversations with the participants to obtain their stories relating to intercultural encounters and their experiences of intercultural interactions. Fieldwork observations not only took place in student accommodation, but also in other locations where there was the potential for intercultural communication, including coffee shops,

bars, supermarkets, public transport and city centres. Furthermore, interactions were observed in academic situations, such as teaching activities inside the classroom and student union activities outside the classroom. Therefore, this ethnographic study presents in-depth and invaluable evidence of how students think and behave in the intercultural scene, so that their intercultural competence can be more easily assessed during the intercultural adjustment period. In keeping with Jackson (2006), during the data collection stage, participants were asked to reflect on their own experience of intercultural communication, including how they interacted with people from other cultural backgrounds and how they engaged with a new social identity.

Data collection took place over eleven months between January 2019 and November 2019 in various locations. I conducted interviews with the participants according to the schedules that we had previously agreed upon. At least once each month, an interview session was conducted, although several participants agreed to meet more than once a month, particularly when there was an interesting event (for example, freshers events or student union events) that offered numerous opportunities for intercultural exchanges. Each interview session lasted approximately one hour and thirty minutes. As we all shared the same cultural background, the interview was conducted in Indonesian, which allowed the participants to express themselves in a manner in which they were most comfortable. All transcripts were translated into English for the purpose of data analysis using the narrative that will be detailed in section 3.6.2. To ensure the accuracy of the translation, a third party (i.e., a professional English editor and an Indonesian translator) reviewed the transcripts. The following section details the data analysis technique that was employed in the study.

3.6.2 Data analysis

A. Thematic discourse analysis

“Ethnography generates or builds theories of cultures – or explanations of how people think, believe, and behave that are situated in local time and space” (LeCompte and Schensul, 1999; cited in Jackson, 2016, p. 246). To accomplish this, as an ethnographer, I identified some themes and issues by categorising the findings, and then inserting new categories or subcategories as new understandings or topics emerged.

In keeping with the data analysis technique that was employed in the pilot study, the ethnographic data were analysed by adopting a thematic approach. Thematic analysis refers to the subjects that arise from the collected data when there is an emergent theme without the researcher’s active engagement (Howitt, 2010). It is an important research technique and a very simple and direct formula, providing a highly effective starting point from which a qualitative study can proceed (Howitt, 2010, p. 163). In qualitative data analysis, the first and most essential step is the continual discovery of themes, and creating concepts and propositions (Taylor et al., 2015). All collected data, including in-depth interviews, observations and field notes, underwent thematic analysis, whereby the data were “combined into meaningful groups and coded based on themes or keywords” (Gibson and Hua, 2016, p. 191). In general, thematic analysis is an approach to analysing and describing visual and textual data.

Furthermore, the ethnographic data were analysed by focusing on the discourse or context that appeared in the intercultural interactions. By borrowing Clarke and Braun’s (2014) methodology, all ethnographic data underwent thematic discourse

analysis, which focused on the constructive role of language as well as multiple and shifting meanings, while maintaining a specific interest in patterned meaning (discourses) within the dataset.

I examined the discourse and context in the intercultural interactions, and then highlighted the ethnographic findings by presenting the results of my interview and observational data in the form of a narrative essay, which included narratives and quotations from the participants. A narrative is a form of interactive discourse that includes “texts, interviews, conversations, and arguments” (Bamberg, 2020, p. 262). The data were analysed by exploring emerging themes and ideas, which was then followed by constructing a concept aimed at interpreting the data. NVivo (computer software programme) was used to assist the researcher during the qualitative data analysis.

B. Analysing the ethnographic data using NVivo

NVivo became more visible and beneficial at this stage in the process, as it permitted the thematic analysis of the ethnographic data to be undertaken (see Appendix 4, 5 ,6 ,7 ,8). The examination of the pilot study data, which had far fewer transcripts, was much simpler than the analysis of the ethnographic data in terms of comparing and contrasting and allowing patterns to emerge. However, during the analysis of the ethnographic data, once the transcripts had been marked up with highlights, codes and margin comments, coded extracts were grouped together according to the themes provided by the narratives in the ethnographic data.

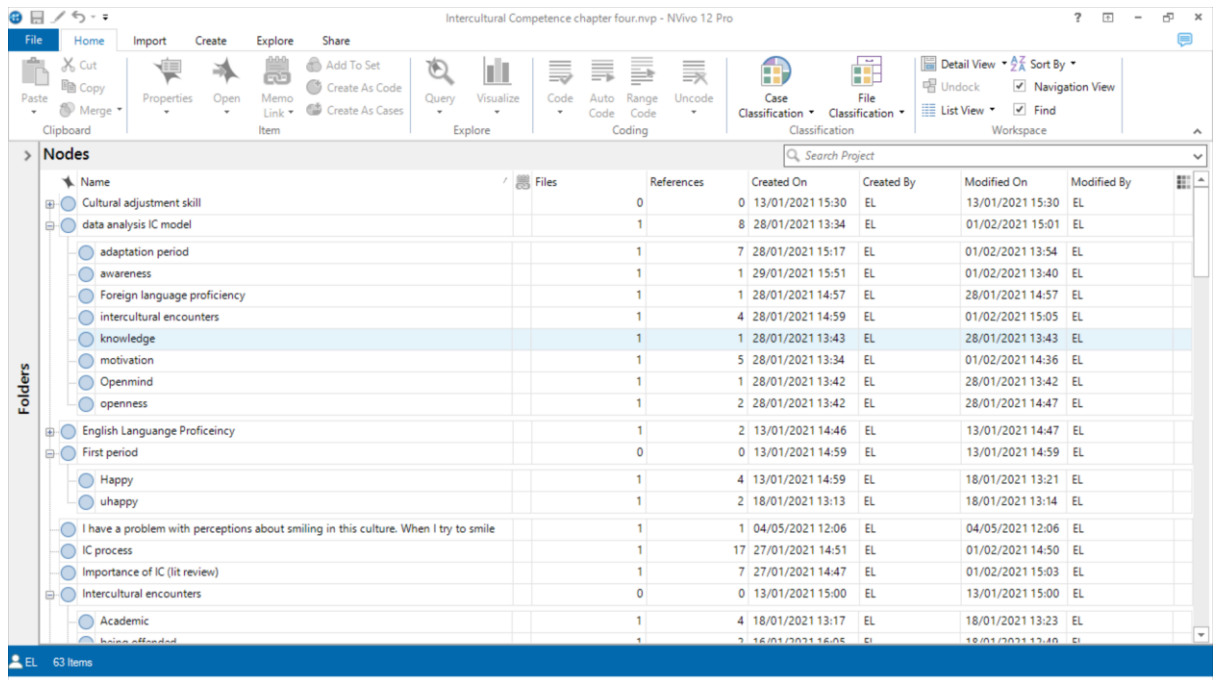


Figure 9. Analysis of the ethnographic data by developing themes using NVivo

To answer the research questions, Figure 9 depicts the format used to discover keywords or themes in relation to the experiences, feelings and intercultural encounters of the participants that were collected throughout the ethnographic study. The titles of the nodes on the left-hand side identified the keywords or topics that were used to locate the participants' experiences and required intercultural competencies. This form of documentation allows the researcher to trace the analytical trail and re-run analyses at a later date, which is particularly useful if the themes require further tweaking.

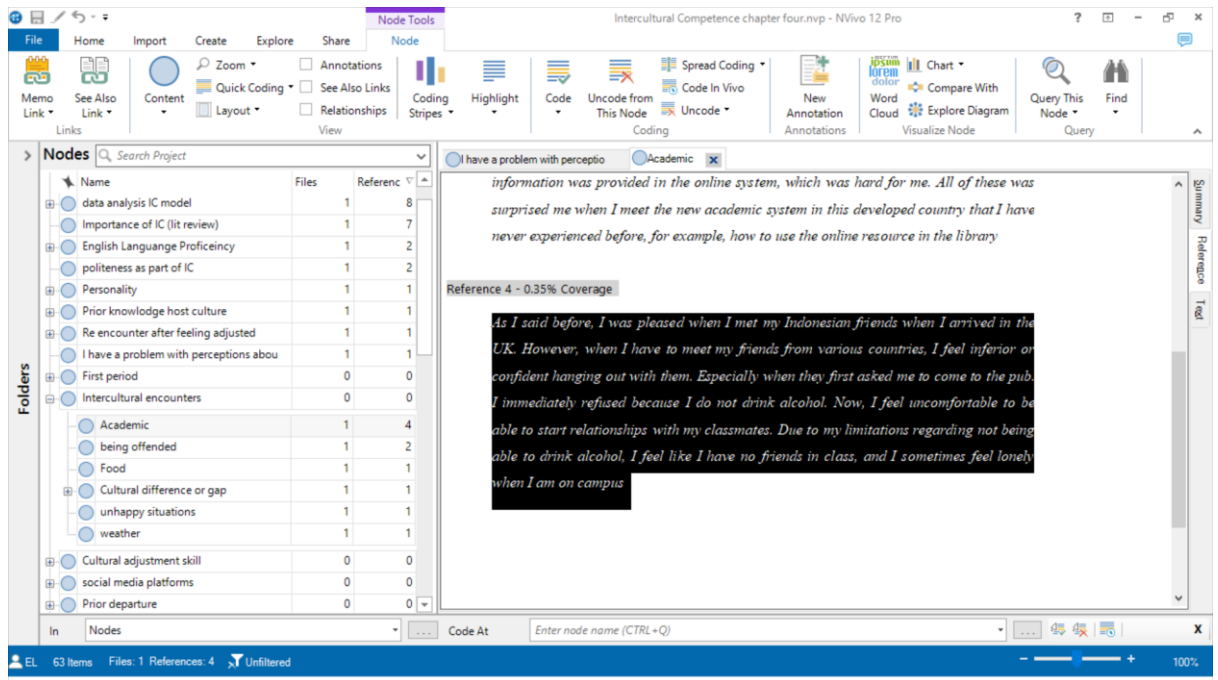


Figure 10. NVivo was used to create a narrative based on the participants' stories about interesting moments they had experienced during their intercultural interactions

Figure 10 demonstrates how NVivo enabled the researcher to remain close to the narratives gathered from the interviews and observations throughout the ethnographic study. Figures 4 and 5 depict how this procedure worked in the transcript analysis. The computer programme was of great assistance to the researcher, since clicking on the nodes retrieved transcripts in which the coded quotation was highlighted so that it could be read in context. Furthermore, as shown on the left-hand side of Figure 10, each time a topic was selected, I was led to narratives or transcripts that were related to one another in terms of similar themes. Quotations were then linked to nodes, so that they could be easily accessed at a later date without having to re-run the searches. As a result, relationships with other codes were carefully examined for each node and quotation.

C. Narratives and a discursive approach

The second data analysis technique involved treating the ethnographic narratives as scratches of discourse in context. Oberhuber and Krzyzanowski (2008) believe that ethnography can be utilised in a study to contextualise discourse. It is widely accepted that discourse analysis within ethnography can be used to analyse various linguistic aspects, including the types of language used and the behaviours exhibited during interactions (Oberhuber and Krzyzanowski, 2008).

Consequently, in the current study, the narratives that were provided for discourse analysis described the participants' experiences or the issues that they faced during intercultural interactions. A narrative is a story formed by the participants in an interview based on their own experiences. Bamberg (2012) defines a narrative as "the realm of experience, where speakers lay out how they as individuals experience certain events and confer their subjective meaning onto these experiences" (p. 85). Moreover, the narratives in this study were based on interviews and observations, in order to understand what the participants were saying. Bamberg (2012) argues that narratives are an interpretive technique for analysing "individuals in their social surroundings as actively imparting meaning on things in the world, including everyday occurrences as well as in interviews or surveys" (p. 88).

By using the analytical framework developed for this study, my aim was to analyse (im)politeness from the perspective of the participants. Narratives were used as a discursive source to analyse the (im)politeness data collected from the ethnographic study. As Gerogakapoulou (2013) notes, a discursive account of (im)politeness might place a premium on narrative activities and use identity analysis techniques in the study of (im)politeness. Additionally, a narrative might serve as a source of discourse for analysing identity work in interaction and comprehending a larger social context (Taylor, 2007, cited in Kádár and Haugh, 2013). Furthermore, as

Kádár and Haugh (2013) advise, my intention was to analyse (im)politeness data from a narrative source by looking at “the participants’ perspective, rather than developing theories first and then analysing interactions” (p. 52).

After the interview data relating to the students’ experiences of misunderstanding (im)politeness was coded, it was then analysed by adopting a discursive approach. In order to answer my second research question (managing (im)politeness in intercultural encounters during the intercultural adjustment period), a discursive approach was used to analyse the (im)politeness data so that a context-based analysis of the participants’ interactions could be undertaken. A discursive approach is preferable because it is a more context-based view of politeness (Mills, 2003). This approach does not analyse (im)politeness data by phrase or sentence, but focuses more on “the unspoken rules whereby certain utterances are for example seen as appropriate” (Mills, 2001, p. 26).

On a pragmatic level, I drew from Van der Bom and Mills’ (2015) discursive framework, which focuses on “what speakers think is possible to say, how they view their relations with others and with their communities, and how power impacts on these relations”, which are analysed contextually and qualitatively (p. 180). Instead of assuming that politeness is inherent in words, this form of discourse analysis focuses on misunderstanding, ambiguity and the possibility that speech is perceived as either polite or impolite (Van der Bom and Mills, 2015). In other words, a discursive approach to (im)politeness can be defined as a more contextualised, interactive and context-focused method of analysis that takes into account participant interaction, examines longer stretches of speech and focuses on people’s perceptions of what is polite and impolite (Van der Bom and Mills, 2015).

By way of illustration, and drawing on Van der Bom and Mills' (2015) discursive framework, the following narrative is analysed because it appears to constitute a problematic moment during an intercultural interaction. This extract was obtained from the data provided by one of the participants during an intercultural interaction at a library, and involves the evaluation of unexpected behaviour as being impolite:

I went to the library to borrow some books. However, they gave the book to me in her left hand and threw it on the table. I was shocked, and I think it was not nice. In my view, if you want to give something to someone, the polite way is to use your right hand and not throw it away. (Febri)

The above extract reveals that the incident involving the librarian, that is, throwing the book at the participant with her left hand, is interesting here, since the participant evaluated this behaviour as impolite or immoral (i.e., '*they gave the book to me by her left hand and threw it on the table. I was shocked, and I think it was not nice*'). According to the cultural background of the participant, the correct moral order is to use the right hand instead of the left hand to pass something (in this case a book) to someone else; however, the librarian gave him the book using her left hand, resulting in a negative evaluation by the participant. This is an example of the discursive approach used in this study, founded on Van der Bom and Mills' (2015) discursive framework; the moral aspect of (im)politeness was also included in the analysis of (im)politeness alongside analysing empathy for others. Furthermore, when analysing the function of language in terms of politeness, it is vital that (im)politeness is

understood to be an evaluation of others, and, in particular, an evaluation of moral judgements, as part of a discursive approach (Eelen, 2001; cited in Van der Bom and Mills, 2015). In addition, in this respect, this finding supports the results of Spencer-Oatey and Kádár's (2020) study, namely, that understanding behaviour in interactions in a situational context is based on our interpretations during the evaluation process. Thus, Febri's evaluation of the unexpected behaviour he received from the librarian led to conflicting feelings.

3.7 Ethical considerations

This study involves Indonesian adults living in the UK during their initial study period. Moreover, to respect the participants' privacy and to ensure confidentiality, their personal information was anonymised. Data was only stored on my personal computer.

Before undertaking any research, ethical approval had to be obtained from the relevant Ethics Committee of Anglia Ruskin University (see Appendix 15). Once ethical approval was obtained, I was able to commence the project. No further extension of ethical approval was required at any stage from the start of the student blog competition to the completion of the ethnographic study.

Before commencing the interviews and observations in the ethnographic study, all participants were told, verbally, the reason for the study in advance of them agreeing to be interviewed and observed (see Appendix 2). All participants were required to complete a consent form, which clearly stated their right to withdraw at any time from the study (see Appendix 1). Before the commencement of audio recording, permission was obtained to record the interviews.

All participants were assured of anonymity, both for themselves and their companies, in any report resulting from the research. Therefore, this report utilises pseudonyms and some excerpts may be edited to eliminate identifiers. All audio-recorded files and text documents were encrypted and stored on password-protected devices and secure external servers.

3.8 My position as a researcher

My role as a researcher serves as a key instrument in this study, which means that I will be “examining documents, observing behaviour, or interviewing participants” (Cresswell, 2014, p. 234) instead of relying on an instrument (like a questionnaire) to collect data. Moreover, as the participants and myself all have the same background (i.e., we have the same cultural background and we are all international students), I was able to approach the participants more easily.

Details about my background and interest in this study have already been outlined in Chapter One. In addition, like the participants, I am an Indonesian international student furthering my studies at a British university. The parallels between myself and the participants made it much easier for me to approach them with my request to participate in the study. Furthermore, the similarities in our backgrounds helped to avoid potential misinterpretation when capturing their responses about their experiences and thoughts. Having access to the participants’ personal profiles allowed me to conduct in-depth interviews, which boosted the study’s reliability. The participants acknowledged and accepted my role in the study environment because I was familiar with their surroundings and I had a well-established relationship with them.

However, on the one hand, by having an insider's knowledge of the research project, my participation could contaminate the findings. On the other hand, Creswell (2012) considers qualitative research to be "interpretive research, in which you make a personal assessment as to a description that fits the situation or themes that capture the major categories of information" (p. 262). Furthermore, findings obtained as a result of the researcher's own interpretations are not necessarily inaccurate, and the researcher's participation could lead to unique interpretations as "it simply means that you bring your own perspective to your interpretation" (Creswell, 2012, p. 262).

Chapter Four

Students Web Blogs

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents and analyses data from online blogs published by Indonesian students in the United Kingdom about their experiences living in the host country. It explains the selected participants, presents the findings, and provides an overview. This chapter is devoted to addressing the first research question presented in Chapter 1, which seeks to explore the intercultural competencies required by Indonesian students in the United Kingdom.

4.2 The selected participants

The student blogs were obtained by holding a blog competition, and the aim of these blogs was to gather each Indonesian participant's life story and assess the competencies of their intercultural communication during the intercultural adjustment period. After the blog competition was published by the Indonesian Student Association's Instagram, 12 participants took part from September 2018 to April 2019. However, to broaden the range of data, interviews will be conducted with the same participants as a part of my ethnography study, details of which will be explained later in chapter five and chapter six.

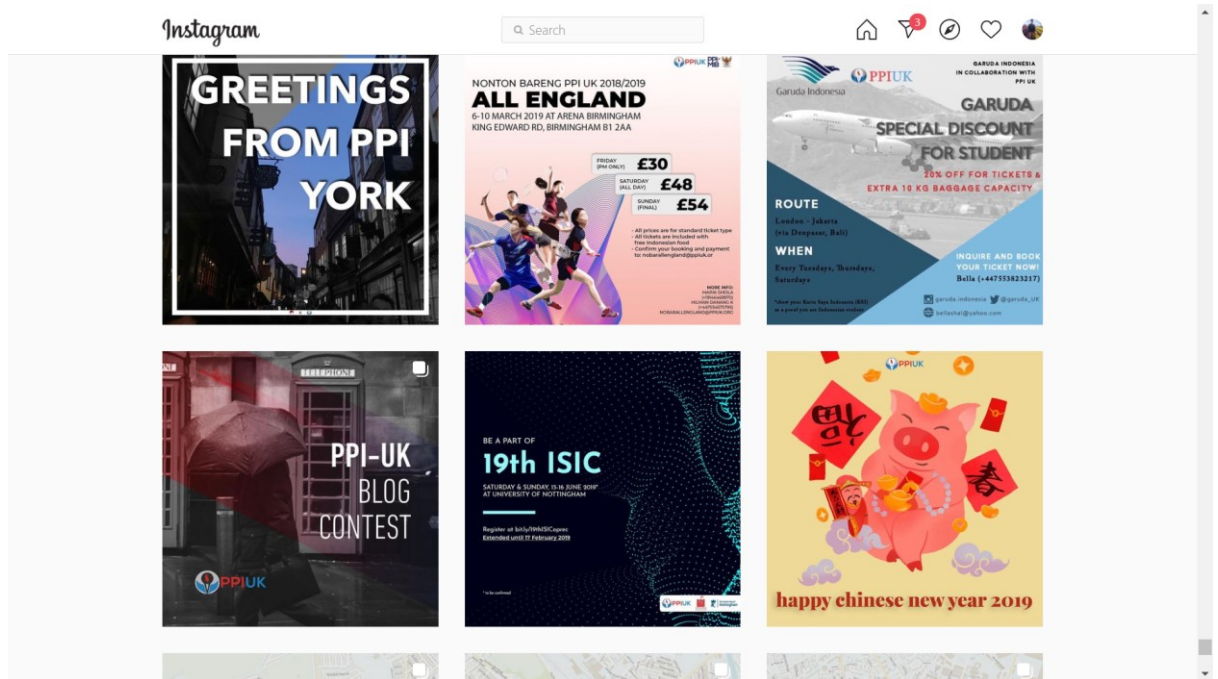


Figure 11. The information of the blog contest was posted in Indonesian Students Association (PPI) in September 2018

4.3 Coding and categorising the data obtained from the first round of student blogs

Intercultural communication competence is defined as “effective and appropriate behaviour and communication” in a cross-cultural area with suitable manners in specific contexts (Deardorff, 2006, p. 68). As suggested by Deardorff, a framework for intercultural competence needs to be designed, with the aim of it being the principal instrument for the assessment of intercultural competence, for example, the frameworks of intercultural competence that were proposed by Fantini (2009), Bennett (2009), Byram (2000) and Paige and Goode (2009). These findings were also supported by other research into intercultural competence, including Ting-Toomey (2009) and Jackson (2011), which will be described in more detail in the explanation of the data.

To help answer the first research question regarding intercultural competencies required, as outlined elsewhere in chapter three, NVivo 12 software was employed. After data was collected from the blogs, each blog file was uploaded on Nvivo 12 to organise and prepare the data for analysis. By reading through the data and making notes, using content analysis, all data were grouped according to emerging themes.

To analyse the students' stories, the data was coded with various intercultural competence criteria based on emerging themes. Coding aims to "assign symbolic meaning to the descriptive or inferential information compiled during a study" (Miles et al., 2014, p. 78). Moreover, coding can be described as a word or short phrase which is "summative, salient or essence-capturing" and is found in qualitative data collection involving "interview transcripts, participants observation field notes, documents and photographs" (Saldana 2013, cited in Miles et al., 2014, p. 78). Initially, several codes were identified which were then reduced in number at a later stage, resulting in seven categories or themes that emerged during data analysis. Of these, five major categories of intercultural competence were identified, and these are detailed in Table 4 below with examples of each.

Table 5. Major components of intercultural competence

Categories	Definitions	Examples
A. Ability to acquire new knowledge of other cultural backgrounds.	To acquire new knowledge of other cultural backgrounds during the adjustment period and also to reflect their ability to identify themselves with their own culture.	"As my cultural background, I used to eat a lot of meat in Indonesia. Food like satay or roasted chicken were my favourite food in my country. However, in Durham, looking for such food was hardly unbearable. Besides, as a Muslim, I have to eat halal meat, which is not easy to find."

<p>B. Flexible attitude, be open-minded and respect other cultures.</p>	<p>To respect cultural diversity by seeing things from other cultural perspectives.</p>	<p>“Later on, I found myself always in the middle of constant conflicts between each other over something that I would normally find okay; but to them, is actually offensive. From here, I learned that I really need to think carefully before saying something as it could actually offend someone. People can be very sensitive here.”</p>
<p>C. Ability to develop the required skills through intercultural experience.</p>	<p>To observe, listen and understand other people’s cultural backgrounds.</p>	<p>“After passing a few months, we are at home with other housemates sitting together to tell stories. This time, we no longer discuss cultural differences but we are comfortable to share our personal stories about families, parents, and so on. We meet at the guest table and listen to each other. I told him how I began to feel homesick, with my parents and twin brothers. Overall, while telling stories, we are getting closer and I am starting to understand their culture and now they are part of my small family in the UK.”</p>
<p>D. Ability to resolve culture shock.</p>	<p>To handle culture shock successfully during the intercultural adjustment period.</p>	<p>“All communities in Nottingham are very helpful to me in dealing with all the problems that I have faced during my early few months living in this country, especially helping me to solve homesickness. Starting from my close friends in the class, and also the Indonesian community who also live in this city and they always help me</p>

		with homesickness which is quite stressful at the first time before meeting them.”
E. Ability to become familiar with the Western formal higher education	To adjust to the difference between Western and Indonesian academic styles of learning.	“I am starting to learn how valuable writing skills are in the academic world. I learned the ability to write structured, and critical is the main basis for those who want a career in the academic world. Indirectly, the culture of writing this essay will also have an effect on our way of looking at problems in the world or the critical thinking way.”

In addition to the above five categories, two other themes were relevant to the students’ development of their intercultural competencies in using social media and understanding the local language. However, these themes were only categorised as minor because only a few students mentioned these competencies in their blog posts. These themes are detailed in Table 5 below.

Table 6. Minor components of intercultural competence

A. Ability to acquire new knowledge of the British language.	To develop their understanding of the English language, and in particular British English.	“I began to learn and use British English in my daily life (i.e., "aye me duck," which translates to "how are you?"")”
B. Attitude to effectively establish intercultural interactions by using social media platforms	To use social media to help themselves adjust to the cultural differences in their new place of residence.	“I have joined a Facebook group of the Islamic Society in the University, and it helps me a lot to find any information about prayer times, halal butchers and Halal Restaurants.”

4.4 Results of the student blogs

After analysing the content of the blog posts produced by the participant, this section will explore in more detail each of the major and minor components of intercultural competence that are required. According to the analysis of the blog posts’ stories, five major components of intercultural competence were identified, and two themes were only classified as minor because only a few students stated these competencies implicitly in their blog posts.

4.4.1 Acquiring new knowledge of other cultural backgrounds

This category relates to how the participants acquire new knowledge of other cultural backgrounds during the adjustment period, and also reflects their ability to identify themselves with their own culture. As is apparent in the following excerpt, a participant used this competence to find out information about having lunch in British culture, which was not familiar to him before coming to the UK:

“Sebagai latar belakang, saya sangat mencintai daging di Indonesia. Makanan seperti sate, tongseng atau ayam bakar adalah nikmat dunia yang tidak saya dustakan. Tapi di Durham, sebagai orang Muslim, mencari makanan seperti itu susahnyanya tidak kepalang tanggung.”

“As my cultural background, I used to eat a lot of meat in Indonesia. Food like satay or roasted chicken were my favourite food in my country. However, in Durham, looking for such food was hardly unbearable. Besides, as a Muslim, I have to eat halal meat, which is not easy to find”

As can be ascertained from this story, the participant acquires new knowledge about the other culture, and then applies it to his own life. He then continued his story by relating how he has resolved this issue by having salad for his lunch, rather than eating meat. As a result, he has become familiar with the composition of a salad because he says:

“Sekarang saya sudah cukup mahir dalam memilih bahan dan *dressing* salad yang tepat dengan menambah nuanasa rasa Indonesia. *Olive*, *coleslaw* atau *feta* sudah terpatrit dalam kamus saya.”

“Now, I am quite proficient in choosing the right salad ingredients and sometimes I add some Indonesian recipe. Right now, olive, coleslaw or feta are in my dictionary”

The above excerpt reveals that the student has to integrate himself in the new culture in order to successfully adjust to his new surroundings. He did not include any meat in his food because he was unable to find Halal meat, but he now eats some vegetables by integrating Indonesian and Western styles of salad. The ability to acquire knowledge of other cultural backgrounds and more understanding of their own national identities is a key skill required by an intercultural person (Jackson, 2011).

By using this skill, an intercultural person can become more accepting of other practices without losing their own identity, and without feeling intimidated by cultural differences or loss of national identity (Jackson, 2011). In this case, he still maintains his identity as a Muslim who only eats halal meat by replacing the meat with salad.

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Dinamika Esai dan Salad: Cerita dari Kota Durham

Setelah lima tahun bekerja di Ibukota Jakarta, pergi belajar di kota kecil di Inggris merupakan sebuah kekhawatiran sendiri. Kota ini bernama Durham, kota dingin namun artistik di timur laut Inggris yang kehidupannya digerakan oleh kaum pelajar. Bisa tiba di kota ini sudah merupakan kenikmatan khusus, hanya saja kenikmatan tersebut mudah sirna ketika saya ingat bahwa saya bukan turis. Cukup sering orang datang untuk berfoto dengan Katedral Durham, minum kopi di pinggir sungai *wear*, menunggu senja kemudian pulang. Tapi nyatanya, saya tetap disini dan tidak pulang – pulang juga. Saya kembali berhadapan dengan kalender akademik.



Figure 12. One of the student's blogs telling his intercultural experience in Durham

4.4.2 Flexible attitude, be open-minded and respect other cultures

This category relates to how cultural diversity can be respected by seeing things from another person's cultural perspective. Some participants who shared their stories in the blog posts described how they changed their views about cultural differences during the period of intercultural adjustment. One participant talked about his experience of living with housemates from a different cultural background. He said that, at first, he was unhappy about the living arrangements because the other housemates often had late-night parties. He was uncomfortable with this because this type of activity is not commonplace in Indonesian culture. However, after having lived together for a while, he understood that party nights were a common activity in

Western culture, aimed at temporarily forgetting the problems that people faced in their daily lives. Finally, a good relationship was formed between them all as the participant states below:

“Ketika aku memahami bagaimana kehidupan teman-temanku seperti itu, aku mulai memahami kehidupan mereka dan kita saling menawarkan waktu dan tenaga untuk membantu satu dengan yang lain, layaknya sebuah “keluarga kedua”. Ketika ada yang lapar, kita memasak bersama. Ketika ada yang sedih, kita belikan hadiah”

“When I understand how my friends live like that, I begin to understand their lives, and we offer each other to help one another, like a “second family”. When someone is hungry, we cook together. When someone is sad, we buy a gift”

In this respect, Elola and Oskoz (2008) have also found that, in respecting other cultures, people are not required to change their principles, but they have to adjust to the new situation and become more aware of their own ethics when assessing others. Being open-minded about other cultural norms can help sojourners gain knowledge about interacting and communicating with people from other cultural backgrounds in the one environment (Hunter et al., 2006, cited in Grandin and Hedderich, 2009).

4.4.3 Self-development through intercultural experience

On its own, intercultural experience is not sufficient for sojourners to become adjusted to the new culture. Intercultural speakers also need self-development in how to observe, listen and ask questions of people from other cultural backgrounds. It was evident from the student blog stories that developing intercultural competence is an essential aspect of living in a new culture, and includes how they interact in

intercultural situations and build new relationships. One of the participants was uncertain about whether something was polite or impolite. As a consequence of living in a different culture, she has to learn to develop herself through the experiences she encounters so that she can successfully adjust to the new culture. This is evident in these words from the participant in the passage below:

“One thing that I learned since I moved is that you should never be afraid to express your voice and do explore new places to know it better. I do cherish every single moments that I spent in London. It may have its flaws, but who would’ve thought that I would come to say that this place is my second home now”

This story is an example of the ability to self-develop in the intercultural experience by acquiring new knowledge about the culture and cultural practices, and also how this new knowledge is used during the intercultural adjustment period. Therefore, this process of self-development and the resolution of intercultural conflicts are part of intercultural competence. This participant’s story proves that sojourners must develop their intercultural competence in order to become aware of the cultural codes used in language, so that they can perform in a similar manner to native speakers in particular communicative contexts (Hua, 2014).

4.4.4 Ability to resolve culture shock

During a student’s self-development in the intercultural adjustment period, it is common for him/her to experience an issue called culture shock. Many of the participants expressed their experience of culture shock and a number of them were able to successfully deal with it. Therefore, this category involves how participants

perceive themselves dealing with culture shock. For example, the story below describes how a student dealt with homesickness:

“Semua komunitas yang ada di Nottingham pun sangat membantuku dalam menghadapi segala permasalahan yang ada. Mulai dari teman-teman dekat di kelas, hingga rekan setanah air yang selalu bisa mengobati rasa kangen rumah yang cukup membuat tertekan. Bermula dari teman satu kelas, dan juga bertemu dengan teman sesama komunitas Indonesia yang tinggal di kita ini, dan mereka selalu membantuku didalam mengatasi rindu tanah air yang terkandang membuatku stress sebelum bertemu mereka.”

“All communities in Nottingham are very helpful to me in dealing with all the problems that I have faced during my early few months living in this country, especially helping me to solve homesickness. Starting from my close friends in the class, and also the Indonesian community who also live in this city and they always help me with homesickness which is quite stressful at the first time before meeting them”

The above excerpt reveals that the student is able to resolve any feelings of homesickness with the support of her friends, both her friends from university and friends that she has made in Nottingham's Indonesian community (an Indonesian community exists in the city because many Indonesians have come to the UK to study or to permanently live here). She has a more open-minded strategy about actively joining societies, rather than isolating herself, which could cause further homesickness. Loneliness and isolation can cause sojourners to feel homesick and stressed during the intercultural adjustment period (Hua, 2014). Therefore, to avoid culture shock, a strategy must be developed as part of intercultural competence.

