A case study of intercultural communication
in a multicultural classroom
in the Brisbane Metropolitan area

By
Min Jeong Ko
BA, BEd (primary) [postgraduate]

2008
Acknowledgement

I would like to extend my gratitude to Associate Professor, John Lidstone without whom it would have been impossible for me to complete this study. I cannot emphasise enough how grateful I am for his encouragement and guidance throughout the times when I was lost and confused. With his endless effort and kindness, I have become more confident in being a researcher and a teacher.

I was lucky enough to get more help with writing this thesis from two other supervisors. I thank Deborah Henderson for advices at the beginning of this study. I also thank Mallihai Tambaya who has guided me through completing this study. I deeply appreciate her thoughtful advice and encouragement.

I thank my parents who allowed me to move to Australia. Even though they do not fully understand why I have decided to move to Australia and study for such a long time, they have continuously supported me throughout the process of this research.

I deeply appreciate other family members’ patience that they have been listening to my complaints and worries over the years.

I would like to thank Mr A, Mr B and Mrs C from the school where I carried out this research. Without their generosity and openness, I would have not been able to collect such rich data. They also helped me to collect data in such a comfortable and welcoming environment. Furthermore, their feedback on my teaching skills made me become more confident in teaching. I thank Mrs C who was the gatekeeper of the research and now has become the most supportive colleague and friend.

Last but not the least; I would like to thank students from 7A and 7B who opened up about their school life.
Abstract

The current global and local issues of culture such as September 11, the Bali Bombings and the “Cronulla Riots” triggered a question for the researcher: “how do primary students deal with intercultural communication in multicultural Australia in times of cultural uncertainty and complexity?” Intercultural communication studies in Australia rely heavily on those of the United States of America and the United Kingdom. For this reason, this study was planned to investigate intercultural communication in a multicultural classroom in a primary school in Australia.

The research employs an ethnographical case study methodology with data collected from observation, interview and documentation. 56 Year 7 students and two classroom teachers from two classes and the school ESL (English as a Second Language) teacher were included in the study. Amongst the 56 students, 24 students were interviewed along with the classroom teachers and the ESL teacher. School documents regarding the promotion of intercultural communication were also collected during the observation period.

The study found that differing language capacities of students and teachers have the greatest influence on intercultural communication. Language was observed to influence positive and negative intercultural communication in the classroom. The study also confirmed that the theory of Intercultural Communication Competence (Wiseman, 2002) supports the current ethos of this school’s curriculum.

Overall, the study provides a vicarious experience of intercultural communication in an Australian multicultural classroom. Intercultural communication in this particular school did not appear to be problematic. This could be due to the teachers’ endeavours to promote intercultural communication both implicitly and explicitly. In concluding, the study suggests that this school could be a model for promoting intercultural communication with a few modifications to its programs.
Keywords: Intercultural Communication, Multicultural Classroom, Multiculturalism, Promoting Intercultural Communication
Statement of Authenticity

The work contained in this thesis has not been previously submitted to meet requirements for an award at this or any other higher education institution. To the best of my knowledge and belief, the thesis contains no material previously published or written by another person except where due reference is made.

Signature ____________________

Date ____________________
Table of Contents

Chapter One: Introduction

What is culture? ........................................................................................................... 2
Researcher’s personal learning journey in culture .................................................. 3
Issues of culture ........................................................................................................... 5
The significance of immigration in Australia’s history ........................................... 7
Understanding cross-cultural and intercultural communication ....................... 12
Diversity in schools .................................................................................................... 14
Inclusive education in Queensland ......................................................................... 15
Terminology of cultural and linguistic diversity in Australia ............................... 16
About this study ........................................................................................................ 16
Summary .................................................................................................................... 17

Chapter Two: Literature Review

Meanings of ‘culture’ .................................................................................................. 19
Meanings of intercultural communication ................................................................ 23
Structure of intercultural communication ............................................................... 24
Intercultural Communication Competence (ICC) .................................................. 26
Barriers in intercultural communication .................................................................. 27
Current curricula promoting intercultural communication .................................... 35
Research questions of this study ........................................................................... 40
Summary .................................................................................................................... 40

Chapter Three: Research Methodology

Qualitative research .................................................................................................. 42
Case study ................................................................................................................ 43
Ethnography ............................................................................................................. 44
Selecting participants ............................................................................................... 45
Description of participants ...................................................................................... 46
Data collection .......................................................................................................... 47
Data analysis ............................................................................................................. 52
Validity of the study ................................................................................................ 55
Summary .................................................................................................................... 57

Chapter Four: The Case Study .................................................................................. 58
Contextual Description ........................................................................................................ 59
Themes ............................................................................................................................ 62
Summary ......................................................................................................................... 100

Chapter Five: Conclusion and Recommendations .......................................................... 101
  Research Findings ......................................................................................................... 101
  Strength of Research .................................................................................................... 109
  Limitations of Research ............................................................................................... 111
  Recommendations ........................................................................................................ 112
  Conclusion ...................................................................................................................... 114

Appendix A: A letter from the principal to QUT Ethics Committee .............................. 117
Appendix B: A letter from the principal to parents ...................................................... 118
Appendix C: Fieldnotes (Excerpt) ................................................................................ 119
Appendix D: Interview Questions for Students ........................................................... 124
Appendix E: Interview Questions for Teachers ............................................................ 125
References ....................................................................................................................... 126

Figures
  Figure 1. Structure of Intercultural Communication (Barnett & Lee, 2003, p. 262) 26
  Figure 2. Representation of themes 58
  Figure 3. The structure of intercultural communication in 7 A and 7B 108
Chapter One: Introduction

Recent events such as the September 11 terrorist attacks and the Bali Bombings have shocked people in Australia as well as elsewhere in the world. Since these terrorist attacks, people feel more insecure living with other people who are from different backgrounds. Henderson (2004) states that “the events of September 11, the aftermath of the Bali Bombing and the current situation in Iraq, indicate the increasing uncertainty and interconnectedness that characterises our world today” (p. 10). Furthermore, the Cronulla Riots in New South Wales has prompted us to reflect on our own culture and those of others. These incidents have also provoked arguments over the effectiveness of Australia’s multicultural policy. These global and local issues of culture have prompted debates about whether our children are adequately prepared to engage with people from different cultural and ethnic backgrounds. This is significant for educators who are responsible for teaching our children to learn the necessary knowledge and skills to be able to live in harmony with people from different backgrounds (Dillon & Maben, 1996). This thesis will investigate how students communicate with people from different backgrounds and how teachers prepare students to engage with others, regardless of their different backgrounds.

The researcher’s background as an immigrant to Australia has motivated her to study the concept and implications of culture for students in schools. Being an immigrant in Australia has allowed her to think about her own culture and others’. The writer is one of the many people in the world who have emigrated to another country in recent times. The rate of international migration, recently, has risen dramatically. Richmond (as cited in Jayaraman, 2000) stated that approximately 70 million people live and work away from their own place of origin and over one million people emigrate permanently each year. Australia is one of the countries where many immigrants reside. Those able to migrate and reside in Australia contribute to its increasing ethnic and cultural diversity. As a result of increasing such diversity, “people increasingly face the challenge of living in multicultural communities in which their values and cultural practices are different from those of their neighbours” (Brisbane Catholic Education, 1999, p. 7) In addition, the capacity of such migrants from such varied backgrounds to live peacefully as fellow
citizens has been challenged by recent events and prompted some to question the capacity of Australia’s policy of multiculturalism to deal with the nation’s changing population.

This study will investigate how students communicate with people from different cultural backgrounds and the ways in which teachers prepare students to engage with others regardless of such differences. In order to justify why this study is planned, this chapter includes nine sections. First, the definition of culture used in this study is examined. Second, the position of the writer as an Australian immigrant is established. Third, global and local issues of culture are examined in order to demonstrate the complex issues that arise when particular incidents of violence occur. Fourth, history of immigration in Australia and its existing immigration policy are reviewed in order to appreciate its current state as a multicultural society. Fifth, the meaning of cross-cultural and intercultural communication is differentiated in order to clarify the connotation of both terms for the context of this study. Sixth, diversity in Queensland schools and the Adelaide Declaration 1999 are examined to review the current context of our education system and policies. Seventh, inclusive education is examined to justify why it is not included as an educational policy in this study. Eighth, current terminology used to describe cultural and linguistic diversity is identified. Last, an overview of this study is presented.

What is culture?
Before proceeding further, it is necessary to define how the term culture has been interpreted for the context of this study. Brislin (1993) states that “culture consists of ideals, values and assumptions about life that are widely shared amongst people and that guide specific behaviours” (p. 4). Culture is not observable until people carry out their culture by communicating and interacting with other people. McLaren (1998) states that:

Culture is a human phenomenon; it is the way we are, both physically and mentally. It is both a state in which each of us exists and a process which changes constantly according to the individual, the time and the place. This combined state and process called culture affects us all as we respond to others, to events and to the environment (p. 14).
For this reason, individuals possess and represent culture in different ways according to their personal experiences in the course of their lives. People learn culture throughout their lives so it can be changed corresponding with each person’s experience. Culture can be represented slightly different from person to person. However, in order for a certain way of life to be culture, it should be shared by a large group of people in community (Jandt, 2004). Helman (2001) reaffirms that:

Culture is a set of guidelines (both explicit and implicit) that individuals inherit as members of a particular society, and that tell them how to view the world, how to experience it emotionally, and how to behave in it in relation to other people, to supernatural forces or gods, and to the natural environment (p. 2).

In short, culture is a way of life and worldview that is shared by people in a community. People learn the way of life, which includes beliefs and values accepted by a community, through socialising within the community. These beliefs and values are embedded in individuals’ behaviour and perceptions of certain events in the course their lives. As people move through their lives, culture can be moulded and changed corresponding with their experiences in life. The definition of culture will be closely examined further in Chapter Two.

**Researcher’s personal learning journey in culture**

My experiences both as a learner of English language and an immigrant in Australia have stimulated my curiosity about cultures. I started learning English in my middle school years (equivalent to years 7 through to 9 in Australia) as other Koreans do. However, I started learning to communicate personally with English speakers from the start of my undergraduate years. My major in Bachelor of Arts (BA) degree, in Korea, was in English Language and Cultures. The focus of this degree was more on communicative and cultural learning than structural language learning. Hymes (1974) affirms that “speaking is itself a form of cultural behaviour, and language, like any other part of culture, partly shapes the whole; and its expression of the rest of culture is partial, selective (p. 127).” The professors, who were from the United States of America (USA),
implemented lessons to enhance my cultural understandings of English speaking countries so that I could communicate with native speakers with few cultural barriers. Learning the language in the context of culture helped me to understand why certain phrases are used for particular events or ceremonies and how I could communicate like a native speaker. Additionally, learning about different cultures prompts me to reflect on and to make comparisons between my own and other cultures.

As one of the many immigrants to Australia, I have encountered lots of people who have shown an interest in me because of my different cultural and ethnic background. The ways in which people have reacted to my culture can be categorised in four ways. Firstly, there are people who do not treat me as a foreigner at all. Such people treat me as if I am an Australian and am expected to understand Australian culture fully and to act accordingly. Secondly, there are those who have some knowledge of Korea and its culture. This group of people may respond in one of two ways. Some are open-minded about what they know and ask me questions about Korea to seek my insider’s view. Hofstede and Hofstede (2005) explain this as the first phase of the reaction cycles of people in the host country where foreign people visit. This first phase is called curiosity which is like a honeymoon period for people from the host country. Others already possess stereotypes about Korea and judge me on the basis of that knowledge. This latter approach was demonstrated by a group of people who looked down on me because they perceive I behaved more like an “Australian” than a “Korean”. Gudykunst (1991) has explained that stereotypical categorisation of other cultures prevented genuine communication. In this case, I did not appear to fit their image of a “typical” Korean, who is “different” from an Australian.

Thirdly, there are those who do not know about the existence of Korea, yet, are willing to learn about Korea. Finally, there are people who do not want to communicate with me at all because of my cultural distinctiveness. Even though I try to communicate, these individuals tend to be impatient with my un-Australian accent. This could be explained by Hofstede and Hofstede’s (2005) approach of the second phase of how people from the host country react to foreigners. This second phase is called ethnocentrism which is a
belief that people’s own culture is better and able to judge the culture of others by their own. These encounters with a range of responses to my cultural distinctiveness have prompted my interest in investigating intercultural communication as a form of competence.

Issues of culture
Researcher’s personal experiences are reflected at global and national levels as evidenced by such incidents at the September 11 terrorist attacks in the USA, the Bali Bombings and local incidents in Australia.

Global issues of culture
Incidents such as September 11 and Bali bombings have prompted Australians to develop an awareness and fear of terrorist attacks in our own country. Tilbury and Henderson (2003) state that “conflict and terrorism has added another dimension to the complexity of the political, social, environmental and cultural relationships of the world” (p. 82). In order to prevent such terrorist attacks, the Australian government took the “war on terror” as one of its policies in 2001. Humphrey (2005) asserts that the “war on terror” has divided the world into friends and enemies. He further argues that the “war on terror” has implicitly targeted Muslim people as enemies in the community and has kept them under intense surveillance. Moreover, he adds that it has deepened racism towards Muslim people in Western societies. Due to those events, many people may have negative images of others of obviously different ethnicity or culture.

Local issue of culture
Most recently issues of race and culture have been broadly debated in the context of the incidents at Cronulla beach, New South Wales, in December 2005. On December 11, 2005, 5000 people gathered at Cronulla beach in New South Wales which was initiated by text messages urging people to “reclaim the beach” from the growing population of “visitors” (King & Box, 2005). Some of them had written phrases such as “ethnic cleansing unit”, “wog free zone” and other racially discriminatory words on their T-shirts or bodies. This group of people attacked individuals of Middle Eastern appearance who
happened to be around the beach at that time. According to Williams and Callinan (2005), this so called “race riot” was ignited by a previous incident in which two lifeguards at Cronulla beach had been attacked by a group of people of Middle Eastern descent. This had led a series of reprisals between two groups of people who claim to be “Aussies” and “Lebanese”. After the bashing incident, there were mobile phone text message circulating in order to call for “Aussies” to gather on the Sunday so as to reclaim their beaches from Lebanese (Williams & Callinan, 2005).

People have reflected on this incident in different ways. On the one hand, New South Wales Premier, Morris Iemma summarised the incident as ignited by racism, alcohol, and the intent to avenge an incident which happened a week prior to this one which involved two Middle Eastern background youths bashing lifeguards at the Cronulla beach (Eastley, 2005). On the other hand, the Australian Prime Minister at the time, John Howard, claimed that there was no underlying racism as some would argue. He also added, "I have always taken a more optimistic view of the character of the Australian people. [But] attacking people on the basis of their race, their appearance, their ethnicity, is totally unacceptable and should be repudiated by all Australians irrespective of their own background and their politics” (Trute, 2005). According to Clark (2003), denying the existence of racism in this country is not uncommon. He explains that it is partially because people have little knowledge about racism and also because people do not admit their responsibility in contributing to it.

Wilson (2005) claimed that the riot was triggered by long term tension against Muslims and those perceived to be Muslim built up by terrorist attacks in the USA, September 11, 2001, Bali bombings killed Australian tourists in 2003 and a number of gang rapes in year 2000 through to 2002. The cause of the riots were also viewed as Anglo-Australians’ intolerance towards people who do not accept Anglo-Australian ways of life (Hamilton, 2005). While the majority of people around the world condemned the Cronulla riots, the British National Party, an anti-immigration party, commented that the riot indicates the death of multiculturalism in Australia (Dyer, 2005). The Party also added it was a brave moment for Australian people to stand up to protect their territory.
Such divergent views prompted much debate about the nature of multicultural society in Australia.

Jaysuriya (2005) stated, “the implicit assumption here was that the pursuit of conventional multiculturalism had, by celebrating and promoting other cultures, led to the denigration of the valued shared culture of the nation (p. 11).” McKnight (2006) affirms that multiculturalism in Australia needs modification of its shortcomings. He explains that one of the problems is the relentless call for respecting diversity which undermined the dominant culture. Also, focusing on minority groups has taken its toll of on “national interest, or social cohesion and trust” (p. 3). McKnight (2006) suggests that it is better to emphasise “common humanity” more and ask people to be not only respectful of differences but also compassionate about people. The former US president, Bill Clinton, also discussed the riot in the 2006 Global Business Forum, suggesting that we should attempt to discover commonalities rather than differences within us (Dick & Snow, 2006).

Whatever point of view is adopted, it is evident from news reports and interviews that the two different groups with little knowledge of each other harmed innocent people who were mistaken as being from one or the other group. To an educator, such an issue raises the question of whether our education system is failing to teach our children to be competent in intercultural understandings and the centrality of culture as a construct for understanding diversity in our world today. Tilbury and Henderson (2003) reassure us that “the need to educate for intercultural understanding is being recognised as vital to achieving peaceful sustainable development in a world shaken by fear of exploitation, terrorism and anxiety of war” (p. 82). However, as the Cronulla Riots indicate, such intercultural understanding appears to be in its infancy in Australia.