4.4.5 Ability to become familiar with the Western formal higher education

This category relates to how a student adjusts to the differences between Western and Indonesian academic styles of learning. There is evidence that a gap exists between Indonesian and Western academic styles, and this is illustrated by one student's story when he realised that different learning systems were being used in class:

“Berbicara tentang sistem belajar, *professors* yang mengajar akan memberikan jurnal-jurnal pendukung yang harus kita selesaikan sebelum kelas diadakan. Pada saat pengajaran pun mereka tidak memberikan banyak teori dalam pembahasannya di kelas. *Slides* presentasi yang ditampilkan tidak terlalu dibahas secara mendetail. Penjelasan mereka cenderung memaparkan pengalaman mereka dalam mengaplikasikan teori tersebut”

“Talking of the different learning systems, professors who teach us will provide supporting journals that we must complete before the class is held. During the teaching in class, they did not provide many theories in their discussion in class. Also, the presentation slides were not too detailed and tend to describe their experience in applying the theory”

Moreover, there is clear evidence that differences exist in writing essays, as illustrated by the following student blog:

“First, when it turns out for writing essays in University, it is a sacred thing that makes (many) people cry. As a graduate from Indonesian education, I am not very used to writing essays to get the final grade from a course.”

These two students openly stated that the new academic environment is different in style from the academic environment they had experienced in Indonesia. In this respect, Novera (2004) also discovered that Indonesian students face some issues with

achieving a Western academic standard. However, to counteract this, students should have a strategy for coping with this challenge, as in the following example where another student related how he changed his perspective about essay writing in a Western academic style:

“Sisi positifnya, saya belajar betapa kemampuan menulis bernilai di dunia akademik. Kemampuan menulis yang terstruktur, kritis dan tepat sasaran merupakan dasar utama bagi mereka yang ingin berkarir di dunia akademik. Secara tidak langsung, budaya menulis esai ini juga akan berpengaruh terhadap cara pandang kita dalam melihat masalah di dunia.”

“I am starting to learn how valuable writing skills are in the academic world. I learned the ability to write structured, and critical is the main basis for those who want a career in the academic world. Indirectly, the culture of writing this essay will also have an effect on our way of looking at problems in the world or the critical thinking way”

Many students have realised that there is a significant difference between Indonesian and British academic styles, including writing essays and the teaching systems which are used in UK universities. This phenomenon can arise because the educational provider does not make adequate provision to help students develop their intercultural competence and cultural self-awareness (Paige and Goode, 2009). By reflecting on the student blog posts, it can be seen that students should have a strategy for the development of their intercultural competence and are therefore in a position to adjust to different academic learning styles.

Two other themes evident in the student blog posts are relevant to how participants acquire new knowledge believed to be of assistance in the intercultural adjustment period. These themes are the ability to acquire new knowledge of the British language

and having sophisticated skills in accessing social media platforms, and these will be explained in the next sections.

4.4.6 Ability to acquire new knowledge of the British English language

This category reflects how students obtain new information about the English language, and primarily British English. Students are confronted with phrases that are unfamiliar to them and they also need to familiarise themselves with the British accent. For example, consider the below excerpt which describes how a student who had difficulties with English is now beginning to understand the British accent:

“Believe it, no matter how good your IELTS is, and no matter how good you can understand English in the movie “Harry Potter”, their English is still difficult to be understood by us.”

In this respect, Launder (2008) found that most Indonesians did not learn British English or American English. Indonesian English was originally influenced by Australian English, for example, the Australian government sponsored teaching materials in some schools. Moreover, Launder stated that Indonesian English could be influenced by what was heard in the media, for example, American popular music such as the Guns and Roses or Marilyn Manson. As a result, it could be difficult for an Indonesian student living in the UK to understand British English. However, over time, students begin to learn British English and use it in their daily lives. For example, one of the participants wrote in his blog post that he greets his friends informally with “aye me duck”, which means “how are you?”.

4.4.7 Attitude to effectively establish intercultural interactions by using social media platforms

Some of the students mentioned in their blog posts how they use social media to help them adjust to cultural differences in their new community. Many social media platforms, such as Facebook, Instagram and WhatsApp, were introduced to help people socialise with one another. Social media is now not only used for socialising, but can also be used to search for new information, for example, a recipe. Consider the below passage which explains the use of social media during the intercultural adjustment period.

“Saya telah bergabung disebuah grup Facebook bernama Islamic Society, dan itu sangat membantuku didalam mencari informasi mengenai waktu sholat, daging Halal, dan Halal restoran”

“I have joined a Facebook group of the Islamic Society in the University, and it helps me a lot to find any information about prayer times, halal butchers and Halal Restaurants”

This story demonstrates how important it is for Muslims to know prayer times and be able to buy halal food. It is rather difficult to obtain this information in the UK, with most butchers and restaurants not selling halal meat and food. In this case, the student was able to resolve this issue by joining the Islamic Society Facebook group which provided details of prayer times and halal foods. In this respect, Junco (2012) found that social media platforms, including Facebook, can help the student actively engage with other students in a positive way. Nowadays, students are able to adapt more easily to their new environments because almost all college students use social media.

4.5 Summary

This chapter offers the findings from an analysis of the students' online blog posts on the intercultural competencies required by Indonesian students in the UK. The outcome demonstrates that the student blog posts provided details about how students develop the required intercultural competencies during the intercultural adjustment period. Seven categories of themes were discovered, which included five major themes and two minor themes. By using Nvivo 12, the five major themes were found to be: (1) acquiring new knowledge of other cultural backgrounds, (2) flexibility, be open-minded and respect other cultures, (3) self-development through intercultural experience, (4) the ability to resolve culture shock and (5) the ability to become familiar with the Western academic style of learning. Furthermore, two minor themes also emerged which are also relevant to how students develop their intercultural competencies: (1) the ability to acquire new knowledge of the British language and (2) the attitude to effectively establish interactions between cultures by using social media platforms.

Chapter Five

Intercultural Interactions in the United Kingdom: An Ethnographic Study

5.1 Introduction

In this and the following chapters, I will examine the findings that emerged from the ethnographic data, which respond to the research questions supplied within the first chapter of this study. In this chapter, I will explore how participants felt about their first experience living abroad and how they performed in terms of intercultural interactions with people from different cultural backgrounds, using information gathered from interviews and observations. The following chapter, Chapter Six, will be devoted to intercultural encounters, emphasising (im)politeness evaluation as a starting point.

This chapter aims to capture the intercultural adjustment journey of a group of Indonesian postgraduate students in the UK. An ethnographic approach was used by involving regular in-depth individual interviews with some of the students and overt observation over one full academic year. Specifically, this study explores students' intercultural competence required and its development during the intercultural journey through an ethnographic approach. These results address the first research question posed by this study which was mentioned previously in the methodology chapter as stated below:

Which intercultural competencies are required by Indonesian students, and how are these competencies developed during the intercultural adjustment period?

According to observations made and interviews conducted at the beginning of the academic year, shortly after students arrived in England, during the intercultural adjustment period, the participants experienced a range of emotions concerning the academic and sociocultural world they were entering and the home world they were leaving behind. This is discussed in detail within this chapter. This chapter will focus on the experiences of the participants when involved in any intercultural interactions, engaging when they are on exchange in the host country. A brief overview of how intercultural competence is developed by each participant starting in pre-sojourn and during sojourn is provided in this chapter's following sections.

5.2 Intercultural Competence Development

The development of intercultural competence is achieved through intercultural experience and cultural learning development, which includes observing, listening to, and asking people from various cultural backgrounds to help teach, share experiences, and have conversations with newcomers (Deardorff 2009). As outlined in the Chapter One and Chapter Two, there is much debate regarding the meaning of the term 'intercultural competence' in the associated literature. For example, the OECD (2018) characterizes intercultural competence as the "knowledge, skills, attitudes, and values" that can be used to interact appropriately with people from diverse cultural backgrounds (p. 7). In this study, as outlined in Chapter One, the term 'intercultural competence' will be defined as the ability to not only interact (verbally and nonverbally) and behave effectively and appropriately with people from different cultural groups, but also to deal with the psychological demands and dynamic results that such interactions entail (Spencer-Oatey and Franklin, 2009).

The development of intercultural competence is achieved through intercultural experience and cultural learning development, which includes observing, listening to, and asking people from various cultural backgrounds to help teach, share experiences, and have conversations with newcomers (Deardorff 2009). This chapter explores the required level of intercultural competence and how it develops in international students, particularly Indonesian students, during the intercultural adjustment period. In the case of international students, as outlined in the Chapter One, the intercultural adjustment is a period when students adjust to the new academic environment and cultural differences in daily life, for instance, “living conditions, housing, food, shopping, the cost of living, entertainment and health-care facilities” (Robbie and Ryan, 1996, p. 515).

5.2 Intercultural Interactions

This study will employ the phrase ‘intercultural interactions’, which refers to persons interacting between cultures. As outlined in Chapter Two, this study defined culture because it is exhibited via different irregularities, some of which are more explicit than others. Moreover, culture is related to social groupings, yet no two people within a group have the same cultural features (Spencer-Oatey and Franklin, 2009). Furthermore, as outlined in Chapter Two, culture in this study refers to a ‘complex set of meaning systems that consists of patterns of traditionalisms, beliefs values, schemas norms, and symbols, which are shared to varying degrees by interacting members of a social group and that influence (but not determine) each member's behaviour and his/her interpretations about the underlying meaning of other people's behaviour’ (Spencer-Oatey and Kadar, 2021, p. 4). The phrase ‘intercultural

interactions' is used as the focus of this study. Aligning with the work of Zegarac (2007), the term 'intercultural' refers to a situation in which the cultural gap between the individuals is large enough to influence how they interact and communicate, at least to some extent (Cited in Spencer-Oatey and Kadar, 2021).

From their motivations to instigate intercultural contact, to their hurdles, I will describe some of the participants' experiences in this ethnographic research report chapter. In addition, this study indicated that intercultural competence is built through intercultural encounters. Furthermore, this chapter will examine the experiences of the participants during intercultural contact and how they manage with these encounters. This study investigated how the participants manage cross-cultural encounters during intercultural exchanges since mismatched evaluations among participants may occur. According to Spencer-Oatey and Kadar's (2021) study, which states that variations in cultural patterning might have an influence on the meaning-forming process and evaluative assessments, resulting in differing degrees of awareness in intercultural encounters. Moreover, managing intercultural encounters in intercultural interactions could be challenging as every individual or group has its own identity, which involves 'norms of behaviour, schematic representations of a situation, and values and beliefs' (Spencer-Oatey and Kadar, 2021, p. 4). The following section will explain the method to analyse the ethnographic data gathered in this study.

5.3 Rendering ethnography data to the narrative story as thematic discourse analysis

Following Clarke and Braun (2014), all data obtained from the ethnography study was analysed using thematic discourse analyses, which paid attention to the constructive role of language as well as multiple and shifting meanings while maintaining a particular interest in patterned meaning (discourses) within the data set.

Interactive discourse, including 'texts, interviews, conversations, and arguments' is referred to as narrative or story-telling (Bamberg, 2020, p. 262). As discussed in the methodology chapter (see chapter three), using a narrative and quotations from the participants, I intend to highlight the findings of the ethnographic research by presenting the findings of the interviews and observed data in the form of a narrative essay. The narrative will talk about the experiences that the participants have had while engaging with people from other cultures. Furthermore, I will use the stories to discuss the competencies that the participants have gained throughout their time in the host country.

I present the data acquired into narratives based on the interview and observation to analyse what the participants have said. Throughout this chapter, I will use the narrative as a discursive source to analyse the intercultural interactions that the participants had throughout the ethnographic study's intercultural sojourn. The focus of this discourse analysis will be on "...the pattern of language across texts as well as the social and cultural context in which the text occurs" (Paltridge, 2012, p. 1). Furthermore, as stated earlier in Chapter Three, the discourse analysis will concentrate on what the participant "really said," which requires abandoning the search for hidden meanings, individual goals, or an overarching ideology, as well as their knowledge background and assumptions (Villadsen, 2020, p. 302). Starting with their motivation to engage with new individuals from various cultural backgrounds in the new area, the next section will cover their journeys and experiences in intercultural relationships. The narratives provided will be presented in both languages, Bahasa Indonesia, and English.

One of the findings was the competencies developed, including motivation, advancing English language proficiency, the first perception of the host culture, and

being active during their last journey to the host country, affected the first period upon arrival to the host country. The following section will explain some of the intercultural competencies developed before departure, which helped them with their journey in the host country.

Based on weekly sojourn interviews, observations, field notes, and quotations (the participants' actual words), written narratives reflect the participants' actual intercultural journeys. Each quote is presented in Bahasa, with an English translation also being provided. Some of the translations were translated directly, word for word, to convey the exact meaning and make it more natural based on what they said in the Indonesian cultural background.

5.4 Intercultural competencies required and developed before the journey

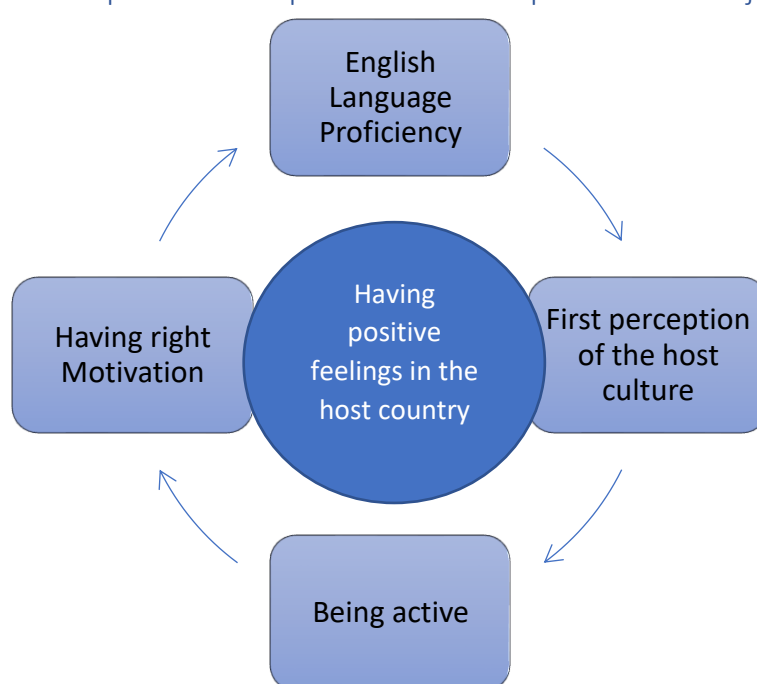


Figure 13. Intercultural competence development prior to the sojourn

This section will outline the participants' journey captured during the ethnographic study pictured in the module above. The module above clarifies how intercultural

competence is required and developed prior to the journey and positively impacts arrival in the host country. As discussed in the previous sections, by outlining the participants' journey, participants were drawn from various sociocultural and academic backgrounds, with various motivations to study abroad. Interestingly, despite one of them having negative feelings upon arrival in the host country, the rest of the participants had positive feelings from their efforts to prepare prior to arrival in the destination country. It seemed that they had developed the intercultural competencies required.

Some intercultural competencies were successfully developed prior to the journey. 'Prior to the journey' refers to the period before departure to the UK. During the first session of the interview, all the participants stated their feelings, experiences, and motivation to continue studying in the UK. After being investigated and analysed through the field notes, some intercultural competence components were developed to impact their living in the host country positively.

5.4.1 Having the motivation to know other culture and to interact across culture

During the ethnographic project, several participants who had the competencies required had a positive experience in the early period of living in the host country. Specific attitudes and prior knowledge was identified that could influence intercultural competence development in their host country, affecting their experience of living in the new place.

As pictured in the above module (figure. 1), having the right motivation, advanced foreign language proficiency, actively seeking general knowledge of the host culture,

and looking for helpful information can positively impact having a better feeling of living in a new environment.

During the first observation and interview, the fundamental attitude that affected the intercultural competence development, resulting in a positive experience for the students' living in the host country, was having the right motivation to learn about other cultures and interact in intercultural communication. Besides continuing study abroad, although all participants have never visited abroad and had minimal interaction with different cultures, they are still incentivised to know about the country and its culture. Consider the following excerpts:

“Jadi, pada waktu itu ada yang mengingatkan mimpi saya kuliah di luar negeri dan selain itu, salah satu motivasi saya adalah untuk mengenal budaya lain juga.”

“So, at that time, there was someone who reminded me of my dream of studying abroad, and one of my motivations is to know other cultures as well.” (Via).

“Aku sangat senang sekali setelah mendapatkan surat penerimaan sebagai mahasiswa untuk berkuliah di Inggris karena aku ingin sekali untuk [mengetahui] budaya baru yang belum pernah aku kunjungi.”

“I was very excited to come to England after getting my offer letter from the university because I want to know a new culture that I have never known before.” (Sulis)

“Negara Inggris merupakan negara yang indah di mana [mereka] mempunyai empat musim, dan aku ingin sekali mempunyai pengalaman untuk tinggal di negara empat musim.”

“England is a beautiful country with four seasons, and I want to experience a country with four seasons.” (Febry)

As can be ascertained from the above excerpts, the participants have positive motivations and cannot wait to start their journey, experience living in the UK, and learn the culture. Moreover, having a worthy reason to continue studying in the UK could increase their curiosity and influence their involvement in the culture to adjust to cultural differences successfully. Likewise, Pusch (2009) believes that the motivation to explore and learn a new culture is an essential factor for developing an attitude of openness and curiosity in a sojourn to achieve intercultural competence development. Being motivated and having prior knowledge of the host culture during the first perception could be well-suited with the sojourner's general skills in communicating cross-culturally, including self-reflection and articulation of differences. During data analysis, it was discovered that the competency of a sojourners' English language proficiency is influenced by positive motivations and will be discussed in the next section.

5.4.2. English language proficiency

Another ability that influences a positive experience living abroad is sojourners' English language proficiency. Although most students have limited opportunities to visit English-speaking countries, they have advanced English language proficiency before departure. By having advanced English language proficiency, students can reduce anxiety levels and increase their confidence in living

abroad and communicating across cultures within the host country. Consider the following excerpts:

“Pada waktu itu aku sudah mempunyai kemampuan berbahasa Inggris untuk bisa berkuliah di Inggris, oleh karena itu aku bakal baik-baik saja untuk berkomunikasi dengan orang-orang baru di sana.”

“I feel I already have sufficient English standards for studying in the UK, so I hope I will be fine interacting with some new people there.” (Via)

“Aku belajar bahasa Inggris ketika aku belajar di masa kuliah sarjana. Maka karena itu, aku berpikir aku bakal tidak punya masalah di dalam berkomunikasi di negara baru.”

“I learned English when I was studying at undergraduate level in university, so I thought I would not have any communication issues in the host country” (Dibyoy)

“Ketika aku belajar bahasa Inggris di level sekolah menengah dengan orang Inggris, aku banyak belajar tentang cara berbicara sesuai budaya Inggris yang berlaku.”

“When a native speaker taught me English lessons at junior high school, I got much information about how to speak using English that applies to British culture” (Ino)

The above excerpts reveal that by having advanced foreign language proficiency, they have the foundations with which to interact across cultures in the host country. For example, Ino has some information about using English following British culture's prevailing norms (i.e., '*I got much information about how to speak using English that applies to British culture*'). As a result, having English language skills could be the basic knowledge that encourages sojourners' involvement in cross-cultural activity in the host country. Prior studies have noted the importance of foreign language proficiency as the rudimentary skills of intercultural competence development (Byram, 1997; Kramsch, 2001; Krajewski, 2011).

However, having foreign language proficiency alone is not enough for a person to adapt quickly to a new environment and culture. It has been suggested that foreign language competency should be paired with knowledge and understanding of the host culture to communicate across cultures successfully (Deardorff, 2006). The students' second priority was to learn general information about the host culture to discover what needed to be prepared to reduce their anxiety when moving abroad.

5.4.3 Learning general knowledge of the host culture as the first perception of the new culture

Some of the participants began to actively seek the information they required while living there. They discovered some negative information that they needed to consider. However, it made them better prepared and gave them the information they needed to reduce their anxiety when living abroad. The students who were proactive in studying the host's culture get a pre-emptive picture to be better prepared and feel less anxious.

This seemed to affect their experience of living in the host country. Consider the following excerpts:

“*Sebenarnya*, sebelum kedatanganku di sini, aku takut dengan Islamofobia di negara ini, seperti yang diberitakan di berita, dan hal itu sangat tidak menyenangkan khususnya untuk orang Islam.”

“Actually, before coming here, I was afraid of Islamophobia in this country, as it can be seen in the news that things are not pleasant, especially for Muslims.” (Sulis)

“Jujur saja, jika harus menyatakan tentang kesan pertama saya tentang budaya Inggris sebelum keberangkatan ke sini, saya agak khawatir sebagai seorang orang Islam. Saya agak khawatir jika harus terlibat dengan budaya minum ala budaya Barat

“To be honest, when talking about my first impression of British culture before departure, I was a little bit afraid as a Muslim. I was a bit worried to be involved with the typical western drinking culture.” (Febry)

The above excerpts reveal that some participants have gained general cultural knowledge before the journey to gather a basic understanding of the host culture. Some participants have negative perceptions of the host culture (i.e., Islamophobia, Western drinking culture). However, their anxiety led them to seek helpful information that could impact the ease of settlement in the host country, and this will be discussed in the next section. This study found that having advanced foreign language proficiency and relevant cultural knowledge could reflect their readiness to adapt to intercultural communication and live in a new environment. This study's results reflect those of Chen and An (2009), who also found that in a large-scale context, from the cognitive process of acquiring cultural knowledge and its character, sojourners could draw an image to show the degree of their perception of a culture. As a result, having prior

cultural knowledge and understanding leads to the individuals' actively looking for helpful information. This is discussed in the next section.

5.4.4. Actively looking for useful information to reduce anxiety

As a result of their concern about their current British cultural knowledge, they actively searched for useful information. During the first interview, being active in looking for helpful information became a contributing factor for a positive experience when moving abroad. The participants highlighted these attitudes by outlining their preparation and how it created positive feelings on arrival in the host country, as described in the following excerpts:

“Sebelumnya saya sudah mulai mencari informasi tentang budaya Inggris dan juga perilaku mereka. Selain itu, saya juga mencari beberapa informasi yang bermanfaat untuk mempersiapkan perjalanan pertama saya ke luar negeri, seperti misalnya, akomodasi dan makanan. Untuk membantuku di dalam hal itu, saya juga bergabung dengan teman-teman mahasiswa saya yang akan berangkat ke Inggris.”

“I have started looking for information about British culture and their behaviour. Also, I was looking for some useful information to prepare for my first journey abroad, for example, accommodation and food. To help me with that, I also joined together with my fellow students who were leaving for England” (Via)

“Saya mulai aktif untuk menghubungi Perhimpunan Pelajar Indonesia untuk mencari akomodasi yang tepat untuk saya karena saya khawatir dan cemas jika harus

mendapatkan lokasi yang buruk di negara baru karena sebelumnya saya belum pernah pernah ke luar negeri."

"I am actively contacting the Indonesian student association to find the right accommodation for me as I was worried and anxious about getting a bad location in the new place. As I have never been abroad before" (Febri)

The above excerpts reveal that some students actively found suitable accommodation for living in the host country (i.e., *'I am actively contacting the Indonesian student association to find the right accommodation for me'*). The word *'actively'* here becomes the keyword that helps students have a good start and a positive experience upon arrival in the host country, as described in the following excerpts taken from the first interview with Via and Febry:

"Aku sudah mulai terbuka sebelumnya [yaitu, sebelum] pergi ke sini. Aku sudah mencoba membangun pertemanan dan berdiskusi dengan mereka yang sudah tinggal di Inggris. Oleh karena itu, aku mendapatkan akomodasi yang tepat."

"I was open-minded before the journey, and I was trying to make new friends and discuss with them who are in the UK already, so I got the right accommodation." (Via)

"Aku senang sekali bahwa teman-teman PPI menjemputku di bandara pada waktu itu untuk mengantarkanku sampai ke akomodasi yang akan kutempati."

"I was pleased that a friend from PPI (Indonesian Student Association) had picked me up at the airport to take me to my accommodation" (Febry)

The stories of Via and Febry offer insight into how being active when looking for helpful information can create a good impression when living in a new country. These case studies are not meant to be representative of all sojourners. However, at least, as expressed by Sulis, knowing useful information could reduce anxiety when staying abroad for the first time:

“Oleh karena itu, aku jadi mempunyai persiapan yang baik dan tidak takut untuk tinggal di lingkungan budaya baru.”

“So that I am better prepared and less worried about living in a new culture.” (Sulis)

Their sense of less worry was influenced by their enthusiastic attitude to find the correct information about the destination country. This finding resonates with Spitzberg and Changnon (2009) that knowing valuable knowledge of the host country and its culture before departure could minimise anxiety and improve satisfaction staying abroad. This study has identified how vital the intercultural competence required was to develop before the sojourn to acquire a positive experience when living abroad for the first time. The following section will discuss the participants’ journey during a stay abroad by starting their positive feelings and experiences from the attitudes developed prior to the trip.

5.4.5 Positive feelings in the host country

As previously mentioned, some participants acquired the right motivation, gained knowledge including English language proficiency and cultural knowledge perception, and actively looking for information. As a result, some of them have

positive feelings during the early period of living in the host country. They appeared to have good feelings and experiences when living in the host country. Consider the following excerpts:

“Saya dapat menyesuaikan diri dengan baik dengan budaya baru selama pertama kali saya tinggal di sini karena rumah saya dekat dengan banyak toko-toko yang menjual daging halal dan dikelilingi oleh banyak teman-teman Indonesia di sekitaran akomodasiku.”

“I could successfully adjust in the new culture during my first stay here as my house is near a lot of halal meat shops and is surrounded by many Indonesians in the neighbourhood.” (Sulis)

“Saya sangat senang ada teman dari PPI [Perhimpunan Pelajar Indonesia] yang menjemputku di bandara untuk mengantar saya ke rumah akomodasi. Sesampainya di sana, teman serumahku yang dari Indonesia sudah siap menyambut saya dengan segala hal yang bisa membuat saya nyaman, seperti makanan dan minuman.”

“I was pleased that a friend from PPI (Indonesian Student Association) had picked me up at the airport to take me to my accommodation. After arriving at my flat, my Indonesian friends’ housemate was ready to welcome me with everything that could make me comfortable, such as cooking, and drinks.” (Febry)

The above excerpts reveal that both Sulis and Febry had positive feelings of living in the host country during the early period of staying abroad. For example, taken from the interview, Sulis had positive feelings about living abroad for the first time (i.e., *'I could successfully adjust to the new culture during my first stay here'*). Another example also expressed by Febry was how being welcomed by his friends that he had contacted before his trip also contributed to his positive experience (i.e., *'my Indonesian friends' housemate was ready to welcome me with everything that could make me comfortable, such as cooking, and drinks'*). As discussed in the previous section, Sulis and Febry maintained their active attitude of looking for helpful information for the most suitable accommodation after having negative perceptions about their host country cultural knowledge. Being active and open-minded is essential for settling and positive experiences when living in a new country. Despite Febry and Sulis having limited intercultural experiences, they recognised the importance of being active and open to looking for information to adjust well to the new place. Following this, previous studies have demonstrated that if sojourners have minimal experience interacting with many cultures, they can still adapt to their new environment effectively as long they develop the knowledge and skills related to competent intercultural communication (Jackson, 2011). Although some participants can adjust effectively to the new location during the early period, all participants needed to pass a critical stage during the sojourn by facing intercultural encounters that affected their study and feelings in the host country.

This study suggests that intercultural competence development could be developed before departure, affecting positive feelings in the host country. The competencies found to affect experiences were *having the right motivation to learn about the host culture prior to the journey and advanced English language*

proficiency. It was then continued *by actively looking for useful information* in the host country to reduce their anxiety.

5.5 Motivation and attitudes for instigating intercultural interactions

This section summarises the findings on how the participants exhibited their motivations and attitudes that impacted their participation in intercultural interactions. It begins with a discussion of their motivation to engage with people from other cultures in new places and to keep an open mind to learn useful knowledge through intercultural interactions.

5.5.1 Being Motivated to Interact Across Cultures

In the first session of the ethnography research, relying on interviews and observation, this study found that most of the participants are committed to immediately interacting between cultures in their new place of residence. This section focuses on the participants' motivation and attitudes to interact with people from various cultural backgrounds upon arrival in the host country. Consider the following narrative taken in the first interview and observation with Ino:

“Aku langsung tahu bahwa ada *event* yang dinamakan Freshers Week, di mana banyak mahasiswa dari berbagai kalangan dunia dan latar belakang budaya, dan sebagai mahasiswa internasional. Aku sangat tertarik untuk menghadirinya. Di minggu pertama, aku datang ke acara Freshers ini, dan aku langsung bertemu beberapa teman dari berbagai budaya. Lalu aku berpikir bahwa acara seperti ini sangatlah penting untuk beradaptasi di budaya baru. [Manfaatnya] seperti, aku mendapatkan informasi yang berguna untuk mendapatkan makanan, kegiatan menghabiskan waktu di akhir pekan, dan mendapatkan informasi lainnya untuk membantuku beradaptasi dengan perbedaan budaya.”

“I immediately knew there was an event called freshers week, where there were many new students from across the world and cultures, and as an international student, I was very interested in attending it. In the first week, I attended a freshers event at Uni to immediately meet new friends from other cultures. So, I think this event, by making new friends is significant in helping to adapt to new cultures. Like get new some useful information for me to get food, to spend time on weekends, and more information to help me to adjust to the cultural difference.”

The above excerpt reveals that Ino had the motivation to participate in intercultural interactions as soon as he was in the host country. Ino wanted to take advantage of being an international student in a multicultural university (i.e., ‘... *there were many new students from across the world and cultures, and as an international student, I was very interested in attending it*’). In Ino’s case, he seemed to be motivated to interact with people across cultures to build friendships in his host country. As a result, he seemed to have a positive attitude upon arrival in the host country by making new friends to help him adjust to the cultural difference (i.e., ‘*So I think this event, by making new friends is significant in helping to adapt to the host cultures*’). This finding supports the study of Spitzeberg and Changnon (2009), which noted that the more a person enjoys interacting in the new society, the more they will see themselves and be perceived as competent in cross-cultural communication.



Figure 14: Attending fresher's week to communicate in intercultural interactions

Ino was very active and motivated to attend the event organised by his Uni, namely freshers week, as shown in the image above captured during the observation of Ino when he was at the Uni's freshers event week. During the observations, it was clear that this event was vibrant, with many students from many cultures interacting and excited to speak with each another. Ino seemed to love his new friendships with the new Uni colleagues after attending this event, and began to engage in numerous multicultural interactions during his time abroad. The following narrative is another example taken from another participant (Via) in the first session of interviews and observations:

“Aku mempunyai motivasi untuk mencari sebanyak mungkin teman di sini. Lalu aku memulai untuk membina pertemanan di sini dengan berkenalan dengan berbagai teman dari berbagai budaya, seperti dari Amerika, dan mahasiswa Taiwan. Dan pada saat itu, aku sudah bisa merasa dekat dengan mereka. Lalu, kami memulai berbagi cerita dalam hal apa saja dengan mereka.

Kami terlihat mempunyai hubungan dekat. Dengan hubungan seperti ini, aku cukup senang. Seperti kami sudah saling kenal sejak lama, kami saling berbagi cerita pengalaman ataupun bercerita untuk berbagi kesulitan yang kita alami. Oleh karena itu, hal ini sangat membantuku selama aku tinggal di sini.”

“I motivated myself to find as many friends as I could. So here I began to develop my friendships by making friends with other cultures, such as English Americans, and Taiwanese students. At that moment, I already felt close to them. So, we shared many kinds of stuff with them. So, we are getting close”. ‘By having this new relationship, I was pleased. It seems like we have known each other for a long time; we shared experiences about everything or some difficulties that we have experienced here, so it helps me a lot while I am living here.”

The above excerpt shows that Via is motivated to conduct intercultural interactions to build new relationships with friends across cultures (i.e., ‘*I motivated myself to find as many friends as I could. So here I began to develop my friendships by making friends with other cultures*’). Those two narratives above show that being motivated is one of the core attitudes required for intercultural interactions, resulting in making new friendships that could help an individual adjust to the cultural difference. These findings corroborate a previous study that emphasised the relevance of motivation for cross-cultural interactions as a behavioural and cognitive component of the adjustment process to the cultural difference when studying abroad (Chirkov et al. 2007, cited in Spencer-Oatey and Franklin, 2009). After having the motivation to interact between cultures in a new place, the next attitude is being open to finding the necessary information through inter-cultural relationships in the new place of residence. The following competency discovered in this study is how the participants had an open attitude about learning useful knowledge via intercultural interactions.

5.5.2 Openness to Find Helpful Information Through Intercultural Interactions

Most of the participants demonstrated an open attitude to interact across cultures upon arrival in the host country. Most of them are already open to communicating in intercultural interactions to find general information needed in the host country. Consider the following narrative taken in the first interview and observation with Sulis:

“Ketika aku tiba di negara Inggris, aku mencoba untuk terbuka dengan cara berdiskusi dengan teman-temanku yang berada di UK. Mereka berasal dari berbagai macam budaya. Aku tidak malu untuk membuka percakapan dengan mereka. Setelah banyak mengobrol dengan mereka, aku mendapatkan akomodasi yang tepat. Maka, aku awal-awal tiba di sini sangat bisa beradaptasi dengan baik, seperti rumahku banyak sekali menyediakan daging halal. Jadi, dengan sifat terbuka ini, aku memperoleh beberapa manfaat.”

“Upon my arrival in the UK, I tried to be open by discussing with my friends who are in the UK. They come from all sorts of cultures, and I’m not ashamed to open a conversation with them. After much chatting with them, I got the right accommodation, so I was fine to adapt to the new place like my house provides much halal meat. So, with this openness attitude, I gained some benefits.”

The above excerpt reveals that she had an open attitude upon arrival in the host country by interacting in intercultural interactions (i.e., *I’m not ashamed to open a conversation with them*). Sulis was open to seeking new information in the host culture through her new intercultural friends to find an accommodation suitable for her as a Muslim. As a result, she found the right accommodation, which became beneficial for her living abroad (i.e., *After much chatting with them, I got the right accommodation, so I was fine to adapt to the new place*). As a result, she had no trouble finding halal

food in her new place of residence. In this respect, these findings resonated with the ideas of Root and Ngampornchai (2012), stating that building intercultural competencies should be formed by affective (i.e., being open) and cognitive (i.e., pre-self-knowledge), which could be helpful to support cross-cultural adjustment. Moreover, a previous study has reported that an openness to discovering new things, including finding information about new daily routines and behaviours in the new place of residence, could support them in adjusting to the cultural differences (Dyne et al. 2008). By implicitly being open to intercultural interactions, Sulis found the information required to support her intercultural adjustment in the new place. The image below, for instance, taken from the observations with Sulis, shows how she was open to obtaining beneficial information through intercultural exchanges, such as finding several halal restaurants near where she lives, which affected her ability to have a good start in the host country.



Figure 15. Because of Sulis' attitude of being open to interacting in intercultural interactions, she found a suitable place of accommodation near the halal shop which was the key to having a good start in the host country.

Febri also outlined a similar experience in how he has become open in intercultural interactions. Consider the following example:

“Mulai saat ini, aku merasa lebih baik, [yaitu] ketika aku memulai membuka diriku dan mencoba untuk terbuka membuka percakapan dengan teman lintas budaya. Dengan keterlibatanku membuka percakapan dengan kawan-kawan dari berbagai budaya, dan sejak dari itu, aku baru tahu bahwa ternyata mereka sangat menghargai kepercayaanku mengenai tidak diperbolehkan untuk meminum minuman alkohol. Sejak itu pun, aku memulai bergabung dengan mereka pergi ke *pub* dan meskipun aku hanya memesan Coca-Cola, kami masih bisa mengobrol santai meskipun aku tidak perlu meminum bir.”

“Right now, I also feel better when I have emboldened and have tried to be open to starting conversations with my friends across cultures. Because of my involvement in intercultural interactions, and from that moment, I began to know that they also respect my religion which forbids drinking alcohol. Since then, I started going with them to the pub even though I only ordered Coca-Cola, and we still have fun chatting even though I don't drink beer.”

The above excerpt reveals that Febri had an open attitude to intercultural interactions. Because of this open attitude, he has now realised that he can hang out with his classmates in a pub, although he cannot drink alcohol because he is a Muslim. Moreover, Febri has also realised that although he cannot drink alcohol, his classmates respect Febri's identity meaning that he cannot drink alcoholic drinks (i.e., '*Since then, I started going with them to the pub even though I only ordered Coca-Cola, and we still have fun chatting even though I don't drink beer*'). During this phase, Febri seemed to gain more knowledge of the host culture such as the respect people have here for other people's identities; therefore, he has started to develop his motivation to participate in intercultural interactions. This study discovered that having these sorts of attitudes and motivations might help the participants want to actively engage across cultures in a new area to form new connections and friendships in the host culture,

which is critical to develop their intercultural competencies. A previous study found that engaging in intercultural interactions is essential for acquiring new knowledge. Listening and observing other cultures can increase a sojourner's motivation and reduce anxiety when interacting across cultures (Spitzberg and Changnon, 2009). Most participants appear to have positive opinions about intercultural friendships in their host nations, which will be examined in the following section, once they have formed the attitudes and motives necessary to engage across cultures in new areas.

5.6 Possessing Positive Feelings While Living in the Host Country

Most participants appeared to have a positive attitude in their host country by being open and motivated to engage in cross-cultural contacts. They also appeared to have positive relationships with their new intercultural friends. Consider the following excerpt taken with Ino in the second interview with him:

“Setelah menghadiri acara The Freshers Week, pada saat awal-awal berada di kampus, aku masih banyak mempunyai waktu luang. Lalu, aku sangat senang bisa *join* di berbagai perkumpulan mahasiswa, seperti komunitas poker, dan juga aku melanjutkan pergi untuk nongkrong bersama teman-teman sekelasku. Sehingga aku sangat menikmati [tinggal] di tempat baru ini karena mempunyai banyak teman dan memperoleh banyak pengalaman baru.”

“After attending the Freshers week, at the beginning of college, I had a lot of free time. So, I was happy to join some student unions, like the Poker society, and continue to hang out with my classmates. Furthermore, it was enjoyable to have many friends in this new place and get some new experiences in this new place.”

The above excerpt reveals that Ino joined many students' unions to maximise his experiences during life abroad (i.e., *'Furthermore, it was enjoyable to have many friends in this new place and get some new experiences in this new place'*). As Ino had spare time at the beginning of his studies, he wanted to expand on his friendships (i.e., *'I had a lot of free time. So I was happy to join some student unions'*). He seemed to be excited about the early period in his new place and new culture. As previously mentioned, as Ino enhanced his self-confidence, he would seek many opportunities to interact across cultures in many settings. In these findings, during the early period, because of Ino's positive mindset and attitude to intercultural interactions, it was natural that he seemed to be enjoying the new environment during this first stage of living abroad. These findings further support Jackson's (2010) idea that a sojourner could acquire positive mindsets (i.e., being active, open, and confident) as one of the intercultural attitudes required in a new place to communicate and interact across cultures successfully.

Via demonstrated a similar feeling and pointed out:

“Aku juga telah memulai membangun pertemanan dengan berkenalan dengan teman-teman lintas budaya, seperti teman dari Amerika dan Taiwan. Semenjak itu, aku sudah merasa mempunyai hubungan dekat dengan mereka. Lalu, aku mulai *curhat* dengan mereka. Dan aku merasakan hubungan yang dekat dengan mereka.”

“I also began to develop my friendships by making friends across other cultures, such as English Americans, and Taiwanese students. At that moment, I already felt close to them. So, we share many kinds of stuff with them. So, we are getting close.”

The above excerpt shows that Via was open and maintained good relationships with her new friends. She sought to enjoy her intercultural journey when she had successfully managed to establish good connections with non-Indonesian friends. Her point becomes more evident in her following quote discussing her enjoyment in the new place when having a new intercultural friendship:

“Aku sangat senang mempunyai hubungan pertemanan seperti ini, seperti kita sudah saling mengenal sejak lama, dan kami pun saling *curhat* tentang apa pun ataupun segala kesulitan yang kita alami selama tinggal di sini. Dengan itu, hal ini sangat membantuku selama tinggal di sini.”

“By having this new relationship, I was pleased. It seems like we have known each other for a long time; we share experiences about everything or some difficulties that we have experienced here, so it helps me a lot while I am living here.”

The above excerpt shows that due to her attitude, being open to having new friends in the new society, she seemed to enjoy living in the host country (i.e., '*By having this new relationship, I was pleased*'). During the sojourn, she kept an openness in the host country by finding new friends from other cultural backgrounds. As a result of her openness to others, she also seemed to have a new interest in learning about other cultural behaviours with her intercultural friends. Via maintained her attitude, being open, as it required communicating effectively across cultures and building intercultural friendships. These findings support evidence from the previous observations (Jackson, 2011; Spencer-Oatey and Franklin, 2009), stating that being open is one factor in accelerating intercultural competence development, resulting in a positive experience during the sojourn. Even after developing an attitude that makes

them actively interact between cultures in a new place, building positive feelings in the host country, most of my participants still experienced encounters that gave them negative experiences in their new place of residence. These challenging experiences are called intercultural encounters, which will be discussed in the next section

5.7 Intercultural Encounters in Intercultural Interactions

Following the phase where participants developed the required attitudes at the start of their stay in a new country and received positive experiences, this study discovered that the following phase includes intercultural encounters in the new location. This was where the participants learned new things that might alter their perception through unpleasant encounters during intercultural interactions. Intercultural encounters may be characterised as "the space where people from other cultures and worldviews negotiate cultural and social identifications and representations" (Kramsch, 1998, quoted in Holmes and O'Neil, 2012). However, this study discovered that this was the stage where individuals may further progress and learn new intercultural abilities to better adjust to the cultural differences in new areas.

5.7.1 Observing Unexpected Behaviours

Despite most of the participants expressing positive feelings upon arrival in the UK, most of them also had negative encounters during intercultural interactions. In this period, some participants started to evaluate which behaviours were not expected, resulting in negative feelings. In this regard, drawing insight from Spencer-Oatey (2020), 'Once evaluation has been activated, both the behaviour itself and the person performing the behaviour are subject to evaluation' (p. 5). Moreover, this period was also a critical stage where sojourners face cross-cultural encounters to explore their

cross-cultural communication's individual and relational viewpoint to access intercultural competence development (Holmes and O'Neil, 2012). Consider the following narrative taken in the third session of interview and observation with Ino:

“Aku tidak pernah *kepikiran* selama ini bahwa ketika temanku mengundangku ke sebuah pesta, mereka sangat berlebihan di dalam meminum minuman alkohol di mana aku belum pernah melihat hal seperti ini di budayaku, di mana aku tinggal. Sepertinya aku sedang salah bergabung di sebuah komunitas.”

“I never thought that my friends would invite me to parties and drink excessive alcoholic drinks that I have never seen before in my home culture. It seemed like I had joined the wrong group”

The above excerpt reveals that Ino viewed the behaviours (i.e., drinking excessive alcoholic drinks) as inappropriate. He seemed shocked about certain behaviours in this new place during intercultural interactions. At one point, he implied that he was shocked by this partying behaviour which did not reflect his cultural identity (i.e., '*I never thought that my friends would invite me to parties and drink excessive alcoholic drinks that I have never seen before in my home culture*'). Ino has joined a society which has many party events. As a result, these habits could affect his academic performance. Aligning with these results, previous studies have demonstrated that intercultural encounters happen from social conflicts. In these findings, despite Ino having successfully interacted across cultures upon arrival to his new place of residence, he encountered experiences that misaligned with his cultural identity (i.e., excessive alcoholic drinks), leading to negative feelings whilst living in the host country. These findings indicate that some social issues are endured in society because they are considered as normal within that culture, yet may be regarded as unexpected behaviours by those outside the society. (Spencer-Oatey and Kothoff, 2007).

Via raised a similar point when she remarked:

“Suatu hari, ketika aku sudah banyak melakukan interaksi antarbudaya di kelas, aku mempunyai sebuah pengalaman negatif. Ketika aku *ngomong* bahasa Inggris, ada satu kawanku melihatku dengan pandangan ingin menertawakanku, sehingga setelah itu, aku takut untuk berbicara menggunakan bahasa Inggris karena aku takut mereka tidak paham dengan perkataanku karena aksenku dan juga beberapa kesalahan *grammar*.”

“One day, when I had a lot of interactions between cultures in the classroom, I had a negative experience. When I spoke English, I saw one of my friends wanting to laugh at me, so afterwards, I was afraid to speak English because I was afraid that they would not understand my words because of accents and some grammar mistakes.”

The above excerpt shows that after experiencing that uncomfortable incident, she was offended (i.e., *‘When I spoke English, I saw one of my friends wanting to laugh at me, so afterwards, I was afraid to speak English’*). In this respect, Via seemed to consider the behaviour shown by her classmate as disrespect, resulting in negative feelings from being involved in intercultural interactions. This finding further elaborates on a previous study that in intercultural interactions, such as in a multicultural class, it is prevalent and sensitive as someone could be offended after being treated with disrespect, resulting in humiliation (Spencer-Oatey, 2000).

Dibyو demonstrated another intercultural encounter in evaluating unexpected behaviour. Consider the following excerpt taken in the second interview:

“Ketika aku sudah mulai hidup di lingkungan lintas budaya dan berinteraksi antarbudaya di mana aku tinggal di sini, aku kaget dengan beberapa kelakuan yang menurutku sangatlah tidak baik, seperti orang di sini sering membuang sampah sembarangan, mengisi tempat sampahku dengan sampahnya mereka.

Selain itu, aku kaget dari sikap mereka yang tidak menghargai pengguna sepeda seperti saya. Mereka mengendarai mobil dengan *ngebut* tanpa memerhatikan pengguna jalan lainnya, seperti pengguna sepeda.”

“When I started living in a multicultural environment and interacting between cultures where I lived, I was surprised by some of the behaviours that I thought were not good. Like people here often throw garbage carelessly, filling my trash with their trash. In addition, I was surprised by the attitude of those who did not appreciate bicycle users like me. They drive cars by speeding without paying attention to other road users such as bicycle users.”

As can be gathered from the above narrative, Dibyo seemed unhappy when he evaluated the unexpected behaviour experienced in the new place where he lives. Observing where Dibyo lived, the neighbourhoods were filled with various cultures such as local British, Romanian, Arab, and other cultures. Dibyo judged the behaviour as negative as he had previously thought the British state was a clean and orderly country. Nonetheless, what he encountered was the contrary. As a result, this became one of the negative experiences encountered during cross-cultural interactions. Dibyo analysed various examples of multicultural community behaviours that were the contrary of what he previously believed about certain people in developed nation's attitudes and behaviours. This finding backs up what a prior study suggested that managing intercultural connections may be complex since each cultural member has distinct attitudes, expectations, and assessment criteria (Spencer-Oatey and Kadar, 2021).



Figure 16. Rubbish is everywhere, Dibyo said

The above image demonstrates that Dibyo was unhappy with his current residence in the host country. As previously said, he lived in a multicultural neighbourhood with a variety of attitudes among the residents. As a result, the perception that England was a clean country did not appear to be attributed to him following the accident. The following section will detail another negative experience that occurred because of an intercultural encounter caused by a participants' mismatched expectations in the host country.

5.7.2 Mismatched Expectations in Intercultural Interactions

This section will discuss the mismatched expectations experienced by the participants during intercultural interactions. As previously mentioned, intercultural interactions are about an interaction between a group of people where the cultural distance is significant, affecting communication (Spencer-Oatey and Franklin, 2009). As a result, mismatched expectations among individuals could occur during these interactions.

Consider the following narrative taken in the second session of interviews and observations with Dibyo:

“Hari ini aku mengikuti beberapa kelas. Saat itu aku merasa mempunyai beberapa kendala di dalam mengikuti kuliah yang diajarkan dosenku. Dia menggunakan *British accent* di mana aku tidak bisa memahaminya. Pada saat itu, aku berekspektasi bahwa karena kelasku terdapat banyak mahasiswa internasional, maka si dosen sebaiknya berbicara lebih pelan. Selain itu, beberapa dosen dari beberapa mata perkuliahan tidak menjelaskan beberapa pelajaran secara spesifik. Maka, aku harus mencari tahu sendiri mengenai hal itu di luar jam kelas. Selain itu juga, aku merasa stres selama berinteraksi dengan beberapa dosen di kelas. Mereka para dosen menginginkan standar yang lebih tinggi tentang tugasku dan berharap aku lebih menjadi mahasiswa yang lebih mandiri, tapi *ya* aku belum siap dikarenakan perbedaan yang sangat mencolok antara sistem pendidikan Indonesia dan sistem pendidikan di budaya Barat.”

“I took some classes today. It was challenging to follow some of the lessons taught by my lecturer. He uses English accents which I do not understand. I expected that because the class has many international students, the teacher needs to speak more slowly. Moreover, even some of the lecturers did not explain specifically about some of the lessons. So I have to find out myself outside of class hours about it. Moreover, I was very stressed during the interactions in the class, as my lecturer wanted me to do a high standard of work and do independent learning, but I am not ready yet. Because the Indonesian education system is very different compared to the Western academic system.”

The above excerpt reveals that Dibyo had encounters found in intercultural interactions in the classroom. Dibyo believed that British accents were still less familiar and less understandable for those who are still new to the UK and other international students (i.e., ‘*He uses English accents which I do not understand. I*

expected that because the class has many international students, the teacher needs to speak more slowly’).

Secondly, when Dibyo interacts with his lecturers, there is a difference in expectations between students and teachers. The difference is how Dibyo is expected to approach his studies with high quality and independent learning. However, Dibyo was still not ready for this because of a different educational background from the campus where he was studying (i.e., *Moreover, I was very stressed during the interactions in the class, as my lecturer wanted me to do a high standard of work and do independent learning, but I am not ready yet*). In this case, when interacting with his teacher, Dibyo found it very difficult to meet the high standards expected. He believed that his lecturers should not expect a high standard of work because he had a different education system. Therefore, Dibyo also felt terrible and objected to this. This finding resonates well with mainstream literature, including Spencer-Oatey and Kadar (2021), which believed that every member participating in intercultural interactions could negatively evaluate the other because of differing expectations, which would be hard for them could cause anxiety

Another similar example is provided below taken in the third session of interviews and observations with Febry:

“Aku tidak bakal mengira bahwa dosenku akan melakukan perbuatan ini, dan aku sangat terpukul ketika dosenku merespons tugas akhirku yang aku kumpulkan melalui email yang dia kirimkan. Dia berkata bahwa tulisanku seperti sampah. Setelah kejadian itu, aku seperti kehilangan motivasi untuk belajar seperti yang aku rasakan sekarang adalah tulisanku tidak layak di level jenjang master.”

“I didn't expect my lecturer to behave like that, and I was devastated when my lecturer gave feedback through email about the writings submitted in one of the exams. She says my writing was rubbish. After that moment, I was less motivated to study because I felt that my writing wasn't enough to be at the master level.”

The above excerpt reveals that Febry described the comments obtained as not what he expected (i.e., *I didn't expect my lecturer to behave like that, and I was devastated when my lecturer gave feedback through email about the writings submitted in one of the exams*). As a result, because of the mismatched expectations evaluations, he had negative feelings affecting his academic performance (i.e., *After that moment, I was less motivated to study because I felt that my writing wasn't enough to be at the master level*). Febry evaluated the comment received as breaking the descriptive norms of what he expects people to say in this context. In this regard, descriptive norms relate to what is normally done or what is 'normal' (Spencer-Oatey and Kadar, 2018). Moreover, this finding supports Spencer-Oatey (2020), in which she states that individuals have a basic need for others to perceive them positively and not to evaluate them negatively. When others fail to do this, it could result in upset and disturb rapport.

Another mismatched expectation outside the academic environment was also demonstrated by Via. Consider the following narrative:

“Pada suatu [hari] ketika di gereja, aku mengambil sebuah foto seorang anak yang orang tuanya salah satu pengunjung gereja. Karena aku suka dengan fotografi, aku pikir itu *oke-oke* saja, tapi mereka ternyata keberatan dengan hal itu, dan secepatnya aku meminta maaf atas kelakuanku dan setelah kejadian itu aku merasa tidak nyaman berada di situ.”

“I was occasionally reprimanded at church because I took a photo of one of the churchgoers' children. Because I am a person who loves photography, I thought it was okay, but they objected to it, and I immediately apologised for my behaviours and felt uncomfortable being there after that accident.”

The story above shows that Via encountered cultural differences within a norm in a new place. It appears that Via was not aware of the norms that apply in her new place of residence about respecting privacy where you should not carelessly take photos of others. In this case, because she was a new member of the church's community, Via did not know what norms applied in this place, such as what can or cannot be done according to the norms or rules. Among the numerous studies examining mismatched social norms (e.g., Parvaresh and Tayebi, 2018; Spencer-Oatey and Kadar, 2020; Kadar et al., 2019), this finding links to a previous study that the ‘right’ and ‘appropriate’ habits of members behaving in a particular way usually go unnoticed, “until one member does more than is necessary” (Watts, 2010, cited in Parvaresh and Tayebi, 2018, p. 92).

After experiencing intercultural encounters through various accidents, the participants began to learn, observe, and look for information in developing their competencies to better adjust in their new places, especially when involved in intercultural interactions. After undergoing the phase in which the participants had undesirable feelings and experiences resulting from intercultural encounters during their stay in the host nation, they were able to develop the necessary intercultural competencies, which will be discussed in the next section.

5.8 Developing Intercultural Competencies Through Intercultural Interactions

This study demonstrates that by phasing the stage in which the participants encountered intercultural encounters during intercultural interactions in the host country, they developed the necessary intercultural competencies, including the skills and attitudes to adjust appropriately and effectively to cultural differences. These findings corroborate Spencer-Oatey and Xing's (2008) study, which was one among several studies (e.g., Deardoff, 2006; Spencer-Oatey and Franklin, 2009) focusing on intercultural encounters by sojourners. It is believed that after experiencing intercultural encounters in a new place, a sojourner may acquire new knowledge, thereby changing the conception of their identity in more dynamic ways (Spencer-Oatey and Xing, 2008).

The findings of this study indicate that the intercultural competencies required for Indonesian students studying in the United Kingdom can be divided into two categories: attitude and skills. The former relates to how individuals act as determined by their internal motivations, personal beliefs, and objectives. The latter refers to the acts or capacities that participants could accomplish, and the knowledge gained throughout their stay. Additionally, in this study, the term "skills" refers to a collection of abilities and, at times, a subjective evaluative assessment. Whereas "attitude" refers to an understanding of other cultural identities, such as knowledge, motivation, self-reflection, and perspective-taking (Spitzberg and Changnon, 2009). This study found the skills required include the ability to learn and listen to other cultural norms, which will be explored in further detail in the next section.

5.8.1 Developing a Skill to Learn and Listen to Other Cultural Norms

After experiencing intercultural encounters that involved unexpected behaviours and mismatched expectations resulting in negative feelings, most participants started to

develop the competencies required to adjust to cultural differences in intercultural interactions. One of the competencies was developing skills to learn and listen to new cultural norms. Learning cultural norms includes learning and expanding expectations during interactions. As discussed in Chapter 2, the term "norms" in this study refers to an abstract object in pragmatics that embodies the agreed rules and principles that serve as the foundation for determining "what is (dis)approved of in an interactional" setting (Kadar, 2020, p. 2). Additionally, learning norms entails watching anticipated behaviours produced by behavioural regularities or habits and social constructs (Culpeper and Tantucci, 2021). For instance, consider the following narrative from the fourth interview and observation session with Ino on how he may obtain the necessary competence by learning other cultural norms:

“Saat ini, aku sedang mencari beberapa informasi yang lebih bisa mendukung masa pembelajaranku di sini ketimbang mengikuti beberapa pesta yang aku pikir tidak baik bagiku, seperti berpesta yang melibatkan minum minuman alkohol. Seperti contoh, melalui hubungan pertemananku [yang] lintas budaya, melalui mereka aku bertanya tentang mata perkuliahan atau hal lain yang belum aku pahami. Dan juga melalui pertemanan lintas budaya, aku mulai mengetahui komunitas mahasiswa yang lain. Maka, aku bergabung dengan komunitas mahasiswa teknik [*sic*] untuk lebih bisa mendukung studiku, terlebih di masa ujian seperti ini. Di komunitas mahasiswa ini, aku belajar norma budaya baru seperti bagaimana cara menghormati orang lain di budaya ini, seperti menahan pintu untuk membiarkan orang lain masuk, menghargai pendapat orang lain, dan tidak memotong percakapan orang lain. Dengan belajar norma baru tersebut, aku sekarang lebih nyaman tinggal di komunitas ini. Selain itu, mahasiswa di komunitas ini, aku mengalami perbedaan budaya khususnya di dalam akademik, aku selalu didukung oleh beberapa temanku di komunitas mahasiswa teknik di sini. Meskipun aku berbeda budaya dengan mereka, mereka selalu dengan senang hati menolongku di dalam mengerjakan tugas-tugas mata kuliah.”

“Now, I was looking for information that is more supportive of my studies here than participating in parties that I think are not good, such as parties involving alcohol. For example, I used my intercultural friendships to support my study by asking about lessons or something that I do not understand the material yet. And from my intercultural friends, I knew about other student Unions in my Uni. So, I joined the engineering society to support my study support in this period of examination. In that student Union, I have learned some new cultural norms like respecting someone else in this culture, like holding the door for someone else, respecting other arguments, and not cutting off any conversations. By learning these new cultural values, I am more comfortable in this community. Moreover, in these student unions, when I experienced difficulties in adapting to the academic differences, I was supported by my friends from the engineering society. Even though I am different from their cultural background, they are happy to help me in doing any module assignments.”

The above excerpt reveals that Ino involved himself in intercultural interactions to learn and find useful information instead of having parties including alcoholic drinks which against his cultural identity (i.e., *'I was also looking for information that is more supportive of my studies here than participating in parties that I think are not good, such as parties involving alcohol'*). As a result, through the intercultural interactions involved, Ino has now obtained new information and joined a new students Union which has more benefit to him and supports his studies (i.e., *'And from my intercultural friends, I knew about other student Union in my uni. So, I joined the engineering society to support my study....'*). Through Ino's intercultural interactions in the new student unions (i.e., Engineering student Union), he has developed the skill to learn other cultural norms (i.e., *'I have learned some new cultural norms like how to respect someone else in this culture, like holding the door for someone else, respecting other argument and do not cut off any conversations'*). Moreover, by joining the Engineering

society student unions, he has support from his friends. Additionally, by continuing to learn other cultural norms, he was more comfortable being in this new environment. Ino has communicated in intercultural interactions more positively by joining the new student union. This finding provides evidence that successful intercultural partnerships begin with each partner taking a sincere interest in the other's culture and showing willingness and inventiveness to learn about and discover 'unfamiliar cultural values, practices and contextual information (Spencer-Oatey and Stadler, 2009, p. 7).

The ability to learn and listen to other cultural norms from others also was demonstrated by Via. An example is provided below taken in the third meeting with Via:

“Aku memulai diriku untuk lebih terbuka dan lebih aktif untuk mempelajari apa saja hal-hal yang dihargai di budaya lain dari teman internasional baruku. Sebelum mengetahui hal ini, pada awalnya aku tidak begitu percaya diri *ngomong* memakai bahasa Inggris di tempat publik. Akan tetapi, aku menyadari sekarang ternyata mereka lebih terbuka, dan aku pun mencoba lebih terbuka, untuk lebih menjadi diriku sendiri dan tidak takut dicap (dianggap) negatif, karena seperti aku juga, pada dasarnya perempuan Indonesia takut dicap jelek (*jaim*). Tetapi mereka di sini tidak pernah menganggap atau mencap [*sic*] jelek kamu. Di sini orang tidak suka berpikiran negatif terhadap seseorang. Maka itu, kamu bisa menceritakan ke orang lain hal apa saja di sini, seperti saling *curhat* tentang keluarga, keluarga mereka, dan mereka lumayan terbuka, dan aku menjadi diriku sendiri tanpa takut dianggap negatif (dihakimi) karena mereka tidak berpikiran apa-apa tentang dirimu.”

“I have started to try to be more open and active to learn other cultural values from my new international friends. Before knowing this, I was not that confident to speak English in a public space. Nevertheless, I realised that they are quite open, so I am trying to open up to them as well, so just being myself and don't afraid to be judged, because, like me, some Indonesian girls are afraid

to be judged. But they never judge you. Like here people are not easy to judge someone, so we can share everything with other people here as well, like talking with my families, their families, so they are quite open, and I could just be myself while not being afraid of being judged because they never judge you.”

The above excerpt explains that because Via was being open and active in seeing her friends to seek new knowledge, she has learned that people here do not judge someone's language proficiency (i.e., *‘I could just be myself while not being afraid of being judged’*). Via implied that she did not overthink grammar mistakes when talking in public. Other people will not judge your English grammar capability in intercultural interactions. Moreover, she gained a new understanding of how certain social groups behave in this new country (i.e., *‘Like here people are not easy to judge someone, so we can share everything’*). When she eliminated the perception that western culture judges a person’s language, she also developed one of the components of intercultural competence to suspend disbelief about other cultures. She did not allow herself to believe something that is not true. Therefore, she was more confident in speaking English in intercultural interactions after observing other cultural behaviour. Among the research of the development of intercultural competence (i.e., Fantini, 2006; Byram et al., 2001), this finding confirms Fantini's (2006) assumption that grammar errors are less offensive than cultural assumptions in intercultural interactions. Moreover, these findings also reflect the study of Byram et al. (2001), who found that being open-minded and obtaining new knowledge gives you a deeper understanding of different cultures with other beliefs and behaviours from another perspective.

Sulis is another participant who experienced similar skill development when learning other cultural norms through intercultural interactions, as illustrated in the following narrative:

“Aku tetap aktif dan selalu terbuka untuk berdiskusi dengan teman asal Inggris di sini, dan juga aku tetap berinteraksi dan berkonsultasi dengan teman Inggris-ku mengenai budaya akademik di sini. Aku mempelajari hal yang sangat bermanfaat di mana sangat berbeda dengan Indonesia, seperti budaya bertanya tanpa meminta izin ataupun aturan-aturan lain tentang menghadiri sebuah kelas. Semenjak mengetahui hal itu, aku lebih santai sekarang dibandingkan awal-awal kehadiranku di kampus.”

“I keep being active and open to discussing with some British friends, and I also keep being open to interacting and consulting with my British friends about the academic culture here. From the interactions, I learned some valuable information that is very different from Indonesia, such as the culture of asking questions without permission or rules of attendance in the class. So now I am feeling stable compared to my early weeks in Uni.”

The above excerpt reveals that Sulis has started to learn other cultural norms through intercultural interactions that she had (i.e., *‘I learned some valuable information that is very different from Indonesia, such as the culture of asking questions without permission or attendance in the class’*). In this respect, because of her nature of openness to be involved in intercultural interactions, Sulis benefited by learning valuable information and experiences while living in England. The participants also managed to develop other competencies, namely their ability to observe cultural norms to adjust to the cultural differences more effectively. This will be discussed in the next section.

Additionally, this study discovered that most participants utilise social media platforms to learn new knowledge necessary for effectively adjusting to cultural differences while engaging cross-culturally. Through this medium, the participants learned about one of the cultural norms that helped Ino adjust to cultural differences in their new place of residence. Consider the following excerpt:

“Aku mulai mempelajari tentang cara masak dari *channel* YouTube untuk bisa lebih nyaman untuk berinteraksi dengan teman-teman baruku di sini. Karena aku menyadari, bahwa makanan yang biasa aku makan dulu di Indonesia berbeda dari makanan yang teman-temanku makan, seperti mereka lebih makan sayuran ketimbang daging. Mereka lebih terbiasa dengan makanan pola sehat yang sangat memperhatikan jumlah kalori di setiap makanannya. Oleh karena itu, mulai dari belajar dari YouTube, aku mempelajari cara masak seperti bagaimana membuat salad. Selain itu di bagian *comment* di tiap videonya, aku juga berinteraksi dengan *user-user* lain dan mendapatkan banyak pengetahuan baru tentang pola makan di budaya di sini.”

“I started learning about how to cook some typical Western food from YouTube channel. Because I realised that the food, I used to eat in Indonesia was different from my friends' food. It's like they eat more vegetables than meat. They are more accustomed to healthy pattern foods that pay close attention to the number of calories in each meal. So, I want to be like them as well. Therefore, starting from learning from Youtube, I learned how to cook, like how to make salads. Therefore, by learning this and switching my behaviour to eat healthier food, I am more comfortable interacting with my new friends here. In addition to the comments in each video, I also interact with other users and gain a lot of new knowledge about diet in the culture here”

By reflecting on the above excerpts, Ino developed skills by learning new cultural knowledge in the host country through social media platforms such as YouTube (i.e., *'I started learning about how to cook from YouTube channel to be more comfortable to interact with my new friends here'*). Moreover, by learning new knowledge in new places, such as how to cook food that is often eaten by his friends here, Ino feels more comfortable with intercultural interactions in the host country (i.e., *'Therefore, by learning this, I am more comfortable to interact with my new friends here'*). Ino implied that he has changed his behaviour to consume healthy food to feel more comfortable when interacting with his new friends in the country host. (i.e., *'Therefore, by learning this and switching my behaviour to eat healthier food, I am more comfortable to interact with my new friends here'*). As can be seen here, by learning behaviours and adapting them (i.e., consuming healthy food), Ino found dynamism in interacting between cultures in his new environment. In addition, he could learn cultural knowledge through social media. Therefore, he could use this new ability to build his confidence and minimise risk within his new place of residence. Among the many studies focused on the use of social media by college students (Albrechtslund, 2008; DeAndrea et al. 2012; Rasmussen and Sieck, 2015), this finding resonates with Rasmussen and Sieck's (2015) idea, that understanding a new culture in a certain way could help a sojourner reach a better degree of intercultural competence. The next skill is how most participants can develop by observing behavioural norms through intercultural interactions that will be discussed in the next section.