**The significance of immigration in Australia’s history**

“Australia is one of a handful of ‘settler societies’ that cannot be understood without placing immigration at the centre of their history and culture (Jupp, 1991, p. 151).” The first people who settled in Australia were the Aborigines between 50 000 and 75 000
years ago and the population of Aborigines grew approximately to 1.5 million by 1788 (Reynolds as cited in Parry, 1998). In 1788, the British commenced its colonisation by bringing convicts over to Australia (Parry, 1998) but colonisation had been legalised a year earlier in 1787 (Jupp, 1991). England was the major source of convicts who sent them to Australia between 1788 and 1868 (Jupp, 1991). From the inception of settlement, there were conflicts between the Aborigines and the British. This was because the British came to Australia where the Aborigines had already been residing and claimed the land to be theirs (Markus, 1994). Their ways of life were not compatible to each other’s (ibid.). It was even more difficult to understand each other’s culture due to the absence of common language (Broome, 1994).

The British were not the only people coming to Australia to settle. During the 1840s, many Irish people immigrated to Australia so that they could escape from famine in their home country (DIMIA, 2005). There were conflicts and tensions between the Irish immigrants and the British due to their religious differences (Jupp, 1991; Sherington, 1980). There was considerable prejudice against Irish Catholics which did not diminish until the 1960s.

The end of the convict system and the discovery of gold led to the importing of Asian migrants probably due to shortages in the labour market (Jupp, 1991). In 1853, the first Chinese arrived in Victoria as gold diggers. Since the Chinese arrived in the goldmines, tensions between the Chinese and Europeans grew based on “alleged cultural immoral habits of Chinese” and on their “cultural incompatibility” with each other (Jupp, 1991). These tensions were reflected on restrictions against non-European immigrants, especially against the Chinese (Tavan, 2005). In 1901, the government set up policies to exclude non-European immigrants to Australia so that Australia could remain “White Australia” (Jupp & Australia Bureau of Immigration Multicultural and Population Research, 1996). The Immigration Restriction Act of 1901 was the legislation representing the “White Australia” policy (Castles & Vasta, 1996; Jupp, 1991). This Act prevented people who could not pass a European language dictation test from migrating to Australia (Tavan, 2005). As a result, there was a decreasing number of people from
non-European countries. Furthermore, in the early 20th century, “racist and xenophobic views were openly expressed by public figures, major organisations and the media” (Jupp, 1991)

During the First and Second World Wars, the number of immigrants decreased. However, after the Second World War, the Australian government accepted people who were displaced from their home countries (DIMIA, 2005). The government assisted further migration due to combat labour shortages and to grow the population for the future of the country. During the period of implementing post-war migration programs, a policy of “assimilationism” was encouraged so that immigrants could become “Australian”. This led the general public to become resentful towards immigrants who did not speak English in public and by speaking their own mother tongue, appeared not to be “Australians” (Jupp, 1991, p. 6).

Regardless of conflicts and tensions amongst immigrants in the past and the present, Australia, today, has grown as a multicultural society. “Nearly one in four people was born overseas, 43 per cent of all Australian’s were born overseas or have at least one parent who was born overseas and in recent years, people from around 185 different countries have made their home in Australia” (DIMIA, 2005). According to DIMIA (Department of Immigration and Multicultural and Indigenous Affairs) (2005), each year, the Australian government grants 100 000 visas for migrants under the Skill and Family Streams of Australia’s Migration Program. Based on the recent census on the 30th June, 2006, the Australian Bureau of Statistics assumes that “a net gain of one international migrant every 3 minutes and 5 seconds” (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2006). As the statistics show, Australia is a country in which people from many different countries and cultures live. In order to avoid the conflicts and tensions that we have experienced throughout our history, the Australian government continues to implement a policy of multiculturalism today. The Howard government in January 2007 changed the name of Department of Immigration and Multicultural Affairs to Department of Immigration and Citizenship (The Daily Telegraph, 2007). Even though the name ‘Multicultural Affairs’ has been expunged, the Department maintains a Multicultural Affairs Branch. Cultural
diversity has changed the face of Australian society in recent times, and is particularly noticeable in metropolitan classrooms.

**Assimilation to Multicultural Australia**

Australia has grown as a multicultural society experiencing changes of polices from assimilation to multiculturalism with integration in between (Castles, 1992). Jupp states that these policies have been influenced by a series of ideologies: “imperialism, racism, utilitarianism, economic rationalism and humanitarianism” (Jupp, 2002, p. 6). The attempt to create a multicultural nation characterised by different cultural and ethnic groups living in harmony did not commence with Australia’s immigration history. According to Jupp (1991), non-British immigrants were expected to immediately adapt their way of life and accept the Australian way of life so as to fit into the community as Australians. This was the pervasive doctrine of “assimilationalism” in Australia meaning “immigrants could be culturally and socially absorbed and rapidly become indistinguishable from the existing Anglo-Australian population” (Castles, 1992, pp. 184-185). These immigrants were expected not to use their mother tongue, not to wear ethnic clothes, and to avoid other visible representation of their ethnic backgrounds in public (Jupp, 1991).

However, the government of the time acknowledged the need to change its policy because of several factors (Jupp & Australia Bureau of Immigration Multicultural and Population Research, 1996). Firstly, mass migration from Italy and Greece has brought many people who were not inclined to abandon their own culture. These people were more likely to leave the country if they were forced to assimilate. Secondly, acquiring English took more time and efforts than expected. For these reasons, Australia slowly changed policies to cater for migrants that was main focus on integration policy. Under the integration policy, immigrants were still expected to fit into mainstream culture; however, they were not forced to abandon their own culture (Jupp & Australia Bureau of Immigration Multicultural and Population Research, 1996).
In 1972, the Whitlam government abolished the White Australia policy which favoured British as well as European immigrants. Since then, Australia has maintained a nominal policy of multiculturalism. It can be argued that the most recent form of multiculturalism has been shaped by constant changes. “Multiculturalism as official policy has gone through a number of phases, corresponding to partisan reinterpretation and politicians’ assessment of public opinion” (Jupp as cited in Jupp, 1991, p. 6).

The National Multicultural Advisory Council (1999) offers the following definition of multiculturalism.

Australian multiculturalism is a term which recognises and celebrates Australia’s cultural diversity. It accepts and respects the right of all Australians to express and share their individual cultural heritage within an overriding commitment to Australia and the basic structures and values of Australian democracy (p. 4).

This definition implies that multiculturalism acknowledges different cultures and accepts them as they are. Also, it respects people from different cultural backgrounds. However, people living in Australia are required to accept Australian democracy and law regardless of their cultural backgrounds. The Council also advocates people to respect and be able to use English as the national language in Australia.

The most recent version of the government’s multicultural policy, ‘A new agenda for multicultural Australia’, was revised in 2003. This update was prompted by the Australian government’s response to national security concerns following the terrorist attacks on September 11 terrorist attacks in the USA and Bali Bombings (Howard, 2003). The Australia Prime Minister John Howard (2003) said, “I commend this renewed statement of our multicultural policy and encourage all Australians to join the government in ensuring that our diversity continues to be a unifying force for our nation (p. 1).” This updated version of multicultural policy is based on four principles:

Responsibilities of all – all Australians have a civic duty to support those basic structures and principles of Australian society which
guarantee us our freedom and equality and enable diversity in our society to flourish;
Respect for each person – subject to the law, all Australians have the right to express their own culture and beliefs and have a reciprocal obligation to respect the right of others to do the same;
Fairness for each person – all Australians are entitled to equality of treatment and opportunity. Social equity allows us all to contribute to the social, political and economic life of Australia, free from discrimination, including on the grounds of race, culture, religion, language, location, gender or place of birth; and
Benefits for all – all Australians benefit from productive diversity, that is, the significant cultural, social and economic dividends arising from the diversity of our population. Diversity works for all Australians (Multicultural Australia: United in diversity, 2003, p. 6).

These four principles emphasise the rights and responsibilities of all Australia to benefit from diversity in the context of Australia’s national interests. The policy focuses on equality which promotes human beings as equal regardless of their backgrounds as well as equity which respects the influence of cultural differences and provides fair treatment based on it. This policy also promotes responsibility as a citizen of Australia to follow the law. Last, it acknowledges diversity as an asset and merit for everyone who lives in Australia.

Understanding cross-cultural and intercultural communication
As we may observe from the latest multicultural policy, Australia welcomes and embraces migrants and descendants of migrants from different ethnic and cultural backgrounds and encourages them to maintain elements of their own original cultures. Despite such recent public policy statements on Multiculturalism, difficulties of communication amongst peoples of such diverse backgrounds occur. This communication tends to be described as cross-cultural or intercultural communication because these two terms, from time to time, are used interchangeably. Gudykunst (2003a), however, states that cross-cultural communication is a subcategory of intercultural communication. Gudykunst and Kim (1997) articulate that “the term cross-cultural traditionally implies a comparison of some phenomena across cultures” (p. 19). Gudykunst (2003a) reaffirms that the study of cross-cultural communication focuses on
comparison between cultures. He argues further that it is essential to understand cross-cultural communication before attempting to understand intercultural communication. Understanding cross-cultural communication is to understand what each culture values in terms of interacting with others.

Of the many cross-cultural theories to explain what affects people’s communication, three will be considered here: individualism-collectivism, high and low context and dimensions of cultural variability. Individualism-collectivism differentiate those culture which value individual freedom and those which value group activity or agreement (Gudykunst & Lee, 2003). “Individualism-collectivism affects communication through its influence on cultural norms and rules related to group identities and the differentiation between members of ingroups and outgroups” (Gudykunst & Lee, 2003, p. 10). Secondly, high and low context cultures may be defined in terms of the amount of information given during communications. Hall (1976) explains that people from high context cultures tend to communicate with implicit messages in which “most of the information is either in the physical context or internalised in the person” (p. 79). In contrast, people from low context cultures communicate with abundant information in the message. Lastly, Hofstede (as cited in Jandt, 2004) articulates uncertainty avoidance, power distance and masculinity and femininity. People from high uncertainty avoidance cultures tend to avoid situations where conflict might occur. They are inclined to follow set rules for almost every occasion (Gudykunst & Lee, 2003). The power distance also can be divided into high and low. In high power distance cultures, people accept power as their way of life. In low power distance cultures, on the other hand, people believe power should not be used unless it is absolutely necessary. The final one of Hofstede’s dimensions of cultural variability is masculinity-femininity. “Masculine cultures focus on ego enhancement, and feminine culture focus on relationship enhancement, regardless of group ties” (Gudykunst & Lee, 2003, p. 21). Examining such dimensions in cross-cultural communication may help us to understand intercultural communication better.

There are slightly different definitions of intercultural communication. One is that intercultural communication generally refers to a type of face-to-face communication
involving people from different cultures (Gudykunst, 2003a, 2003b, 2003c; Jandt, 2004). Lustig and Koester (1999) did not confine their definition of intercultural communication to face-to-face but they used more general terms of interaction with people from different cultures. They also added that “intercultural communication is a symbolic process in which people from different cultures create shared meanings” (p. 52). This study identifies intercultural communication as a face-to-face communication between people with different cultural backgrounds using the common language of English.

Diversity in schools

In recent years, many people from diverse cultural or ethnic backgrounds have settled in Queensland. According to the Department of Education and the Arts (2004), Queensland is a diverse place to the extent that:

- four in 10 residents are migrants or the children of migrants;
- one in five was born overseas;
- more than 200 nationalities co-exist;
- 10 per cent of people were born in non-English speaking countries; and,
- 10 per cent of the population over five years old speaks a language other than English at home.

Such diversity is reflected in Queensland schools, and overtime, Queensland schools have embraced more pupils with different cultural or ethnic backgrounds. Due to its growing population of immigrants and descendents of immigrants, all students have more opportunities to communicate with others from diverse cultural and linguistic cultural backgrounds. The Australian education system at national and state levels has been responsive to such diversity. For example, in 1999, the State, Territory and Commonwealth Minsters of Education gathered at Adelaide to improve Australian schooling nationwide. This collaboration led to the Adelaide Declaration, 1999 which includes national goals to improve quality of education (National Goals for Schooling in the 21st Century: The Adelaide Declaration, 1999). “The achievement of the national goals for schooling will assist young people to contribute to Australia’s social, cultural
and economic development in local and global contexts” (National Goals for Schooling in the 21st Century: The Adelaide Declaration, 1999). These goals emphasise not only learning Key Learning Areas (KLAs) but also living in harmony with people in the community. One of the three elaborated goals is that “schooling should be socially just” which brings awareness of equal opportunity for all regardless of their backgrounds.

One of the outcomes of achievement of the goals would enable students to be “free from the effects of negative forms of discrimination based on sex, language, culture and ethnicity, religion or disability; and of differences arising from students’ socio-economic background or geographic location” (National Goals for Schooling in the 21st Century: The Adelaide Declaration, 1999). Another enables “all students to understand and acknowledge the value of cultural and linguistic diversity, and possess the knowledge, skills and understanding to contribute to, and benefit from, such diversity in the Australian community and internationally” (National Goals for Schooling in the 21st Century: The Adelaide Declaration, 1999). Eight years later, it is important to investigate the current nature of intercultural communication in our schools and the extent to which students are provided with the learning environment where those outcomes could be achieved.

Inclusive education in Queensland

The Queensland Government Department of Education promotes inclusive education which respects students from diverse backgrounds. The department states that inclusive education:

… recognises and actively addresses injustice and disadvantage, responds to uniqueness of individuals so all students can access schools and participate to achieve learning outcomes and to develop skills to work and live productively and respectfully with others from a range of backgrounds, abilities and cultures (The State of Queensland: Department of Education Training and the Arts, 2005).

This declares that all students are entitled to quality education regardless of their backgrounds and abilities. The education includes students from different cultural, social
and economic backgrounds and students with special needs due to physical and mental abilities. Inclusive education encourages equity which appears to promote intercultural communication. However, this study does not pursue inclusive education policy because the policy does not necessarily focus on facilitating students to become effective communicators in a multicultural society.

**Terminology of cultural and linguistic diversity in Australia**

The Queensland School Curriculum Council has selected different terminologies to identify students from different cultural backgrounds. The Council (2001) states that the preferred term is “students from diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds” (p. 9). It also acknowledges different abbreviated terms such as ESL, LBOTE and NESB. According to Longman dictionary (*Longman: Dictionary of English language and culture*, 1998), ESL stands for English as a Second Language. It is widely used in describing students who are learning English as a second language who are called ESL students. In Queensland, the ESL program caters for ESL students. LBOTE stands for Language Background Other Than English. NESB stands for Non-English Speaking Backgrounds. Also, EAL is used to describe students with English as an Additional Language. “EAL is a more inclusive and encompassing term” (Manitoba Education Citizenship and Youth, n.d.) that appreciates students’ abilities in more than one language before learning English language. Another abbreviation that is currently prevalent is CALD, standing for Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (Multicultural Development Association Inc, 2006). In this study, the term ESL will be used to identify the ESL program at school and students who participate in the program. In order to identify students from different cultural backgrounds, the study also uses the term culturally and linguistically diverse.

**About this study**

Given the overview of the historical and current context in Australia portrayed so far and the increasing mobility of people in globalised times, it is vital that future generations are educated to interact with people of different cultural backgrounds. Accordingly, this study is concerned with the ways in which the significant knowledge and skills children
in multicultural Australia might require to fulfil their rights and responsibilities as future citizens can be developed in the classroom. Three components are selected for investigation namely:

1) the nature of communication amongst children with different cultural backgrounds;
2) the nature of communication between teachers and children with different cultural backgrounds; and,
3) the nature of curricula elements implemented to enhance intercultural communication skills in classrooms.

The research is presented as a case study of a single primary school in the Brisbane metropolitan area. Primary students from a state school participate in this study. The school was chosen based on the large number of different cultures represented in its student body and permission was obtained from the principal and the teacher. In this study, students’ different cultural backgrounds are indicated by their bilingualism or multilingualism at home. Students’ daily interactions with their classmates are observed in their classroom and the playground. The daily interaction includes verbal and non-verbal communication. Teachers’ and students’ interaction are observed in the same manner. With the curricular documents, the study observes SOSE (Studies of Sociecity and Environment) and LOTE (Languages other than English) syllabus documents and other related school documents promoting intercultural communication.