5.8.2 Observing and Learning Knowledge of Behavioural Norms in Intercultural Interactions

The next skill developed by the participants was observing behavioural norms in the host country, which could have a positive impact on building harmony in intercultural interactions. As mentioned previously, matching the expected behavioural norms could be essential in creating harmony in intercultural interactions (Spencer-Oatey and Kadar, 2021; Parvaresh and Tayebi, 2018). Therefore, after experiencing intercultural encounters involving mismatched expectations of applied norms in the host culture, most participants started observing and learning behavioural norms in the new place. For instance, consider the following excerpt taken in the fourth meeting of interviews and observations with Ino:

“Aku telah mengobservasi beberapa hal yang membuatku lebih baik di dalam berinteraksi lintas budaya. Seperti contoh, menahan pintu untuk membiarkan orang lain masuk dahulu di tempat umum, seperti di supermarket, rumah sakit, dan kampus, di mana hal itu sangatlah sopan, Hal ini sangat berbeda di Indonesia di mana mereka tidak pernah melakukannya. Contoh lain adalah budaya berjabat tangan, di sini orang suka sekali tiap bertemu berjabat tangan, meskipun terkadang aku anggap berlebihan, tapi hal itu membuatku nyaman ketika aku harus terlibat di interaksi lintas budaya. Hal lain adalah mengenai hal yang bersifat pribadi (*privacy*). Di Indonesia, mereka tidak peduli tentang hal itu. Mereka seolah-olah tidak peduli tentang hal itu, saling tusuk dari belakang, selalu meributkan hal yang tidak penting. Akan tetapi, di sini mereka sangat menghargai tentang sesuatu hal yang bersifat pribadi. Jadinya, dengan cara mengobservasi beberapa norma dan tingkah laku yang sering dilakukan di sini dan dianggap baik, aku bisa memulai sebuah komunikasi lintas budaya yang baik di sini.”

“I have observed some behaviours that make me feel better when I interact in intercultural interactions. For example, holding the door seems very polite in a public place like in a supermarket, a hospital, and a university. This is very different in Indonesia that they never do the same things. Another example was shaking hands; we always shake hands every time we meet, even though I feel

that too much, but it made me comfortable during my involvement in intercultural interactions. Another thing is about privacy, people in the UK respect privacy, well I believe it is a really good thing in this country, in Indonesia they don't care about privacy, they don't like to have personal space like that, all people just stabbing other self want to know everything, like being nosy. However, here people respect other privacy so much. As a result, by observing new norms or behaviours which are more familiar and nice here, I could maintain good communication here in intercultural interactions.”

The above excerpt reveals that Ino started to observe norms or behaviours which he thinks are positive in the host culture to maintain good communication in intercultural interactions (i.e., holding doors, shaking hands, respecting someone's privacy). Ino has successfully observed norms applied in the host culture through his observation during intercultural interactions. Viewed in this context, Ino had more positive feelings after observing behaviours in the host country that can be more helpful when creating harmony in intercultural interactions. This finding supports Corder and Meyerhoof's (2007) who argues as a part of an understanding community of practice to do better in intercultural interactions, observing cultural norms is an essential aspect that could help us understand and unpack macro cultural 'norms' and even make suggestions for societal progress for sojourners. This finding also provides evidence that openness and mindfulness are essential aspects of communication skills to observe and understand cultural awareness and other cultural norms (Chen and Statosta, 2005, cited in Spencer-Oatey and Franklin, 2009).

The following extract is another illustration of how the participants developed necessary skills by observing new cultural norms as exemplified by Via:

“Aku mulai mengobservasi tentang bagaimana cara orang mengobrol di sini, salah satunya bagaimana mereka membangun sebuah percakapan dengan

menanyakan cuaca, menanyakan kabar, memanggil dengan *mate* dan lain-lain. Oleh karena itu, pada waktu ini, aku sudah bisa membangun hubungan interaksi antar budaya yang baik, seperti aku mulai nyaman *ngobrol* bersama teman-teman baruku di kelas. Selain itu aku bahkan mempunyai teman seorang barista kafe. Kami memulai *ngobrol* hal-hal yang menyenangkan setelah aku mengobservasi bagaimana cara memulai *ngobrol* dengan orang lokal di sini seperti menanyakan kabar, cuaca, bagaimana akhir pekan mereka sampai *ngobrol* tentang hobi mereka. Aku mulai merasa nyaman di sini ketika sudah bisa berinteraksi antar budaya dengan baik.”

“I started to observe how people chat here, one of which is how to build a conversation by asking the weather, asking "how are you", or calling your friend by "mate, buddy". Therefore, I built a good intercultural interaction relationship, as I started to feel comfortable chatting with my new friends in class. In addition, I even have a friend who works in a café as a barista. We started chatting about fun things after I observed how to start chatting with local people here, such as asking how they were doing, the weather, how their weekend was going to talk about their hobbies. I started to feel comfortable here when I was able to interact well between cultures.”

The above narrative story uncovers how Via started to observe other cultural norms by learning aspects that help her build intercultural interactions easily. She observed a way to interact in intercultural interactions by observing the behavioural norms expected by people in this new place (i.e., '*I started to observe about how people chat here, one of which is how to build a conversation by asking the weather, asking "how are you", or calling your friend by "mate, buddy"*'). Sulis seemed to successfully observe and learn the behavioural norms expected to maintain intercultural interactions comfortably (i.e., '*Therefore, at this time, I was able to build a good intercultural interaction relationship, as I started to feel comfortable chatting with my new friends in class*'). As shown in the above narrative, by learning behavioural norms

in the host country, Via then had positive feelings while living in the host country, particularly when involved in intercultural interactions. After observing and interviewing Via, I could see that she had developed some competencies, such as listening, learning, and observing the culture or norms that apply in the host culture. This finding supports the evidence that by observing and studying the behaviours of local people in the new environments, a sojourner could develop conceptions of what typically happens in each context and come to expect, or sense how others should or should not behave in intercultural interactions (Spencer-Oatey, 2008).

Besides developing the skills required, they could also successfully develop the attitude required to interact between cultures effectively and appropriately, aiming to have a positive experience during their stay abroad that will be discussed in the following section.

5.9 Developing the Required Attitudes

Apart from learning the skills necessary for successful and suitable intercultural contact following intercultural encounters, this study discovered that the participants developed the necessary attitudes for effective and appropriate intercultural interaction. This study found the necessary attitudes including *innovative thinking*, *mutual trust*, and *acceptance of diverse cultures*. As previously explained, attitudes describe how the participants behave in response to their internal motives, personal beliefs, and objectives. The first attitude discovered was how the participants developed innovative thinking to adjust to cultural differences in the host nation, which will be explored in the next section.

5.9.1 Innovative Thinking

This study discovered that the first attitude required is for participants to have an innovative mindset. This was important when adjusting to cultural differences in the behaviours and norms practised by individuals in host countries to communicate more effectively during intercultural exchanges. To clarify, consider the following narrative below taken in the fifth session of interviews and observations with Ino:

“Pada saat ini, aku memutuskan untuk menghindari hubungan yang tidak baik, seperti menghindari budaya mabuk-mabukan ataupun hal lain yang tidak berguna. Akan tetapi, aku tetap menjaga hubungan baik dengan temanku untuk hal yang lebih baik, seperti tetap berhubungan dengan temanku yang bisa lebih mendukung studiku di sini. Selain itu, aku harus lebih berhati-hati dengan perbedaan budaya di sini di mana bertentangan dengan identitas budayaku, yang bisa berdampak buruk dan punya pengaruh tidak baik terhadap studiku.”

"At this time, I have decided to avoid negative relationships, like being drunk or things that are not useful. However, I keep maintaining a good relationship with my friends more positively, like having friends who are supporting my study here. Moreover, I need to be more aware of some cultural behaviours which are against my cultural identity, particularly some of them that could negatively affect my study.”

The above excerpt reveals that despite Ino experiencing intercultural encounters, he developed his innovative mindset attitude, and continued to make intercultural friends in his new place (i.e., *At this time, I have decided to avoid negative relationships, like being drunk or things that are not useful to support my studies here*). Additionally, Ino has transformed into a person who is more aware of the cultural differences that have a negative impact on his academic achievement (i.e., *‘I keep maintaining a good relationship with my friends more positively, like having friends who are supporting my study here’*). In this regard, this finding supports Spencer-Oatey and Stadler’s study

(2009), which suggest that innovative thinking involves being truly open towards other ways of thinking and accepting that they might be more beneficial to a different cultural context. Moreover, this attitude of an innovative mindset also provides evidence that adjusting to different ways of thinking is more effective than adopting them to replace one's habits (Spencer-Oatey and Stadler, 2009). This point becomes clearer in the following narrative about Ino's innovative mindset to finding a new student union on the campus which could support his studies while staying abroad:

“Aku sudah berubah pikiran untuk membatasi diriku dengan hubungan yang tidak baik dengan keluar dari komunitas poker. Jadi, aku sekarang bergabung ke organisasi mahasiswa baru seperti komunitas *engineering* dan komunitas Indonesia di kampus, di mana banyak juga mahasiswa non-Indonesia yang berkumpul di sana, sehingga aku tetap berinteraksi dengan orang dari budaya lain. Maka, aku sekarang bisa lebih berhati-hati terhadap perilaku buruk yang bertentangan dengan identitas budayaku.”

“So, I have changed my mind to limit myself with some negative relationships by quitting the poker society. Now I have joined new students' unions like the mechanical engineering society, which I found helpful to support my study. Indonesian society students' union, where many non-Indonesian students have joined there so I can continue to interact with people from other cultural backgrounds. So now I have become more aware of some negative behaviours which against with my cultural identity.”

The above excerpt reveals that Ino left the Poker society and joined another student union (i.e., the engineering society) which was more beneficial and had more of a positive impact during his studies. Ino's innovative thinking (i.e., avoiding parties and joining a new student Union) could help him adjust to cultural differences effectively, which he believed was more beneficial to support his studies. It was

innovative thinking by developing his awareness of finding friends who were not conflicting with his cultural identity. In this respect, this finding confirms Holmes and O'Neil's study, (2012) which states that despite overcoming intercultural encounters, a sojourner still needs to reconstruct his own culture alongside the new culture to feel comfortable in this new community.

As seen in the figure below, taken from the observation with Ino, he decided to get more involved in the community, which positively impacted his studies in England without losing his cultural identity (i.e., *'Indonesian society students' union, where many non-Indonesian students have joined there so I can continue to interact with people from other cultural backgrounds'*).



Figure 17. Joining the right student union to support Ino's study.

This finding is closely linked to allowing the sojourner to be aware of their cultural identity and differences to communicate effectively and appropriately by creating an equally enjoyable relationship (Kupka, 2008, cited in Spitzberg and Changnon, 2009). These findings also provide evidence that an innovative mindset

involves being genuinely open towards other rituals and accepting that they might be more beneficial or suitable to a different cultural context, or as suggested is ‘adaptation not adoption’ (Spencer-Oatey and Stadler, 2009, p. 9). The following attitude discovered in this study is how participants may develop the attitude to generate shared knowledge and mutual trust via social media, which will be discussed in the next section.

5.9.2 Building Mutual Understanding Through Social Media

The next attitude is to effectively establish interactions between cultures by using social media platforms to establish relationships with intercultural friends. After developing the competencies required, which involves developing a skill to learn and listen from others, Ino built shared knowledge and mutual trust within intercultural interactions by using social media platforms in his new place of residence. To clarify, consider the narrative story below taken in the fourth meeting with Ino:

“Nah ini, aku tak bisa lepas dari *social media*. Aku tak terpisahkan dengan ponselku. Aku sekarang lebih terbuka dan juga aku menggunakan akun *social media*-ku secara positif, terutama di dalam berinteraksi dengan teman-teman lintas budaya di sini. Aku banyak bicara dengan temanku melalui WhatsApp untuk mendapatkan informasi mengenai studi dan juga dengan hal apa pun. Seperti contoh, ketika aku sedang melakukan penelitian kecil, aku tinggal hubungi saja orang-orang sekitarku dan menanyakan beberapa referensi studi. Selain itu, kami di komunitas mahasiswa teknik [*sic*], kami membentuk sebuah *WhatsApp group*. Di grup tersebut, kami banyak melakukan hal seperti bercanda, bercerita, atau hal apa saja. Akan tetapi, yang paling penting adalah

dengan media *WhatsApp* group ini yang berisikan orang-orang lintas budaya, aku banyak mendapatkan informasi yang berguna selama tinggal di sini.”

“So yeah, I use a lot of social media every single time, I can’t be separated with my phone, I have become more open, and I try to use social media positively, particularly with my cross-cultural friends here. I spoke with my friends through WhatsApp to get information about my study, and about everything. For example, I am doing little research, I just like to talk with people and ask for my study references. Moreover, with the engineering society, we formed a WhatsApp group. In that group, we did many things like joking, telling stories or about anything. However, the most important thing by having a WhatsApp group that has many intercultural people, I can obtain some helpful information during my stay here.”

The above excerpt uncovers that Ino built mutual understanding through social media within intercultural interactions (i.e., Joining WhatsApp group of Engineering society). Through social media, Ino could not only stay active in intercultural contacts to discover useful material to enhance his studies, but he also created a mutual understanding with his intercultural friends, which supported his studies. As a result, Ino took advantage of social media platforms to successfully maintain intercultural relationships to assist his study in the host country. (i.e., *‘But the most important thing is by having a WhatsApp group which has many intercultural people, I can obtain some useful information during my study here’*). This finding backs up prior research that found social media use to be shared among college students for various reasons; for example, students utilise social media platforms for academic purposes to assist them in adjusting to their new academic environment (Saw et al., 2012; DeAndrea et al., 2011).

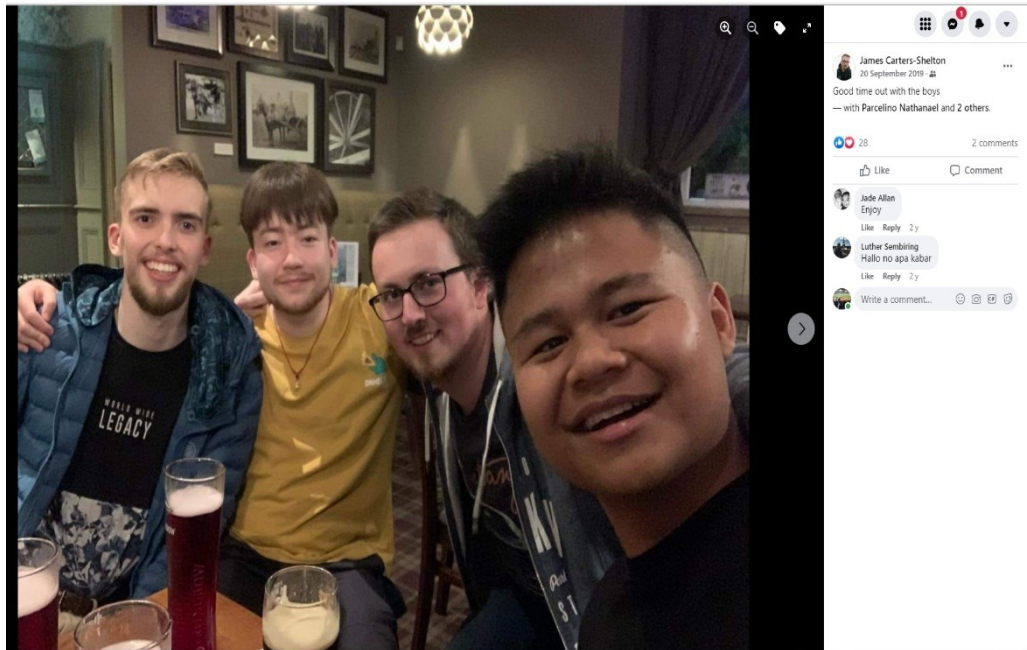


Figure 28. capturing a special moment with a photo together, and post the photo on my social media by tagging friends in the photo

Another example is offered below by Ino (see figure 18) and Via illustrated the benefits of using social media to enhance mutual trust in intercultural interactions:

“Melalui Facebook dan Instagram, sekarang kita bisa melakukan hal yang menarik dengan teman-teman lintas budaya di sini. Seperti nonton sepak bola *bareng*, makan *bareng*, dan kita abadikan momen ini dengan foto bersama, dan *posting* fotonya di *social media* dengan saling menandai temanku di foto tersebut.”

“By using Facebook and Instagram, we can do interesting things with my intercultural friends here. Like watching football together, eating together and then we capture this moment with a photo together, and post the photo on my social media by tagging my friends in the photo.”

Via shows a similar attitude to developing mutual understanding by sharing togetherness with her cross-cultural friends in the host country. Consider the following excerpt:

“Selama aku di sini, aku banyak menggunakan Instagram untuk menunjukkan momen-momen kebersamaanku dengan teman-temanku lintas budaya. Seperti setelah melakukan presentasi di kelas di dalam mempresentasikan hasil studi, kita selalu *posting* foto bersama. Kami melanjutkan kumpul *bareng* di luar kelas, seperti makan *bareng*. Jadi setiap aktivitas, saya selalu menyebut *Instagram account* mereka, dan mereka selalu kembali menyebutkan akunku. Aku sangat menikmati beberapa fitur di Instagram ini sehingga aku bisa membangun hubungan baik di hubungan lintas budaya di sini.”

“While here, I use a lot on Instagram to show moments of togetherness with cross-cultural friends here. Like I always post photos with my presentation group after presenting the results of my studies. We even continued to gather outside of academics, such as eating together. For every activity, I always mention their Instagram account, and they mention me back. We really enjoy the features of Instagram to build a good relationship in building intercultural interaction here.”

Both participants, Ino and Via established a mutual understanding relationship with their multicultural friends in the host culture. Ino and Via used many interactions on social media platforms to build positive intercultural interactions (i.e., Tagging friends on Instagram, reposting their friends' posts). In addition, through the joined WhatsApp group, Ino, for example, can also communicate effectively in any intercultural interaction. As a result, Via, for instance, could communicate smoothly in intercultural interactions, trust others, and show their togetherness through their respective social media accounts without any hesitation by re-tagging their accounts. As a result, most participants could establish intercultural relationships and a sense of togetherness through social media platforms. In this respect, Spencer-Oatey and Stadler (2009) agree that one of the critical assets for building trust and a mutual understanding with

our international partners is the quality of our communication. The next attitude is how the participants accept the habits and cultures of the local people around them to be able to adjust to the new environments.

5.9.3 Acceptance of Cultural Variation Ideas and Behaviours

In the previous section, one of the skills developed was learning the behavioural norms through intercultural interactions in the host country. As a result, another attitude discovered in this study was the acceptance of various behavioural norms in the host country. Consider the example below taken in the fourth session of interviews and observations with Via:

“Untuk mempunyai perasaan yang positif di negara ini, terutama ketika terlibat di interaksi antar budaya, sekarang aku harus menerima beberapa perilaku yang berlaku di komunitas sini. Yang paling penting adalah bagaimana kita menghormati orang lain. Selama apa yang telah aku pelajari dan aku lebih terbuka [daripada] sebelumnya, seperti mengantri [*sic*] atau menghormati orang lain, di mana pun aku berada. Selain itu, dari yang aku pelajari, kita harus menghormati hal-hal yang bersifat pribadi (*privacy*) seperti tidak mengambil sebuah foto tanpa izin dan juga harus lebih menghormati dalam antrian [*sic*] seperti masuk ke bus, antri di supermarket, atau tempat-tempat lain.”

“To have positive feelings in this country, mainly when involved in intercultural interactions, now I must accept some acceptable behaviours to the community here. The thing that I think is important to do is how to respect other people here. As I have learned and to be more open earlier, about getting in line and respecting others, wherever I am. In addition, as a result of what I have learned so far, I have to respect other people’s privacy by not taking other

people's photos without their permission and always lining up when getting on the bus, queuing at the supermarket and other places.”

The above excerpt reveals that despite Via experiencing unexpected behaviours at the church, Via has started to accept the behavioural norms that are more acceptable in the host country (i.e., lining up, and respecting privacy). This could have been formed because Via has tried to be more open and learn about the norms that apply in the culture in this country (i.e., *‘As I have learned and to be more open earlier, about getting in line and respecting others, wherever I am’*). In this scenario, when Via first had intercultural contacts, she attempted to be more open and learn about various cultural standards. As a consequence of the mindset she adapted, she was able to accept cultural differences, and now felt more comfortable embracing them. This finding supports a previous study that found that being open is the key to intercultural adjustment since it allows for individual improvement to accept cultural differences (Matsumoto, et al. 2008).

The following is another example demonstrated by Dibyo:

“Mulai sekarang, aku akan lebih berhati-hati di dalam bersepeda, mengingat kondisi sesama pengguna jalan di sini – mereka terkadang tidak saling menghormati. Selain itu, aku selalu menaruh tempat sampah di belakang rumah karena banyak orang mengisi sampahnya di tempatku kalau aku taruh depan rumah, yang menurutku tidak pantas dan tidak sopan dilakukan. Akan tetapi, aku harus menerima kondisi ini dan harus lebih berhati-hati terutama ketika menghadapi interaksi lintas budaya yang terkadang ada hal-hal yang di luar ekspektasiku.”

“From now on, I am more cautious in cycling, considering the conditions of road users here don't really respect other road users. Besides that, I always put

my rubbish box behind the house because many people fill my trash can when I put it in front, which is very unacceptable and impolite. Nevertheless, I have to accept it, and now I have become more be careful, particularly in these intercultural interactions, which sometimes is beyond my expectations.”

The above comments reveal that Dibyo approached intercultural life in the host country more carefully. In this finding, as can be shown by Dibyo, he seems to have accepted the reality of living a diverse life in his host country. In this respect, these findings support Spencer-oatey and Franklin’s (2009) ideas that part of intercultural competence factors of being open is accepting behaviour that is different from their own cultural identity. After acquiring the necessary intercultural competencies, including the necessary skills and attitudes, most of the participants re-experience intercultural encounters that require them to develop additional intercultural competencies for the host country, which will be discussed in the following section.

5.10 Re-experiencing Intercultural Encounters

This study reveals that, even though they developed the necessary skills and attitudes for cultural adjustment in the host nation, most of the participants re-experience intercultural encounters throughout their studies in the United Kingdom. As a result, whenever the participants have another intercultural encounter in a new area, they must continue to employ the necessary skills and develop the necessary attitudes. This section will examine how the participants relived previous intercultural encounters in their host nation.

5.10.1 Re-experiencing Unfamiliar Cultural Behaviour and Mismatched Expectations

The fact that most of the participants felt better in the new country when demonstrating the growth of intercultural competencies a few months previously does not mean that they are finished developing their intercultural competencies every time they experience another encounter while living in the new country. Dibyو, for example, in the fifth meeting, after feeling better in the new country by displaying the development of his intercultural competencies a few months before, still has to build his competence during each encounter while living in his new place of residence. After successfully adjusting to the cultural differences, he had another encounter, which he described in the fifth interview after six months of living in the new place. Consider the following example:

“Aku sekarang merasa kecewa karena keterbatasan waktu untuk *nongkrong* dengan teman-temanku sangat terbatas. Aku menjumpai hal yang aneh ternyata orang di sini tidak pernah *ngopi-ngopi* di malam hari. Seperti contoh, aku tidak bisa nongkrong sama teman-temanku di kedai kopi sama teman-teman lintas budayaku karena terlalu dingin atau hal ini kurang biasa bagi mereka. Jadinya, aku merasa bosan, kesepian, dan stres tinggal di sini, karena aku *pengen* punya lebih banyak waktu bersama mereka.”

“I was so disappointed because my friends seemed to limit hanging out with me. I met unfamiliar behaviour when people are not having out for coffee at night. For example, I cannot hang out in a coffee shop with my intercultural friends every night because it was too cold or relatively unfamiliar for them to do that. As a result, I feel bored, lonely, and stressed living here. As I want to have more time with them.”

As can be gathered from the above excerpt, Dibyو had another encounter when experiencing unfamiliar behaviour in the host country (i.e., ‘*I was so disappointed because my friends seemed to limit hanging out with me. I met unfamiliar behaviour*

when people are not having out for coffee in the night’). As a result, Dibyo had negative feelings in this period in the host country (i.e., *‘As a result, I feel bored, lonely, and stressed living here’*). Below is another example where Sulis had another intercultural encounter that involves mismatched expectations in the host country:

“Sekarang aku kembali mengalami sebuah kesulitan yang terjadi di kehidupan akademisku yang belum pernah aku alami sebelumnya. Selama aku berinteraksi dengan dosenku, aku mengalami sedikit masalah tentang cara berdiskusi dengan dosenku. Entah kenapa dia ingin melihatku lebih mandiri di dalam mencari tambahan ilmu untuk bekal perkuliahan dan mengerjakan tugas akhir. Selain itu, entah kenapa aku kecewa juga dengan dosenku, di mana kurangnya penjelasan mengenai ujian akhir yang diberikan dosenku. Aku berharap jika aku lebih dikasih tambahan penjelasan mengenai petunjuk di dalam pengerjaan esai tugas akhir.”

“I again encountered difficulties in academic life here that I had never experienced before. During my interaction with my lecturer, I had a little trouble following some of the discussion styles with my lecturer; it seemed like he demanded that I be more independent by looking for the knowledge needed in attending lectures and doing some essays. In addition, I was also somewhat disappointed with my lecturer, where there was less explanation about the exam assignment given by my lecturer. I wish he had given clearer essay guidelines.”

The above excerpt describes that Sulis reached another encounter in her academic life. She was required to be more independent in this new academic system. (i.e., *‘it seemed like he demanded that I be more independent by looking for the knowledge needed in attending lectures and doing some essays.’*). In this context, Sulis needed more guidelines for her essays which caused her difficulties approaching her essay exam (i.e., ...*‘I wish he gave clearer in the essay guidelines’*). Sulis was

expected to become an independent student in this new academic setting which she has not been ready for yet. In this finding, Sulis found differences in expectations with her lecturers, where she hoped to get more information about in the lessons taught and more precise explanations of her exams. At the same time, the lecturer expects students to be more independent. As a result, after reaching another problem in academic life, Sulis repeatedly used her developed intercultural competencies (i.e., skills to gain new knowledge) in her academic life. This finding is consistent with Zao and Wildemeersch's (2008) study, where they discovered in their investigation of international students' problems that heavy workload assignments and a lack of explanation regarding requirements and evaluation standards resulted in difficulties in students' academic lives.

5.10.2 Flexible Attitude to Adapt Other People's Behaviour/Communication

After developing the competencies discussed earlier, another attitude demonstrated by the participants was that they were more flexible in adapting the behaviour or the way of communication shown by the local people. Consider the following narrative story taken in the fourth interview with Sulis:

“Aku sekarang lebih banyak terlibat di berbagai interaksi antarbudaya karena aku sekarang merasa lebih fleksibel di dalam pemilihan kosakata yang aku pakai di percakapan. Melalui interaksi lintas budaya yang pernah kulalui, aku mulai belajar dan meniru beberapa kosakata yang sering orang-orang ucapkan. Hal-hal seperti menanyakan tentang cuaca, kegiatan di akhir pekan, dan bahkan bertanya tentang keluarga mereka. Semenjak itu aku lebih fleksibel sekarang, dan aku bisa menguasai kosakata apa saja yang diperlukan untuk

memulai percakapan di interaksi lintas budaya, aku mulai menikmatinya sekarang.”

“I feel more like getting more involved in intercultural interactions because I’m now more flexible in selecting phrases I use in conversations. Through the intercultural interactions I had before, I have learned and copied phrases that people often say. Like asking about the weather, weekend activities, and even family. Since I’m more flexible now than before, I can understand the phrases to start a conversation in intercultural interactions, and I enjoy this.”

As can be ascertained in the excerpt above, from observing and learning when interacting in intercultural interactions, Sulis is now more flexible when selecting words and phrases used in building a more effective conversation (i.e., *Through the intercultural interactions I had before, I have learned and copied phrases that people often say*). She also copied phrases that are commonly used and applied them in conversations with local people, resulting in positive feelings during intercultural interactions. This finding supports the desire to acquire a wide range of behaviour and communication patterns by imitating and adopting behaviour or communication styles, making sojourners appear more relaxed and accepted through the lens of intercultural abilities necessary to live in a new country (Spencer-Oatey and Stadler, 2009). Sulis’ flexible attitude development becomes more evident in the following narrative:

“Setelah menjumpai kepala jurusan di kampusku dan menjelaskan tentang permasalahanku yang aku alami di semester sebelumnya, dia menyarankan untuk tenang, banyak membaca, dan jangan ragu untuk bertanya jika ada sesuatu yang belum jelas tentang tugas perkuliahan. Meskipun itu berat, sekarang aku menyadari dan mencoba untuk beradaptasi bahwa betapa pentingnya budaya membaca untuk mendukung studiku di sini. Maka,

strategiku sekarang untuk lebih menjadi mahasiswa yang lebih mandiri adalah membaca minimal satu jurnal artikel setiap harinya untuk lebih membuatku mudah mengikuti perkuliahan yang melibatkan interaksi dengan dosen-dosenku.”

“After meeting the lecturer at the head of the department and explaining the problems that I went through in the previous semester, he advised me to stay calm, read more, and not hesitate to ask if anything is unclear about the lecture assignments. Although it was hard for me, now I have realised and adapted how important reading is to support my academics, so my strategy becomes a more independent learning person is to read one article every day to make it easier to understand comprehensively. Although it was hard for me, now I have realised how important reading is to support my academic, so my strategy becomes more independent learning person is to read at least one article every day to make it easier to understand comprehensively during my interactions with my lectures”

The above excerpt reveals that she developed her strategy to solve her study-related problem where students are required to be more independent (i.e., *'so my strategy becomes more independent learning person is to read at least one article every day to make it easier to understand comprehensively'*). Sulis developed a flexible attitude by acquiring the new learning strategy in this western culture, aiming to become a more independent learner. Sulis' flexibility for developing a new strategy leading to becoming well-adjusted in intercultural interactions. In this respect, these findings resonate with Wang and Hannes' (2014) ideas that international students should have an integration acculturation strategy of their academic and social-cultural adjustment. Dibyo also demonstrated a flexible attitude throughout the time of his study in the UK. He states:

“Aku sebelumnya merasa sangat *bosen* karena tidak ada hiburan untukku, tidak seperti di Indonesia. Seperti contoh, kalau di sini aku *gak* bisa sering

nongkrong di kedai kopi bersama teman-teman lain lintas budaya tiap malam karena cuaca yang terlalu dingin. Jadinya, aku merasa bosan, kesepian, dan stres tinggal di sini. Tetapi aku mencoba berbicara dengan salah satu teman internasionalku di sini, ternyata mereka mempunyai komunitas FIFA online di mana kita bisa saling tanding satu per satu. Lalu, aku mencoba diriku mengadaptasi [dengan] hal ini untuk lebih fleksibel mengikuti aktivitas mereka dan sekarang kami bersenang-senang di interaksi lintas budaya ini. Maka dari itu, ketika kami ada waktu *nongkrong* di kedai kopi, kami tertawa *bareng* dan banyak bercanda mengenai permainan ini.”

“I was so bored because there is no entertainment, like in Indonesia. For example, I could not hang out in a coffee shop with my intercultural friends every night because it was too cold. So sometimes, I felt bored, lonely, and stressed living here. But when I talk to one of my international friends here, it turns out they have an online FIFA playing community where we need to meet in person to play. And I'm trying to be more flexible in adapting those activities so that now we can have fun in these intercultural interactions. So, when we had a chance to hang out in a coffee shop, we laughed and joked a lot about this game.”

As can be gathered from the above excerpt, Dibyo once again, after experiencing another problem, which was feeling bored and lonely, developed a flexible attitude to solve his issues (i.e., *‘But when I talk to one of my international friends here, it turns out they have an online FIFA playing community where we need to meet in person to play’*). After raising his awareness of cultural differences (i.e., different styles of hanging out), Dibyo became more adjusted to cultural differences and could be more relaxed living in his new place of residence. These results reflect those of Bennett (2009), who found that expanding a sojourner's cultural self-awareness, altered the level of encounters and support needed, the next phase of a part of the intercultural

competence development is to get the correct information along with acquiring new skills to listen, adapt, resolve conflict, and manage social interactions and anxiety. All of the above narratives in this section could be evidence that the participants will continue developing their intercultural competence during the rest of their stay abroad.

5.11 Conclusion

This chapter focused on the participants' experiences of intercultural interactions with individuals from various cultural backgrounds. As mentioned earlier, this chapter emphasises the interactions where a significant difference impacts the participants involved in the interaction. Starting from their motivation to instigate interactions between cultures, such as the want to engage in interactions between people and a curiosity to learn new things through interaction between cultures. Once they start interacting between cultures, they encounter intercultural encounters by discovering unexpected behaviours incompatible with their cultural identity and differences in expectations of some of the events they experience. After working through the intercultural encounters, they develop several skills as a part of their intercultural competence development to adjust to cultural differences. The main aim of intercultural competence development is to interact both verbally and non-verbally and perform effectively and appropriately with individuals from other cultural backgrounds, as well as '... to handle the psychological demands and dynamic outcomes that result from such interchanges' (Spencer-Oatey and Franklin, 2009, p. 51). After expanding the necessary competencies, they produce several outcomes involving some of the things mentioned above, such as a new way of thinking, the use of social media, acceptance, and an attitude of flexibility. However, intercultural competencies don't just stop there, but is a process that will continue to evolve during their stay abroad. As the participants experienced, they rediscover intercultural

encounters and re-use their newly built attitudes to re-adjust to the cultural difference in new environments. This finding is consistent with that of Deardorff (2009), who argues that intercultural competence development is a continuous process and could become essential for the sojourner to be given prospects to reflect on and evaluate their intercultural competence over time. This finding also reflects those of Sptizberg and Changnon (2009), who found that an intercultural competence development process is ongoing, aiming to become more open-minded through learning and interacting across cultures.

Chapter Six

Intercultural Encounters Involving (im)politeness Evaluation

Introduction

This chapter details the results obtained from the linguistic ethnographic framework adopted in this study, which includes interviews and observations to investigate intercultural encounters experienced by the participants involving (im)politeness during intercultural interactions. The current chapter begins with a brief description of (im)politeness in intercultural interactions, followed by a brief explanation of how the participants were selected, the data collection procedure, and the obtained results. Guided by narrative stories, this section will focus on the listener or speaker's perspective to analyse the (im)politeness evaluation. Furthermore, this section will also demonstrate the intercultural competencies required to handle intercultural encounters involving (im)politeness to create harmonious communication in intercultural interactions.