**Summary**

This chapter has justified why this study was planned to investigate intercultural communication in a multicultural classroom in Australia and the definitions of culture were examined before a decision was taken to define cultural identity for this study initially on the basis of first language. The researcher’s personal background as a migrant and experiences of intercultural communication in Australia were presented. The global and local issues of culture were identified which initiated this research study. The history of immigration and policies of immigration in Australia were reviewed. The
meanings of cross-cultural and intercultural communication were distinguished. Statistics of diverse population in Queensland schools were presented. Government policies regarding the promotion of intercultural communication were addressed. The study acknowledged the existence of inclusive education and current terminology describing people from different cultures were identified. Last, the overview of this study was demonstrated. The next chapter will examine and review existing literature regarding intercultural communication. The theoretical perspective of this study which is based on the ‘structure of intercultural communication’ (Barnett & Lee, 2003) will be discussed further in Chapter Two.
Chapter Two: Literature Review

This chapter will explore the current literature on intercultural communication which can assist in formulating the current study. Conceptions of intercultural communication reviewed in Chapter One will be reviewed in more theoretical detail so that those gaps in the literature can be identified. Barnett and Kincaid (1983) affirm that studying intercultural communication requires understanding of what defines culture. Having applied Barnett and Kincaid’s idea to this chapter, first, this chapter will examine the definition of culture incorporated within different scholars’ views. Second, it will define what intercultural communication means in order to distinguish it from the term cross-cultural communication which is used interchangeably. Third, it will examine the structure of intercultural communication. Fourth, it will review the theory of Intercultural Communication Competence. Fifth, it will examine possible barriers in intercultural communication to appreciate the complexity of its nature. Sixth, current curricula documents and the aspects of hidden curriculum facilitating the promotion of intercultural communication are examined. Finally, this chapter will formulate research questions that will guide this case study of intercultural communication in a single primary classroom context in Brisbane.

Meanings of ‘culture’

Throughout this study, the reader will encounter the word ‘culture’ numerous times. The word ‘culture’ is widely used in our daily life, frequently without reflecting on its meaning even though it implies rather complicated meanings. Also, it often means different things to different people (Gudykunst & Kim, 1997). Scholars have attempted to define culture in many different ways (Hofstede, 2001). For instance, Kroeber and Kluckhohn collected 300 different meanings of culture in their 1954 study (McLaren, 1998). Having considered these meanings, it is challenging to define the word ‘culture’ as a single definition. Samovar and Porter (1991) reassure us that culture is not a unitary concept so there is a need for many different definitions:
We define culture as the deposit of knowledge, experience, beliefs, values, attitudes, meanings, hierarchies, religion, notions of time, roles, spatial relations, concepts of the universe, and material objects and possessions acquired by a group of people in the course of generations through individual and group striving (p. 51).

This study does not attempt to put the term ‘culture’ in a nutshell; instead, it encompasses the view of all culture. Since it is complicated to incorporate its numerous aspects, there have been different approaches to defining the word “culture”. Amongst those approaches, Lustig and Koester (1999) outline five approaches to define culture in order to facilitate better understanding of how culture is pertinent to communication:

1. Culture is learned;
2. Culture is a set of shared interpretations;
3. Culture involves beliefs, values, and norms;
4. Culture affects behaviour; and
5. Culture involves large group of people (pp. 30-33).

Culture is learned. Stephan and Stephan (1996) support the idea by stating that “culture is the sum of all learned behaviour in a society” (p. 117). People are not born with cultural differences but these are learned throughout their lives due to belonging of a particular group (Kluckhohn, 1949). Hofstede (2001) explains that culture is “the collective programming of the mind that distinguishes the members of one group or category of people from another” (p. 9). This definition implies that people learn culture through socialisation from their childhood. Samovar and Porter (2004) add that people learn their behaviours from others who are in the same group and internalise those learned behaviours to turn them into a habit. Furthermore, each individual from the same cultural group could go through different experiences (The State of Queensland: Department of Education and the Arts, 2002) which means people could learn and relearn different cultures in the course of their lives.

Culture is a set of shared interpretations. Barnett and Lee (2003) explain that “it [culture] is a group’s shared collective meaning system through which the group’s
collective values, attitudes, beliefs, customs, and thoughts are understood” (p. 261). This meaning system (culture) is invisible to people until it is expressed by visible tools. One of the visible tools could be symbols which are shared by a group of people. “Symbols refer to verbal and nonverbal language” (Jandt, 2004, p. 7). People from the same culture often share the same interpretation of symbols.

Culture involves beliefs, values, and norms. “A belief is an idea that people assume to be true about the world” (Lustig & Koester, 1999, p. 80). Values are the standpoints from we discern differences between:

- Evil and good;
- Dirty and clean;
- Dangerous and safe;
- Decent and indecent;
- Ugly and beautiful;
- Unnatural and natural;
- Abnormal and normal;
- Irrational and rational; and
- Moral and immoral (Hofstede, 2001, p. 6)

Norms are guidelines for people to behave in a socially accepted and expected way (Lustig & Koester, 1999). These are invisible cultural aspects that could be visible through people’s behaviour. Beliefs, values and norms may be learned through others who are in the same group, especially through parents, teachers, peers and religious institutions (Gudykunst & Kim, 1997). Furthermore, people learn them through history, mass media, proverbs, myths, folktales, art and legends (Samovar & Porter, 2004). A document published by Brisbane Catholic Education office (1999) argues that these are at the core of cultural aspects which are reflected in people’s behaviour and activities and expressed by symbolic processes.

Culture affects behaviour. Intangible culture, which includes beliefs, values and norms, could become apparent through people’s behaviour. Beliefs, values and norms, which directly affect our behaviour (Gudykunst & Kim, 1997), are the guidelines for people to behave in a socially accepted way (Brislin, 1993).
Culture involves large groups of people. Jandt (2004) defines this large group of people as “a community or population sufficiently large enough to be self-sustaining, that is, large enough to produce new generations of members without relying on outside peoples” (p. 7). On the other hand, this definition precludes the notion of a multicultural society such as the situation in Australia today. It may be argued that Australian culture has always been in a state of flux due to a contact in flows of people from “outside” and that rather than diminishing a common sense of culture, this process enhances the culture as a dynamic entity.

Collier (2006) defines this ‘group’ based on people’s “nationality, ethnicity, gender, profession, geography, organisation, physical ability or disability, community, type of relationship, or other factors” (p. 54). While Collier’s definition of ‘group’ encompasses various groups, for the purpose of this study, this group of people will be distinguished by students’ and their parents’ language usages other than English. According to Hofstede and Hofstede (2005), when researching cultural differences it is feasible to group people by their nationality. However, the reason why nationality was not chosen to distinguish cultural differences in this study is because nationality is often distinguished by which passport one holds (Hofstede & Hofstede, 2005) and it does not embrace people who were born in Australia but parents of those who were born in Australia are from different cultures.

This study distinguishes people’s cultural backgrounds using language ability for, as Fong (2006) asserts “language influences and shapes how people perceive their world, their culture” (p. 215). Language could be defined as “a set of symbols shared by a community to communicate meaning and experience” (Jandt, 2001, p. 126). Samovar, Porter and McDaniel (2007) agrees with Jandt stating that language is shared by a group of people to express their thoughts and experiences and adds that language reflects culture. Fong (2006) argues that language constrains the group of people to conform to cultural norms. Language is interwoven with culture to symbolise events and thoughts. Therefore, this study identifies different cultural backgrounds using linguistic
backgrounds. As this study focuses on intercultural communication in a culturally diverse classroom, this study identifies languages as a signifier of cultural backgrounds.

**Meanings of intercultural communication**
The words ‘cross-cultural’ and ‘intercultural’ are frequently used interchangeably in our daily lives (Gudykunst & Kim, 1997); however, they are identified in a dissimilar way in the context of this study. Cross-cultural communication employs ‘etic’ view of other cultures. ‘Etic’ view includes communication with other cultures from an outsider’s perspective. In contrast, intercultural communication involves ‘emic’ view of other cultures by engaging communication with people from different cultures. ‘Emic’ view comes from the participants who are in the communication with different cultures.

In order to identify the difference between cross-cultural communication and intercultural communication, the term cross-cultural communication is defined. Gudykunst and Kim (1997) assure us that “the term cross-cultural traditionally implies a comparison of some phenomenon across culture” (p. 19). In other words, ‘cross-cultural’ is to compare distinctively different cultures in order to understand the dissimilarities and similarities between cultures. In order to compare it is necessary to know the cultures that one compares. Since the act of comparing usually needs a benchmark, which is one’s own culture in this context, ‘cross-cultural’ also refers to understanding of another culture from an outsider’s point of view. In other words, cross-cultural communication involves ‘etic’ view of different cultures. One of the most cited cross-cultural communication research studies was carried out by Hofstede in 1980 (Hofstede, 2001). In Hofstede’s study, he compares cultures that affect communication between people whose ethnic backgrounds are different. His study helps people to understand what might affect communication between people from different cultures.

Hofstede (2001) states that the inception of intercultural communication in history is the time when people from two different tribes meet. Hofstede’s assertion implies that any time when people from different cultures encounter and communicate is the time when intercultural communication occurs. Samovar and Porter (2004) reaffirm that
“intercultural communication involves interaction between people whose cultural perceptions and symbol systems are distinct enough to alter the communication event” (p. 15). Barnett and Lee identifies the interaction to be “the exchange of cultural information” (Barnett & Lee, 2003, p. 260) between groups of people from different cultures. As Samovar and Porter (2004) suggest, intercultural communication involves two parties from significantly different cultures (Barnett & Lee, 2003; Gudykunst, 2003c; Lustig & Koester, 1999). Lustig and Koester (1999) add to that definition stating “intercultural communication is a symbolic process in which people from different cultures create shared meanings” (p. 52). Intercultural communication involves people working towards the common channel of communication regardless of their differences. Also, this definition implies that intercultural communication may deter people from maintaining aspects of their own cultural characteristics when it occurs. Incorporating these definitions, this study identifies intercultural communication as an interaction between people from distinctive cultural backgrounds which might influence or be influenced by own cultural characteristics.

**Structure of intercultural communication**

For the better understanding of intercultural communication, this study employs Barnett and Lee’s (2003) structure of intercultural communication. Barnett and Lee (2003) outline the structure of intercultural communication which they refer to as exchanging cultural information between two groups with distinctive cultures. This study employs Barnett and Lee’s (2003) ‘Structural Model of Intercultural Communication’.
In order to explain the structure of intercultural communication theoretically, Barnett and Lee randomly nominated two groups, ‘A’ and ‘B’, who possess two distinctive cultural characteristics. Between the two groups, there is sparse communication; however, within the groups there is intense communication occurring. There are people originated from the two groups who temporarily leave their own culture because of business, education, enjoyment of travelling or military or diplomatic purposes, and the authors name them ‘a’ and ‘b’.

These individuals could be immigrants who reside in an area where people from the same culture densely populate. ‘a’ and ‘b’ represent their own culture to each other and for this reason, they are ‘the gatekeepers’ of their own culture. Their representation reduces the uncertainty of unfamiliar culture by exchanging cultural information. The problem of this representation from ‘a’ and ‘b’ is that people might consider their cultural representation fits everyone from that particular culture. Barnett and Lee suggest that this representation facilitates understanding of different culture; however, they did not consider it might induce stereotypes of certain groups. Having considered some members of a group as representatives of the whole, there are possibilities of overgeneralisation and categorisation of members from a particular group. ‘c’, in the diagram, represents those who are descendants of multicultural marriage or are able to speak both languages. Therefore, ‘c’ does not belong to either group A or B but still has
the understandings of both cultures. Due to their belonging to neither group A nor B, ‘c’ are able to appreciate intercultural encounters more objectively. In this study, the researcher focuses on the communication between ‘a’ and ‘b’ in terms of observing and interviewing about intercultural communication. If possible, ‘c’ will be included in this study.

Gudykunst (2003a) and Jandt (2004) acknowledge intercultural communication as a face-to-face interaction; however, face-to-face interaction is not the only means of intercultural communication. The mass media and international organisations are also parts of intercultural communication (Barnett & Lee, 2003). The international organisations, such as the United Nation or the World Bank, help promote intercultural understandings. Media ‘A’ which represents the group ‘A’ more strongly influences b’s understandings of culture A and vice versa. ‘c’ also uses both Media to understand A and B’s culture. This event is a part of intercultural communication because “Intercultural communication occurs whenever a message produced in one culture must be processed in another culture” (McDaniel, Samovar, & Porter, 2006, p. 7). The Media ‘A’ and ‘B’ convey cultural information to its own cultural group A and B which is not regarded as intercultural communication.

**Intercultural Communication Competence (ICC)**

ICC has been a major part of intercultural communication research (Wiseman, 2002). Due to the fact that this study attempts to examine how effectively students communicate with others from different cultures, the literature of intercultural communication competence (ICC) is reviewed. Wiseman (2002) identifies that “competent communication consists of behaviours that are regarded as effective and appropriate” (p. 209). He elaborates the terms “effective” and “appropriate”. When engaging in effective communication, people are able to achieve their personal goals through that communication. Also, he suggests that “appropriate communication entails the use of messages that are expected in a given context and actions that meet the expectations and demands of the situation” (Wiseman, 2002, p. 209). This implies that appropriate communication occurs when the communicators acknowledge rules, etiquettes and
manners required in different contexts and execute these during interaction with others. Based on these, ICC is effective and appropriate communication occurs when encountering people from different cultures.

ICC does not occur naturally to human beings; however, it must be gained through consistent and conscious attempts in intercultural communication (Wiseman, 2002). The elements that people are to possess in order to become competent communicators are ‘knowledge’, ‘motivation’ and ‘skills’ (Spitzberg and Cupach as cited in Gudykunst, 1993; Wiseman, 2002). However, Gudykunst (1993) affirms that the possession of these elements do not necessarily result in competent communication. On the other hand, such skills are more likely to enhance people’s adaptability to different context of communication which results in an impression of competence (Wiemann & Bradae as cited in Gudykunst, 1993). Wiseman (2002) elaborates each element as follows:

- Knowledge refers to our awareness or understanding of requisite information and actions to be interculturally competent;
- Motivation refers to the set of feelings, intentions, needs, and drives associated with anticipation of or actual engagement in intercultural communication (p. 211); and
- Skills refer to the actual performance of the behaviours felt to be effective and appropriate in the communication context (p. 212).

First, the element of knowledge includes but is not limited to, cultural aspects such as norms, rules of communication and language and this provides better understanding of others’ behaviours in intercultural communication (Wiseman, Hammer, & Nishida, 1989). Second, the element of motivation includes negative and positive perception, “anxiety, perceived social distance, attraction, ethnocentrism, prejudice” (Wiseman, 2002, p. 211) of others with different cultural backgrounds. Last, the element of skills includes “behaviours [that] reflect the ability to communicate in a adaptive, flexible, and supportive manner” (Wiseman, 2002, p. 219). These three elements are intertwined and ICC is affected when one of them is lacking (Wiseman, 2002).

**Barriers in intercultural communication**
Communicating with people who have different cultural backgrounds from ourselves may induce more breakdowns than harmony due to significant dissimilarities between the cultures. There are several possible barriers in intercultural communication and those are reviewed following Samovar and Porter’s (2004) suggestions:

- Seeking similarities;
- Uncertainty Reduction;
- Withdrawal;
- Sterotyping;
- Prejudice;
- Racism; and
- Ethnocentrism (pp. 284-300).

**Seeking similarities**
When socialising with others, people tend to seek similarities with others (Jandt, 2004; Samovar & Porter, 2004). It might be natural for people to socialise with others who have things in common; however, it can cause a problem when it comes to intercultural communication. Due to seeking similarities with others, people try to exclude others who possess cultural distinctiveness (Samovar & Porter, 2004). On the other hand, Gudykunst (1991) suggests that we assume similarities between ourselves when encountering people from different cultures. Assuming similarities is limited to the fact that everyone requires basic human needs of living such as eating, sleeping, defecating and socialising. At the same time, it is important to understand that the way we fulfil our needs of living could be different.

**Uncertainty reduction**
Due to seeking similarities, people find it hard to reduce the uncertainty of others with different cultural backgrounds (Samovar & Porter, 2004). When meeting with strangers, who “are members of different groups and unknown to you” (Gudykunst & Kim, 1997, p. 25), people have uncertainty about strangers. At the same time, people try to reduce uncertainty about others by predicting possible behaviours from them. Gudykunst and
Kim (1997) affirms that it is necessary for people to try to understand others’ behaviour by doing so. They add that people are more likely to rely on their own categorisations to reduce their uncertainty of others rather than by trying to reduce uncertainty by understanding others’ behaviour.

People could be anxious about a situation where they encounter people whose behaviour could not be expected or predicted (Jandt, 2004). For this reason, people tend to avoid a situation where they have to face strangers (Neuliep, 2006). This will be discussed further in the next section (3. Withdrawal). If one fails to reduce uncertainty, he/she tends to avoid the situation. Hofstede and Hofstede (2005) articulate this as ‘uncertainty avoidance’ and define this as “the extent to which the members of a culture feel threatened by ambiguous or unknown situations” (p. 167). They give an example where people with a tendency towards strong uncertainty avoidance are less tolerant towards deviants and minorities (Hofstede & Hofstede, 2005).

Withdrawal
People may also withdraw totally from intercultural encounters (Neuliep, 2006; Samovar & Porter, 2004). Sandhu (1994) reaffirms that students who do not have a sense of belonging to other cultures and do not find similarities often “reject other cultures, ethnic groups and institutions” (p. 11).

These problems of seeking similarities, uncertainty reduction and withdrawal were found in Antonopolulos, Cimaroli, Moran and Power’s (1997) study. Through their preliminary questionnaires prior to their study about efficacy of an educational programme, they found an insignificant number of students (less than 20% of students chose best friends to be culturally different and less than 40% of students would like to get to know others who are culturally different) to interact with others from different cultural and linguistic backgrounds. The study suggests that the possible causes of this lack of interaction are firstly due to the distinctive differences and secondly due to the stereotyping of each other based on lack of cultural understanding. However, this study overlooks the fact that
some students could not speak the common language (English in this study) and that this could be a possible cause of lack of intercultural interaction.

However, withdrawal from involvement in intercultural communication is not always identified as a problem or barrier. From her study about troublesome intercultural communication Jaasma (2001) found that 9.2% of responses stated ‘nothing bad’ happened in students’ intercultural communication experiences. Such a response was explained by treating others equally, withdrawing from an unpleasant situation and forgetting any problems or bad experiences. Withdrawing from the unpleasant situation or people in Jaasma’s study was not categorised as a barrier even though withdrawal has been identified as one of the barriers. In this study, withdrawal was from a foreseeable troubling situation; however, this may not always be the case in instances of intercultural communication.

Stereotyping
Stereotypes are overgeneralisation of a group of people without acknowledging members’ individualities (Brislin, 1993; Lustig & Koester, 1999). “Stereotypes exist because they offer the individual a shorthand way of engaging with and understanding the world around them” (Locke & Johnston, 2001, p. 109). In other words, stereotyping is a result of people trying to expect and predict what other people would do in order to reduce the uncertainty of others. This could become a barrier in intercultural communication due to its “oversimplified, overgeneralised, and/or exaggerated” (Samovar & Porter, 2004) nature. Also, stereotyping is unacceptable because people who stereotype often assume that they are superior to others and hold ethnocentric views of others (Le Roux, 2001). “Stereotypes create expectations that often lead us to misinterpret messages we receive from people who are different and lead people who are different to misinterpret the messages they receive from us” (Gudykunst, 1991, p. 2). Neuliep (2006) adds that stereotypes can bring about prejudice, ethnocentrism and discrimination. McLaren (1998) agrees with the idea that ethnocentrism results from stereotyping.
Jandt (2004) sums up the problems that stereotypes could cause in relation to intercultural communication as follows:

- It makes people assume that prevailing stereotyped beliefs are true even though they are not;
- People continually adopt stereotyped beliefs which result in reinforcement of the beliefs;
- The prevalent beliefs make people assume that they apply to one individual; and
- People who stereotype may affect the stereotyped people’s behaviour since the latter behave accordingly to the beliefs of the former (*self-fulfilling prophecy* (p. 96)).

**Prejudice**

“Prejudice refers to negative attitudes towards other people that are based on faulty and inflexible stereotypes” (Lustig & Koester, 1999, p. 153). “It is the judgments we make about others without sufficient evidence to substantiate the opinions” (Bolgatz, 2005, p. 27). While stereotypes include both positive and negative opinions of others, prejudice is usually a negative judgments of others (Jandt, 2004). Gillborn (1995) agrees with Jandt’s assertion and adds that it is an unfair judgement along with irrational hatred. Allport (1958) outlines how prejudice could be acted out through people’s behaviour.

1. **Antilocution**: People talk about their prejudices with friends or people around them. They do not act out but might take slight aversive action.
2. **Avoidance**: People avoid contact with whom they have prejudices against.
3. **Discrimination**: Prejudice is the perception and attitude which could become observable and reflected through discrimination (Lustig & Koester, 1999). People treat those whom they have prejudices against unfairly.
4. **Physical attack**: People overtly express their prejudices by physical or verbal abuse of those whom they have prejudices against.
5. **Extermination**: Lynchings, pogroms, massacres, and the Hitlerian program of genocide mark the ultimate degree of violent expression of prejudice (p. 14).
Discrimination induced by prejudice was found in Biggs and Edwards’ study (1994), conducted in 1989, about teachers’ interaction with students from different ethnic backgrounds in a primary classroom in the United Kingdom. The authors acknowledged that teachers were sensitive and aware of cultural diversities; however, the study showed that those teachers blatantly interacted in a different way with students from different ethnic backgrounds. One of the findings was that teachers spent less time with students from minority ethnic backgrounds (in their study, the word ‘black’ was used to differentiate students from those with those from dominant ethnic backgrounds who were referred to as ‘white’).

Jassama’s study (2001) found out that prejudice is one of the causes of the worst experiences of people from different ethnic backgrounds. The study used 906 year six American primary students’ responses to identify barriers in intercultural encounters in a multicultural environment. 43.5% of students have experienced fighting and 20.5% of them have experienced verbal aggression due to their different ethnic backgrounds. On the other hand, Stoughton and Siverston (2005)’s study explained that prejudice was not the major problem of communication between Black and White students (as they were referred in the study). They found that lack of knowledge of each other’s culture and social distance were the barriers in intercultural communication between them.

Racism
Racism also appears to be one of the barriers in intercultural communication. Gillborn (1995) explains racism as “an irrational hatred or fear of another racial group” (p. 5). “Racism is the belief that racial differences between people are the main influence on their characters and abilities, and especially that one’s own race is the best” (Longman: Dictionary of English language and culture, 1998, p. 1097). Neulip (2006) agrees with the latter definition and adds that it is an ideology of believing one group is superior to others in terms of morality and intelligence. These two definitions of racism summarise people’s beliefs of being superior to others because of their biological differences. They believe that some races are born to be superior to others (Barnett & Lee, 2003). This
belief is revealed as a racist act when exercising social power over minority groups based on their race (Hollinsworth, 1998; Jandt, 2004). Racism can be practised as a defence mechanism and protects one’s traditions and customs against other people who have different cultural backgrounds (Barker as cited in Gillborn, 1995).

Milojevic, Luke, Luke, Mills and Land (2001) states that racism based on physical appearance is a conventional understanding of it. They also add that racism based on nationality and language exists covertly and is equally harmful. Nationality based racism is a belief that there is a “hierarchy of nations and nationalities” (Milojevic et al., 2001, p. 10). However, this hierarchy does not totally explain racist behaviour towards descendants of immigrants who are Australian by nationality, birth and first language. Furthermore, Milojevic et al. (2001) suggest that people who speak non-dominant languages with a different accent may become targets of discrimination. This is problematic when people are not tolerant with others whose English accent is different from mainstream English speakers. Milojevic et al. (2001) imply that it is racism when English speaking people ask Chinese-speaking people to speak English instead of Chinese. However, these incidents should not necessarily be interpreted as racism against Chinese-speaking people because non-Chinese speaking people could feel excluded due to their lack of knowledge of the Chinese language. While covert racism based on language differences may exist in culturally diverse classroom, equally, any perceived lack of tolerance of cultural diversity could be interpreted purely in terms of lack of a common language to facilitate communication.

Racist behaviour can be observed amongst students and between students and teachers. One of the prevailing forms of racism amongst students is racial name-calling. Troyna and Hatcher (1992) conducted a research study on racial name-calling. Their research discovered that minority groups of people consider name-calling to be disturbing. However, it also appears that racial name-calling hurts children more than non-racial name-calling such as ‘idiot’. They labelled name-calling as ‘hot’ and ‘cold’ name-calling. ‘Hot’ name-calling occurs when friends have a heated argument which often causes feelings of guilt or regret afterwards. If there is no guilt or regret involved, it would be
considered as ‘calculated harassment’. In contrast, ‘cold’ name-calling is an action that contains intention to hurt or tease other people for fun. Racial name-calling in schools amongst children is more likely to be ‘hot’ name-calling. Some children used it because they were too upset to think of other people at the time and felt guilty at doing it afterwards. However, some children used it to upset other children knowing that it would hurt their emotions.

A second example of racial discrimination is between teachers and students. In this context, the common term for racial discrimination is ‘teacher typification’. Foster (as cited in Pillkington, 1999) argues that typification does not arise from any racial grounds. Rather, it arises from an observation of students’ academic achievement and classroom behaviour. Pillkington (1999), however, believes that teacher typification can be based on prior observation of students’ ability and behaviour and categorised them by their race. To support his statement, he quoted a dialogue of a pre-service teacher after he talked to one of the staff. The pre-service teacher was told to look out for West Indian students by the school management. As a result, he subconsciously held on to this prejudiced view throughout his teaching career. According to Pilkington, such an event is not uncommon in teaching practice. Pilkington also believes that this is a circle of prejudice which needs to be considered as racism. Pilkington’s (1999) research shows that teachers’ endless negative stereotyping can affect students and prevent them performing to their full potential.

Ethnocentrism
Ethnocentrism is a problem in intercultural communication because this belief leads people to think that their own culture is superior to that of others’ (Jandt, 2004; Lustig & Koester, 1999) and judge others’ by the standards of their own culture (Jandt, 2004; Linde, 1997). Gudykunst and Kim (1997) add that people with ethnocentric minds think their own way of life is right and others’ ways are wrong. “Ethnocentrism is a bias toward the ingroup that causes us to evaluate different patterns of behaviour negatively, rather than to try to understand them” (Gudykunst, 1991, p. 67). Novinger (2001)
reaffirms that people judge other people’s different behaviours as “impolite, irresponsible, inferior” (p. 20) and so forth.

Ethnocentric perceptions may influence our own perceptions. Neuliep, Hintz and McCroskey (2005) studied this matter with the participants of American undergraduate students. Their study found that there are significant and negative correlations between ethnocentrism and perceptions of others “within organisational contexts” (p. 51). Furthermore, Wiseman, Hammer and Nishida’s study (1989) showed that ethnocentric people tend to have less cultural knowledge of others and “the highly ethnocentric individual suffers from a form of cultural myopia” (p. 364). The authors support their statement by explaining that understanding and learning cultures of others help people to be able to understand their own as well as appreciate those of others.

One of the characteristics of ethnocentrism which hinders effective intercultural communication is that it tends to magnify differences rather than similarities in other cultures (Lustig & Koester, 1999). As previously examined, differences deter people from attempting to interact with people from other cultures due to people’s propensity to avoiding uncertainty regarding others. Also, ethnocentrism could be a problem not only because people believe their own culture is superior to others but also because people do not realise their ethnocentricity could deter them from understanding the cultural differences of others (Gudykunst & Kim, 1997; McLaren, 1998).

**Current curricula promoting intercultural communication**

This study intends to review how a school promotes intercultural communication. The Queensland Studies Association (QSA) is the authority in Queensland which writes and develops curricula in all Key Learning Area (KLA). As such, it is the government authority which establishes curricula to prepare students to become effective communicators through intercultural communication. These curricula are identified with two KLAS: Studies of Society and Environment (SOSE) and Languages Other than English (LOTE). Also, this study includes ‘hidden curriculum’. Each of these areas is examined below.
Studies of Society and Environment (SOSE)

This KLA prepares students to become “active participants” in the world. The KLA values social justice and peace which may promote positive intercultural communication. Through social justice, the KLA attempts to facilitate students’ ability to appreciate different ways and perspectives of life in the world. Also, SOSE promotes challenging unjust situations. The nature of peace promotes positive interactions and relationships with others. Students are to value ‘honesty’, ‘sensitivity’ and develop ‘empathy’.

In addition, this KLA promotes students to become a lifelong learner as do other KLAs. The lifelong learner is described as:

- a knowledgeable person with deep understanding;
- a complex thinker;
- a creative person;
- an active investigator;
- an effective communicator;
- a participant in an interdependent world; and
- a reflective and self-directed learner.

Amongst these attributes, a knowledgeable person with deep understanding, an effective communicator and a participant in an interdependent world agree with Wiseman’s (2002) elaboration of elements in intercultural communication competence, i.e. knowledge, skill and motivation. The knowledgeable person with deep understanding enables students to understand and appreciate different cultures. “They develop understandings of cultural diversity and cohesion in Australia and the world” (The State of Queensland: The Office of the Queensland School Curriculum Council, 2000, p. 4). Also, the effective communicator describes students to become skilful communicators. “Learners clarify, persuade, debate, negotiate, establish consensus and use other group and interpersonal forms of communication” (The State of Queensland: The Office of the Queensland School Curriculum Council, 2000, p. 5). Last, the participant in an interdependent world is parallel to the element of motivation in intercultural communication competence. The SOSE syllabus (The State of Queensland: The Office of the Queensland School...
Curriculum Council, 2000) identifies that “they relate to others in peaceful, tolerant and non-discriminatory ways” (p. 5).

Learning outcomes that SOSE facilitates students to achieve are distinguished in four strands: Time, Continuity and Change, Place and Space, Culture and Identity and Systems, Resources and Power. Of the four strands, except for the System, Resources and Power strand, three strands are identified as promoting intercultural communication competence. Each strand elaborates core learning outcomes based on learning levels. At the end of Year 7, students are expected to reach level 4 so this study examines core learning outcomes of level 4.

The core learning outcomes that may promote intercultural communication in the Time, Continuity and Change are as follow:

TCC 4.1 Students use primary sources to investigate situations before and after a change in Australian or global settings;
TCC 4.2 Students illustrate the influence of global trends on the beliefs and values of different groups;
TCC 4.3 Students share empathetic responses to contributions that diverse individuals and groups have made to Australian or global history; and
TCC 4.4 Students critique information sources to show the positive and negative effects of a change or continuity on different groups.
TCC 4.5 Students review and interpret heritages from diverse perspectives to create a preferred future scenario about a global issue.

These outcomes focus on gaining knowledge about different cultures. This promotes getting to know about changes, influences and heritages of different cultures. On the other hand, this facilitates promoting students’ motivation in intercultural communication by sharing empathetic views on contributions of diverse groups to Australia and showing negative and positive effects of changes on diverse groups.

Another strand, Place and Space, includes a core learning outcome that may promote intercultural communication.
PS 4.4 Students use latitude, longitude, compass and scale references and thematic maps to make inferences about global patterns.

This outcome does not explicitly address promoting intercultural communication competence; however, this could extend to investigating cultural patterns as well.

The other strand, Culture and Identity appears to be explicitly designed to prepare students to become competent in intercultural communication. The core learning outcomes of this strand are:

CI 4.1 Students investigate how religions and spiritual beliefs contribute to Australia’s diverse cultures.
CI 4.2 Students design an ethical code of personal behaviour based on their perceptions of cultural groups.
CI 4.3 Students debate how media images concerning gender, age, ethnicity and disability reflect groups to which they belong.
CI 4.4 Students describe changes resulting from cross-cultural contact on Australian and non-Australian indigenous cultures.
CI 4.5 Students express how material and nonmaterial aspects of groups influence personal identities.

These core learning outcomes appear to promote students’ knowledge, motivation and skills of intercultural communication competence. The outcomes CI 4.1 and 4.5 facilitate students’ knowledge of different aspects of diverse cultures: religions, spiritual beliefs, material and nonmaterial aspects. CI 4.2 focuses on students’ prior knowledge and experience of people from other cultures and sharing their perceptions of them. Students might be able to identify their own stereotypes and prejudice of different cultural groups at the end. Through CI 4.3, students practise their communication skills by debating. Also, they build empathy with people from different cultural groups through possible portrayals of negative and untrue images of their own. From CI 4.4, students acknowledge changes made from contact with different cultural groups in Australia.

Languages Other Than English (LOTE)
This KLA includes government priority languages including Chinese, French, German, Indonesian, Italian, Japanese and Korean. The nature of this KLA is to “prepare learners
for meaningful, productive lives in a culturally and linguistically diverse society and global community, and help learners relate positively to the richness of human diversity” (Queensland Studies Authority, n.d.). Language learning enables students to understand and appreciate different cultures which lead to positive attitudes towards people from different cultures (Ingram, 1994). Ingram (1994) also suggests that learning language at primary level is more beneficial since young children’s attitudes towards people from different cultures are “malleable”.

Through this KLA, communication skills and appreciation of cultures are promoted. These enhance students’ skills in intercultural communication as well as knowledge of different cultures which provide better understanding of other cultures and their people. Unlike SOSE, this KLA does not have different strands but has two components: comprehending and composing. Comprehending assists students to be able to listen and read languages and understand cultures of the languages are used. Composing focuses on speaking and writing as well as cultural understanding. Learning about other cultures fosters students with less ethnocentrism, prejudice and stereotypes. The core learning outcomes are not addressed in this chapter since implementation of the outcomes varies depending on the school’s LOTE policy.