6.1 (Im)politeness in Intercultural Interactions

To examine the level of intercultural competence in the later section, this study needs to investigate how these students experience intercultural encounters that involve (im)politeness evaluation beforehand. It is essential to investigate this phenomenon of (im)politeness because some sojourners may form different interpretations of a person's behaviour during intercultural encounters, leading to a misunderstanding, disagreement, mismatched expectations, and/or taking offence.

Politeness is an essential aspect of all relationships and plays a fundamental role in how people interact. This aspect is included in this study because “politeness

is a key means by which humans work out and maintain interpersonal relationships” (Kádár and Haugh, 2013, p. 1). Moreover, because (im)politeness is part of human behaviour, “it is *culturally* as diverse as the human race is: since its earliest studies, politeness has been discussed as a ‘culture-specific phenomenon’” (Kádár and Bargiela-Chiappini, 2011, p. 2). Consequently, “politeness is a question of evaluation” (Eelen, 2001, cited in Mills, 2011, p. 21), and every culture has its own perspective on what is polite or impolite behaviour. In this study, when discussing (im)politeness in intercultural interactions, this particular interaction refers to where ‘...the cultural distance between the participants is significant enough to affect interaction/communication that is perceived in some way by at least one of the parties’ (Spencer-Oatey and Franklin, 2009, Cited Spencer-Oatey and Kádár, 2021, p. 6).

6.1.1 Impoliteness

Impoliteness emerged as one of the major themes in the data provided by Indonesian students regarding their intercultural sojourn to the UK. In this study, impoliteness can be defined as a negative attitude towards specific behaviours occurring in specific contexts and suffered by ‘expectations, desires, and/or beliefs about the social organisation’ (Culpeper, 2011, cited in Parvaresh and Tayebi, 2018, p. 91). Moreover, the notion of ‘impoliteness’ relates to the listener’s evaluation of behaviours, which involves listeners evaluating speakers, speakers evaluating themselves, or informants evaluating hypothetical speakers or utterances (Eelen, 2001, cited in Haugh, 2013). Moreover, Haugh (2013) claims that impoliteness evaluations could be conceived as ‘social practices that are occasioned through particular social actions and pragmatic meanings in situated, talk-in-interaction’ (p 59). Here the context of social practice in

impoliteness evaluations could be referred to as the moral order evaluation of social actions to interpret behaviours, such as "good" or "bad", "normal" or "exceptional", "appropriate" or "inappropriate" and so on, and of course, as "polite", "impolite", "over-polite" and so on (Haugh, 2013, p.57).

Evidently, managing (im)politeness could become crucial to maintaining smooth communication during intercultural interactions. As previously mentioned, evaluation is crucial to understand (im)politeness. Each individual across cultures has their own interpretations that judge acceptable or unacceptable behaviour in specific contexts (Spencer-Oatey and Kádár, 2016, 2021). As a result, this chapter also focuses on how the participants experienced intercultural encounters, including (im)politeness in intercultural contexts as part of the development of intercultural competence throughout their adjustment phase. The following section will briefly discuss the ethnographic framework of this study, which involves interviews and observations.

6.2 An Ethnographic Study

An ethnographic approach has become increasingly popular amongst applied linguists and intercultural researchers when studying international students living abroad long-term (Jackson, 2006, 2008; Covarrubias, 2008). An ethnographic study aims to gain a more in-depth interpretation of behavioural activities for a specific group at a particular time (Jackson, 2006). Ethnography could also be a valuable approach to understanding (im)politeness in a specific context. As suggested by Reiter (2021), an ethnographic study involves the direct observation of the practices of a given social group in the situation of their everyday lives to investigate the (im)politeness that members of a given social group participated in. Furthermore, ethnography could assist the researcher in understanding the individuals of a social group to examine (im)politeness by investigating the social principles where it is based

(Reiter, 2021). Throughout this chapter, the data will be provided using narratives that will be briefly discussed in the next section.

6.3 Interpreting Ethnographic Narratives as Discourse Analysis

Drawing on the perspectives of ethnography and discourse analysis, this study will incorporate these two viewpoints. Oberhuber and Krzyzanowski (2008) argue that ethnography could be used to establish the context of the discourse in a study. As a result, in this chapter, a proposal is put forth for studying (im)polite interactions based on small stories/narratives as a framework for discourse analysis. By relying on interviews and observations, narratives were created to interpret what the participants have said. Bamberg (2012) defines a narrative as an interpretative approach to analyse 'individuals within their social environments as actively conferring meaning onto objects in the world, including everyday situations as well as in interviews or surveys (p. 88). Furthermore, throughout this chapter the data will be provided using narratives as a discursive source to analyse the (im)polite actions experienced by the participants during the intercultural sojourn from the ethnography study. The next part will discuss intercultural encounters, including an (im)politeness evaluation, which arose from the data analysis and became the findings of this study.

6.4 (im)politeness evaluation in intercultural encounters

This section will discuss intercultural encounters involving (im)politeness that emerged from the data. In the previous chapter (see chapter five), the participant's experiences of the host country's journey were discussed, starting with their story before departure until they adjusted effectively to the new place. The participants experienced intercultural encounters during this period where they met unfamiliar

cultures conflicting with their social identity. As mentioned in the earlier chapter, intercultural encounters can be defined as when a sojourner meets unfamiliar 'cultures and worldviews, negotiate cultural and social identifications and representations' (Kramsch, 1998, cited in Holmes and O'Neil, 2012, p. 709).

Even though most participants appeared to have positive feelings while living in the host country for a few months, they need to face intercultural encounters. In intercultural encounters, a shortage of common ground in evaluating the various features of the communicative event is expected to occur frequently, resulting in misunderstandings and misevaluations (Kecskes, 2014, cited in Spencer-Oatey and Kadar, 2021).

During this period, most participants have started to interact with more people across cultures, more frequently. As a result, the participants could evaluate some behaviours differently, which prevents conflicts. In this respect, Parvaresh and Tayebi (2018) state that conflict may occur in any cross-cultural interactions as each of them may represent "different values and codes of conduct" (p. 92). Consequently, *conflict* seems to be an enormously "important phenomenon that interconnects morality and the moral order" (Parvaresh and Kadar, 2019, p. 1). Therefore, these factors need to be analysed, including the aspect of moral order, to understand what caused the conflict, the listener's perception, or the speaker's intended meaning.

6.5 Moral Order

As discussed in chapter 2, moral order, together with norms and expectations, plays a critical role in this study's analysis of data (see chapter 2). This section will briefly describe the definition of moral order used in this study. To begin with, moral

order is defined as a "socially constructed set of understandings we carry with us from situation to situation" (Domenici and Littlejohn, cited in Parvaresh and Tayebi, 2018, p. 92). Moreover, moral order can be defined as "what grounds people's evaluations of social actions and meanings as good or bad, appropriate or inappropriate, polite or impolite, and so on" (Zhao and Ran, 2019, p. 262). Moral order can also be defined as an 'order in the sense that both individuals and social groups expect the structure and style of interactions to unfold in what they perceive as an "orderly way"' (Kadar et al., 2019, p. 9). Moreover, they also argue that orderliness could be found in any situation, including interpersonal settings and any familiar scenes in social interaction (Kadar et al., 2019).

As mentioned previously, politeness is an essential aspect of creating well-behaved communication. Moreover, politeness also represents a social practice and 'it involves evaluations that (implicitly) appeal to a moral order: a set of expectancies through which social actions and meanings are recognisable and, consequently, are inevitably open to moral evaluation (Kadar and Haugh, 2013, p. 6). As a result, moral order is vital to maintaining positive communication in our daily lives. Furthermore, moral order can be seen both explicitly and implicitly, including "institutional rules, laws, moral codes, and the like" (Davis, 2008, cited in Parvaresh and Tayebi, p. 92). Furthermore, moral order is taken into consideration while determining if impoliteness is something good (appropriate), or something bad (inappropriate). As Parvaresh (2019) states, moral order involves assumptions, expectations, and a set of perceptions of 'what is right and what is wrong' (p. 82)

When (im)politeness is involved in intercultural interactions, each individual will have their own cultural identity to consider when maintaining harmonious communication. Spencer-Oatey and Kádár (2016) argue that politeness requires an

evaluative decision, particularly in intercultural interactions where 'our interpretations are not usually idiosyncratic, but rather relate to culturally based expectations as to what is acceptable or unacceptable behaviour in the context in which it occurs' (p. 74). Moreover, understanding politeness depends on the interactants' understanding of what is communicated, influenced by their cultural backgrounds and experiences, including understanding the norm between what they did and how it is interpreted. Norm is an abstract entity for pragmatics. It represents the shared rules and principles that form the basis for "understanding what is (dis)approved of in an interactional context" (Kadar, 2020, p. 2).

In this regard, moral order could also become an essential aspect to evaluate politeness in any intercultural interaction. As Spencer-Oatey and Kádár (2016) believe, there is a relationship between moral order, cultural values, and politeness. During intercultural interactions, mismatched expectations could occur regarding morals. However, being moral is an abstract thing "between right and wrong" (Boltanski and Thevenot, 2000, cited in Kadar et al., 2019, p. 7).

A section further in this chapter will discuss the mismatched expectation patterns of moral order evaluation and will come to an understanding about the unexpected behaviour experienced by the participants. However, before discussing the findings of this current study, the following section will briefly discuss taking offence as the core of impoliteness evaluation.

6.6 Taking Offence

The idea of offence needs to be outlined as this is one of the main aspects in evaluating (im)politeness as an offence. Taking offence is an emotional response (i.e., anger, displeasure, or annoyance) which is caused by an offending incident (Culpeper,

2011, cited in Haugh, 2015). Here, being offended can be described as the perceived behaviour of people or individuals that 'is not appropriate for a society' and causes the receiver to be sensitively offended (Parvaresh and Tayebi, 2018, p. 97). Moreover, Haugh (2015) argues that taking offence is "predicated on a complex interplay of different factors" (Haugh, 2015, p. 36).

In this regard, there is a close relationship between the concept of expectation and in the analysis of im)politeness or taking offence (Mills, 2003, Culpeper, 2011; Kadar and Haugh, 2013; Tayebi, 2016). For example, Culpeper (2011) states that the evaluation of impoliteness is influenced by 'clashes of expectations' as soon as there are conflicts with how one expects them to be, how one wants them to be, or how one considers things ought to be (p.23). The idea of 'offence' will always relate with (im)politeness in interactions where it is the intention of the speaker to offend someone by "threatening/damaging" (Haugh, 2015, p. 36). Being offended as a pragmatic act could be indicated by having a negative emotive state of "feeling bad", which involves displeasure, annoyance, hurt, anger and so on (Zhao and Ran, 2019, p. 262).

When it comes to intercultural interactions, as previously mentioned, politeness is one of the vital aspects to maintain smooth communication. Moreover, being offended seems unavoidable when building new relationships through intercultural interactions due to misunderstanding behaviour cross-culturally because of perceptions that are influenced by cultural identity. As Tayebi (2016) notes, cultural differences may become a factor when individuals take offence. Furthermore, when an offence has taken place during an intercultural interaction, there may be varying perceptions of what formed an offence (Spencer-Oatey and Kadar, 2021). Additionally, Spencer-Oatey and Kadar (2021) also state that a failure to understand

any symbolism that exists in cultural differences, or they call it 'ritual space', could result in offence or negative perception (p. 96).

In this respect, insight from Tayebi (2016) suggests that investigating the justification of the offence should start by examining the expectations perceived in the interaction. People have expectations of how they should be treated in a specific situation regardless of what the perceived '(im)polite' norms are (Mills, 2003, cited in Tayebi, 2016). The following section will discuss and provide examples of how the participants have mismatched expectations of moral order, which results in participants being offended in intercultural interactions during the ethnographic study. The following section will discuss the mismatched expectations of moral order when unexpected behaviour is experienced by the participants as one of the findings in this current study.

6.7 Mismatched Expectations of Moral Order: Indonesian Students' Experiences in the UK.

This chapter explores the findings of intercultural encounters involving (im)politeness during intercultural interactions in the host culture gathered from this linguistic ethnographic study. Most of the conflicts occurred during the intercultural encounters when participants were starting to get involved in many intercultural interactions. During intercultural encounters, the participants may still use their knowledge of 'cultural identities' as a discursive source (Haugh and Kadar, 2017), which their viewpoints could influence conflict during the interaction. Ordinary gestures or norms shown by people within the new place could be considered impolite

or inappropriate by the participants who are newcomers in the host country which can cause misunderstandings during interactions.

Some encounters occur because they fail to understand the different 'polite' norms or linguistic differences in intercultural interactions. The factor could be from several aspects, including linguistic and cultural differences and contextual or interpersonal. In this respect, Parvaresh (2019) states that in any interaction, people might fit into complicated social groups where common values could influence their decisions and behaviour (p. 80). The fundamental idea is that we all have expectations about what people will say, how they will say things, how specific we need to be, the order in which things are said, and so on, when engaging in talk (Kadar and Haugh, 2013).

This section will discuss how mismatched expectations of moral order and assumptions could result in the participants having negative experiences during the sojourn in the host country. Due to the cultural difference in perceiving moral order between participants and the people surrounding them in their new place of residence, the first encounter is how the participants evaluated unexpected behaviour which breached the moral order expected, which will be discussed in the following section.

6.7.1 Evaluating Unexpected Behaviour

The first encounter that will be investigated is how the participants evaluate unexpected behaviour during interactions. Behaviours are 'situationally constructed', 'morally informed', and 'originates from a set of similar assumptions and expectations' (Parvaresh, 2018, p. 82). An example in this study was shown by Mantri. This interaction took place when the participant tried to be friendly to his neighbour within

the host country. The participant had no experience in interacting with other cultures before he came to the UK. Consider the following narrative:

“Aku mempunyai masalah tentang persepsi budaya tersenyum di sini. Karena aku berasal dari wilayah Sunda, di mana di budaya ini senang menunjukkan keramahan dan selalu bersenyum ke semua orang. Lalu, ketika aku mencoba tersenyum dengan orang-orang sini, sepertinya tidak terbiasa bagi mereka. Malah mereka membalasnya dengan sikap yang kurang ramah yang menunjukkan norma (perilaku) yang tidak pantas dilakukan. Maka, aku jadi agak takut tinggal di sini, yang ke depannya aku bakal tinggal dengan orang-orang yang kurang ramah dan itu membuatku kangen ingin pulang.”

“I have a problem with perceptions about smiling in this culture. I came from a Sundanese culture, where this culture emphasises hospitality and smiles at everyone. When I try to smile at the people here, this habit is unfamiliar to them. So, they responded with an unfriendly gesture which is a very inappropriate norm. So, I was a bit worried about living here, if I’m going to live with people who aren’t nice, and it made me feel homesick.”

The above excerpt reveals misaligned expectations of moral order between Mantri and other members within the interaction. Mantri wanted to display a smile to show his friendly attitude, however the other participants responded with unexpected behaviour according to Mantri (i.e., *I came from a Sundanese culture, where this culture emphasises hospitality and smiles at everyone*). According to this participant, Mantri, there was unexpected moral order from the person he was smiling at (i.e., *When I tried to smile at my new neighbour close to my flat, this habit was unfamiliar to them*). The reactions to Mantri's smile can be interpreted as *'unfriendly'*, which offended him (i.e., *So, they responded with an unfriendly gesture which is a very*

inappropriate norm'). In this participant's case, because of this conflict, he implied that he had negative feelings while living in his new place of residence and missed his home country (i.e., *'So, I was a bit worried about living here, if I'm going to live with people who aren't nice, and it made me feel homesick'*). This finding demonstrates the assessment of unexpected behaviour which results in a negative evaluation. The finding provides further evidence that moral order is about "our sense of right and wrong, good and bad", and "is reflected in a patterned set of personal actions (Domenici and Littlejohn, cited in Parvaresh and Tayebi, 2018, p. 92). Moreover, following the findings, previous studies have demonstrated that mismatched expectations of moral order can occur as a way of doing the right thing in a complex social process (Parvaresh, 2019). These current findings also support the study of Graham (2007), which found that if there are different expectations of appropriate behaviour, then there is a possibility that a conflict will arise, which causes negative relationships between the persons and within groups.

Another participant, Febry, also makes a similar remark. Consider the following excerpt:

“Aku pergi ke perpustakaan kampus untuk meminjam beberapa buku. Akan tetapi, dia (petugas perpustakaan) memberikan buku yang aku minta dengan tangan kiri dan melemparnya ke meja. Aku cukup terkejut dan aku pikir waktu itu hal itu sangatlah tidak layak untuk dilakukan. Di dalam pandanganku, kalau kamu memberi sesuatu ke seseorang, sopannya menggunakan tangan kanan dan tidak di lempar. Setelah itu pun, aku tidak mau lagi ke perpustakaan untuk meminjam buku karena pelayanannya yang sangat tidak menyenangkan.”

"I went to the library to borrow some books. However, she gave the book to me by her left hand and threw it on the table. I was shocked, and I thought that it wasn't very nice. In my view, if you want to give something to someone, the

polite way is by using the right hand and not throwing it. After that, I won't borrow another book from the library as the service in the library was very unpleasant for me."

This interaction took place when the participant asked for a book from the librarian in the university to find the suggested book by Febri's lecturer after the class. He could not find the book he was trying to find, and directly went to the librarian. During the interaction between Febry and the librarian, he was shocked by the librarian's response in giving the book when Febry asked. The librarian threw the book with her left hand to give it to him, and he viewed this behaviour as impolite (i.e., *she gave the book to me by her left hand and threw it on the table. I was shocked, and I thought that it wasn't very nice*'). In this case, Febry's assessment of the unexpected behaviour from the librarian lead to him being offended. As a result, this kind of conflict involving mismatched expectations of moral order discouraged Febry to visit the library to avoid this incident which could possibly affect his academic performance during his study abroad (i.e., *'After that, I won't borrow another book from the library as the service in the library was very unpleasant for me'*). Febry evaluated the unexpected behaviour from his viewpoint, which demonstrates how morals are included within interactions to produce harmonious communication. This finding supports Spencer-Oatey and Kadar's study (2021), who state that understanding behaviour in interactions is situational, based on our interpretation during the evaluation process. This finding also links to the prior study that morality is essential in evaluating behaviour (Parvaresh, 2018).

The following is another example taken during the interview with Sulis:

“Aku sering menjumpai mahasiswa di sini menghembuskan ingusnya ketika perkuliahan sedang berlangsung. Menurut pendapatku, ini perbuatan tidak sopan untuk dilakukan. Di dalam budayaku, kita tidak bisa melakukan itu. Kita mestinya ke toilet jika mau berbuat itu. Aku merasa tidak nyaman dan tidak bisa berkonsentrasi di dalam kelas pada saat itu. Lalu, aku melewati beberapa hal pelajaran penting yang diajarkan oleh dosenku. Aku sudah bilang kepada orang tersebut mengenai itu, tapi dia terlihat tidak peduli.”

“I often see students here blowing their nose when we have a lecture. In my opinion, that behaviour is impolite. In my culture, we cannot do that. We must go to the toilet to do that. I feel uncomfortable and cannot concentrate on the teaching in the class at that time. So, I miss essential information taught by the lecturer. I have already told the person, but he seemed unbothered.”

The situation took place when Sulis started university with 10-15 students across cultures inside the classroom. When Sulis needed to concentrate on what the lecturer said during the class, suddenly Sulis encountered an annoying situation that distracted her attention. The excerpt above shows that there is unexpected behaviour according to Sulis in the classroom (i.e., *I often see students here blowing their nose when we have a lecture. In my opinion, that behaviour is impolite*). As the above extract illustrates, the unexpected behaviour (i.e., blowing your nose in public) is perceived as impolite by Sulis. Moreover, she felt that those actions are inappropriate due to his cultural background (i.e., *In my opinion, that behaviour is impolite. In my culture, we cannot do that, and we must go to the toilet to do that*). The most noticeable implication of the unexpected behaviour shown by her classmate was distracting her from listening to the teacher's explanation. This research further supports the idea that

negative thoughts or evaluations may be one of the components of impoliteness that appear in communication (Eelen 2001, cited in Parvaresh and Tayebi, 2021).

The example below demonstrates how one of the participants encountered unexpected behaviour within their new environment. Consider the following narrative taken with a participant during the interview:

“Ketika aku sedang berada di supermarket, ada seorang petugas pelayan di toko menggerutu di depanku ketika aku ingin melihat sebuah barang dengan meminta pertolongan mereka. Di akhir percakapan, dengan suara nada yang tidak menyenangkan, aku terkejut ketika dia bilang jika kamu ingin meminta sebuah pertolongan, jangan lupa untuk bilang kata *please* di akhir kalimat. Aku tidak tahu sebelumnya, dan padahal aku sudah berusaha ramah dan senyum. Semenjak kejadian itu, aku menjadi kurang percaya diri ketika berkomunikasi dengan orang Inggris yang bekerja sebagai pelayan di toko.”

“Once, when I was at the supermarket, there was a shop assistant grumbling in front of me, when I asked for help and wanted to see some items. At the end of the conversation, with an unpleasant tone, I was shocked as he said that when you want to ask for help, don't forget to end the sentence with the word 'please'. I didn't know this beforehand, and I asked for help in a friendly tone and smile. After that incident, I become less confident when I wanted to communicate with British people working as shop assistants.”

The above excerpt reveals that Dibyo had a conflict with the British shopkeeper in the supermarket. This interaction took place in a big supermarket, and in that supermarket, Dibyo could not find what he wanted. As a result, despite Dibyo lacking the confidence to communicate with British people, he needed help, so he asked the shopkeeper. Then, the shopkeeper displayed unpleasant gestures after Dibyo did not add the word 'please' at the end of his request. It seems that there was a conflict between Dibyo and the shopkeeper, and that Dibyo was uncomfortable after

encountering the unexpected behaviours shown by the shop assistant. The tone was unpleasant when telling Dibyo how he should behave in the supermarket when requesting help (i.e., *'I was shocked as he said that when you want to ask for help, don't forget to end the sentence with the word 'please'*). In other words, the shopkeeper implied that Dibyo should have said the word 'please' at the end of his request. However, according to Dibyo, the nasty tone of the shop assistant possibly was considered inappropriate by him (i.e., *At the end of the conversation, with an unpleasant tone, I was shocked as he said....'*). Like my previous participants, this conflict occurred because of the misaligned expectations of moral order in intercultural interactions. The manners expected by the shopkeeper was that Dibyo used the word 'please' while making a request. Dibyo also expected the shopkeeper to be polite, as he was a customer and smiled when making a request. These findings are in accord with recent studies indicating that maintaining well-organised communication, besides sharing common knowledge, the participants need to think about what social actions are appropriate/inappropriate, good/bad, polite/impolite and so on (Kadar and Haugh, 2013).

Moreover, the most noticeable implication was that Dibyo was uncomfortable with the shop assistant. He explained that he thought he was using the appropriate forms when asking for help or requests (i.e., *'I didn't know this beforehand, and I asked for help in a friendly tone and smile'*). As a result, Dibyo was shocked by this response, had a negative experience of this incident, and no longer had the confidence to communicate with British people. This finding further supports the idea of Kadar (2013), that different understandings of 'societal convention' in intercultural interactions, including linguistic and non-linguistic, could create conflict with each

other. The next section will examine how the participants attempt to evaluate the moment at which over-politeness becomes offensive in intercultural encounters.

6.7.2 Over-Politeness

In intercultural interactions, the presence of over-politeness perceived across cultures is often encountered, which can be received negatively (Haugh, 2007). Mismatched interpersonal messages in communication could lead to a phenomenon that predictably falls under such descriptions as politeness and over-politeness (Culpeper et al., 2017). People are typically expected not to act on something that could damage their identity in an interaction. As a result, some interactions between the participants and others during the intercultural adjustment period caused conflict. The first conflict occurred when Sulis perceived the teacher as being over-polite. Consider the following narrative:

“Selama yang aku tahu, karena guru mempunyai derajat yang lebih tinggi, maka kita dituntut untuk sangat menghargai guru. Akan tetapi, di sini terkadang justru sebaliknya. Guru sangat menghargai lebih murid. Mungkin terkadang, hal itu terlalu sopan bagiku untuk meminta maaf, membawakan tas, dan menawarkan minum, sehingga aku kurang merasa nyaman sebagai mahasiswa di sini. Karena hubunganku yang kurang baik dengan guruku, aku merasa sedikit ketinggalan mengikuti perkuliahan karena aku jarang bertanya atau menemui dia.”

“As far as I know, a teacher has a higher position than the student, so we are expected to respect our teachers. However, here, sometimes, it is the opposite way. The teacher appreciates the students more, and maybe sometimes is too polite. She apologises for everything, like being late to see me, carrying my bag, and offering a drink. It was unnecessary to do. At first, I was a bit shocked with the over-politeness here. It makes me uncomfortable and does not feel

good when I meet her as a student. So, I rarely see my lecturer because she treats me like that. Due to my poor relationship with my teacher, I am so hesitant if I need to ask something about things or lecture material that I do not understand.”

Drawing upon their diverse knowledge, this conflict occurred when the participant met her supervisor for the first time after class. In her comment, the conflict occurred because of the unusual manner at which the lecturer addressed Sulis. Sulis was presumably expected to be in a lower position and be more respectful towards her teacher. As the comment implies, Sulis viewed her teacher as over-polite in meetings with the students (i.e., *'The teacher appreciates the students more, and maybe sometimes is too polite'*). According to her, some things were over-polite, which made her uncomfortable (i.e., *'She apologises for everything, like being late to see me, carrying my bag, and offering a drink'*). As a result, she seemed uncomfortable with over-politeness when she met her teacher. Therefore, she was trying to avoid her lecturer after class to discuss something which could become a disadvantage for her (i.e., *'So, it makes me uncomfortable, so I rarely see my lecturer because of that'*). This kind of conflict also occurred, which relates to her perception of how a student needs to be more respectful because the teacher has a higher hierarchy than the student (i.e., *'As far as I know, the teacher has a higher position than the student, so we are expected to respect our teachers'*). It seems that there is mismatched expectations of moral order in terms of how students or teachers ought to be in this kind of interaction. The fact that Sulis mentions, *'Due to my poor relationship with my teacher, I miss important lesson because I rarely see her discuss the lesson'* suggests that there was a disharmony relationship between Sulis and her teacher, which affected her study performance. This discovery supports the findings of Haugh and Kadar's (2017), who

note that every individual involved in an interaction will consider someone else's behaviour 'through the lenses of moral values of how things 'should be' (p. 611)

Another example of evaluation of over-politeness found in another participant, Via. Consider the following narrative:

“Pada awal mulanya, aku mempunyai sebuah permasalahan dengan supervisorku ketika aku memanggil dia dengan panggilan ‘Prof’. Dia terlihat sangat kecewa dengan panggilan itu. Setelah hal itu, malah hubungan kita tidak berjalan baik. Malah dia lebih nyaman dengan cukup dipanggil namanya saja, di mana malah lebih sopan dan dihargai di budaya di sini. Tetapi, di budayaku, memanggil namanya, maksudku memanggil nama gurunya, atau seseorang yang berkedudukan lebih tinggi, atau pas di kasusku memanggil supervisorku, itu bisa menjadi sikap yang sangat tidak baik.”

“At first, I had a problem with the supervisor when I called him using his academic title, like 'Prof'. He looked very disappointed when I called him that. Even after that moment, our relationship did not go very well. Then I found that he is happier to be called by his name, which is more polite and respectful in this culture. However, in my culture, calling the name, I mean only his or her name especially for the teacher, or someone who has an upper hierarchy, or here in my case my supervisor, is a horrible attitude.”

As the above narrative shows, Via was uncomfortable with the teacher's reaction because of mismatched expectations of moral order between them influenced by their cultural background (i.e., '*when I called him using his academic title. He looked very disappointed when I called him that*'). Via assumed that the teacher's thought she seemed over-polite toward her teacher, which created an uncomfortable interaction. She was unconsciously acting over-polite, which leads to being impolite. As Loacher

(2006) argues, someone in an interaction could be consciously or unconsciously impolite or over-polite, thus breaching norms of appropriateness' in the participants' relationship (p. 258).

Like Sulis, Via also could not maintain a good relationship or make good harmony with their teacher, affecting their academic performance (i.e., '*Even after that moment, our relationship did not go very well*'). What is notable here is that in calling the teacher, Via uses the word '*prof*' to show respect to the teacher who has a higher social hierarchy than her. In Via's case, she evaluated the teacher's reaction as discomfort. In this respect, this finding aligns that an offending event associated with a moral face could create 'a psychological effect' (Zhao and Ran, 2019, p. 270). Moreover, this finding supports Kadar's finding (2013), which states there are rules for evaluating impoliteness in intercultural interactions. The following section will explore another component of mismatched expectations of moral order that results in the participants feeling offended as a result of their interactions with others from other cultures.

6.7.3 A Mixture of Emotional (Anger) Evaluations

Another mismatched expectancy of the moral order and expectations, as frequently referred to in this observation, is emotional judgments involving anger by participants. Due to the misaligned moral order and expectations anticipated; several participants made emotional evaluations after receiving unpleasant utterances in a particular intercultural interaction.

Taken from an interview, consider the following narrative:

“Aku mendapatkan perkataan yang menyakitkan dari seorang resepsionis di sebuah klinik kesehatan ketika aku datang sedikit terlambat dari jadwal yang

telah ditentukan. Dia bilang aku telah menyiakan-nyiakan waktunya untuk menungguku dengan wajah yang kurang menyenangkan dan menurutku hal itu tidak sopan di dalam melayani seorang konsumen. Aku bekerja sebagai bidan, jadi aku tahu mereka tidak selayaknya berbicara seperti itu dengan seorang pasien di mana pun itu. Mereka mengatakan perkataan itu seolah-olah aku telah membuat kesalahan besar. Sebagai seorang warga Inggris asli, aku merasa dia telah berbuat hal rasisme karena aku memakai jilbab. Aku memahami bagaimana orang di sini sangat menghargai waktunya. Tetapi, ya, sebagai warga yang baru datang, aku masih memerlukan untuk memahami peraturan-peraturan baru. Mereka seharusnya bisa lebih memahami itu jika aku tidak bisa datang tepat waktu. Tetapi aku cukup terkejut dan sakit hati bagaimana mereka mengutarakan kata-kata tersebut ketika menegurku.”

“I once got an offensive utterance from the GP reception when I arrived a little late for an appointment. They said I wasted their time waiting for me with an unpleasant face and, in my opinion, they were not polite in terms of serving customers. As my background as a midwife, they could not talk to any patients like this in any health centre anywhere. They seemed to say that I had made a huge mistake. As a British lady, I think, she was racist as I am wearing hijab (craft). I understand here how people here value their time. However, I am a new resident here, so I need to learn the rules. They should understand if we could not manage to be on time. However, I was shocked and offended when they expressed those impolite words when reprimanding me.”

This interaction took place in a health centre upon early arrival in the host country between Sulis and a British native speaker. The native speaker was in her late 50s, and Sulis is an Indonesian student who had limited real experience interacting with a native speaker. Looking back at the narrative above, Sulis expressed anger at the lady in the scene for making what she perceived to be unjust comments (. i.e., *‘They seemed to say that I had made a huge mistake. As a British lady, I think, she was racist as I am wearing hijab’*). The lady's comments were considered so intense

that they could be considered humiliating. Valdesolo (2018) emphasises the links between anger, emotion, and moral concerns as components of behavioural evaluations (cited in Spencer-Oatey and Kadar, 2021).

As the narrative above shows, Sulis, who is in her late thirties, evaluated the receptionist as intentionally offensive because she did not expect the receptionist to speak offensively due to her late arrival at the GP, resulting in emotional judgments toward the lady. Sulis mentioned '*I am a new resident here, so I need to learn the rules. They should understand if we could not manage to be on time*'. This suggests that the receptionist should understand her situation of being a new resident and that it was not easy to find the place for the first time. As a result, participants may use this element to form an emotional judgment when the evaluation process starts due to a noticeable break in expectations.

Furthermore, Sulis was a midwife in Indonesia. Therefore, she believed that any patient who came to the health centre should be served politely (i.e., '*As my background as a midwife, they could not talk to any patients like this in any health centre anywhere*'). Moreover, the evaluation of emotions was supported by the background between Sulis as a Muslim wearing hijab and the receptionist (a British lady). Sulis was concerned about Islamophobia in the host country. Thus, this incident shows that judgement could be triggered by the participant's background as a Muslim who was worried about Islamophobia that she might experience while living in the UK. Therefore, as she used a hijab as a Muslim, she thought the receptionist was racist (i.e., '*I think, she was racist as I am wearing hijab*'). Therefore, supported by thoughts about Islamophobia, she firmly thought that the receptionist was very rude. This finding provides evidence that someone's background can influence offence, history, and nature of their relationship resulting in an emotional evaluation (Tayebi, 2016).

Moreover, this finding confirms the view of Tayebi (2016), who observes that (im)politeness evaluations do not necessarily rest on what was said and how it was said but instead on who said it.