Hidden curriculum

SOSE and LOTE are officially planned and documented which could be described as “official curriculum” or “explicit curriculum” in schools. However, in the classroom, students learn more than carefully planned and documented knowledge and skills. Based on Burton (1998), Wren (1999) and Meighan and Harber (2007), this study defines hidden curriculum as an entity of learning that is not explicitly planned but manifested in the classroom or in the school. Wren (1999) lists elements of hidden curriculum: “school rules, ceremonies, rituals and routines” (p. 595). These elements are similar to elements of culture previously discussed which may influence students’ behaviour. Wren (1999) also adds “documents available for students’ use such as year book, school newspaper, handbook and school calendar” and “documents available for faculty and community members such as handbook, announcements, mission statement, newsletter and reports
on school/community service projects” (p. 596). These documents are not explicitly planned to enhance students’ learning; however, they may manifest aspects of the hidden curriculum in a school. In this study, these documents are included as a part of hidden curriculum.

**Research questions of this study**

The research literature examined for the current study indicates that there is a gap to be filled in the literature especially if one looks closely into intercultural communication between students and between students and teachers in a multicultural classroom in Queensland. This study is, therefore, designed to attempt to fill in such gap by implementing a case study of intercultural communication in a multicultural classroom. It will consist of a detailed case study of intercultural interactions in a single primary classroom in the Brisbane metropolitan area. In conducting this case study, the researcher will focus specifically on:

1) To what extent does a school promote intercultural communication competence for students?
2) How effectively do students in a multicultural classroom communicate?
3) How effectively do students and their teacher communicate in a multicultural classroom?
4) What kinds of breakdowns/barriers in intercultural communication do students and teachers experience?

By investigating intercultural communication in a classroom through these research questions, the study will represent the essence of multicultural education in a selected Queensland classroom. In addition, the nature of intercultural communication amongst students and between students and teacher is investigated.

**Summary**

This chapter has reviewed existing literature on intercultural communication. The definition of culture was established based on the elaboration developed by Lustig and
Koester (1999) which relates culture to communication. With this definition of culture in mind, the meaning of cross-cultural and intercultural communication is distinguished. In order to provide a theoretical framework for this study, Barnett and Kincaid’s (2003) structure of intercultural communication is adopted. In addition, the study incorporated literature of Intercultural Communication Competence (Wiseman, 2002) and possible barriers of intercultural communication. SOSE and LOTE curricula documents were examined to review programs that might be implemented in the school to promote intercultural communication. Also, the hidden curriculum which may facilitate the promotion of intercultural communication was considered and lists typical documents which may illustrate intercultural communication. Lastly, the research questions were formulated to guide this study. The next chapter examines the methodology for this study and justifies why such methodology is used to investigate intercultural communication in a multicultural classroom.
Chapter Three: Research Methodology

This chapter examines the methodology for this study. The study is designed to investigate intercultural communication as it occurs in a multicultural classroom under current curriculum guidelines in Queensland. Intercultural communication appears in various forms of social interaction such as: behaviour, belief and language, and as such may be appropriately investigated using qualitative research and ethnographic case study. This chapter explains why case study was chosen and how data are collected and analysed. Lastly, it raises issues of validity of the study and suggests ways to overcome these issues.

Qualitative research

Stake (2005) asserts that a case study is not “essentially qualitative” (p. 443) and it can be both quantitative and qualitative (Yin, 2003). However, this study has chosen to undertake a qualitative case study as it attempts to investigate human interaction in a natural setting. Denzin and Lincoln (2005) define qualitative research as:


a situated activity that locates the observer in the world. It consists of a set of interpretive, material practices that make the world visible. These practices transform the world. They turn the world into a series of representations, including field notes, interviews, conversations, photographs, recordings, and memos to the self (p. 3).

Tesch (1990) refutes the existence of qualitative research but asserts the existence of qualitative data. Other scholars have agreed that qualitative research is gathering qualitative data (Johnson & Christensen, 2004; LeCompte & Schensul, 1999; Tesch, 1990) and interpret the data to represent the world so that readers can experience the event vicariously. Qualitative data include verbal and non-verbal communication and documents but generally precludes numerical data. Such data sources could be appropriate for the researcher to gather information about human interactions as they are experienced through intercultural communication.
Maxwell (2005) indicates that it is useful to conduct a qualitative study when attempting to:

1. understand the meaning, for participants in the study of the events, situations, and actions they are involved with and of the accounts that they give of their lives and experiences; and
2. identify unanticipated phenomena and influences, and generating new grounded theories about the latter (p. 22).

This study not only investigated how students and teacher interacted physically but also aims to understand how their interactions were influenced by their individual perspectives. Also, the researcher attempted not to overlook any forms (verbal and non-verbal, positive and negative) of intercultural communication during the data collection.

**Case study**

This research adopts a case study approach to investigate the current situation of intercultural communication in a single classroom. Amongst different kinds of case study, this study is an ‘intrinsic case study’ to understand such interactions in a multicultural classroom in-depth and in detail. Stake (2005) explains that “if the study is undertaken because, first and last, one wants better understanding of this particular case” (p. 445), it is classified as ‘intrinsic case study’. Having examined empirical studies, it appears that Australia relies on American and British studies on intercultural communication in a multicultural classroom. This is the reason why case study approach is taken to understand and appreciate the status quo of intercultural communication in an Australian primary school in Queensland.

Creswell (2005) states that case study is a kind of ethnography with a few significant differences. Case study allows the researcher to “describe the activities of the group in-depth” and “focus on an in-depth exploration of the actual “case”” (Creswell, 2005, p. 439). This study aims to provide insight to readers so that they can relate their experience of intercultural communication in a multicultural classroom or experience such situations second-hand since the writer herself is describing the communication. A case study was chosen because:
the methods for case work actually used are to learn enough about the case to encapsulate complex meanings into a finite report to describe the case in sufficient descriptive narrative so that readers can experience these happening vicariously and draw their own conclusions (Stake, 2005, p. 450).

Also, case study helps the researcher “to retain the holistic and meaningful characteristics of real-life events” (Yin, 2003, p. 2). The real-life events such as interaction amongst human-beings may not be anticipated nor expected. Also, such interaction cannot be isolated as a separate event since it can be influenced by individuals’ prior experiences. Due to the ethnographic characteristic of case study, this study does not presume answers to research questions but prepares to discover novel situations. LeCompte and Schensul (1999) maintain that “ethnography emphasizes discovery; it does not assume answers” (p. 33). Even though the study has acknowledged possible problems in intercultural communication as detailed in the previous chapter, it does not assume such problems exist in the case submitted to the research process.

The study allows the researcher to describe and interpret both students’ and researcher’s perspectives. One of the ethnographic characteristics that this study adopts is that the researcher includes the participants’ perspectives as well as those of the observer (LeCompte & Schensul, 1999). In ethnographic terms, those perspectives can be described as ‘emic’ and ‘etic’ data. Emic data includes information and perspectives that are provided by an insider of the study and etic data are those received from an observer (Creswell, 2005; Johnson & Christensen, 2004). These two data sources allow the researcher to cross-examine the findings and interpret them. While it is the intention of the researcher to report emic data in this study, she acknowledges that her own cultural background must inevitably influence her observations and therefore result in etic data influencing findings.

**Ethnography**

The study used an ethnographic case study methodology; therefore, it adopted the characteristic of ethnography. Ethnography methodology appreciates that people’s
behaviour, their worldviews, their perspectives of lives are highly contingent on individual living circumstances and environment (LeCompte & Schensul, 1999). In other words, ethnography recognises the complexity of social relativity in a group. A classroom is a complex interaction of students and teacher(s) in a particular school/geographical context and all aspects of the context can affect the interactions between students and students and teachers. As previously discussed, this research study did not assume answers to the research questions. This was facilitated by using an ethnographic approach which “uses open-ended methods that allow investigators and others to gather information identifying the source of the problem, rather than simply assuming that it is known from the start” (LeCompte & Schensul, 1999, p. 33).

Selecting participants
The researcher chose to conduct this study in a year 7 classroom where children start to form their own opinions about themselves and others rather than follow others’ (Manning, 1999/2000). According to Manning (1999/2000), people begin to “form their cultural identities; establish close friendship with, and positive opinions of, others; and develop a sense of justice and fairness” (p. 82) in their early adolescent period. Variations in intercultural communication are more likely to be identified when there are many students with different cultural backgrounds. For this reason, the researcher had determined to find a school with significant number of students from different cultural backgrounds.

In order to identify a culturally diverse school, the researcher used government documents from the Education Queensland website to select schools where many people with diverse cultural backgrounds reside within the Brisbane area. Even though the researcher attempted to discern cultural backgrounds according to students’ ability to use languages other than English, the website merely provided students’ ethnicity. State primary co-educational schools within these areas were listed. The researcher found out the number of students from diverse ethnic backgrounds using the statistics from the website and subsequently short-listed them into the 10 most diverse schools. Written information about the study was sent to the principals of short listed schools to obtain
their permission for the study. The written information was composed under the
guidelines of Bogdan and Biklen (2003):

1. what the study is about and what is involved in the study;
2. kinds of disruption that might be caused by the researcher;
3. how findings are to be represented;
4. why the school was chosen; and
5. benefits of participating in the study for the researcher, school and other interested
parties

Description of participants
The main participants of this study are students, their teachers and an ESL teacher.
Students’ and teacher’s cultural backgrounds are identified. Determining and discerning
students with culturally different backgrounds are based on their language use at home.
Students’ use of different language at home indicates that they are exposed to different
cultures. Hymes (1974) affirms that “speaking is itself a form of cultural behaviour, and
language, like any other part of culture, partially shapes the whole; and its expression of
the rest of culture is partial, selective” (p. 127). In other words, language is interwoven
with culture since the way we use our language reflects our culture (Samovar & Porter,
2004). In addition, this study acknowledges those whose home language is English even
though their parents’ and grandparents’ first language is other than English as culturally
different.

The initial plan was to research a single class; however, the organisation of this
classroom has led the researcher to carry out the study with two classes in a single
classroom. The primary participants of this study are Year 7 students from two classes.
The age group of the students is between 11 and 13. Amongst 56 students from the two
Year 7 classes, 20 students (around 36%) and their parents speak English, 17 students
(around 30%) speak a language other than English, 8 students (around 14%) speak
English and parents of those students can speak a language other than English, 8 students
(around 14%) speak English and language other than English, 3 students (around 5%)
speak more than two other languages than English at home. At the time of the study, 4
students were taking ESL (English as a Second Language) classes through the school.
Also, two classroom teachers of Year 7 and the ESL teacher are involved in this study. The two classroom teachers speak English only. The ESL teacher’s first language is English and she can speak another language due to her intercultural marriage and experience in living in another country where the official language is not English.

In order to maximise participants’ well-being in the course of research, the researcher’s performance is governed by the QUT (Queensland University of Technology) Code of Conduct for research (QUT, 2004). Confidentiality of participants is retained at all cost. In order to respect the confidentiality and anonymity of students, pseudonyms are used for students’ names. The pseudonyms are chosen based on students’ real names considering the origin and the sounds of them. The selection of pseudonyms has respected their cultural backgrounds when students use their culturally distinctive names. Also, those who changed their culturally distinctive names to English names are named with English names. The researcher believes Pinker’s (2007) suggestions that naming reflect people’s “desire to fit” in and “desire to be unique” (p. 322) and social trends. Therefore, the pseudonyms are chosen carefully adhering to the characteristics of students’ real names.

Ethics clearance was negotiated with the principal and the Ethics Committee at Queensland University of Technology. Instead of obtaining consent from every parent or guardian of the students, the researcher sent out letters to them so that they are fully informed about the study (See Appendices A and B). Also, parents were not discouraged from objecting to inclusion of their child in the study.

Data collection
The data on which this case study consists of:

a) State, school and classroom documentation relating to intercultural communication;
b) The researcher’s observation of representative interactions between student-
student, teacher-student and student-teacher both within classroom settings and
elsewhere in the school; and

c) Interviews with students and teacher individually to elicit perceptions of observed
interactions.

Patton (2002) summarises three kinds of qualitative data as observation, interview and
documents and this study collected data of each of these types. The researcher was with
the class throughout the school day or sometimes half day to observe students’ behaviour:
their verbal and non-verbal communications with each other. In addition, the teacher’s
interactions with students and the teacher’s response to various aspects of students’
intercultural communication were observed. Observation allows the researcher to
interpret and understand participants’ behaviour (Maxwell, 1996). The researcher
interchanged the role of being a participant and a non-participant throughout the data
collection process. Creswell (2005) supports this as “changing observational role” (p.
212) and explains the researcher typically starts as a non-participant observer and slowly
changes to a participant observer. The advantage of this is for the researcher to be able to
observe students and their teacher both subjectively and objectively (Creswell, 2005). In
other words, the researcher was allowed to interpret students’ and teacher’s interaction as
an insider as well as outsider evolving both ‘etic’ and ‘emic’ perspectives.

Classroom observation is limited to situations and sites where the researcher can gain
access (Creswell, 2005). Observation can be differently interpreted as the researcher is
an outsider of the study. For these reasons, interviews were conducted to overcome the
issues from observation. Interviews allow the participants to talk about their personal
information (Creswell, 2005). Furthermore, interviews became a tool to find missing
information from observation and to double-check the accuracy of data obtained through
observation (Maxwell, 1996). Simultaneously, audio or visual data were planned to be
gathered with participants’ consent. However, only audio data was collected during
interviews. The audio data allowed the researcher to capture information that the
researcher might have missed from interviews. Finally, data was collected from
documents which were analysed at the end of the case study in order to assist in identifying the relationship between explicit and hidden curriculum.

**Observation**
Audio recording was planned to capture the presented behaviour with the participants’ consent whilst observing. However, due to the limitation of time and human resources, the researcher relied on fieldnotes that were kept during the observation process (See Appendix C). The notes were taken discreetly so that participants did not feel the pressure of being observed. The field notes were recorded with pen and paper at school and typed using a word process program after each day to reduce the amount of time during the analysis process and to review the observation. The fieldnotes were guided to include the following information:

- *Where the observation took place;*
- *Who was present;*
- *What the physical setting was like;*
- *What social interactions occurred* (verbal and non-verbal);
- *Observer’s own feelings, reactions to the experience;*
- *Observer’s own reflections about the personal meaning and significance of what has been observed;* and

The researcher also took notes of conversation between teachers and students and amongst students in verbatim. Not only social interactions were observed, but also lessons were observed to analyse explicit and hidden curriculum. The observation was planned to take place over two or three days in a week for four weeks depending on the availability of the class. However, the observation took place for 34 days over five months. The researcher spent time from 8:30 to 3:00 for 16 days and half days for 18 days. The researcher followed the class as it participated in school assembly, morning tea, lunch and other lessons which needed a change of venue. During observation, the researcher was involved in teaching classes, assisting ESL students, and aiding both teachers when needed. As the researcher attempted to maintain natural settings, field notes were not either taken in front of participants or taken simultaneously as
communications occurred. Field notes were not taken when acting as a classroom teacher or as a teacher-aide although the researcher endeavoured to be aware of intercultural communication and made notes afterwards. Also, the researcher arranged her day so that formal teaching was not conducted at times allocated to formal observations.

**Interview**

Further, the researcher conducted formal interviews with students and the teacher towards the end of the research period. There were two reasons why the formal interviews were conducted after the observation; firstly because interview questions might have given a clue to students about what the researcher was attempting to study which might disturb the natural setting; and, secondly because the researcher could ask questions about students’ behaviour during the observation so as to include students’ perspectives of their behaviour. The researcher negotiated with the teachers a suitable time for students to participate in the interview process in order to minimise interference with their learning. The interview site was also chosen in the same manner and it was in the classroom during the second lunch period. The researcher had planned to conduct one-on-one interviews only; however, five students were in two separate group interviews due to their shyness when talking to the researcher alone.

Initially, the researcher planned to interview all students from the class. However, the researcher had to choose a few students since the research was carried out in two classes. 24 students were chosen to be the part of the interview process based on the observation data. Students were selected to be interviewed because nine students only socialised with others of certain cultural backgrounds; two students teased others; one student was teased by others; seven students socialised with others; one student was secretive about her own cultural background, three students were in the ESL program; and one student appeared to be alone most of the time. ESL students were particularly included due to their English language ability which engaged as one of the significant elements in intercultural communication during the observation.
The interviewees’ language ability is varied. 10 student interviewees speak English at home. Amongst them, three students’ parents speak European languages, one student’s parents speak Asian languages, one student’s parents speak a Middle Eastern language and one student’s parents speak an African language. Amongst the 24 interviewees, nine students speak Asian languages, one student speaks European and Asian languages and one student speaks African and Middle Eastern languages. Interviews were conducted for an average of 16 minutes. The languages spoken during the interviews were English and Korean. With 22 students, English language was used during the interviews. With two Korean ESL students, the Korean language was spoken because of their preference and ability to express themselves. This choice of interview languages was possible because the researcher’s first language is Korean and second language is English.

The adult participants in interviews were two classroom teachers and the ESL teacher. Both classroom teachers do not speak any other language than English. On the other hand, the ESL teacher speaks one European language due to her intercultural marriage and experience of living in the country where the language is spoken. The interviews with adult participants were conducted for approximately one hour in English.