Moreover, the complicated link between gender and (im)politeness, particularly within pragmatics and sociolinguistics, or the intersectionality factor, may have contributed to the participants' evaluation of offence (e.g., "As a British woman, I believe she was racist since I am wearing a hijab"). In recent years, the complicated link between gender and (im)politeness has been investigated from a variety of perspectives, particularly within the language subdisciplines of pragmatics and sociolinguistics (Chalupnik et al., 2017). Individuals engage in their social environment through the use of language and acts that are regarded as appropriate or inappropriate within certain social situations (e.g., gender and (im)politeness) (Mills, 2003). Consider, for instance, Sulis description of a 'British Lady': Mills (2003) argues that stereotypical femininity, such as 'white' middle-class ladies, may impact the listener's perception of (im)politeness. Moreover, when comprehending politeness in English-speaking societies, 'white' feminine stereotypes are frequently connected with deference (i.e., negative politeness) (Mills, 2003; quoted in Troutman, 2022, p. 124).

Febry, another participant, expressed his anger and negative emotions after evaluating an utterance from his supervisor. The case was also discussed in an earlier section about mismatched expectations experienced by the participants during intercultural interactions (see 5.7.2). But this time it will be discussed from the point of view of (im)politeness evaluation. This point becomes more explicit in the following narrative:

“Hancur perasaanku ketika dosenku memberikan kiriman balik melalui email mengenai tulisanku yang aku kumpulkan di salah satu ujianku. Dia memberikan komentar bahwa tulisanku ‘*rubbish*’. Aku tidak pernah [mengalaminya] atau baru kali [ini melihat] seorang guru berkata seperti itu. Kata itu menunjukkan perilaku yang tidak sopan, bahkan kasar. Sebagai seorang guru, tidak patut dia berbicara seperti itu. Setelah itu, aku merasa tidak punya motivasi lagi untuk belajar karena aku merasa bahwa tulisanku tidak layak berada di level Master.”

"I was devastated when my lecturer gave feedback through email about my writings submitted in one of the exams. She said my writing was rubbish. I never heard a teacher say that before. That word is more than impolite behaviour, but she was so rude. As a teacher, she could not say that. After that moment, I was very less motivated to study because I felt that my writing wasn't enough to be at the master level."

As can be ascertained from the above narrative, Febry demonstrated an emotional evaluation after receiving his supervisor's word 'rubbish' and considered it to be intentionally abusive, roughly translated as disgusting. Rubbish in Febry's opinion defined something worthless, which a teacher should not say (i.e., '*she said my writing was rubbish. I never heard a teacher say that before*'). Despite this, Febry did not know what the primary purpose of saying the word 'rubbish' was. For Febry, this was not a nice word to say in an academic setting. According to Febry, the word rubbish already exceeded the impoliteness behaviour that becomes intentionally abusive, leading to an emotional reaction (i.e., '*That word is more than impolite behaviour, but she was so rude*'). As this comment clarifies, the word rubbish breaks the communication appropriateness between Febry and his supervisor. The finding extends the discovery that the abusive word, which could be considered as shameful,

or hatred, could initiate a mental impact on the receiver (Spencer-Oatey and Kadar, 2021)

Furthermore, this comment made by the lecturer created an emotional reaction demonstrated by Febry, which created an uncomfortable relationship with the teacher and seemed to affect Febry's academic performance. In this respect, as demonstrated by the above narrative, through the lens of emotional judgments, this spectrum of emotions or feelings can be classified into two categories: positive feelings such as love and joy, and negative emotions such as anger, despair, and fear, with "surprise" falling somewhere in the middle (Spencer-Oatey and Kadar, 2021).

To summarise, the findings of this study showed that emotional judgments were linked to the participants' evaluation of mismatched expectations of moral order patterns during intercultural interactions. The findings show that emotional reactions play a crucial role in moral judgement, which is one of the automatic responses people make when they think someone has broken a shared moral order or done something wrong (Spencer-Oatey and Kadar, 2021). Furthermore, these findings support the evidence that emotional judgements are based on norms and expectations that individuals have formed from categorising the experiences of similar historical circumstances, or conclusions that one derives from other people's experiences (Loacher and Watts, 2008, cited in Tayebi, 2016). Despite the participants' prior experience with intercultural encounters involving impoliteness, this current study revealed that the participants could also develop the competencies needed to handle encounters to create harmonious relationships, specifically managing (im)politeness in intercultural interactions, which will be discussed in the following section.

6.8 Managing Politeness as a part of intercultural competencies development

Following on from the previous section's explanation of the aspects that most participants also encountered intercultural encounters, including (im)politeness evaluations, this study discovered that intercultural competencies are also necessary to manage harmonious intercultural interactions. Furthermore, in response to the second research question, the findings of this study demonstrated that intercultural competencies, including the abilities and the attitudes to manage (im) politeness in interaction, are essential in order to deal with intercultural encounters. As described in chapter two, politeness is a fundamental component of all interactions and plays an important role in how people communicate with one another. This study includes politeness because "[p]oliteness is a crucial way by which people work out and sustain interpersonal connections" (Kádár and Haugh, 2013, p. 1). Furthermore, because (im)politeness is a characteristic of human behaviour, "it is culturally as diverse as the human race: politeness has been regarded as a 'culture-specific phenomenon' since its initial investigations" (Kádár and Bargiela-Chiappini, 2011, p. 2). The following section describes how the ability to learn new knowledge is required in intercultural interactions that involve (im)politeness to create smooth communication.

6.8.1. ability to acquire new knowledge of over-polite behaviour

As stated in the previous sections (see section 5.8.2), this study discovered that the majority of situations of over-politeness encountered by my participants were evaluated negatively, resulting in less harmonious relationships in intercultural interactions. This section details how the participants were able to shift their perception of what they consider to be an over-polite act, by using their intercultural experience of how they are treated by British people in a number of settings during the intercultural adjustment period. Over-politeness can be perceived as being a negative or inappropriate behaviour in some contexts. However, by adopting a

discursive approach, an over-polite expression can be analysed by evaluating the social behaviour of the communicator, rather than by evaluating his/her linguistic utterances (Mills, 2003; Kádár and Haugh, 2013; Haugh, 2013).

This ability was also discussed in the previous chapters (see chapter four and five), which detailed the way in which students learn knowledge of another cultural background. Based on the following narrative of an intercultural encounter involving (im)politeness, students can be confronted with unfamiliar phrases and behaviour, or over-polite behaviour and expressions, during the first few weeks in their new environment. For example, consider the below excerpt which describes a student's reaction to an over-polite utterance:

“Aku punya sebuah pengalaman ketika pergi berbelanja. Ketika harus membayar barang sehari-hariku, wanita yang ada di kasir memanggilku dengan sesuatu yang membuatku kurang nyaman – maksud saya secara negatif. Dia memanggilku dengan sebutan *gentleman* sebelum melayani kostumer [*sic*] lainnya.”

“I had experience is like when I go shopping, then I have to pay my groceries, the women in the cashier there called me with some phrases which I was not comfortable with, I mean in a negative way. She said, please wait for this gentleman before serving another customer.”

This interaction took place between a native English speaker and a participant who had never previously visited an English-speaking country, and thus has little experience of cross-cultural communication. The interaction took place in a small, traditional supermarket when the participant bought groceries for the first time in the UK. By considering the above excerpt, it can be noted that the participant has been

offended by the overly polite way in which the cashier has called him a ‘gentleman’. The cashier was asking another customer to wait until the transaction with the participant had been completed. This offence has arisen because the participant has drawn on his own stereotypical belief that the word ‘gentleman’ refers to a well-mannered, wealthy British man.

Moreover, the participant considers a ‘gentleman’ to be a person who is well-attired. However, as he is only an international student who, at that time, was wearing a shabby long-sleeved T-shirt and casual hat to buy groceries in a small supermarket, he does not feel that he deserves to be called a ‘gentleman’. In intercultural encounters, the repeated adoption of stereotypes could result in communication misunderstanding (Stadler, 2011).

A different student had a similar experience. This student describes going to buy groceries for the first time, upon his arrival in England. However, he did not go to a modern supermarket, instead choosing to go to a traditional market because he believed, at that time, that some of the items would be much cheaper than in a modern supermarket. Being his first time at the traditional market, he thought he would have difficulty communicating because of unfamiliar words or slang. However, it was not what he expected because he found the use of over-polite expressions led to impoliteness, as he explains in the excerpt below:

“Aku merasa tidak nyaman ketika orang Inggris di sini memanggilku dengan sebutan *love*, *sweetheart*, seperti contoh, ‘*see you in a bit sweetheart*’. Hal itu membuatku merasa tidak nyaman dan aku mempunyai persepsi yang berbeda tentang itu.”

“I did not feel comfortable when some of the British people here called me by,

love, my sweetheart, for example, “see you in a bit sweetheart”, that just made me uncomfortable and I had a different perception about that.”

The above narrative demonstrates how each person, or each culture, has different expectations, which can, therefore, lead to impoliteness and offence (Parvaresh and Tayebi, 2018; Tayebi, 2016; Haugh and Chang, 2018). In this respect, Locher and Watts (2005) have found that some forms of behaviour can be judged in different ways, including impolite and over-polite, depending on the social context. Moreover, Mills (2004) argued that working-class people tend to engage in more positive politeness, which is characterised by more swearing, as well as talking more loudly and directly (p. 173). In Indonesian culture, the word ‘sweetheart’, or ‘sayang’ in Bahasa, is used by a couple, for example, a boyfriend and girlfriend, or husband and wife to express their love for each other.

In this respect, as highlighted by Locher and Watts (2005), “a hearer may interpret the speaker’s utterance as negatively marked concerning appropriate behaviour, while the speaker did not intentionally wish to appear as such” (cited in Kádár and Haugh, 2013, p. 219). Mills (2004) also found that differences in how politeness was interpreted by the British public and herself, lead to her believing that certain statements were impolite. As she noted, by calling her ‘love’, it appeared that attention was being drawn to “my gender in a particularly patronising stereotypical way when I did not consider gender to be a relevant factor in the exchange” (p. 184). Kadar and Haugh (2013) also mentioned that being overly polite can be regarded as being “negatively valanced” in specific interactions (p. 63).

During the first two weeks of his time in the UK, the participant found it difficult to adjust to this type of over-polite exchange. However, in the following

weeks, because of the student's increasing intercultural competence, flexibility, open-mindedness and respect for other cultures, as discussed in the previous chapter, this student became aware that cultural diversity can be appreciated by seeing things from another person's cultural perspective. By doing so, he became more relaxed and understood better how over-politeness is used in social situations. Thus, he felt less like a stranger in his new cultural environment. A similar experience was observed by another participant, as shown in the excerpt below:

“Seperti aku yang ceritakan, kemarin dia (seorang kasir, umur agak tua), memanggilku *love*, dan sekarang, meskipun agak berlebihan, sekarang aku melihat sisi positifnya, dan aku malah merasa dia lebih menghormati aku sekarang dengan panggilan itu.”

“So like, when she yesterday (the cashier, white lady British middle-age), called me love, and for me, even I still that is too much, but I feel now, she tried to call me in the positive way, now I feel that she respects me a lot.”

From the above narrative, it can be seen that the participant also learn new knowledge about his new cultural environment by understanding that the over-polite manner that was used by the British speaker is an attempt to express respect to his interlocutors in a more casual way. When he says ‘in the positive way’ in describing his understanding of (im)politeness, it is clear that he has started to evaluate this over-polite behaviour in another way (from the perspective of how it is used by British speakers). Kádár and Haugh (2013) suggested that there are multiple factors that influence the understanding of (im)politeness, particularly in cross-cultural interactions. For example, Mills (2004) claimed that a factor worth considering when evaluating (im)politeness in British culture is that white, middle-class people, particularly

women, are generally more polite than other people. As a result of the students' increasing intercultural competence during their intercultural adjustment period, they are now able to evaluate these over-polite expressions from the other cultural viewpoint. Consequently, this enables the students to become more relaxed about the use of this typical form of British over-politeness in the host culture.

In a similar vein to the aforementioned Sulis example, the conflict between Arif and the female cashier may have been influenced by intersectionality, that is, the link between (im)politeness and gender (see section 5.8.3). Conflicts can arise in interactions when there are mismatches between "how one expects them to be, how one wants them to be, and/or how one thinks they ought to be" (Culpeper, 2011, p. 254). However, in understanding (im)politeness, experiencing conflict within an interaction could have a positive influence as "individuals have a tendency to evaluate social actions and meanings, and the forms and practises through which they are accomplished, in certain ways vis-a-vis politeness" to develop the required attitudes (i.e., being well-mannered, avoiding conflict, being considerate) over time during intercultural interactions (Kadar and Haugh, 2013, p. 212).

Therefore, conflict is not always a negative aspect, but it could influence the development of intercultural competence. Conflict enables Arif to develop the ability to acquire new information based on his exposure to a 'woman's language' and the disparity between the polite gestures of men and women. This finding demonstrates that women are expected to have different social roles than men, such as preserving morality and civility within society; hence, women's speech may be seen as being more polite (Lakoff, 1975; cited in Chalupnik et al., 2017, p. 522).

6.8.2 Attitude to become familiar with the different perceptions of (im)politeness in other cultures

As previously mentioned in Section 5.8.1, most of my participants evaluated unexpected behaviour during interactions as mismatched expectations of moral order patterns, resulting in a negative evaluation. However, they could build the skills necessary to learn new knowledge about the host culture, and as a consequence, they may develop the attitude that attempts to adapt my participants' minds to the unexpected behaviour they encountered earlier in the phase.

Intercultural encounters involving (im)politeness evaluation could occur during intercultural interaction as “Culture is inevitably construed as part of one’s **identity**, and because of this, it is relative to the individual’s perception of her or his identity, even though this is also influenced by one’s perceptions of norms” (Kádár and Haugh, 2013, p. 8). Politeness is a natural and culture-specific phenomenon, and the evaluation of (im)polite behaviour can be analysed by considering cross-cultural differences. However, it is apparent in the following narrative that, at the beginning of the intercultural adjustment period in the UK, the participant was unaware of this type of cultural dissimilarity when evaluating (im)polite behaviour:

“Aku tak tahu kenapa murid di sini tidak sopan kepada dosennya. Tahu *gak*? Dia selalu memotong pembicaraan dosen ketika menyampaikan materi di depan kelas. Seperti contoh, dia bicara saja di depan kelas ketika dosen berbicara dan tanpa tunjuk tangan juga. Di budayaku, hal itu sangat tidak sopan. Di budayaku, dosen akan memberikan waktu untuk bertanya dan sopannya murid akan angkat tangan sebelum bertanya.”

“I do not know why a student in here cannot be polite with their lecture in class, you know, how they are interrupting lecturers when giving talks in the

class. As an example, they just talk in front of the class when the lecturer is explaining the material without pointing hands. In my culture, it is very rude of such a thing. In my culture, the lecturer will provide time to ask questions and the polite manners students need to raise their hands before asking.”

This interaction took place in a university classroom between a British lecturer, a number of local students and the participant, who was attending her first class in a Western academic setting. This situation occurred when the local students suddenly interrupted the explanation being given by the lecturer, which did not perturb the lecturer in the least. In other words, the participant failed to accurately understand this behaviour as she was influenced by her own cultural interpretation that a teacher must be respected by students and should not be interrupted when talking.

At earlier stage, she tended to over-generalise and did not recognise that politeness norms can differ between cultures, with positive and negative elements existing in all societies. At the end of her first week of lectures, she was still confused about the impolite behaviour exhibited by the other students in interrupting the lecturer when (s)he was talking because this is not common practice in Indonesian academic culture, which stipulates that respect should be shown at all times to a teacher. She had never been in this situation before because her parents had advised her to always show respect to a teacher, no matter where she was in the world. This incident has occurred because of cultural differences between Western and Indonesian education systems. East Asian education and learning systems are more teacher-centred, with students tending to be passive listeners who always show respect to their teachers (Kennedy, 2002; Harvey, 1985, cited in Stadler, 2011).

As she becomes more adjusted to her new cultural environment, her intercultural competence, primarily her ability to self-develop her intercultural competence, evolves by learning new knowledge about the culture and cultural practices, and she becomes more aware of cultural differences in her academic and non-academic surroundings. As she is now living in a different cultural environment, she must learn to self-develop by using the experiences that she encounters, so that she can successfully adjust to the new culture, a process which involves cultural differences in how (im)politeness is evaluated, as stated by the participant in the passage below:

“Ada hal lain juga. Saat pertama kali [datang], aku mempunyai masalah dengan supervisorku ketika aku memanggil dia dengan menyebut titel akademik beliau. Tapi dia terlihat kecewa dengan panggilan itu. Malah justru hubungan kami tidak terlihat baik. Lalu, aku menyadari bahwa dia lebih bahagia dengan memanggilnya cukup dengan namanya, di mana terlihat lebih sopan di budaya di sini. Akan tetapi, di budayaku, memanggil guru dengan sebutan nama, atau seseorang yang mempunyai posisi yang lebih tinggi, yang di kasusku adalah supervisorku, adalah perbuatan yang tidak baik.”

“Another thing was, for the first time, I had a problem with the supervisor when I called him using his academic title. He looked very disappointed when calling him that way. Even after that moment, our relationship did not go very well. Then I found that he is happier to be called by his name, which is more polite and respectful in this culture. However, in my culture, calling the name, I mean only his or her name especially for the teacher, or someone who has an upper hierarchy, or here in my case my supervisor, is a really bad attitude.”

As previously mentioned, a teacher must always be respected in Asian education systems, and Asian students show this respect by addressing their teacher using ‘sir’ or ‘madam’, or using his/her academic title, for instance, ‘Dr’ or ‘Professor’. It would be considered impolite to address the teacher by using his/her first name.

During our next meeting, at the beginning of the fourth week, she felt that she had more freedom to express her ideas and thoughts, even asking the lecturer questions when she had not fully understood the material being discussed. At the beginning, she was reluctant to ask the lecturer questions because she did not want to appear to be less competent than the other students. By the fourth week, she felt more confident talking in front of the class, and did not fear being considered impolite by the other students and the lecturer.

As she began to relax, she became more aware of cultural differences between her own Indonesian culture and that of the host country. Consider the following narrative taken in the second interview with Sulis:

“Aku mulai senang tinggal di sini karena aku bisa membangun sebuah percakapan yang harmonis dengan orang-orang sekitar. Aku mulai belajar kata-kata yang simpel, dengan memanggil mereka dengan sapaan *mate* atau *buddy*, lalu menanyakan kabar, cuaca, atau bagaimana akhir pekan mereka, sehingga aku sekarang mempunyai teman baru seorang barista di sebuah kafe di kampusku.”

“I’m starting to enjoy living here because I can build a harmonious conversation with the people around me. I began to learn simple words, by calling them ‘mate or buddy’. Then ask about the news, the weather, or how their weekend is. Until now I have a new friend a barista in a café on my campus.”

The above narrative demonstrates that now she enjoyed her morning coffee that she bought in a café near the university. One reason why she enjoyed having a cup of coffee in that particular café was because she had begun to develop a good relationship with the staff. Although, at first, she was rather shocked when she tried to be polite by calling the staff ‘sir’ or ‘madam’, but instead ending up offending them, because this was not the usual way to address the staff. Therefore, she changed to a more casual form of address, calling the staff ‘mate’ or ‘buddy’, and having informal conversations with them, like discussing the weather or asking how busy the shop had been the day before. This type of ‘chit-chat’ with a relative stranger was rather unfamiliar to her.

On the basis of the above narrative, the participant can be seen to develop her intercultural competence, and she becomes aware that her understanding of (im)politeness should not be subjective (based solely on her own culture), but should be intersubjective in order to “understand the perceptions, feelings, thoughts, beliefs, desires of others, and in some cases reach an agreement or a common understanding” (Kadar and Haugh, 2013, p. 207). During her stay in England, I was able to observe that she became more aware of the different forms of politeness. Moreover, in everyday life, particularly in cross-cultural communication, the ability to intersubjectively decide whether a behaviour is right or wrong, or to understand another person’s feelings, is necessary for maintaining good communication (Luckmann, 2002, cited in Parvaresh, 2019).

6.8.3 Re-evaluating the moral order

As previously highlighted, in section 5.8, this study discovered how mismatched moral order expectations and assumptions might result in my participants experiencing negative evaluation while their stay in the host country. As a result by developing the ability to learn and observe new behaviours of the host culture, most participants appeared to have the attitude to re-evaluate what the moral order anticipated in host countries in order to build harmonious intercultural interactions.

The moral order is an important factor in maintaining good communication, which is the ultimate goal of each participant in an interaction (Parvaresh and Tayebi, 2018). Moral order can be defined as being something obvious which at the same time is invisible (Haugh, 2013). When there are differing expectations of the moral order in communication, one of the communication partners could be offended, as shown in the excerpt below which has been taken from a participant's story:

“Saya memiliki masalah dengan persepsi tentang senyum di dalam budaya ini. Ketika saya mencoba tersenyum dengan orang-orang di sini, mereka pikir kebiasaan ini agak asing bagi mereka. Akibatnya, saya merasa mereka tidak nyaman dengan kebiasaan di dalam saya mengundang senyum kepada mereka. Mereka tidak menanggapi saya dengan senyuman, sebaliknya, mereka pun merespons dengan wajah yang kurang bersahabat.”

“I have a problem with perceptions about smiling in this culture. When I try to smile with the people here, they think this habit is a bit unfamiliar for them. As a result, I feel they are uncomfortable with my habit of inviting a smile to them. They are not responding me with a smile, on the contrary, they responded with a less friendly face.”

In his interview, this participant displayed his disappointment at his housemates' response to his attempts at being friendly. During his first week living in Nottingham, he tried to be friendly by smiling at them. His housemates were local students with only one international student. However, when he said, "they responded with a less friendly face", it would appear that the participant had received an unpleasant, rude and impolite response from the local students to his attempts at being friendly. In this respect, politeness is based on a social order which involves the arrangement of expectation; however, when a mismatch exists between different expectations during communication, impoliteness can result (Kádár and Haugh, 2013; Sifianou, 2013; Parvaresh and Tayebi, 2018). The moral order upon which the participant is basing his actions is that smiling is a pleasant form of greeting, particularly when people are unfamiliar with each other. In Indonesian culture, smiling is a mutually recognisable and ratified sign of familiar interpersonal relations.

The following week, the same participant still misunderstood the cultural differences in the understanding of the moral order. Let us consider the excerpt below:

"Hal lain adalah ketika melewati kerumunan orang, atau katakanlah, ketika melewati beberapa orang yang duduk, hal yang menurut saya [harus dilakukan] adalah mengatakan permisi atau minta maaf dan juga membungkuk. Tetapi di sini saya tidak pernah menemukan sikap seperti itu. Jika saya duduk, orang-orang berjalan melewatinya tanpa mengatakan permisi atau maaf, dan menurut saya, itu bukanlah hal yang benar untuk dilakukan atau tidak sopan."

"Another thing is when passing through a crowd of people, or let say, when passing some people who are sitting, the thing that in my opinion is to say excuse me, or sorry and also bowing. But here I never find that kind of manner,

if I'm sitting, people just walk past without saying excuse me or sorry, and in my opinion, it's not the right thing to do or it is impolite.”

This situation occurred when the participant was sitting having a discussion with this classmates in a narrow hallway. Suddenly a young student, who the participant assumed was an undergraduate student, came walking through the crowd without excusing himself, which the participant considered to be impolite. In Indonesian culture, the moral order of that particular situation is that the younger person, when passing a group of older people sitting on a bench, needs to excuse himself/herself and bend his/her body. In this respect, in Javanese culture (Java is an Indonesian island on which the majority of Indonesian people live) it is believed that older people should be more highly respected “because of the value placed on lineage” (Ng et. al., 2010, p. 120)

He explained that the manner in which the young man behaved should have complied with the moral order expected by the participant. Impoliteness was therefore triggered by the mismatch between his expectation of the moral order and his evaluation of the young man’s behaviour, which are both influenced by his own cultural background. The moral order is used to guide us in “the sense of right and wrong, good and bad”, and it is an order which is precisely reflected “in a patterned set of personal actions” (Domenici and Littlejohn, 2006, cited in Parvaresh and Tayebi, 2018, p. 92). Moreover, the moral order is associated with morality which considers some behaviours as being “right and wrong or good and bad conduct” (Parvaresh and Tayebi, 2018, p. 93).

Despite his self-reflection of the moral order, after spending two weeks living

in the host culture the participant became less disturbed by the cultural differences and appeared to accept that there were two different expectations of the moral order. He appeared not to judge impoliteness from the perspective of Indonesian culture, an example being that he became more casual about not smiling at new acquaintances in his new living environment. As he said in the interview:

“Saat ini, aku mulai berpikir bahwa terdapat perbedaan di dalam menentukan baik atau buruk di dalam memahami perbuatan tingkah laku, dibandingkan budaya saya di Indonesia.”

“Now I began to think that there were differences in good or bad manners in this country when compared to my culture in Indonesia.”

When he mentions ‘good or bad manners’, it would seem that he is prepared to learn more about how that moral order is applied in British culture. For instance, even though adjusting to the expectations of British culture has not been easy, he is now more accepting of what he considers to be bad manners, but which appears to be perfectly acceptable in British culture. For example, he no longer expects to automatically receive a smile from people in restaurants, supermarkets or even his own neighbourhood. By trying to understand what is considered to be polite in British culture, has shown him that a request should always end with the word ‘please’, rather than a smile. In addition to using the word ‘please’ when making a request, the participant also mentioned that he now holds a door open to allow another person to pass through, as he realised that this action is a definite moral order in British culture. In this respect, he has learnt that the moral order is a “socially constructed set of understandings we carry with us from situation to situation” (Domenici and Littlejohn,

2006, cited in Parvaresh and Tayebi, 2018, p. 92). Moreover, politeness is closely related to the social practice of examining the moral order, and involves learning the explicit or implicit expectancies of everyday life that are familiar to members of the local culture (Culpeper, 2011; Kadar and Haugh, 2013; Parvaresh and Tayebi, 2018).

6.9 Conclusion

In conclusion, because of mismatched expectations of moral order during cross-cultural interactions, this chapter found some aspects regarding (im)politeness evaluations that made feeling discomfort and being offended experienced by my participants. The finding of this study has identified that understanding politeness in interaction is 'a discursive concept arising out of interactants' perceptions and judgements of their own and others' verbal behaviour concerning the context of the interaction' (Locher and Watts, 2005, p. 10). Moreover, through the narrative stories provided in this chapter, the discursive approach could be used to analyse what norms and behaviours are expected among the participants in intercultural interactions, whether an utterance is appropriate or inappropriate, and polite or impolite.

This chapter focuses on the participant's experiences of the host country's journey, particularly their story of facing intercultural encounters, which involves (im)politeness evaluation in the intercultural scene. This study found that after passing the pleasure time by adapting to a new environment at the beginning of staying abroad, my participants have started to experience encounters that involve (im)politeness evaluation. Most of the encounters resulted in the participants having negating feelings stay abroad.

The findings of this current study reveal that my participants' personal cultural background knowledge is usually influential in cross-cultural interaction, resulting in the mismatch expectations of the moral order patterns, which cause conflict or being offended. As a result, intercultural competencies are also necessary to effectively manage (im)politeness evaluation, maintain a harmonious relationship, and generate smooth communication in intercultural interactions.

Chapter Seven

Discussion, Conclusion and Implications

The aim of this study is to investigate the intercultural competencies required by Indonesian students living in the UK. As outlined in Chapter One, my intention is to reveal the competencies that Indonesian students living in the UK need to adjust to cultural differences, particularly those competencies that are required for successful intercultural interactions. In addition, the study also investigates how Indonesian students manage intercultural encounters that necessitate the evaluation of (im)politeness as part of the development of their intercultural competence. Managing politeness is a necessary intercultural competence, particularly in intercultural interactions, to create smooth and dynamic exchanges between the participants.

According to the OECD (2018), one of the reasons for developing intercultural competence is to be able to live harmoniously in multicultural societies. Therefore, the current study borrows the term ‘intercultural competence’, which focuses on intercultural relationships (e.g., Spencer-Oatey and Franklin, 2009; Mendenhall et al., 2010). Spencer-Oatey and Franklin (2009) state that one of the aims of developing intercultural competencies in intercultural interaction is to create dynamic outcomes by communicating effectively and appropriately with people from other cultural backgrounds. By conducting an ethnographic study involving student blogs, interviews and observations, I have explored the experiences of Indonesian students during their time in the UK, which resulted in the emergence of recurring themes during the development of their intercultural competence.

In this chapter, I will discuss the key findings of this study in relation to the research questions. I will then summarise the implications and limitations of the study,

and will provide suggestions for further research on intercultural competence and the evaluation of (im)politeness in the context of studying abroad.

7.1 Discussion of findings in relation to the research questions

This section discusses the study's key findings in respect to the following research questions, as outlined in Chapter One:

1. Which intercultural competencies are required by Indonesian students and how are these competencies developed during the intercultural adjustment period?
2. How do Indonesian students manage intercultural encounters involving (im)politeness as part of intercultural competence during the intercultural adjustment period?

7.1.1 Research question 1: The required intercultural competencies and how they are developed

After the discussions in Chapters Four and Five, the following summarises the key findings that address the question concerning the required intercultural competencies and how they are developed. The required intercultural competencies are divided into two main components: the necessary skills and attitudes developed by the sojourn in the host country. One of the necessary attitudes found in the data was that the participants had to be actively involved in acquiring helpful information and cultural knowledge, resulting in positive feelings upon arrival in the host country. This factor will be discussed in the following section.

7.1.1.1 An active attitude to generate positive feelings about their arrival in the host country

Despite having little experience of intercultural interactions before arriving in the host country, this study shows that the majority of the participants adjusted well to their

new environment. They developed positive feelings when interacting with different cultures during the early days of their stay. By far, the most-referenced competency was an *active attitude*. By actively looking for helpful information and cultural knowledge, the Indonesian students in this study felt that this helped to create positive feelings about their stay. Activeness and open-mindedness are essential for settling into a new environment and for developing positive experiences. The participants recognised the importance of being active and open-minded when looking for information that would help them to adjust to their new environment. As indicated in Chapter Six, Ino, for example, actively engaged in intercultural interactions in his new academic setting with the purpose of making new friends. He was able to gain necessary information from his intercultural interactions to help him adapt to his new environment.

Actively seeking helpful information is a crucial attitude and one which is needed to adjust to cultural differences in the host country. For example, one of the first tasks that the majority of the participants had to undertake was finding suitable accommodation, about which they had developed a negative perception based on their cultural knowledge of the host country. Despite their limited intercultural experiences, the participants recognised the importance of being active and open to looking for information which would help them to adjust to their new place of residence. This finding resonates with previous studies on international student sojourns (e.g., Jackson, 2010, 2011; Holmes and O'Neil, 2013). For example, international students have demonstrated that if they have minimal experience of interacting with other cultures, they can still adapt to their new environment effectively as long they develop the knowledge and skills that are related to competent intercultural communication, including being active in their new environment (Jackson, 2011).

This finding differs from those of previous studies (e.g., Hua, 2014; Brown, 2008), which suggest that international students commonly have problems with quietness and passivity in a multicultural classroom. Hua (2014) discovered that feeling anxious is a common phenomenon for international students with limited experience of intercultural interactions prior to their arrival in the host country. However, this does not appear to be the case in the current study. The participants' active attitude had a pivotal role in creating positive feelings about the host country. The findings of the current study also differ from Brown's (2008) conclusions. She found that because of the new environment and emotional and physical disturbances, international students felt frightened, stressed and vulnerable upon arrival in the host nation. Despite their initial positive feelings and experiences of living in the UK, my participants began to have encounters in the host country during the next session of the interview and observation. These hard situations are referred to as "intercultural encounters," and they will be examined further in the following section.

7.1.1.2 Engaging in intercultural encounters

This study indicates that despite having good feelings about the host country and encountering pleasant experiences, all the participants needed to spend a period of time engaging in intercultural encounters. When a sojourner finds unfamiliar, he/she needs to negotiate cultural and social identifications and representations, a stage which is known as the intercultural encounters period (Kramsch, 1998; cited in Holmes and O'Neil, 2012, p. 709). As indicated in Chapter Five, the majority of the participants encountered unfamiliar cultures that clashed with their own social identities. All the participants had engaged in intercultural encounters. For example, as outlined in

Chapter Five, Ino was shocked by the actions he had witnessed in regard to the excessive drinking of alcohol, which, according to his own cultural perspective, were most unusual. Another example given in Chapter Five involves a participant called Dibyo. When he first arrived in the host country, he expected to find a country that was populated with highly educated people who constantly followed the rules. However, he experienced the opposite situation: he was upset because he saw people leave rubbish near his home and he was afraid to ride a bike because some people did not respect the rules and regulations. These findings provide evidence that differing cultures, experiences and languages can have an impact on a person's ability to understand the cultural gap (Spitzberg and Changnon, 2009).

Furthermore, these findings support Bennett's development model of intercultural sensitivity (DMIS), which focuses on how individuals respond to cultural differences and how their responses vary over time (Bennet, 1993; cited in Spitzberg and Changnon, 2009). The findings of the current study confirm that sojourners first deny their new understanding of the host country's cultural norms, before developing intercultural sensitivity during the period of intercultural encounters.

However, after passing through the intercultural encounters period, all participants began to acquire the necessary competence to develop more robust coping mechanisms for dealing with the challenges of living abroad. They developed the necessary skills by learning, discovering and evaluating their perceptions of the host culture. The following section discusses the necessary skills that are involved in the development of intercultural competence, particularly after the intercultural encounters stage, to enable the effective adjustment to cultural differences when living abroad.

7.1.1.3 Developing the necessary skills

After the intercultural encounters period, the next stage in the development of intercultural competence saw the participants starting to develop their skills by learning and evaluating new information about the host culture. They used this momentum to learn how to deal with cultural differences in intercultural interactions, even though many of them were depressed or had negative feelings following their initial intercultural encounters in the host country. As detailed in Chapter Five, the majority of the participants developed the necessary skills during this period, which included *active learning and listening* to new aspects of their host culture. Moreover, most participants used *observation skills* to acquire new knowledge about the host culture, as discussed in the following section.

7.1.1.4 The skills required to acquire new knowledge of other cultures

This study demonstrates that *acquiring new knowledge of other cultures* plays a significant role in the adjustment to cultural differences in the host country. As outlined in Chapters Four and Five, with the development of their skills, most participants became active in learning, talking about and exploring new things during intercultural interactions, which helped them to adjust to cultural differences. For example, as one student blog demonstrates, new things were learnt about the English language, primarily British English. Students were presented with unfamiliar terms and the British accent, which they had to learn and become familiar with. The students gradually began to learn British English and to use it in their daily lives. One of the participants, for example, noted in his blog post that he welcomed his friends with ‘Aye me duck’, which means ‘How are you?’

Another example from my ethnographic research involved one of the participants, Via. After learning new information about the host culture, she was able

to eliminate her perception that western culture enjoys judging a person's language abilities. Moreover, she developed one of the components of intercultural competence, namely, the ability to suspend disbelief about other cultures. She had allowed herself to believe something that was not true. These findings align with those of Byram et al. (2001), who discovered that being open-minded and learning new things helps people to comprehend different cultures, their beliefs and behaviours from different viewpoints. As a result, after undergoing further cultural training, Via feels more secure about using English in intercultural encounters.

Of the many studies on the conceptualisation of the intercultural competence development model (Deardorff, 2009; Mendenhall et al., 2010; Spencer-Oatey and Franklin, 2009; Spitzberg and Changnon, 2009), this finding resonates with Deardorff's (2009) study, in which she argues that listening and observation skills are an essential part of developing intercultural competence. Moreover, these findings are in line with those of previous studies by Jackson (2008, 2010, 2011), which focus on the journeys of international students by conducting ethnographic studies. These studies claim that when a sojourner notices a cultural gap in the host country during the adaptation period, they need *to observe, be open and learn clearly* from other people's behaviours before acting, instead of imagining things from their own perspective. Meanwhile, in the current study, when interacting in intercultural encounters, the participants began to gain a number of essential skills, including learning and listening to new knowledge through their own processes and experiences. Another skill that was found to be required by the participants in this study was understanding the norms of the host country, which will be discussed in the next section.

7.1.1.5 The skill to observe the norms of the host culture

The second intercultural competency found in this study was the skill to observe and, in particular, comply with the cultural norms of the host culture. A norm is an abstract concept. It denotes the set of common standards and concepts that serve as the foundation for determining what is (dis)approved of in a social setting and refers to what is commonly done or considered ‘normal’ (Kádár, 2020; Spencer-Oatey and Kádár, 2016). People should understand the norms when they interact in order to encourage harmonious interactions. Norms are not written, but they must be understood by individuals when they interact. In this sense, Kádár (2020) defines a norm as “an abstract entity for pragmatics since it embodies the established rules and principles that serve as the foundation for understanding what’s (dis)approved of in an interactional environment” (p. 20). Norms also refer to what is frequently done in a culture or community, as well as “what is typically approved of, or disapproved” of, within that culture or society in the context of intercultural interactions (Spencer-Oatey and Kádár, 2021, p. 111).

The current study shows that with the skills they have developed, namely *the skills to observe the norms* that apply in the local community, the participants were able to create harmonious intercultural interactions. As indicated in Chapter Five, after his experience of intercultural interaction, Ino has begun to observe the norms and behaviours that he believes are more acceptable in the host culture in order to maintain good communication in his intercultural interactions (i.e., holding doors, shaking hands, respecting someone’s privacy). Similarly, as outlined in Chapter Five, Via began to understand the factors that would help her to effectively construct multicultural interactions. She developed an understanding of how to behave in intercultural encounters by observing the behavioural conventions anticipated by some

individuals, such as questioning the weather, using more informal ways of greeting people ('How are you?') or addressing her friends as 'mate' or 'buddy'. These findings are consistent with those of Spencer-Oatey (2008). She notes that sojourners can build concepts as to what typically happens in a given context, and come to expect or sense that others should or should not execute particular forms of behaviour in intercultural interactions, by observing and analysing some of the frequent behaviours of local people. Via appeared to develop a favourable opinion about living in the host nation once she had understood the behavioural norms of the host country, which she achieved by engaging in intercultural contacts, as seen in the narrative scenario in Chapter Five.

After developing the two essential skills that were found in this study, namely learning and observation skills, as described above, the outcome of these developed skills was to acquire the correct attitude to adjust to cultural differences in the host country.

7.1.1.6 Developing an innovative mindset

This study demonstrates that the participants developed an innovative mindset, which allowed them to be more open and aware of people's behaviours and the generally accepted norms of the host country, thus enabling them to communicate more effectively in intercultural interactions. As indicated in Chapter Five, the majority of the participants established an innovative mindset, which necessitated a genuine openness to the behaviours of others and an acceptance that they may be more helpful or appropriate in the cultural environment of the host country. *Adaptation, not adoption*, is the objective. For example, many of the participants recognised the different ways of thinking and cultural differences and adapted their own ideals and

practices accordingly, which did not necessarily mean that their own ideals and practices were replaced.

For instance, as outlined in Chapter Five, Ino developed an innovative mindset in order to avoid harmful associations, such as getting drunk or becoming involved in activities that were not beneficial to his studies. Ino showed initiative by leaving the Poker club and joining a different student organisation (e.g., the Engineering Society), which was more valuable and favourable to his studies. Ino's innovative mindset (i.e., avoiding parties and joining a new student organisation) helped him adjust to cultural differences more effectively, which he believed was beneficial to his studies. This finding supports Spencer-Oatey and Stadler's (2009) claim that adapting to new ways of thinking or being innovative is more successful than adopting new habits. The findings are also in line with Holmes and O'Neil's (2012) conclusions. They found that even after encountering intercultural contacts, a sojourner must still reconstruct his own and the new culture's mindset to feel more at ease in his new community. The next attitude that the participants needed to develop is the accepting and respecting of culturally diverse ideas and behaviours in their new surroundings.

7.1.1.7 Developing an attitude of acceptance towards culturally diverse ideas and behaviours

The learning of behavioural norms via intercultural exchanges in the host nation was one of the necessary skills that the participants demonstrated. As a consequence, the participants appeared to accept the behavioural standards employed in the host nation, one of the necessary attitudes for intercultural competence. This study provides clear evidence that the majority of the participants accepted the norms that applied to local customs, and, as a result, developed more positive feelings about the host country. As shown in Chapter Five, Via has begun to embrace the more acceptable behavioural

norms of the host nation (i.e., queue behaviour, respecting privacy). This attitude might have developed because of Via's efforts to be more open and her desire to learn about the cultural norms of her new environment. Another participant, Dibyo, appears to have adjusted to the cultural gap by accepting certain forms of behaviour as part of the reality of living a multifaceted life in the host nation. For example, even though a culture that appears to condone the leaving of rubbish on the street and contempt for fellow road users was not what he had previously imagined, he has begun to embrace it by accepting certain things and being more cautious about his own safety.

Of the many previous empirical studies on the experiences of international students studying abroad (e.g., Matsumoto et al., 2008; Young et al., 2013; Wang and Hannes, 2013), these findings resonate most with those of Matsumoto et al. (2008), who noted that being open is the key to intercultural adjustment since it enables individuals to accept cultural differences. These findings also align with the conclusions of Spencer-Oatey and Franklin's (2009) study: being open is an element of intercultural competency that encourages people to tolerate and accept behaviours that differ from their own cultural identity. The majority of the participants in the current study appeared to be able to adjust to certain cultural behaviours by accepting and tolerating them, as this was the reality of living a diversified life in the host country. After developing the necessary skills and having the attitude needed to adjust to their new environment, the participants continued to experience intercultural encounters during their study abroad. The following section will explain the period when they re-experienced intercultural encounters in the host country.

7.1.1.8 Re-experiencing intercultural encounters: The development of intercultural competence as a continuous process

This study confirms that despite possessing the necessary skills and attitudes to acclimatise to cultural differences in the host country, many of the participants re-experienced intercultural encounters during their studies in the UK. For example, in the case of Dibyo (see Chapter Five), after successfully adjusting to the cultural differences that he initially experienced, within six months he was faced with another intercultural encounter in a different location. Consequently, each time he is confronted with another intercultural encounter in a new location, he must continue to utilise his skills to observe the behaviours of other people in the host country. For instance, Dibyo appeared to have another negative experience of the host nation because he was feeling lonely due to a lack of time with his friends, which left him bored, unhappy and homesick. Sulis provides yet another example when she underwent another encounter during her curricular activities. During interactions with her lecturer, she was told that she needed to be more autonomous in the new academic system. As a result, Sulis appeared to require additional help with her compositions as she was struggling with her essay writing.

This study found that intercultural competency skills must continuously be maintained and developed to create the necessary attitude for a positive experience in the host country. Therefore, the development of intercultural competence does not stop at a certain point. This finding is in line with Deardorff's (2009) study, in which it is claimed that the development of intercultural competence is a continual process and that providing opportunities for sojourners to reflect on and evaluate their intercultural competence over time is critical. This finding is similar to that of Spitzberg and Changnon (2009). They discovered that the development of intercultural competence is ongoing, and involves continuous learning and interacting

with other cultures in an attempt to become more open-minded. The current study also discovered that the development of intercultural competence is an ongoing process. Another of this study's findings is that after many of the participants reused the skills they had initially acquired, they found that the new attitudes they had developed provided them with the flexibility to adjust to the cultural context of their new place of residence.

7.1.1.9 An adaptable attitude

After developing the necessary skills for intercultural competency, another attitude revealed by the participants was the adaptability to adjust to cultural differences in the behaviour or the manner of communication of local people as a result of learning about new cultures in the host country. For example, Sulis has now developed the adaptability to choose suitable words and phrases to construct a more successful conversation based on what she has learned from previous intercultural experiences (see Chapter Five). She also copied and used words that are commonly used in conversations with local people, resulting in more harmonious intercultural relationships. Another participant, Dibyo, developed an adaptable approach to feeling bored and lonely, overcoming these feelings by playing online games (see Chapter Five). As a result of improving his awareness of cultural differences, Dibyo learned new techniques to cope with his negative feelings (i.e., using different techniques to 'hang-out' with people). He became more accustomed to cultural variations and was more relaxed about living in his new environment. This finding resonates with the conclusions of Spencer-Oatey and Stadler's (2009) study of intercultural interactions, which suggest that when sojourners are in an unfamiliar situation, they should observe how others behave, reflect on how similar or different this behaviour is to their own behaviour, and experiment with adjusting their own behaviour.

7.1.1.10 Addressing research question one

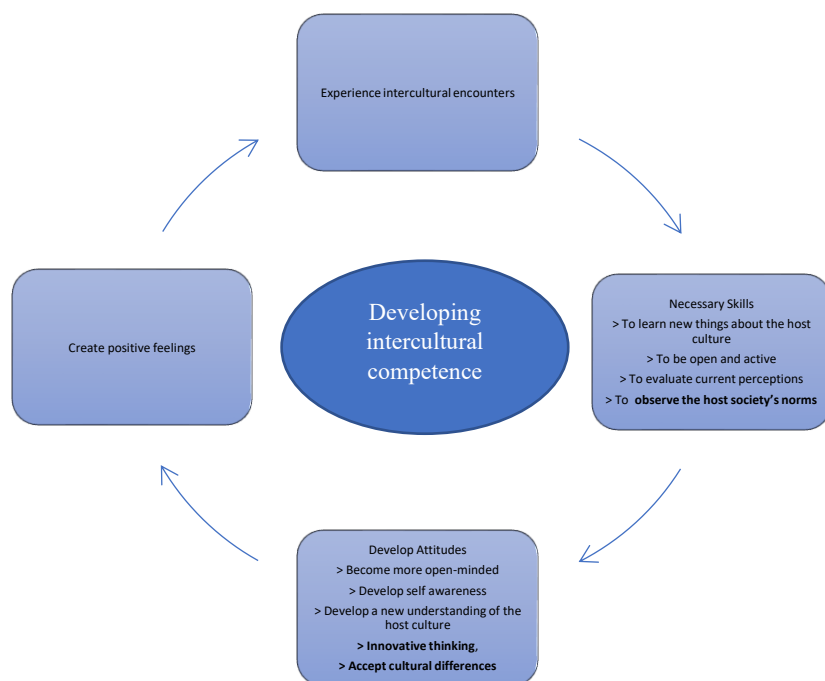


Figure 19. The development of intercultural competence during the intercultural journey

In response to the first question, this study found that intercultural competence can be learned before departure, which leads to positive feelings in the host country. The competencies found to affect experiences were *having the right motivation to learn about the host culture prior to the journey and advanced English language proficiency*. It was then continued by **actively** looking for useful information in the host country to reduce their anxiety.

Furthermore, this study reveals that the intercultural competencies needed by Indonesian students in the United Kingdom can be classified into two categories, namely, *attitudes and skills*, as shown in the above diagram (Figure 19). The former

refers to the way in which people behave, as defined by their inner motives, personal beliefs and goals. It includes *an active attitude, innovative thinking and the acceptance of cultural differences*. The latter pertains to the actions that participants can perform or their capabilities, and what they have learned throughout their stay. It encompasses the *skills required to learn new information* about a different culture and *the skills required to observe the host society's norms*. This finding supports the results of Deardorff's (2009) study, in which it is concluded that both competencies are essential because attitudes can maintain a courteous, open and curious approach, while skills enable an individual to acquire and assess knowledge.

The current study demonstrates that the development of intercultural competencies is also shaped by positive feelings about the host nation. However, as can be seen in Figure 19, it is worth noting that most participants at this stage already had some experience of intercultural encounters, and at this point began to develop the necessary skills and attitudes. They appeared to adjust to cultural differences with a greater degree of success after developing the necessary abilities. Furthermore, as developing *intercultural competencies is a lifelong process*, this study reveals that all the participants tended to re-experience intercultural encounters, resulting in the continuous development of abilities that are necessary to sustain worthwhile relationships.

As shown in Figure 19, this study found that the achievement of intercultural competency cannot be accomplished in a single moment, but instead is a continual process throughout the duration of the sojourn. This finding confirms that achieving intercultural competency is a process of development which involves grasping underlying cultural values, communication methods and worldviews to better comprehend the behaviour of other people and to communicate successfully and

respectfully with people who have different cultural identities (Book, 2009, p. xiii). The suggested process (see Figure 19) sketches out the participants' journey, which begins with the creation of positive feelings during the first few months in a new country. These positive feelings are created when the sojourners experience intercultural encounters, learn the necessary abilities, become open-minded and establish a fresh perspective on the new culture. The next section will discuss another finding of this study, which aims to address the second research question.

7.1.2 Research question 2: Intercultural encounters involving the evaluation of (im)politeness

One of the motivations for developing intercultural competence, according to the OECD (2018), is to live harmoniously in multicultural societies. Therefore, as previously mentioned in Chapter One and when discussing the findings in Chapter Six, another reason for undertaking this research is to identify the competencies that are needed to adjust to cultural differences so that (im)politeness can be correctly evaluated, in order to sustain harmonious relationships between individuals from different cultural backgrounds. This aspect is considered in the current study because “[p]oliteness is a thoughtful way by which people work out and preserve interpersonal connections” (Kádár and Haugh, 2013, p. 1). Consequently, this section will attempt to answer the second research question by explaining the key findings in regard to the elements that have an impact on intercultural encounters, including the evaluation of (im)politeness and the way in which evaluations of (im)politeness are handled during intercultural encounters to preserve harmonious interactions.

7.1.2.1 Mismatched moral order expectations: the experience of Indonesian students in the UK

The current study's second key finding is that intercultural contacts that necessitate the evaluation of (im)politeness in the host nation, require skills and attitudes that are developed through intercultural encounters. Before discussing the skills and attitudes required to manage intercultural encounters involving the evaluation of (im)politeness, the following sections will first explain how the misalignment of moral expectations and assumptions may cause the participants to develop negative feelings during their stay in the host country.

As previously outlined in Chapters Two and Five, the concept of a 'moral order' can be defined as a socially created "set of understandings that we carry with us from situation to situation" (Domenici and Littlejohn 2006; cited in Parvaresh and Tayebi, 2018, p. 92). Furthermore, the moral order grounds the judgments of social acts and meanings as good or evil, suitable or inappropriate, courteous or rude, and so on (Zhao and Ran, 2019). The moral order may alternatively be described as the order in which people and social groupings expect the structure and style of interactions to develop in what they perceive to be an "orderly manner" (Kádár et al., 2019, p. 9). Cultural differences in understanding the moral order had a significant impact on the participants' first intercultural encounters, and the resulting behaviour will be described in the next section.

7.1.2.2 Evaluating unexpected behaviour

The participants' first intercultural encounters, which included the evaluation of (im)politeness, involved the participants assessing unexpected behaviour. Behaviours are "situationally constructed", "morally informed" and "originate from a set of comparable assumptions and expectations" (Parvaresh, 2018, p. 82). A participant,

Mantri, sought to be polite to his neighbour (see Chapter Six). He wanted to make a kind gesture by grinning, but other members of the group responded with unexpected behaviour, which Mantri judged inappropriately. Another example involves Febri's reaction to a librarian's response to the book request he had made (see Chapter Six). He thought the librarian's behaviour was impolite because the librarian had thrown the book at Febri using his left hand. In responding to these circumstances, as previously indicated, this type of conflict involving the misalignment of moral expectations appears to produce unpleasant feelings, which might affect the participants' academic performance while studying abroad.

This finding contributes to research on the relevance of the moral order when evaluating (im)politeness (e.g., Spencer-Oatey and Kádár, 2020; Parvaresh and Tayebi, 2018; Parvaresh, 2019). For example, this finding extends Spencer-Oatey and Kádár's (2020) view that understanding behaviour in intercultural encounters involves a situational context based on our own perceptions throughout the evaluation process. This study also demonstrates that the evaluation of unexpected behaviour is dependent on the moral order so that harmonious relationships can be achieved. Furthermore, this finding is consistent with Parvaresh's (2019) finding, which emphasises the importance of morality as a collection of comparable beliefs and expectations that are arguably informed by, amongst other factors, the evaluation of different behaviours. The next aspect of intercultural encounters involving the evaluation of (im)politeness was how the participants attempted to analyse over-politeness in their exchanges.

7.1.2.3 Over-politeness

Over-politeness, as a result of being offended, is a breach of the moral order (see Chapter Six). In this study, over-politeness was shown to be negatively evaluated, which might influence the participants' relationships with other people in the

multicultural environment. As previously mentioned, over-politeness is frequently experienced in intercultural contexts, with the inevitable negative consequences (Haugh, 2007). Furthermore, mismatched interpersonal messages in communication may result in behaviours that are commonly described as politeness or over-politeness (Culpeper et al., 2017). For example, Sulis, as a student, assumed that she was in a lesser position and should treat her teacher with respect. Sulis said that her lecturer was extremely friendly during meetings, apologising for being late to the meetings, requesting to carry Sulis' bag and offering her a drink. As a result, when Sulis met her teacher, she appeared uncomfortable with her overly polite behaviour. Another example involved Arif, who was insulted by a supermarket cashier's overly courteous description of him as a 'gentleman' (see Chapter Six). This encounter took place when the cashier asked another customer to wait until the transaction with the participant had been completed. This offence developed because of the participant's conventional notion that the word 'gentleman' referred to a well-mannered, wealthy British gentleman. This finding supports Haugh and Kádár's (2017) results, which claim that all the participants in an encounter should evaluate the behaviour of others "through the glasses of moral standards of how things 'should be'" (p. 611). Furthermore, this finding also supports Locher's (2006) study, which found that the participants in an encounter might be deliberately or subconsciously rude or overly nice, thereby violating the standards of appropriateness of the parties involved (p. 258). The following intercultural encounter focuses on how the participants evaluated verbal and nonverbal impoliteness that breached the anticipated moral order, resulting in emotional or angry expressions.

7.1.2.4 Emotional (anger) evaluation

This study also revealed that some gestures and speech were deemed to be offensive, creating unease for the participants when interacting with people from different cultures in their new environment. Due to the misalignment of moral expectations, as outlined previously, the evaluation of specific words or gestures resulted in the participants feeling emotional or angry. One of the participants, Sulis, rated a person as being particularly unpleasant because she did not anticipate that anyone would react badly or be nasty to her because she was late for her appointment at a health clinic (see Chapter Six). In this situation, the participant was still getting used to her new surroundings and she felt that all patients should be treated with respect. Another example demonstrating emotional evaluation involves Febri, who judged his supervisor's use of the word 'rubbish' to be rather unpleasant and nasty. In Febri's opinion, 'rubbish' meant something useless and, therefore, his supervisor should not have said it. Although Febri had no idea what the primary aim of using the word 'rubbish' was, he considered this word to be very unpleasant and, as a result, he became angry. Anger was generated in response to the participants' evaluations of the gestures or words they had received, which did not appear to meet their moral expectations. This finding supports Parvaresh and Tayebi's (2018) results by confirming that the moral order is one of the most essential aspects of social interactions. The moral order directs how individuals think about what is right or wrong (or good or terrible), and it is supposed to be reflected in personal and social behaviours. In general, this finding confirms Tayebi's (2016) study, which states that the offender's background, history and nature may have an impact on any judgement of impoliteness that causes offence. Despite facing intercultural encounters that necessitated the evaluation of (im)politeness because the moral order had been

breached, resulting in negative feelings and even emotional or angry expressions, the majority of the participants were able to establish harmonious intercultural interactions by developing other intercultural competencies.

7.1.2.5 Intercultural competencies required to deal with (im)politeness in intercultural encounters

In response to the second research question, this study discovered that intercultural competence is necessary to handle intercultural encounters that involve the evaluation of (im)politeness. As discussed in previous chapters, politeness is an essential component of all interactions and plays a crucial role in how individuals engage with one another. As “[p]oliteness is a crucial way by which people work out and sustain interpersonal connections” (Kádár and Haugh, 2013, p. 1), it is included in the current study. Furthermore, because (im)politeness is a feature of human behaviour, “it is culturally as diverse as the human race is: politeness has been addressed as a ‘culture-specific phenomena’ since its first investigations” (Kádár and Bargiela-Chiappini, 2011, p. 2).

The majority of participants had to deal with conflict, referred to in this study as an intercultural encounter, during their intercultural interactions. Conflict can be regarded negatively in social relationships. According to Balliet and Van Lange (2013), conflicts of interests may arise during circumstances of social interdependence, such that the action resulting from the conclusions formed by each individual may actually harm or result in comparatively fewer advantages for others. Furthermore, according to Culpeper (2011), the evaluation of impoliteness is the result of conflicts arising in interactions whenever there are mismatches between “how one expects them to be, how one wants them to be, and/or how one thinks they ought to be” (p. 254).

However, this study found that conflict is not necessarily a negative aspect of social relations and could be an indicator of a more meaningful social interaction. By experiencing conflict, the majority of participants were able to improve their intercultural competence, thus leading to more harmonious intercultural interactions within such a context. This finding supports Kádár and Haugh's (2013) observation that when experiencing conflict during an interaction, people tend to evaluate social behaviours and meanings, as well as the forms and practises by which they are performed, in specific ways in relation to politeness.

7.1.2.6 Ability to learn new knowledge about overly polite behaviour

As previously mentioned, the participants were faced with intercultural encounters that involved the evaluation of different behaviours, which sometimes resulted in unfavourable sentiments about the host country. By using their intercultural experience of how British people treated them in various situations during the intercultural adjustment phase, the participants were in a position to change their view on what they considered to be an overly polite gesture. For example, Arif, as a result of his developing intercultural competence, flexibility, open-mindedness and respect for different cultures, as mentioned in the previous chapter, realised that cultural variety could be enjoyed by looking at things from another person's point of view, which led to him becoming calmer. Furthermore, he developed a greater understanding of how over-politeness is employed in social situations. As a result, he felt less alienated in his new cultural setting. When Arif stated that he now evaluates over-politeness in a good light, it was apparent that he had begun to judge overly polite behaviour in a different way (from the perspective of how British speakers use over-politeness). This discovery is consistent with the findings of Kádár and Haugh (2013), who state that a variety of factors impact people's perceptions of (im)politeness,

particularly in cross-cultural encounters. Furthermore, this particular finding resonates with Mills' (2004) discovery: when analysing (im)politeness in British society, one element to consider is that white, middle-class individuals, particularly women, are typically more polite than other groups of people.

7.1.2.7 Attitudes towards learning about different cultures and (im)politeness norms

In this study, (im)politeness in intercultural interactions is understood to be part of one's own identity. As a result, it is related to the individual's view of her or his identity, even though one's judgments of norms also impact this (Kádár and Haugh, 2013, p. 8). Furthermore, the current study has found that politeness is a natural and culturally distinctive phenomenon. The judgment of (im)polite behaviour can be analysed by taking cross-cultural variations into account. Therefore, it is not surprising to see that the majority of the participants tended to generalise and failed to recognise that politeness standards vary according to culture, with good and negative aspects present in all cultures. However, as they adjust to their new cultural environment, the participants' developing intercultural competence, particularly their ability to self-develop their intercultural competence and learn more about the culture and cultural practices of the host nation, enables them to become more aware of cultural differences in their academic and non-academic settings. They must learn to self-develop by utilising their experiences of intercultural encounters in order to effectively acclimatise to the new society, a process that incorporates cultural variances in how (im)politeness is evaluated. For example, Sulis, as outlined in Chapter Six, began addressing people as 'mate' or 'buddy' and engaged in casual conversations with them, such as discussing the weather or enquiring about how busy they had been the previous day. She now recognises that her view of (im)politeness should not be subjective (based solely on her own culture). Similarly, Kádár and Haugh (2013) note

that (im)politeness is intersubjective in order to “understand others’ perceptions, feelings, ideas, beliefs, and desires” (p. 207), and in certain circumstances to achieve an agreement or shared understanding.

Another participant, Via, felt the need to continue acquiring new cultural knowledge and observing the polite way of doing things during her intercultural journey, in order to adjust more successfully and effectively to cross-cultural communication. She realised the necessity to queue in certain circumstances, for example, getting on a bus, which she did not do in her home country. Previous research has shown that encountering certain situations can reveal the regular norms of the new cultural environment, i.e., the ‘moral duty’ of the participants (Spencer-Oatey, 2000, p. 41). In general, after experiencing cross-intercultural encounters, most of the participants developed their understanding of the new cultural environment from a different perspective, including understanding the norms that are applicable in the host country and cultural differences in terms of (im)politeness. These findings also align with Bennet’s (2009) conclusions. He proposed the development model of intercultural sensitivity (DMIS) and discovered that intercultural interactions might be a suitable time for participants to acquire the necessary attitudes to develop their intercultural competence. The following section discusses the re-evaluation of the moral order as a necessary competence for comprehending the standards of (im)politeness in the host country.

7.1.2.8 Re-evaluating the moral order

As outlined in Chapter Six, this study demonstrates that the misalignment of moral expectations has a significant influence on intercultural encounters that involve the evaluation of (im)politeness. Moral order agreement between parties is necessary for maintaining harmonious communication, which is the ultimate goal of each participant

in an encounter (Parvaresh and Tayebi, 2018). The moral order can be characterised as both apparent and unseen (Haugh, 2013). The majority of the participants in the current study began to acquire the ability to self-reflect on the moral order of the host culture after spending an extended period of time abroad. As a result, individuals appeared to accept that various moral standards existed throughout the intercultural contact phase, and were therefore less bothered by cultural differences. They did not appear to judge (im)politeness from the standpoint of their own culture. For example, Mantri experienced problems with grinning the first time he made a request. However, he did not appear to assess impoliteness from the perspective of his own cultural background once he had acquired new information and standards via intercultural exchanges. As a result, he began to re-evaluate his actions and developed another method that was more compatible with the host culture's moral order. When making requests, for example, he now uses the word 'please' rather than grinning.

Another example of re-evaluating the moral order of the host nation involves the participant, Ino. He has re-evaluated the moral orders that the host culture upholds. For example, he now holds a door open for another person to walk through because he recognises that this is part of the moral order of British society. These findings support the idea that moral order is a "socially created collection of understandings that we carry from situation to situation" (Domenici and Littlejohn, 2006; cited in Parvaresh and Tayebi, 2018, p. 92). These findings support, elaborate and broaden the concept of politeness, which is intimately linked to the social practice of analysing the moral order and entails understanding the explicit or implicit expectations of everyday life that are common among members of the local culture (Culpeper, 2011; Kádár and Haugh, 2013; Parvaresh and Tayebi, 2018).

7.1.2.9 Addressing research question two

Overall, this research demonstrates that managing intercultural contacts that necessitate the evaluation of (im)politeness is essential for developing intercultural competence, and this study demonstrates several factors which can make a positive contribution to this process. The participant's *evaluation of unexpected behaviours and over-politeness*, which can lead to offence and misunderstanding in intercultural relationships, are two such factors. In addition, the majority of the participants also indicated the importance of the *emotional evaluation* of gestures or statements that they perceived as impolite or offensive.

As previously stated, the majority of the participants exhibited an increase in intercultural competence over the course of their intercultural interactions. They also illustrated how the development of intercultural competence can be utilised to manage intercultural encounters that involve the assessment of (im)politeness, including *acquiring new information about over-politeness, learning more about the beliefs of other cultures in terms of (im)politeness and re-evaluating the moral order*.

7.2 Contribution of the study

This study focuses on determining the necessary attitudes and skills for intercultural competency by addressing this issue and exploring it in more depth. Furthermore, this study contributes to the intercultural competence of international students, in particular Indonesian students living in the UK, a research topic that has received little global research attention. In addition, this study also adds to our understanding of the intercultural competencies that sojourners must develop when living abroad.

As previously stated, the focus of this research is the intercultural competence needed to foster harmonious intercultural interactions when studying abroad. The goal

of this research is to fill the gap in the existing frameworks of intercultural competence that focus on the management of intercultural relationships. As discussed in Chapter Two, relationship management is expressly identified as an essential component of intercultural competence in these frameworks (Brinkmann and van Weerdenburg, 2014; Mendenhall et al., 2010; Spencer-Oatey and Stadler, 2009; Deardorff, 2006) (see Table 6). In fact, almost every scholar who studies intercultural competence agrees that communication is crucial for relationship management. On the other hand, relational management has to be identified more explicitly, as indicated by Deardorff (2009). As a result, the purpose of the current study is to identify the gap in existing frameworks and to update the necessary competencies, with a particular focus on the competency of international students to maintain harmonious relationships in intercultural encounters. There are parallels and discrepancies between the results of the current study and prior research studies, which can be observed in the table below.

This study provides support for the intercultural competencies previously established by intercultural communication scholars, who identified relationship management as being a core component of intercultural competence (e.g., Brinkmann and van Weerdenburg, 2014; Mendenhall et al., 2020; Spencer-Oatey and Stadler, 2009). Moreover, the findings of the current study elaborate a number of the components of intercultural competency that are required to manage interpersonal relations in intercultural contexts (Deardorff, 2009). Therefore, it is essential to consider how the competency to manage interpersonal relations in intercultural contexts can be conceptualised. Mendenhall et al. (2010), Spencer-Oatey and Franklin (2009), Brinkmann and van Weerdenburg (2014) each identify a number of components.

Table 7. Contributions to the framework of intercultural competencies

Mendenhall et al. (2010)	Deardorff (2009)	Spencer-Oatey and Stadler (2009)	Brinkmann and van Weerdenburg (2014)	The current study (Indonesian students in the UK)
> Perception management > Relationship management; self- management	> Skills: To listen, to observe, to interpret, to analyse, to evaluate, to relate > Attitudes: Respect, openness, curiosity	> Knowledge and ideas > Communication > Relationships > Personal qualities and dispositions	> Intercultural sensitivity (cultural awareness and attention to signals) > Intercultural communication (active listening and adapting communication styles) > Building commitment (building relationships and reconciling stakeholder needs) > Managing uncertainty (openness to cultural diversity and exploring new approaches)	Skills: > Foreign language proficiency > To learn general knowledge of other cultures > To acquire new knowledge of other cultures > To respect (observe) the norms of the host culture > To observe (im)politeness in different cultures > To communicate (learn) new knowledge via social media Attitudes: > Active > New thinking > Acceptance > Flexibility > Re-evaluating the moral order > Actively participating in intercultural interactions

As illustrated in Table 7, as far as this study's results are concerned, contributions that are similar to the findings of previous studies could be useful in other contexts (beyond that of Indonesian students). By building on these frameworks, the current study provides a number of results that resonate with earlier findings. For example, the finding relating to the skills required to acquire new knowledge of other cultures elaborates and extends the intercultural competencies formed by Spencer-Oatey and Franklin (2009) that stress the importance of acquiring new knowledge and ideas. Furthermore, the findings on the required attitudes, such as being active, accepting other cultural norms and being willing to communicate in intercultural interactions,

support the findings of Deardorff's (2009) study, in which the importance of attitudes such as respect, openness and curiosity for behaving and interacting appropriately in intercultural situations are emphasised. Furthermore, the skill required to become familiar with the notion of (im)politeness in other cultures elaborates the findings of Brinkmann and van Weerdenburg's (2014) study. They stress the significance of intercultural sensitivity, which involves cultural awareness and attention to signals, unwritten rules or norms as part of intercultural competency in multicultural environments.