The interview questions were prepared as open-ended ones for students and their teachers. The interview questions were formulated based upon observations as they were in Liao’s study (2001). Patton’s (2002) guideline also assisted formulating interview questions of this study as follows:

- experiences of intercultural communication;
- opinion and values about intercultural communication;
- feelings about intercultural communication; and
- personal backgrounds (pp. 348-351).

During the interview, students were asked a series of questions; core questions for every interviewee; predetermined questions based on observation; and improvised questions based on the responses to the first two types of questions. There were six predetermined categories of questions for students: school, perspectives on different cultures, learning Chinese, own cultural backgrounds, friends and group work (See Appendix D). For
teachers, there were four pre-empted categories of questions: own cultural background, experience of teaching class with diversity, teaching a student called Kent and curriculum (See Appendix E). Kent was one of the students who appeared to have difficulties in the classroom. Adding to those, individual questions were asked based on issues that occurred during observation. The language used during the interviews was English; however, the researcher spoke in Korean with two Korean ESL students.

The interview process was recorded by a digital voice recorder with the participants’ consent. Later on, the recordings were transcribed verbatim. Regarding the interviews conducted in Korean, the researcher transcribed in Korean. However, the researcher translated the Korean transcripts to her utmost language capacity whenever direct quote and paraphrase were needed.

**Documents**

The researcher gathered information of the existing curriculum in relation to the promotion of intercultural communication. Documents were collected from the teacher-participants as well as from existing literature. The researcher analysed existing documents to identify how teachers promote intercultural communication competence amongst students.

**Data analysis**

This research study examines the social interactions between students and teacher through the process of observation and interview as well as the analysis of curriculum documents. Data that were collected were interpreted in the light of Barnett and Lee (2003). These three forms of data are all qualitative in nature; however, the data collected through observation and interview need to be analysed in more depth and detail than the curriculum documents if they are to provide a vicarious experience for the readers. The researcher aims to analyse the curriculum documents so that the reader may understand the documents as a whole. For this reason, data analysis in this study involves two different methods to investigate intercultural communication and the curriculum. The data from observations and interviews are analysed using a qualitative
analysis method as described by Bogdan and Bilken (2003), Creswell (2005), Johnson and Christensen (2004) and Miles and Huberman (1994), while the curriculum documents are analysed using the content analysis method as described by Wilkinson (2004) and Weber (1990).

Observation and interview

Data analysis in qualitative research study is an iterative and cyclic process (Bogdan & Biklen, 2003; Creswell, 2005; Johnson & Christensen, 2004; Miles & Huberman, 1994). Miles and Huberman (1994) further add that analysis consists of “concurrent flows of activity: data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing/verification” (p. 10). In this study, data reduction involves coding, segmenting and categorising. These processes were to implement using software NVivo which facilitates qualitative data analysis. Due to the familiarity and competency of Microsoft Word software program, the researcher used the Word program instead. Yin (2003) supports using software because of:

> The great benefit from such tools is when (a) the narrative texts represent a verbatim record of an interviewee's remarks or the literal content of a file or historic document, and (b) the empirical study is trying to derive meaning and insight from the word usage and frequency pattern found in the texts (p. 110).

However, (b) approach was not taken in this study. The study aims to provide ‘thick description’ (Patton, 2002, p. 437) so that readers can experience the study context vicariously. For this reason, codes were derived from the students’ and the teachers’ own words, which are called ‘inductive codes’ (Johnson & Christensen, 2004, p. 508), in order to deliver as close a description as possible. Even though inductive codes were used in this study, the researcher coded the data under the guidance of Bogdan and Biklen (2003):

- Setting/context codes;
- Definition of the situation codes;
- Perspectives held by subjects;
- Subjects’ ways of thinking about people and objects;
- Process codes;
- Activity codes;
- Event codes;
- Strategy codes;
- Relationship and social structure codes;
- Narrative codes; and,
- Methods codes (pp. 162-168).

‘Segmenting’ is to excerpt meaningful and relevant passages from the data and this process is conducted concurrently with the coding. The researcher then categorised codes to search for possible patterns of intercultural communication amongst students and their teacher. Such categorisation could be displayed as a diagram and drawn as a graphical summary of the findings. As previously discussed, these processes were undertaken repeatedly until internal consistency was reached.

Curriculum documents
The Queensland curriculum documents pertinent to intercultural communication were analysed using a content analysis method. Content analysis is a research methodology which represents text using ‘valid inferences’ (Weber, 1990). This method enables the researcher to summarise the documents objectively. Wilkinson (2004) affirms that “content analysis produces a – relatively systematic and comprehensive – summary or overview of the data set as a whole, sometimes incorporating a quantitative element” (p. 182).

The analysis of curriculum documents also involves the iterative and cyclical process of data reduction, data display and conclusion/verification. Unlike the analysis of data from interview and observation, prearranged codes were used to analyse curriculum documents due to the fact that the researcher focussed on examining particular aspects of intercultural communication within curriculum documents. Also, frequently used words were counted so that the researcher may determine the major focus of the curriculum. The researcher acknowledged Weber’s (1990) assertion that the validity of counting frequently used words could be questioned because a word could be used differently in a different context or could have more than one meaning. Also, documents may contain synonyms which might cause the researcher to overlook the actual focus of the
curriculum. The researcher attempted to resolve this problem by consulting a third party’s interpretation about the documents.

**Validity of the study**

There are possible threats to the validity of this study as identified by Maxwell (1996; 2005): “researcher bias” and “reactivity”. As previously discussed in brief, the researcher’s age and cultural background might affect the collection and interpretation of data. The researcher may have either overlooked or overreacted to collected data. Using observation as one of the data collecting methods might have resulted in a situation where “certain objects and relations may more likely be recorded by observers with different interests, biases and backgrounds” (Kellehear, 1993, p. 7). As Maxwell (1996; 2005) points out, reactivity affects the interview process more than observation. The interview situation and the researcher’s response and questions could have influenced both students’ and teacher’s response. These problems might have been resolved through ‘member checking’ and ‘triangulation’. The ‘member checking’ was carried out during the interviews. The researcher added supplementary interview questions along with core ones to assist the understanding of observation data. Also, the researcher compared interview, observation and document data in order to triangulate the interpretations. The researcher attempted to conduct the member check with the teacher regarding the accuracy of the report (Creswell, 2005). By doing so, the researcher was able to represent emic perspectives more accurately (Gall, Gall, & Borg, 2007). Triangulation involved with data collection methods and multiple analysis. As stated above, this research design employed multiple data collection methodologies and data analysis processes. Using this method, the collected data could be cross referenced to ensure its accuracy to the extent which it increases the credibility of the design (Creswell, 2005; Johnson & Christensen, 2004; LeCompte & Preissle, 1993; Weirsma, 2005).

The researcher also acknowledges and adopts the following strategies suggested by Gall, Gall and Borg (2007) to ensure the quality of the study.
1. **Usefulness:** The study is useful for readers, whom may be its participants or its interested group of people, so that readers could learn something from the study.

2. **Truthfulness and reporting style:** The researcher reports the study honestly and straightforwardly. Reporting should ensure the reader to experience the study vicariously.

3. **Contextual completeness:** The study includes detailed contextual information from where data are collected.

4. **Rich data:** When collecting data, the researcher ensures data are in as much detail as possible so as to provide vivid description.

5. **Peer examination:** The researcher seeks comments on findings from his/her colleagues.

6. **Researcher reflection:** The researcher acknowledges own perspectives, assumptions and opinions about the study being undertaken (pp. 474-476).

Firstly, the usefulness of this study has already been discussed in the first chapter; this research study is useful for readers to understand how children interact with others who are from culturally different backgrounds due to the current situation within and outside of Australia. Secondly, the researcher manipulated neither the data nor the process of collecting and interpreting them. Without any manipulation or distortion, the data are represented vividly with detailed description. Thirdly, the researcher includes contextual information such as “physical setting, environment, number of participants, activities, schedules and temporal order of events… routines and variations, significant events and their origins and consequences, members’ perceptions and meanings, social rules and basic patterns of order” (Gall et al., 2007, p. 475). Fourthly, rich data are collected using audio equipments during interviews. Fifthly, the findings are reviewed by supervisor and others to maximise quality of the study. Lastly, the researcher acknowledges and reflects on her own experiences, perspectives and assumptions of intercultural communication. The researcher diarised every time after visiting the classroom to collect data. The diary contained the researcher’s feelings and reactions towards issues of intercultural communication in the classroom.
Instead of looking into intercultural communication in Australia through an Australian-born researcher’s eyes, this study projects the current situation of intercultural communication in a selected classroom through an immigrant who possesses and acknowledges Korean as well as Australian cultures. Using a qualitative method to investigate intercultural communication seems to create fewer barriers of valid and unbiased study due to the researcher’s cultural background. On the other hand, the researcher’s background paves the way for the study to become an example of intercultural communication itself to readers.

Summary
This chapter has examined the methodology for this study. This research employed ethnographic case study methods to investigate intercultural communication in depth incorporating both emic and etic views. The methodology required the researcher refrain from making any assumptions of the findings. The process for selecting participants and a description of the participants were presented. This study collected observation, interviews and document data. The observation and interview data were analysed engaging an iterative and a cyclic process (Bogdan & Biklen, 2003; Creswell, 2005; Johnson & Christensen, 2004; Miles & Huberman, 1994). The document data were analysed using content analysis method. Last, this chapter identified a few threats to the validity of the study methods used to overcome these threats were discussed. The next chapter will represent the findings of the study.
Chapter Four: The Case Study

This chapter represents the findings of this study of intercultural communication in a multicultural primary classroom in Brisbane. In order to develop an understanding of this classroom, a contextual description will be presented with information of participants and an overview of the classes. Data from observation, interviews and documents will be presented in three themes: the contributions of languages, the influence of curriculum and individual teachers’ and students’ behaviour and perspectives. These themes could be represented as a diagram below. The representation of these data will be incorporated with the researcher’s interpretations.

![Diagram showing the relationship between the contribution of language, the influence of curriculum, and individual teachers’ and students’ perspectives and behaviours]

Figure 2. Representation of themes

The diagram represents the relationships amongst themes of research findings. To a certain extent, the themes of language and curriculum appear overlapped and intertwined. These two themes emerge from individual teachers’ and students’ perspectives and behaviours.

58
Contextual Description
The school where this study was carried out is located in the Brisbane metropolitan area where more than 40% of the population speak languages other than English at home (Brisbane City Council, 2003). The social economic status of this school was classified as high according to Education Queensland webpage published in 2003 (The website is not disclosed due to inclusion of the school’s name). Between 600 and 650 students are enrolled in Years Prep through to seven and amongst them 25% of students are from non-English speaking backgrounds. Thirty different languages are used in the homes of those who speak languages other than English at home. The students from non-English speaking backgrounds speak Mandarin, Cantonese and Korean in this order and a few European languages such as Russian, French and German not in any particular order. On the school website, the school claims that it “has a large proportion of overseas-born students giving it a distinctly international feel that has had lasting benefits to the school and its wider community”

Participants in the classroom
The research was originally designed to study the intercultural interaction of students in a single Year 7 classroom. However, due to the organisation of the school, the study was conducted in two Year 7 classes in a double teaching space big enough for two classes with a total of 56 student (aged between 11 and 13) and two teachers. The room is a rectangular shape which is invisibly divided into three sections. At each end there are whiteboards and desks arranged so that students face the whiteboards. In the middle section, there is a carpeted area just enough for 56 Year 7 students to sit on the floor for a joint session which does not require a whiteboard.

The adults included in this classroom are two teachers referred to in this thesis as Mr A and Mr B. Both Mr A and Mr B do not speak any other language than English and neither do their parents. The classes are also assisted by an ESL (English as a Second Language) teacher, Mrs C, who supports ESL students at school. She speaks Finnish to an intermediate level as a result of intercultural marriage and living in Finland for a couple of years. She does not come to the classroom for ESL support but she visits the
classroom when discussion is needed with Mr A and Mr B. The two teachers, Mr A and Mr B, employ a team-teaching method. Teachers teach the classes separately or as a whole group, in turns or together. For instance, Mr A teaches maths for the two classes as a whole while Mr B does marking or paper work and vice versa. Also, Mr A and Mr B teach the two classes as a whole group together. Another example is that Mr A teaches science A lesson to class A and simultaneously Mr B teaches science B lesson to class B. Later on, they swap the classes so that the teachers can teach the same science lessons to different classes.

Overview of the classroom
In order to provide a more vivid picture of the classroom, the following depicts a day in this classroom. A classroom is a dynamic place where unexpected situations can appear from time to time. In this classroom, the day starts with the bell at 8:45 every morning which is the specified time when students are allowed to enter the room. However, students are normally allowed to enter the classroom as soon as the teachers arrive. Students are asked to put their tuck shop money in the designated tuck shop box and two allocated students bring the box to the tuck shop. Until the second bell goes, students are not restricted to any particular activities. Some sit quietly and read books, some chat with friends or the teachers, some do their homework and some just wander. Once the second bell goes, all students from the two classes sit in the central carpeted area. Both teachers, or sometimes only one teacher sits in front of students on chairs while students are sitting on the floor. Once the teacher calls the first person’s name on the list the next person calls out their name and so forth. After the roll, students are asked to hand in their homework or teachers announce messages from the school.

The first session of the day starts with cross country running. Students are asked to gather at the school oval. Some students are left in the classroom due to their medical or physical condition. During the period of data collection for this study, while the two teachers supervised students on the oval, the researcher supervised the remaining students in the classroom. Those students are allowed to use computers to do their projects or read books. Students work in pairs or alone but girls and boys do not usually work
together. Students at the cross country running session come back to the classroom. Mr A teaches 7B English at the 7B area while the LOTE (Language Other than English) teacher teaches 7A Chinese at the 7A area. Then, the teachers ask the classes to swap the seats and continue the lessons. Once the English and LOTE lessons are over, Mr A asks students to sit around 7B area to check some maths scores from the worksheet that was previously done. Some students are sitting on chairs and some on the floor.

Then it is ‘morning tea time’ or the ‘first lunch’ and students are allowed to go out to the designated eating area for Year 6 and 7 students. Students sit in small groups which appear to be separated mostly by gender. After the morning tea, students are back to the classroom. They generally come back to the classroom a little bit earlier than the teachers come and open the doors for them. They stand or sit around in front of the classroom. Some chat, some play around and some sit by themselves looking bored. When the teachers come and open the doors, most of them walk straight to their seats for different reasons: some read books; some do their homework, and so on. Some students stand around with their friends at the central carpeted area and chat freely.

The middle session starts as soon as Mr A is organised. He calls everyone to sit around 7B area. 7B students are at their seats while 7A students sit on a little space on the floor or sit on chairs at the back of 7B area. The maths lesson is carried out as a whole group. Mr B is in front of the computer doing administrative work. Once the maths lesson is over Mr A and Mr B organise science lessons. The science lessons are set up at each end where the whiteboards are. Mr A takes 7B and vice versa. Before the lesson begins, Mr B reminds students what sort of behaviour is expected during the lesson. This session includes getting background knowledge by answering questions, discussing and reading texts. At 7B area, the sound from 7A area is audible which creates a distraction from time to time. The science lesson is not complete but it is lunch time. Mr B allows students to leave for lunch.

At lunch time, students go to the same eating area as the morning tea time. During lunch students are expected to stay seated in the eating area for 15 minutes. After that they are
allowed to play in the oval, adventure playground and other open areas with their hats on. Students are allowed to go to the library. Also, students are allowed to remain in the classroom so long as teachers are present. Some students complete their unfinished work with their peers or by themselves. Some students use computers: listening to music, surfing the net and so on. Even though students are allowed to do their work and play with computers they are not permitted to eat in the classroom.

After the lunch, students come back to the classroom waiting for the teachers to come and open the doors for the last session. As previously described, some students chat with others and some students sit alone. Once most of the students are in the classroom, teachers ask students to start reading silently and students take out their books to read. Some students wander and try to disrupt others. Unless those are very loud, they are unnoticed by the teachers. Students are allowed to read magazines and books that are written in their own languages as long as they are age appropriate. Then, the science lesson resumes. Students finish reading the text with the class that Mr B has prepared on the whiteboard using a computer projector. Then students are asked to write the science report on their books. Approaching the end of the day, students are reminded what needs to be done when they go home: homework and study for upcoming tests. Some students leave the classroom straightaway and some students ask teachers about homework. By 3:10, the classroom is empty and teachers get organised for the next day.

Themes
Based on the data from observation, interviews and documents, the findings are represented in three different themes: language, curriculum and peripherals. Firstly, language is one of the most recognisable characteristics of different cultures according to students’ responses during interviews. It appears that language affects students’ communication in the classroom in different ways: positive and negative. Secondly, this study presents curriculum which promotes intercultural communication. This includes ‘hidden curriculum’ as well as ‘traditional curriculum’ even though the study was designed to examine ‘traditional curriculum’. The hidden curriculum has surfaced during the period of observation and interview. Lastly, a few events observed in this classroom
are presented under the theme of individual teachers’ and students’ perspectives and behaviours.