The findings of the current study also contribute to the growing body of knowledge on (im)politeness in intercultural situations (Spencer-Oatey and Kádár, 2016, 2021; Parvaresh and Tayebi, 2018; Haugh, 2013), for instance, the finding relating to the misalignment of moral expectations in intercultural interactions that involve the evaluation of (im)politeness. These findings affirm, elaborate and extend the importance of the moral order as a component of (im)politeness evaluation, as asserted by Parvaresh and Tayebi (2018), Parvaresh (2019) and Spencer-Oatey and Kádár (2020, 2021), who emphasise the importance of investigating moral-order expectations to confirm that such expectations exist and how individuals cope with them on a daily basis. Similarly, this finding supports Spencer-Oatey and Kádár's (2016) study, in which ideas, ideologies and the moral order were found to influence the evaluation of intercultural (im)politeness. The current study also supports Haugh's (2013) claim that im/politeness judgements should be seen as social practises that form a moral order which is triggered by specific social behaviours. In keeping with prior empirical research, this study demonstrates that intercultural competence is essential for handling intercultural encounters that necessitate the evaluation of (im)politeness. The study's findings on the intercultural competencies that are required to manage

intercultural interactions that involve the evaluation of (im)politeness provide further support for the conclusions of Spencer-Oatey and Kádár (2021), who claim that politeness can manifest itself in the form of proactive behaviour in intercultural interactions as people seek to maintain smooth connections.

Another contribution of this study is the ethnographic approach that I adopted to investigate the development of intercultural competencies by Indonesian students in the United Kingdom, which incorporated student online blogs, interviews and observations. Ethnography is the systematic collection of data from people in naturally occurring settings or 'fields' by using methods that capture their social meanings and everyday activities. It requires the researcher to participate directly in the setting to collect data systematically (Brewer, 2000; cited in Jackson, 2006, p. 78). The current research, which was part of an ethnographic study, attempted to measure the intercultural competencies of students by directly involving the researcher in the study. This required the researcher to examine the students' everyday lives in the UK, including both their academic and non-academic activities. Such an ethnographic approach to studying foreign students on long-term stays abroad has recently become popular with applied linguists and interculturalists (Jackson, 2006; Jackson, 2010; Covarrubias, 2008). An ethnographic study aims to develop a more in-depth understanding of the behavioural activities of a certain group at a specific moment in time (Jackson, 2006). By adopting an ethnographic approach, the current study has been able to provide more in-depth knowledge about the ways in which intercultural competence is acquired and developed in particular circumstances. The collection and analysis of the data was a time-consuming process, but provided robust results and reliable conclusions. Previous research on the intercultural competencies required by sojourners (Deardorff, 2006; Salisbury et al., 2013; Schartner, 2016) relied on semi-

structured interviews and surveys. As a result, this study helps to expand existing research by employing a different technique, namely ethnography, to delve further into the case of international students studying abroad.

This study has made a significant contribution to the research on Indonesian students studying abroad and has helped to update the findings of Novera's (2004) study, which indicate that Indonesian students struggle to adjust to academic differences during their studies and to cultural differences outside of academia. Although the Indonesian students who participated in the current study developed intercultural contacts during their stay, they were found to have more positive feelings about the host country because they had arrived in the UK with the necessary competencies to engage in intercultural interactions and, furthermore, they strove to maintain these competencies throughout the duration of their stay.

7.3 Implications of the research, limitations and areas for further research

As a consequence of my research, I am now more at ease because I now realise that I am not alone in experiencing difficulties with intercultural encounters during my studies abroad. As indicated by the data, all the participants had trouble adjusting to cultural differences throughout their duration of their studies. In this context, this study demonstrates that intercultural competencies are a necessity. The development of intercultural competency is a complicated phenomenon, one which necessitates the critical appraisal of practise and research to fully understand how this can be achieved.

The outcomes of this study suggest that Indonesian students living in the UK must adjust to cultural differences in order to develop positive feelings about living abroad. Intercultural competencies are unique and complicated phenomena that have received little academic attention and are therefore worthy of further investigation. Due to budgetary and time constraints, the current study was limited to a small number

of participants, primarily Javanese individuals who form the largest ethnic group in Indonesia. It did include participants from other regions, such as Sumatra, Bali or other surrounding islands. Therefore, further research should be conducted with participants from all over the world who choose to study in the UK.

The generalisability of the conclusions from this study may be limited, as with any other qualitative research using a small, unrepresentative sample. By integrating qualitative and quantitative methodologies, larger-scale research undertaken by, or in partnership with, an organisation such as the Indonesian student association which has access to a large number of international students, might help to overcome the limitations of this study.

To address these limitations, further research is required:

- A. Further research could adopt a pragmatic research paradigm by focusing on what should be examined and how the study should be conducted, depending on the expected outcomes. A mixed methodology, one which combines quantitative and qualitative approaches (Creswell, 2014), could be employed. Furthermore, as a pragmatist, a mixed methods researcher could broaden our understanding by employing a range of approaches, worldviews, assumptions, and data gathering and analysis procedures.

Consequently, a quantitative study, for example using a framework like the developmental model of intercultural sensitivity (DMIS) (Bennett, 1993), could reach a larger sample that is more representative of Indonesian culture, which consists of over a hundred local ethnic groups. As indicated earlier, this study only employed members of the Javanese ethnic group (the largest ethnic group in Indonesia).

B. Secondly, for sojourners who have lived abroad, intercultural adjustment is essential, and re-entry into their home culture necessitates another adjustment period (Hua, 2014). The majority of Indonesian international students are likely to bring back what they have learnt from their intercultural communication experiences to Indonesia. Therefore, future research should investigate the contributions that former Indonesian international students have made to Indonesia in the years after their time spent abroad and whether any adjustments in their intercultural competence are required when returning to their home country.

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Appendices

Appendix 1: Participant consent form

<div style="text-align: center;">Anglia Ruskin University</div> <p>NAME OF PARTICIPANT:</p> <p>Title of the project: Intercultural Competence, and (in)Politeness During the Intercultural Adjustment Period of Indonesian Postgraduate Students in the UK</p> <p>Main investigator and contact details:</p> <p>Erizal Lugman, (erizal.lugman@pgr.anglia.ac.uk)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. I agree to take part in the above research. I have read the Participant Information Sheet for the study. I understand what my role will be in this research, and all my questions have been answered to my satisfaction.2. I understand that I am free to withdraw from the research at any time, without giving a reason.3. I am free to ask any questions at any time before and during the study.4. I understand what will happen to the data collected from me for the research.5. I have been provided with a copy of this form and the Participant Information Sheet.6. I understand that quotes from me will be used in the dissemination of the research.7. I understand that the interview will be recorded. <p>Data Protection: I agree to the University¹ processing personal data which I have supplied. I agree to the processing of such data for any purposes connected with the Research Project as outlined to me"</p> <p>Name of participant (print).....Signed.....Date.....</p> <p>Name of person witnessing consent (print).....Signed.....Date.....</p> <p style="text-align: center;">PARTICIPANTS MUST BE GIVEN A COPY OF THIS FORM TO KEEP ADD DATE AND VERSION NUMBER OF CONSENT FORM.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">I WISH TO WITHDRAW FROM THIS STUDY.</p> <p><small>¹ "The University" includes Anglia Ruskin University and its Associate Colleges.</small></p>	<p>If you wish to withdraw from the research, please speak to the researcher or email them at erizal.lugman@pgr.anglia.ac.uk stating the title of the research. You do not have to give a reason for why you would like to withdraw. Please let the researcher know whether you are/are not happy for them to use any data from you collected to date in the write up and dissemination of the research.</p> <p>Date 24.10.18 V1.2</p>
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Appendix 2: PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET



PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET

Section A: The Research Project

1. Title of project

Intercultural Competence, (im)Politeness and the Use of Social Media During the Intercultural Adjustment Period of Indonesian Postgraduate Students in the UK.

2. A brief summary of the research.

To achieve their academic goals whilst studying abroad, international students must successfully adjust to cross-cultural differences. As a result, they need to develop new abilities including intercultural competence and politeness in order to communicate between different languages and cultures effectively. (im)Politeness is also an essential aspect of intercultural competence which is vital for effective intercultural communication. This study seeks to integrate different aspects of intercultural competence, and (im)politeness which is solely focused on Indonesian students studying in the UK.

1

3. Purpose of the study

The study is being done in partial fulfilment of my PhD degree in the Faculty of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences, Anglia Ruskin University.

4. Name of your Supervisor

Dr Vahid Parvaresh.

5. Why have I been asked to participate?

You are being approached because you are a member of the Indonesian Student Association (PPI) and have been participated in the blog contest organised by the PPI UK.

6. How many people will be asked to participate?

5-10.

7. What are the likely benefits of taking part?

Studies regarding the intercultural competence acquired and politeness by international students at British universities have been extensively researched; however, no studies exist that focus solely on the significant differences between Indonesian and Western cultures that Indonesian students in the UK experience. There are no immediate benefits for those people participating in the project. However, it is hoped that this work will have a beneficial impact and to glean further findings that have not been discussed in any previous studies.

2

8. **Can I refuse to take part?**

It is up to you to decide whether or not to take part. If you do decide to take part, you will be able to keep a copy of this information sheet, and you should indicate your agreement to the consent form. You can withdraw at any time; however, after the dissertation has been written up and submitted, you will not be able to withdraw.

9. **Has the study got ethical approval?**

It has ethics approval from Anglia Ruskin University.

10. **What will happen to the results of the study?**

The analysis of your participation in this study will be written up in partial fulfilment of my PhD degree. You will not be identifiable in the write-up or any publication which might ensue. In addition, You and your institution will not be identified in any report or publication.

11. **Contact for further information**

- a. Erizal.lugman@per.anglia.ac.uk (Researcher).
- b. Vahid.Parvaresh@anglia.ac.uk (Supervisor).

Section B: Your Participation in the Research Project

1. **What will I be asked to do?**

You have already been asked by the Indonesian Student Association to tell your intercultural experiences encountered during the cultural adjustment period through the use of blog as part of general and public contest organised by the Indonesian Student Association (PPI).

3

Following on from this, I am inviting you to participate in the interview as a part of my ethnography study.

2. **Will my participation in the study be kept confidential?**

All the information collected during the research will be kept strictly confidential. You will not be able to be identified or identifiable in any reports or publications.

3. **Will I be reimbursed travel expenses?**

No, when an interview is needed, it could be done during the term time at your place or could be done through Skype or other media platforms.

4. **Are there any possible disadvantages or risks to taking part?**

Participating in the research is not anticipated to cause you any disadvantages or discomfort.

5. **Whether I can withdraw at any time, and how.**

You can withdraw from the study at any time and without giving a reason. If you wish to withdraw from the research, please speak to the researcher or email them at stating the title of the research.

6. **What will happen to any information/data/samples (delete as applicable) that are collected from you?**

Any data collected will be stored in the researcher's personal computer, and also will be stored offline in a form protected by passwords and other relevant security processes and technologies.

4

Data collected may be shared in an anonymised form to allow reuse by the researcher. These anonymised data will not allow any individuals or their institutions to be identified or identifiable.

If you wish to be given a copy of any reports resulting from the research, please ask the researcher to put you on our circulation list.

7. Contact details for complaints.

If you have any complaints about the study, you could send an email to the researcher (erizal.lugman@pgr.anglia.ac.uk) or his supervisor (Vahid.Parvaresh@anglia.ac.uk).

You can also contact through email to Anglia Ruskin University's complaints procedure team (complaints@anglia.ac.uk)

Postal address: Office of the Secretary and Clerk, Anglia Ruskin University, Bishop Hall Lane, Chelmsford, Essex, CM1 1SQ.

Version control

Your participant information sheet, consent form and other documents should have a version number and date. This is in order that should any changes be required by the ethics committee; it is clear which documentation has ethical approval.

PARTICIPANTS SHOULD BE GIVEN A COPY OF THIS TO KEEP,
TOGETHER WITH A COPY OF THE CONSENT FORM.

Date 24.10.16

V1.0

Appendix 3: INTERVIEW GUIDE

Participant Name:

Upon arrival in the UK (less than one month)

1. Briefly describe your life in Indonesia (e.g., your occupation, prior English language knowledge, etc.).
2. Briefly describe the reasons why you want to study abroad.
3. Describe your journey (Did anyone help you? Where did you stay? What were the conditions like? Did you face any problems? How did you deal with these problems?).
4. In as much detail as you can, describe your experience when you first arrived in the UK.
5. Describe your experience of your first time at a British university (i.e., your interactions with new people).
6. Describe what your life has been like since your arrival in the UK (What challenges did you face? How did you overcome these challenges?).
7. Describe the type of people that you commonly engage with during intercultural interactions (Do you interact with people inside or outside of your own community? Do you interact with people inside or outside of your university? How often you are in contact with them? What prevents you from interacting with them?).
8. Tell me how you feel about living in the UK.

After living in the UK for a month

9. How do you feel about living in the UK? In as much detail as you can, please describe your experiences.

10. Have you experienced any problems associated with cultural differences (e.g., food, language, the weather)?
11. Having lived in the UK for a month, have you experienced any problems during intercultural interactions in your academic life (e.g., with classmates, teachers, staff) or outside of academia (e.g., hanging out with friends, meeting your neighbours)?
12. During this period, have you experienced any problems during your intercultural interactions where the misunderstanding of (im)politeness has been an issue?
13. Is there anything else you would like to tell me about?

After living in the UK for more than three months

14. Do you feel that you have adjusted to cultural differences? In what way?
15. Do you still experience problems in your intercultural interactions?
16. Has the way in which you interact with other people changed? In what way? How do you feel now?
17. What have you learnt from intercultural interactions that has enabled you to develop more positive feelings about living in the UK?
18. How has your understanding of (im)politeness developed in your new environment? What have you learnt that helps to create harmonious intercultural interactions?
19. What else can you do to improve your feelings about living in the UK?

Appendix 4: An Example of Themes based on a Transcribed Interview from Ethnography

The screenshot shows the NVivo 12 Pro interface. The top menu bar includes File, Home, Import, Create, Explore, Share, and Node Tools. The left sidebar shows a list of nodes under 'Folders'. The central workspace displays four references with their respective coverage percentages and text excerpts.

Name	Files	Refer
Importance of IC (lit review)	1	7
English Language Proficiency	1	2
politeness as part of IC	1	2
Personality	1	1
Prior knowledge host culture	1	1
Re encounter after feeling adjusted	1	1
I have a problem with perceptions about smili	1	1
First period	0	0
Intercultural encounters	0	0
Cultural adjustment skill	0	0
Learning new knowledge	1	8
To adapt	1	6
Be aware	1	5
Active	1	2
social media platforms	0	0
Prior departure	0	0
Lit review	0	0
Misunderstanding (im)politeness	0	0
Misunderstanding cross cultural interaction	3	5

References:

- Reference 1 - 0.06% Coverage:** *I have to study hard here, not to party hard here, so I need to adjust myself about that"*
- Reference 2 - 0.16% Coverage:** *so I now have joined new students unions like mechanical engineering society. Indonesian society students' union, where there were also many non-Indonesian students have joined there so I can continue to interact with people from other cultural backgrounds*
- Reference 3 - 0.08% Coverage:** *When I experience difficulties in adapting to the academic differences, I was supported by my friends from the engineering society.*
- Reference 4 - 0.17% Coverage:**

Appendix 5: An Example of Themes based on a Transcribed Interview from Ethnography

The screenshot shows the NVivo 12 Pro interface. The top menu bar includes File, Home, Import, Create, Explore, Share, and Node Tools. The left sidebar shows a list of nodes under 'Folders'. The central workspace displays four references with their respective coverage percentages and text excerpts.

Name	Files	Refer
Importance of IC (lit review)	1	7
English Language Proficiency	1	2
politeness as part of IC	1	2
Personality	1	1
Prior knowledge host culture	1	1
Re encounter after feeling adjusted	1	1
I have a problem with perceptions about smili	1	1
First period	0	0
Intercultural encounters	0	0
Cultural adjustment skill	0	0
Learning new knowledge	1	8
To adapt	1	6
Be aware	1	5
Active	1	2
social media platforms	0	0
Prior departure	0	0
Lit review	0	0
Misunderstanding (im)politeness	0	0
Misunderstanding cross cultural interaction	3	5

References:

- Reference 1 - 0.07% Coverage:** *Then I began to leave the poker community and joined the engineering society to support my study support'*
- Reference 2 - 0.08% Coverage:** *I have decided to avoid negative relationships, like being drunk or things that are not useful to support my studies here*
- Reference 3 - 0.16% Coverage:** *So now I need to try to be careful and try to adjust myself living in the new country that I had never thought of at all. Therefore, I think that knowing host cultures before departure was an important aspect to adapt better to the new place."*
- Reference 4 - 0.23% Coverage:**

Appendix 6: An Example of Themes based on a Transcribed Interview from Ethnography

Intercultural Competence chapter four.nvp - NVivo 12 Pro

File Home Import Create Explore Share Node Tools

Annotations See Also Links Relationships View

Quick Coding Layout Coding Stripes Highlight Code Uncode from This Node Uncode Spread Coding Code In Vivo New Annotation Annotations Word Cloud Compare With Explore Diagram Visualize Node Query This Node Find Query

Nodes Search Project

Name	Files	Refer
Learning new knowledge	1	8
To adapt	1	6
Be aware	1	5
Active	1	2
social media platforms	0	0
positive	1	1
Prior departure	0	0
Lit review	0	0
Misunderstanding (im)politeness	0	0
Misunderstanding cross cultural interactio	3	5
Miunderstanding in western academic ma	2	2
Misunderstanding in direct and indirect	2	2
Being offended	2	2

Drag selection here to code to a new node

In Nodes Code At Enter node name (CTRL+Q)

EL 63 Items Files: 1 References: 1 Unfiltered

Reference 1 - 0.21% Coverage

After hanging out with the engineering society, then we formed a Whatsapp group, in that group we did many things like joking, telling stories or about anything. But the most important thing, I can obtain some useful information during my stay here, and we kind of helping each other in the group to work on college assignments.

Appendix 7: An Example of Themes based on a Transcribed Interview from Ethnography

Intercultural Competence chapter four.nvp - NVivo 12 Pro

File Home Import Create Explore Share Node Tools

Annotations See Also Links Relationships View

Quick Coding Layout Coding Stripes Highlight Code Uncode from This Node Uncode Spread Coding Code In Vivo New Annotation Annotations Word Cloud Compare With Explore Diagram Visualize Node Query This Node Find Query

Nodes Search Project

Name	Files	Refer
Learning new knowledge	1	8
To adapt	1	6
Be aware	1	5
Active	1	2
social media platforms	0	0
positive	1	1
Prior departure	0	0
Lit review	0	0
Misunderstanding (im)politeness	0	0
Misunderstanding cross cultural interactio	3	5
Miunderstanding in western academic ma	2	2
Misunderstanding in direct and indirect	2	2
Being offended	2	2

Drag selection here to code to a new node

In Nodes Code At Enter node name (CTRL+Q)

EL 63 Items Files: 3 References: 5 Unfiltered

Reference 1 - 7.78% Coverage

I have a problem with perceptions about smiling in this culture. When I try to smile with the people here, they think this habit is a bit unfamiliar for them

Reference 2 - 14.66% Coverage

The second thing is that at the first when they gave something to me with their left hand, I think it was very rude or they even sometimes throwing some stuff at me. Because of our culture, if you want to give something to someone, the polite way is by using the right hand and do not throw it.

Reference 3 - 23.13% Coverage

Still regarding how to call people, when I go to a shop, or a cafe, I called Sir or Madam. At the first time I wanted to try to be more polite by calling in that way, but the opposite is what I received, they even thought it was unacceptable, or by saying ma'am, the person you're talking to might be just as offended. Then I just realize that they like to be called by "mate" and their name, which I believe that way is more showing a respectful and polite manner.

Appendix 8: An Example of Themes based on a Transcribed Interview from Ethnography

Intercultural Competence chapter four.nvp - NVivo 12 Pro

Nodes Search Project

Name	Files	Refer
Learning new knowledge	1	8
To adapt	1	6
Be aware	1	5
Active	1	2
social media platforms	0	0
positive	1	1
Prior departure	0	0
Lit review	0	0
Misunderstanding (im)politeness	0	0
Misunderstanding cross cultural interactio	3	5
Miunderstanding in western academic ma	2	2
Misunderstanding in direct and indirect	2	2
Being offended	2	2

Drag selection here to code to a new node

Nodes Tools

Annotations: ☐ Annotations, ☐ See Also Links, ☐ Relationships

View: ☐ Coding Stripes, ☐ Highlight, ☐ Code, ☐ Uncode from This Node, ☐ Uncode

Spread Coding: ☐ Spread Coding, ☐ Code In Vivo

New Annotation: ☐ New Annotation, ☐ Annotations

Word Cloud: ☐ Word Cloud, ☐ Compare With, ☐ Explore Diagram, ☐ Visualize Node

Query: ☐ Query This Node, ☐ Find

Nodes ☒ Miunderstanding in western academic ma ☐ openness ☐ Active ☐ To adapt ☐ I have a problem with perceptio ☐ Re encour

Nodes ☒ [Files\cecep> - \\$ 1 reference coded \[26.40% Coverage\]](#)

Reference 1 - 26.40% Coverage

Another thing was, at first, I had a problem with the supervisor when I called him using his academic title. He looked very disappointed when calling him that way. Even after that moment, our relationship did not go very well. Then I found that he is happier to be called by his name which is more polite and respectful in this culture. However, in my culture, calling the name, I mean only his or her name especially for the teacher, or someone who has an upper hierarchy, or here in my case my supervisor, is a really bad attitude.

Nodes ☒ [Files\vendah bahasa indo> - \\$ 1 reference coded \[35.92% Coverage\]](#)

Reference 1 - 35.92% Coverage

Di budayaku, kami dituntut untuk sangat menghargai guru. Akan tetapi disini terkadang justru sebaliknya. Guru sangat menghargai lebih murid, mungkin terkadang hal itu terlalu sopan bagiku untuk meminta maaf, membawakan tas dan menawarkan minum. Awalnya aku agak shock dengan over polite disini.

EL 63 Items Files: 2 References: 2 Unfiltered

Persewaan budaya

Siswa belayar, beda

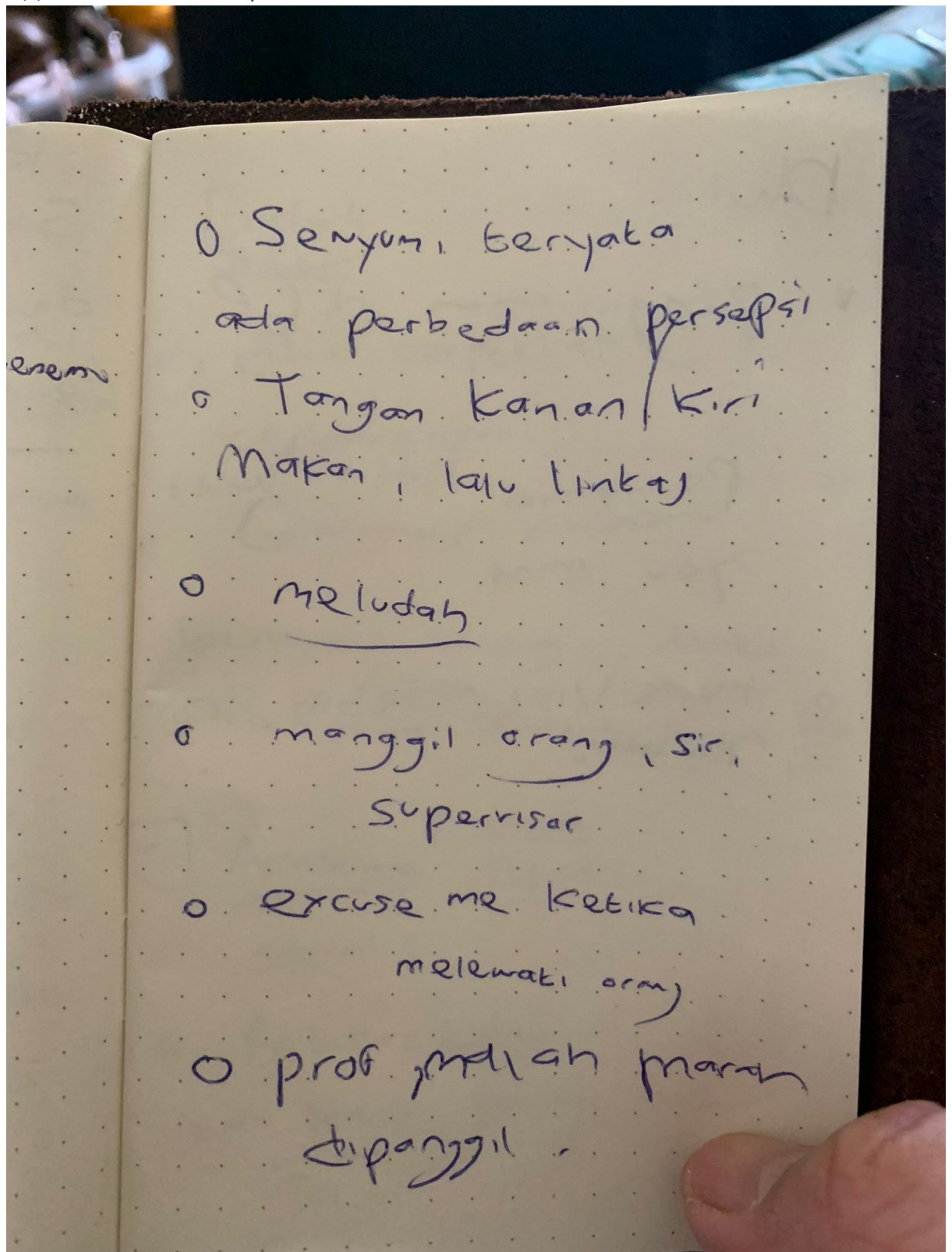
- interupsi kuliah, langsung gk
kangen, motong pembicaraan

- budaya kelas, masuk kelas
biasa aja,

di Indo, gak boleh masuk

tidik sopan, dan disedekah
waktu bertanya,

• budaya membaca, andis
Journal



INO = 3-Des-2019 - 7-12-19

- mengenal Society & di Nott itu penting supaya bisa sektr di Nott
- Kenal Society tsb melalui Uni fresher.
- Adapun Indonesian Society yang diikuti oleh Ino
- mengikuti Society yg sesuai hobby, spt poker, bola
- Pertemanan merupakan sangat penting untuk adapte sebagai contoh, pertemanan dikelas, ~~yang~~ kami bottom bukan hanya dikelas, tapi juga diluar kelas seperti hangout, makan diluar

Appendix 12: An Example of a Blog post

[Home](#)

[About Me](#)

TOP POSTS & PAGES

Ndilalah

Mimpi

Pakudes

Ndilalah

Gupayan Weh Lah!

Myson Green

About Me

Terlena

TWITTER

Tweets by @anilpras

Arif P. Sulistiono Retweeted

 **Data Professor**
@thedataprof
An illustration on Handling missing data#datascience

Ndilalah

Masalah adaptasi acap kali menjadi perbincangan ketika seseorang harus keluar dari zona nyaman untuk mencoba tantangan baru. Ketika akhirnya dibukakan jalan untuk menuntut ilmu di University of Nottingham, saya sepenuhnya sadar bahwa petualangan ini tidak akan mudah. Sebagai pusat dari revolusi industri yang menyebabkan perubahan drastis di sektor ekonomi beberapa ratus tahun silam, hampir tak terbantahkan bahwa kualitas pendidikan di negara ini adalah salah satu yang terbaik di dunia.

Akibatnya—ini salah satu yang membuat saya minder—standar kelulusan di sini akan berbanding lurus dengan usaha untuk mempertahankan kualitas tersebut; kemampuan beradaptasi dengan level akademis akan memegang peranan penting untuk dapat menginjak garis akhir sesuai dengan yang diimpikan.

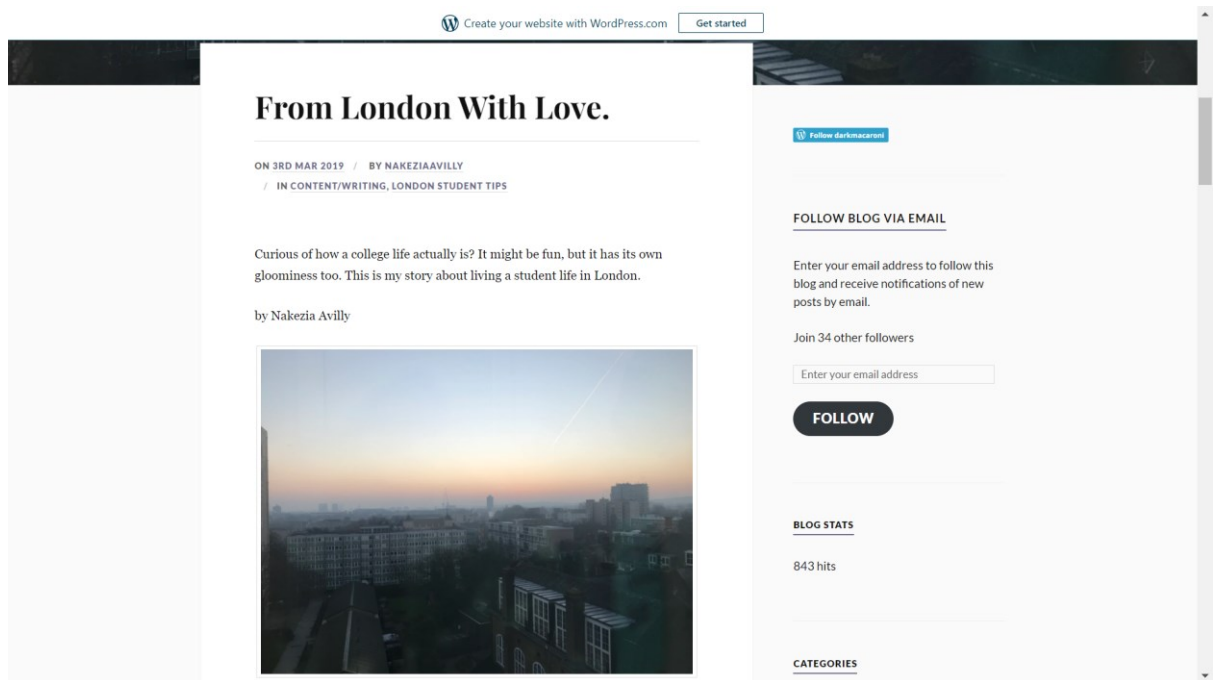
 Follow ...

Appendix 13: An Example of a Blog post

Inspirasi Indonesia Sebuah blog untuk berbagi asa, rasa, cita dan inspirasi dari sosok pembelajar kehidupan Bimul Qodriyyah, S.Kep.Ns, Farid Afrizal's wife, writer, trainer, researcher, passionate on education

[illegible]

Appendix 14: An Example of a Blog post



Appendix 15: Faculty Research Ethics approval letter



28th November 2018

Dear Erizal Lugman

Principal Investigator: Erizal Lugman

Supervisor: Vahid Parvaresh

Project Title: *Intercultural Competence, (Im) Politeness and the Use of Social Media During the Intercultural Adjustment Period of Indonesian*

I am pleased to inform you that your ethics application has been approved by the Faculty Research Ethics Panel (FREP)/Departmental Research Ethics Panel (DREP) under the terms of Anglia Ruskin University's Research Ethics Policy (Dated 8 September 2016, Version 1.7). Approval by DREP is subject to ratification by the FREP.

Ethical approval is given for a period of 1 year for Postgraduate students, from 28th November 2018. If your research will extend beyond this period, it is your responsibility to apply for an extension before your approval expires.

It is your responsibility to ensure that you comply with Anglia Ruskin University's Research Ethics Policy and the Code of Practice for Applying for Ethical Approval at Anglia Ruskin University available at www.anglia.ac.uk/researchethics including the following.

- The procedure for submitting substantial amendments to the committee, should there be any changes to your research. You cannot implement these amendments until you have received approval from FREP/DREP for them.
- The procedure for reporting accidents, adverse events and incidents.
- The General Data Protection Requirement and Data Protection Act (2018).
- Any other legislation relevant to your research. You must also ensure that you are aware of any emerging legislation relating to your research and make any changes to your study (which you will need to obtain ethical approval for) to comply with this.
- Obtaining any further ethical approval required from the organisation or country (if not carrying out research in the UK) where you will be carrying the research out. This includes other Higher Education Institutions if you intend to carry out any research involving their students, staff or premises. Please ensure that you send the FREP/DREP copies of this documentation if required, prior to starting your research.
- Any laws of the country where you are carrying the research and obtaining any other approvals or permissions that are required.
- Any professional codes of conduct relating to research or requirements from your funding body (please note that for externally funded research, where the funding has been obtained via Anglia Ruskin University, a Project Risk Assessment must have been carried out prior to starting the research).
- Completing a Risk Assessment (Health and Safety) if required and updating this annually or if any aspects of your study change which affect this.
- Notifying the FREP/DREP Secretary when your study has ended.

Please also note that your research may be subject to monitoring.

Should you have any queries, please do not hesitate to contact me. May I wish you the best of luck with your research.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Sebastian Rasinger', followed by a long horizontal flourish.

Dr Sebastian Rasinger
Chair, School Research Ethics Panel
School of Humanities and Social Sciences

Date 20.6.18
V1.3