The contribution of language
Entering into this classroom, a visitor would immediately be able to see the cultural differences and guess the linguistic diversities that students present. Once getting to know them, the researcher’s speculation that students are from various linguistic backgrounds is corroborated. Based on students’ response, it appears that only 20 out of 56 students as well as their parents speak only English. 36 out of 56 students are influenced by or and used languages other than English at home as a result of migration to Australia or intercultural marriage of their parents. Amongst them, three students are trilingual and four students are learning English as a second language at the time of data collection. The represented languages other than English in this classroom are Hokkien, Indonesian, Vietnamese, Cantonese, Mandarin, German, Hebrew, Burmese, Spanish, Korean, Teochiu, Denka, Arabic, Russian, Tamil, Italian, Afrikaans, two different African languages (students and their parents could not remember the exact name of their language in English) and one of the Philippino languages. However, this does not mean that people would have a lot of opportunities to hear different languages in this classroom. Due to the fact that English is the primary and encouraged language, most of the time English is spoken in the classroom.

Mr A, Mr B and Mrs C share similar opinions about children speaking English at school. They believe that it is better for students to speak English so that they can improve their English language skills. When asked specifically about their views, Mr A responds using an example of twins who came from a Chinese speaking country. One twin constantly spoke in English at school and the other one did not try to speak English and socialised solely with Chinese speaking people. Within six months, the difference in their development in English was clear. One could speak English like an Australian but the other could not. He added that “If you don’t speak English at school, [be]cause they go home to a Chinese, Taiwanese, English, Spanish backgrounds, they don’t get any development there from most families. See, only place they can pick it up is at school”
Having given this example, Mr A asserts that he prefers students to speak in English as it would accelerate their learning of English. Mr B agrees with his opinion stating that he would encourage students to speak English just to ensure their learning of English language:

I think that they can speak their language. um, Learning English requires practice. If my major concern with kids would always be that if you wanna be, if you are here learning English or wanting to learn English, I would be trying to encourage them to interact in English purely for the sake of practice (Mr B, personal communication, August 28, 2007).

However, he would not make a strict rule of speaking English solely in the classroom. When Mr B is asked whether there is any boundary regarding students speaking language other than English he responded that:

… to me, would be um if I perceived that it was you know, you being used in rudeness or kids used as a way of getting away of misbehaviour all those sorts of things. Um, but if it was being used as a way of you know, trying to come to terms with the teaching or learning I have no problems with it (Mr B, personal communication, August 28, 2007).

He does not mind students speaking their languages when they need to get academic assistance, release their frustration with expressing themselves in English and speaking outside the classroom with other students who can speak the same language. When Julie and Cort are having trouble in getting a partner, Mr B suggests they become partners. Julie and Cort protest and insist on not becoming partners. Julie does not want to be partner with boys and Cort dislikes working with girls. When Cort asked Mr B the reason why he has to work with Julie, Mr B responds that it would be good for each other because they speak the same language. Also, Mr B perceives that it is great for Korean students to be in the presence of the researcher since she is able to speak Korean so that those students can get help from her. On the other hand, Mr B prevents students from misusing their language ability: escaping from the consequences of misbehaviour, being rude and abusing language ability. These ideas of misusing were also shared by the ESL teacher who believes that:
Language is power because you can learn to communicate to more people. You can get more knowledge by using different language. You can exclude people by your language if you want people not to understand you. You speak in another language to your partner and you know that people around you can’t understand you that is power isn’t it? (Mrs C, personal communication, August 31, 2007)

The ESL teacher encourages students to speak in their own language to be able to release some frustration caused by speaking English that is in learning progress. She also intimates in private conversation that deterring students from speaking their own language in any circumstances could be viewed as racism to a certain extent.

Even though students are discouraged from misusing their own languages, there are times when students speak in languages other than English to criticise others in class. According to the teacher, students may use their own language if the purpose is to increase their understanding of classroom activities or instructions. However, it is difficult for teachers to supervise whether students use their language to understand lessons or procedures of tasks because of their language skills. On the other hand, the researcher is able to observe a number of occasions when Korean speaking students are ‘off task’ in their use of Korean. On one occasion, Dave walks up to the researcher and started talking about how long he had been playing TV games. He proudly tells the researcher how long he normally plays TV games.

In the meantime, Cort who can speak Korean comes along and listens to him. Cort appears to be surprised at the duration of time Dave played TV games. Cort blurts out in Korean, “I can’t believe his mother let him playing TV games that long”. Dave is not affected by the comment nor, does he ask the researcher what Cort has said. Cort takes into consideration that Dave might possibly have been offended by his comment and he made the comment to the researcher in Korean. A similar situation occurs when the teacher has a lesson in 3-digit-addition with the whole class. The teacher asks students to gather around the 7A area so he can teach two classes at the same time. During the transition, Julie walks past me and says “I cannot believe year 7 cannot do such an easy
sum!” (Julie, personal communication, n.d.) in Korean. It is loud enough for whoever walks past her to hear but nobody can understand except me. Those students sometimes use their language ability exclusively to express their thoughts aloud.

Despite these observations, it appears that students with non-English speaking backgrounds do not always use their language to deter others from knowing their thoughts. The Korean speaking ESL students tend to speak to each other and with the researcher in Korean in between lessons. At first, the researcher refuses to speak in Korean with the students. The researcher writes a note after encountering Julie that:

I am reluctant to speak Korean to that girl because I want her to practise English more. Also, I am not sure whether her parents will appreciate if I spoke in Korean with her. They might have come to Australia because they want their daughter to learn English a bit better and quicker. The other reason is because I didn’t want to exclude any other students to join the conversation because of Korean being spoken.

However, the researcher’s concern about speaking Korean in the classroom is uncalled for. When the researcher continues speaking English, Cort makes a comment that “My dad said that amongst Korean people, you should speak Korean” (Cort, personal communication, August 14, 2007). Later on, during an interview, Cort explained the reason for his dad’s belief is that if one does not speak the first language one would forget the language. Also, the teachers encourage students to speak their own language to release their frustration and understand lessons and instructions.

One morning, the researcher waits for the teachers to come and open the classroom. A few students are wandering outside of the classroom. Julie comes up to the researcher and starts chatting in Korean. She explains what she has done over the weekend. She continuously and briskly talks about her weekend. A few minutes later, Kathy comes along and stands next to the researcher and Julie. Julie does not mind the presence of an English-speaking classmate. Even though the researcher responds to her in English and interprets the recount of Julie’s weekend for Kathy she continues to speak in Korean. Kathy looks emotionless and does not say a word but leaves shortly after. She does not
appear to be particularly irritated by the conversation; however, it discourages her to participate in the conversation. To Julie, it seems to be more natural to speak in Korean than in English. She does not seem affected by Kathy’s departure.

Another day, students are helping the teachers to rearrange gym equipment in the hall for the fete. In between rearranging, Julie starts talking to the researcher in Korean. She talks about Korean TV programs that she watches and some English programs. During an interview, Julie and Cort explain that the hardest part of school life is to speak English. Also, the reason why Julie continues to speak Korean while English speaking students are around is because she is not aware of their presence. When asked specifically about activities that she does for entertainment with others, she responded that “we play ‘concentration’ and ‘thumb up’. … well, and we do balancing games” (Julie, personal communication, July 31, 2007). On the other hand, in response to the same question, English speaking female students responds that they like chatting. Julie seems to be more involved in physical activities with her friends due to her language ability. The only time when she can talk about her daily life without frustration from speaking English seems to be with the researcher. Julie indicates that it is great to have a Korean teacher in the classroom and reasons that “when I have difficulty in English I could ask you [the researcher] for help” (Julie, personal communication, July 31, 2007). ESL students appear to speak their language because of the desire to release their frustration in speaking English and express their thoughts and experiences freely.

While ESL students use their first language as a means of expressing themselves without frustration, other students respond to this in two different ways: positively and negatively. Positive reaction to usage of other languages than English is to initiate intercultural interaction. During one of the silent reading sessions, Julie is reading a Korean comic book. Holly walks past her and realises that Julie is reading a book written in Korean. Even though Holly does not appear to be close to Julie throughout the observation, Holly stops in front her and asks what the book is about. Julie attempts to explain and translate the text for Holly. On another occasion, Julie is writing a poem in Korean before translating it into English. Elise who sits next to Julie finds it interesting and asks her to
read it for her in Korean. Julie does not hesitate to read the poem. While listening to
Julie, Elise has a smile on her face. On the other hand, Lesley walks away from the two.
During the interview, Justin indicates that language is one of the elements about different
cultures and adds that “it’s interesting to hear them” (Justin, personal communication,
July 25, 2007). Students seem to perceive the usage of different languages in terms of
fascination rather than obstacles in their interaction.

On the other hand, there are times when the usage of different languages becomes a
barrier in communication. During the interview, students respond to a question, ‘what
are the bad things about having people about different cultures at school?’ Amongst
different responses, one of the “bad things” mentioned is language differences. Some
respond that:

uh, just when like, if they speak their language and they don’t wanna
talk in other people’s um, in English it’s really bad [be]cause you can’t
really hear [understand] them what they are saying (Akili, personal
communication, 07 August, 2007),

some people talk their own language, sometimes, and it kinda makes
you feel left out (Elise, personal communication, 23 July, 2007)

Akili and Elise express the view that listening to other students speaking in their own
languages makes them feel excluded. As well as feeling excluded, students tend to
withdraw from interaction with other students if languages other than English are spoken.
Peter states that “I’d be going [be]cause I don’t understand a word” (Peter, personal
communication, 23 July, 2007). Due to the inability of comprehending different
languages, students may withdraw from communicating with others.

While some students feel isolated and excluded being in a situation where students speak
different languages other than English, Kamea suggests that “if they’re speaking about
me I’d feel offended” (Kamea, personal communication, 25 July, 2007). Upala also says
that as long as students do not talk about her it is fine to use different languages.
However, it is difficult for students to discern whether the topic of conversation in another language is about them or not since they do not understand the language. This might be one of the reasons for students to distance themselves from conversation that are incomprehensible to them rather than ask for interpretation.

Even though students use the common and encouraged language, English, in the classroom, some students experience obstacles in communicating with classmates. In particular, ESL students encounter those situations where non-native-like usages of English become impediments to intercultural communication. Non-native-like English usages which may be incomprehensible to the listener seem to negatively influence students’ attitudes. During the interview, Long mentions that it is good to have students from different cultures because “we can sort of teach them how to learn like, teach them how to learn English” (Long, personal communication, July 27, 2007). By teaching English to ESL students, Long feels a sense of achievement as a person who has experienced a similar situation around 9 years ago.

At the same time, Long also mentions that one of the bad things about having students with different cultural backgrounds is “sometimes they don’t really understand and you have to like teach, like, you have to, like you have to be really good at make them understand” (Long, personal communication, July 27, 2007). For Long who sometimes needs help from other students with his own understanding, it might be hard to guide other students to have a better understanding. He is not the only one who feels that it is hard to understand students from different cultural backgrounds. To the same question, ‘what are the bad things about having people about different cultures at school?’, Joshua also responds that it is hard to understand students from different cultures because of their poor English. Joshua states that “sometimes they don’t understand English a little bit and you have to wait a while but that’s nothing much” (Joshua, personal communication, July 19, 2007). He acknowledges that one of the problems of having people from different cultures in the classroom is their incomprehensible use of English. The term ‘incomprehensible use of English’ is used throughout this study. This term does not imply that some students’ use of English is objectively measured to be incomprehensible.
but merely to describe the situation when some students’ use of English is not recognisable to the listener.

Even though Joshua suggests that others’ incomprehensible usage of English is not a big deal, it appears that he does not socialise with students with poor English. He is not the only one who presents negative thoughts towards people’s incomprehensible English usage due to their linguistically diverse backgrounds. These thoughts are reflected in some students’ behaviour as ridiculing others. One morning, the researcher chats with Michelle, Kathy and Zeena about frivolous matters while standing in a circle. Julie stands behind Zeena and whispers. Zeena blurts out what Julie has said and it appears to be verbatim. The researcher asks for a clarification. Zeena responds that “she is speaking Julie language” (Zeena, personal communication, May 2, 2007). Right after her comment Kathy says “which is gibberish (Kathy, personal communication, May 2, 2007). Julie does not appear to be happy about this and leaves the group. In spite of an attempt to speak English, Julie’s interaction results in ridicule. Even though Zeena and Kathy do not understand Julie they do not attempt to ask her for clarification. Instead, those students clearly state that it is hard to understand Julie’s English. Also, they label her poor English as ‘Julie’s language’ and ‘gibberish’. This suggests that they do not think it is worthwhile to communicate with Julie.

On another occasion, Kent is trying to talk to Dave. Dave says to Kent “I don’t understand your language” (Dave, personal communication, May 25, 2007). Then, he starts making sounds as if they reflect his understanding of Kent’s English. Kent walks away after being humiliated by Dave’s response. During the interview, Dave expresses that he thinks Kent is “stupid” because “he goes blah blah blah” (Dave, personal communication, July 19, 2007). This shows that Dave does not attempt to understand someone’s poor English. Also, he stereotypes the inability to speak good English as stupidity. Another incident occurs during a lesson. Mr B asks students what an oscilloscope is. Kent eagerly looks up the dictionary and raises his hand. Mr B chooses Kent to read out the definition. While Kent is reading out the definition with a little difficulty, Long and Gary giggle. Long, later on during the interview, says that Kent
sounds funny. When asked why, he claims it is difficult to explain why and how due to his limited English. In a nutshell, humiliating other students’ poor English and not attempting to understand their English could result in withdrawal from intercultural communication. The humiliation is not observed between native speakers but only between non-native ones. These incidents appear to be purely based on language barriers in intercultural communication rather than motivated by racial discrimination or prejudices.

The influence of curriculum
Based on the classroom teachers’ statement and the researcher’s observation data, there are no concrete units that promote intercultural communication in this classroom. Mr A explains that:

if you come into school and you don’t expect problems to be you don’t give indication of problems to occur mostly children will get from the vibes. Well, that’s something which is unacceptable and so most case it doesn’t occur if you turn around and um give it credence, we get emphasising all these differences too much then as said, then it justifies um the problems that occur and so, any issues dealt with at an individual basis or as group basis um if they some trend that may occur that particular time but that’s just in time need mix of classroom behaviour management (Mr A, personal communication, August 23, 2007).

He seems to believe that recognising differences would give rise to the expectation of problems. Also, he deals with problems employing classroom behaviour management without cultural implication. On the other hand, Mr B reasons that:

… it’s not a specific, it’s not specifically directed at the intercultural communication. Possibly part of that is because by grade 7, I figure that they’ve sort of they’re in the school, in a situation where there’s multicultural, I I am not so sure that kids see it the way that we see. They might experience it but not understand that. but I don’t know if they actually see it the way t.. uh adults see it so I don’t think it really is as big a deal to the kids um on the surface as maybe we perceive it to that to be. That doesn’t necessarily mean that that’s not worth
pursuing or doing. That’s not something that’s really dawned on me (Mr B, personal communication, August 28, 2007).

According to Mr B, having co-existed with people from different cultures in the school possibly from Year 1, students in Year 7 are accustomed to the environment. In his view, this facilitates students to perceive cultural diversity as a natural occurrence. He adds that students might not experience cultural diversity as adults do. He implies that adults may recognise students’ experience in multicultural environment as more complex and problematic than it really is for students. He also states that in the Year 7 curriculum there is no particular unit regarding promoting intercultural communication available.

Even though teachers pointed out that there is no explicit unit to promote intercultural communication the researcher identifies some hidden curriculum and explicit curriculum aspects that promote intercultural communication. This ‘hidden curriculum’ may be identified from messages from the house captains during assembly which is called ‘virtue of the week’, school’s ‘Responsible Behaviour Plan for Students’, teaching strategies, ‘ESL (English as a second language) program’ and a Tae Kwon Do lesson. On the other hand, the ‘explicit curriculum’ includes a workshop on the Enrichment Day and LOTE lessons.

First of all, one of the messages from the school during assembly which promotes intercultural communication is ‘virtue of the week’. On the school website, the school claims that this “promote[s] ethical autonomous life long learners by reinforcing values and morality”. At the beginning of each year, the deputy principal and house captains conduct a meeting to decide which virtue to present each week. The decision is made based upon what is happening around the school during the year. The ‘virtue of the week’ is presented by house captains in two parts: mini drama and narration. The narration is a reading from the book called ‘The family virtues guide: simple ways to bring out the best in our children and ourselves’ (Popov, Popov, & Javelin, 1997). One of the virtues which promotes intercultural understanding is ‘unity’. This intercultural
understanding may lead to positive intercultural communication. This is an excerpt from the narration on ‘unity’:

When you practice unity, you value what each part brings to the whole. With unity you can strive for harmony with your family at home and your human family around the world. Unity brings peace. Unity means you don’t try to make everyone look, think, act, or talk alike. Through the power of unity you can solve conflict. You can discover a new idea or solution that meets everyone’s needs. … People of different colors, countries, religions, sexes, and ages are part of one race – the human race. We were all created by God. … Without unity differences scare people and drive them apart. In many parts of the world prejudice causes disunity. People hurt and even kill each other because of differences in their color, their religion, or their ideas. … Differences don’t have to hurt, whether in a single family or the human family. God loves diversity. It makes life more interesting. … When you practice unity, you look at your prejudices and are willing to let them go. Just as every leaf on a tree has a unique design, each person on this earth is someone special. When you practice unity, you try to see the specialness in every person, not as a reason to be scared or to fight, but as a gift (Popov et al., 1997, pp. 269-271).

The narration encourages students to live together with others who might appear to be different. The differences amongst the group do not affect the group negatively. Conversely, the different aspects of others complete the group as a whole which is valued as individuality. Students are encouraged to value individuality as an asset to the society instead of an obstacle. This message not only acknowledges people’s differences but also promotes people’s equality by describing ‘human family’. It also suggests abandoning negative generalisations of others by reflecting on one’s own prejudices which hinder positive intercultural communication.

Second, the school’s ‘Responsible Behaviour Plan for Students’ (‘the Plan’) document from the school website is examined as a part of the ‘hidden curriculum’. The goal of this school is to “provide a stimulating, supportive and secure environment in which learning, cooperation; self-esteem and success are valued and encouraged”. This demonstrates that the school supports students at an emotional level as well as academic level. This goal is be achieved through planning and providing ‘inclusive curriculum’,
promoting positive ‘interpersonal relationships’ and providing ‘organisational and administrative procedures that are non-discriminating’. The first avenue to achieve the goal clearly states that the school acknowledges and caters for its diversity and diversity in the society to promote intercultural communication. The second one states its attempt to facilitate students to grow up as decent human beings who can behave appropriately in a social situation. The last one takes ‘inclusive curriculum’ into a practice as a part of day to day life in school.

In the Plan, it states that the school provides students with ‘supportive’ environment. In terms of promoting intercultural communication, the Plan specifies that the school provides everyone in the school to feel ‘safe’ and ‘valued’. Also, ‘non-discriminatory language and practices are demonstrated and encouraged by everyone who belongs to the school. The Plan also outlines the school’s beliefs about behaviour and learning in terms of students’ rights. This outline does not use straightforward terms that imply promoting intercultural communication. In other words, the outline describes every student’s right to learn and socialise in a safe and supportive environment with respect for and from others. The school sees students as equal human beings. However, the school acknowledges students’ different academic level. The Plan states that “students have the right to receive instruction at their appropriate level”. This implies that students learn at a different rate and students’ language ability varies. In terms of intercultural communication, students’ different level of English language ability is acknowledged.

The Plan also suggests “Consequences for unacceptable behaviour/consideration of individual circumstances”. This suggests when applying consequences for unacceptable behaviour, students’ individual circumstances are to be considered. The Plan advises that “individual circumstance may include gender, disability, socio-economic status, race and culture”. This appears to promote intercultural communication by stating race and culture may be included as individual circumstance. Race is a socially constructed concept rather than scientifically proven fact (Hollinsworth, 1998); therefore, it is difficult to consider students’ race as an individual circumstance. Similarly, culture is a difficult concept to pin down as this study has demonstrated in Chapter Two. Even
though students’ cultural background is identified, it is not easy to determine whether their behaviour is culturally influenced due to the unavoidable limitation of cultural knowledge of staff. However, the Plan attempts to promote intercultural communication by acknowledging students’ differences.

Third, teaching strategies are included as a hidden curriculum which promotes intercultural communication. During the interview, Mr A, Mr B and Mrs C are asked to share their teaching strategies to promote intercultural communication. Mr A and Mr B facilitate students’ understanding during lessons. Mr A states that:

… I pause more when I am teaching, and also (inaudible) try to teach twice. And uh, to draw things as well to use different modes of getting instructions for children. And uh, using repetition, we also use uh peer teaching quite a lot. … If you get someone comes and knows nothing and we start off by teaching them alphabet. And we use a lot of peer teaching to do that. … we use um something called ‘Living Books’. … They can read and they can click on the words. It’s interactive. … We use a lot of dictionaries that they have their dictionaries there so that they do translation of um, mathematical definitions and concepts and that type of things. Um, personal dictionaries if it’s required. There is modification of assignments so assignments uh given a lower similar methodology but lower level of outcomes required. And they get additional time as far as stuff being done. … (Mr A, personal communication, August 23, 2007)

Mr A caters for ESL students’ understanding of lessons and learning of English language through his own language usage, repetition of lessons, peer-teaching, technology engagement, dictionary usage and modified assignments. The first two strategies, repetition of lessons and peer-teaching, appear to benefit not only the ESL students but also the rest of the class. The repetition of lessons and instructions may also help those of all languages backgrounds. Through the peer-teaching, ESL students are given opportunities to build up friendship as well as language skills. This also benefits the students who help to understand that ESL students’ experience while learning English and build empathy. Also, this may help students to build up self-esteem and sense of achievement.
The latter three strategies, technology, dictionary and modified assignments, encourage ESL students to become independent in their learning and allow them to feel the sense of achievement all by themselves. The computer program allows students to be able to develop their language skills by themselves as well as technology manipulation. Also, using dictionaries helps them to spell and understand the meaning of words independently. Lastly, modified assignments and tests enable students to learn similar topics at a lower level. Even though it is a lower level of English, ESL students would feel a sense of achievement through modified assignments and tests. During the observation period of this study, the researcher found that they use modified tests for ESL students. Mrs C prepares the adapted tests for the students. As previously stated, Mr A claims not to acknowledge cultural differences of students; however, he takes students’ different language ability into consideration when it comes to his lessons.

When Mr B is asked the same question about teaching strategies, he seems to experience difficulty remembering the strategies instantly. Then he responds that

… I might refer to um variety of culture’s attitude sort of beliefs. … so I would probably use that as an example so when we have free discussions or class discussions. … I don’t think my specific outcome is directed at improving cultural communication in the classroom. … It’s really just to show that just because you might have one certain way of behaving it doesn’t mean that there’s another one that’s correct or right or equally as good or beneficial or whatever … People can learn from the attitudes of others (Mr B, personal communication, August 28, 2007).

Mr B explains that he does not employ specific teaching strategies to promote intercultural communication; however, he draws examples from the cultural diversity students bring into the classroom. By doing so, the teacher facilitates students’ understanding of others as individuals and acceptance of others as equally valued human beings regardless of differences.
Mr B’s approach is exemplified by the following observation. During a science lesson, students are allowed to ask questions. Joshua asks a question and Mr B answers it. Kent raises his hand as other students do and Mr B gives Kent a chance to ask his question. Kent tries to formulate his question but it seems to be hard for him and Mr B listens to him patiently. In the meantime, the class gets agitated and starts chatting. Mr B reminds students to “show him the same respect”. He adds that Kent listens to other students and other students should do the same. The situation could have been just one of the behaviour management issues. However, the way Mr B phrased his comment ‘showing the same respect’ implies his belief that students should be respectful to all others equally.

During observation, it is apparent that Mr A and Mr B employ cooperative learning as the essential teaching strategy when involved in the debating team and on the school camp. Mr A and Mr B were asked about deciding factors in choosing group members for students: ‘what do you consider the most when forming groups?’ Both classroom teachers explained that allocating groups depends on different situations and needs. Mr A states that,

..behaviour management is the first thing. The second thing is in a group um, a leader within a group. And making sure that there is um someone in the group who, someone lacks in initiative. … If there is an ESL person in the group depending on their group sometimes for peer support we might put another person with them. But other times (inaudible) put them by themselves. … when we went on camp … they could choose one friend but then essentially … we wouldn’t allow um six Mandarin speaking children in the one in the one place. There might be two Mandarin speaking children but four English is their first language … We also make sure that the children must split up so that there’d frequent occasion where they don’t speak Mandarin so again developing their vocabulary as a need (Mr A, personal communication, August 23, 2007).

Mr A considers students’ behaviour the most when forming groups. He further explains that he groups people who get along and reinforce positive behaviour from each other. He allocates a leader and others who lack a high level of initiative to each group. English ability is one of the factors when forming groups as he puts ESL students separately in
each group. Unless ESL students need peer-supports, ESL students are put in each group. By the same token, students who speak the same first language are separated so that they can develop English vocabulary as needed.

Mr B expresses his view on forming groups that,

before culture, we considered the way that people get along with one another … We also considered … that we knew we were gonna get along well enough but wouldn’t necessarily be friends in a playground and sort of force to interact in ways and maybe create new relationships. With debating, we we ensure that … ESL [students] had a balance of list so that they against another person in in opposite debating team had an ESL person. So we sort of achieved a balance where they’re able to um, compete against one another as feeling is more equal sort of playing fields rather than you know, having to compete completely … against kids who have only spoken English in their lives so. The considerations were made of … mastery of English, … So, their mastery of English was considered. … We made sure that we gave that to kids who come from the ESL backgrounds so that they can sort of express opinions and feelings and maybe they had or had experienced in their course of that time in that situation (Mr B, personal communication, August 28, 2007).

Mr B explains that he considers students’ behaviour in terms of their socialising with others when forming groups. Also, he attempts to create new relationships amongst students who would not initiate friendship even though they might be compatible to each other. Once again, he takes ESL students’ English ability into consideration when their English ability might become an obstacle to completing tasks. He also gives topics that ESL students may relate to so that they become more involved in the group work.

Both classroom teachers appear to consider students’ behaviour the most when forming groups. This appeared to be due to the characteristics of cooperative learning that it is difficult to conduct group works with students’ unmanageable behaviour. They also take students’ English ability into account. Mr A allocates ESL students in different groups so that they learn English by needs during their camp. He facilitates ESL students’ learning of English language by creating an appropriate environment. For debating teams, Mr B recounts that ESL students’ English ability is considered so that they do not become
overwhelmed by the task because of their English. Considering the nature of debate, Mr B creates a fair environment for ESL students so that they can be evaluated at a similar level. He also attempts to motivate students to build new relationships through group work. However, their strategies for forming groups do not explicitly aim to promote intercultural communication. These teachers create an atmosphere to maximise students’ cooperative learning, facilitate ESL students’ learning of English language and learning in English language and promote diverse human relations.

The teaching strategies for promoting intercultural communication used by Mr A and Mr B are slightly different in terms of facilitating ESL students’ understanding of lessons. Mr A employs the repetition of lessons but Mr B uses simpler vocabularies to ensure students’ comprehension of lessons. Even though their approaches are slightly dissimilar, both teachers cater for students’ different level of English language ability. While Mr A emphasises students’ learning with and without aids, Mr B focuses more on learning other students’ attitude through employing different cultural aspects during lessons. Due to the fact that the two teachers sometimes teach the classes in turns, students may benefit from these somewhat different teaching strategies of promoting intercultural communication.

A different approach to promoting intercultural communication Mr A and Mr B is taken by Mrs C. During Mrs C’s interview, she is asked ‘what do you do to prevent any cultural problems?’. She expresses her views that:

… I always try to welcome the new students and make them feel completely accepted and important and try to value their culture by asking them things about their culture. … giving them the tour around the school showing them the toilets explaining everything. … And I think once the students and the parents are relaxed and know that we are not going to leave them strained and having to fend for themselves with no help which will be impossible. Once I allay those fears you can see them relax (Mrs C, personal communication, August 31, 2007).
She acknowledges the basic needs of the new students which may be overlooked by English speakers. These are finding the right toilet and other amenities due to their English signs. In this school, there are four different toilets divided by students’ grades and genders: junior male and female toilets and senior male and female ones. She explains that “if they [the new students] can’t read the English words, and they can’t remember which toilet it was they might go into the wrong toilet and that’s a very terrible thing for child to do so” (Mrs C, personal communication, August 31, 2007). In addition, she appreciates the stress that parents and students may feel due to the significant change in their lives. She attempts to create more comfortable and inclusive environment so that students feel welcomed and included at school.

These viewpoints of hers are evident in her teaching strategies: buddy system, engaging bilingual or trilingual teachers, use of modified tests and projects, use of bilingual books. The buddy system is mainly for the new students whose English ability is limited and who need extra help in daily routines. The buddy might be chosen based on the classroom teacher’s decision, Mrs C’s decision or students’ volunteer. Also, the new students’ language is taken into consideration. If there is no one who can speak the new students’ language, Mrs C finds one from another class to ensure the new student’s wellbeing. This aims to ensure students’ feelings of inclusion. She explains that:

… sometimes they [the buddies] can speak their [the new students] languages and sometimes they can’t. … Sometimes we have two: one can speak and one can’t. um, and they stay with them all day and make sure that they know where to follow them to toilets and everything. So they’re really not just left in the deep end (Mrs C, personal communication, August 31, 2007).

She not only caters for the new students’ daily needs but also looks after students’ emotions. When students are too stressed out and their English expression is not comprehensible, bilingual or trilingual teachers are engaged to help them. Sometimes upper level students help out the situation when no teachers can speak the students’ first language.
As well as catering for students’ daily needs and emotions, Mrs C makes the students feel included when it comes to tasks and tests in the classroom. According to Mrs C, using modified tests and projects answers that “students can still do something and feel like they were [are] included in the class even though they can’t do um, the complexity of the tests or the assignments but they can still do something” (Mrs C, personal communication, August 31, 2007). By doing so, students do not feel incompetent nor unintelligent. Students may be able to feel a sense of achievement from doing works in English which they are trying to acquire. In addition, Mrs C provides bilingual books so that students can practise reading in English and understand it by reading in their first language. This encourages students to be interested in reading. This also helps students to maintain their first language ability, an ideal which Mrs C strongly supports. She has provided the researcher with a brochure explaining that it is important to maintain first language. The brochure is designed for parents who speak languages other than English.

This is an excerpt from the front part of the brochure:

Building literacy skills in that first language will help your child’s literacy in English. Skills gained in one language are useful for other languages.

Students who maintain their home language tend to
- have a better idea of how language works
- benefit from similarities in words, pronunciation, spelling or grammar. Even where the language is very different from English, there can be useful similarities such as sounds and word order.

This boosts children’s general confidence with language. So they are likely to
- join in more actively in the classroom
- understand or guess words much faster
- make more use of a dictionary and be more organised in note taking
- seek out extra or new information (ACSSO & Australian Parents Council Inc, n.d.)
The front part of the brochure explains about English language learning. It explains that language skills in students’ first language will enhance second language learning which in this case is English. Students who maintain their first language seem to understand the mechanism of language. This knowledge helps them to compare and relate the similarities between their first language and English which enhances students’ confidence in language. This results in them participating more actively in the classroom, expanding their vocabulary, learning independently by using dictionary, taking notes effectively and trying to gain more information.

On the other side of the brochure, it explains that maintaining first language is beneficial for students to be able to possess their own heritages and use it as a stepping stone for learning other languages and cultures. This is an excerpt from the other side of the brochure.

Students who maintain their home language tend to
- become proud of knowing and using it
- be interested in maintaining their heritage
- gain a broader interest in languages generally – and in learning about different cultures.

Students who gain skills and confidence in two languages will often be keen to try a third language later on. The skills they have already gained will make this easier for them (ACSSO & Australian Parents Council Inc, n.d.).

This brochure implies that students who maintain their first language are proud of their cultural identity and make use of it. These students are also interested in preserving their own cultural heritage. Their exposure to English-speaking culture as well as their own cultures elicits them to be more interested in other languages and their cultures. Due to their language learning skills, these students will more easily learn other languages. Learning languages will also facilitate their understanding of other cultures.
helps those students to be able to understand migrants and others who try to learn another language.

Fourth, the ESL program is considered as a part of the curriculum in the classroom since four students are benefited by this program. Generally, this program supports students who are acquiring English as their second language. According to the school webpage, in order to determine the eligibility for this program, ESL teachers assess students who are born in Australia or recently arrived in Australia. Objectives provided by the webpage are summarised as:

- Providing support in acquiring English language and participating in English used education setting;
- Working with classroom teachers to meet the students’ needs;
- Providing modified tasks and tests on needs base;
- Creating culturally inclusive and welcoming school environment, and
- Promoting effective communication amongst home, school and community through translated newsletter and interpreting.

As well, this program provides support for students’ English acquisition to ensure their success in mainstream education in Australia, and it promotes students’ positive attitudes in the school through providing an inclusive environment. By working with the classroom teachers, this program becomes an extension of classroom activities rather than isolated lessons for the students. This program also includes students’ parents to establish positive network amongst teachers, students and parents by translated newsletters and interpretation. At the time of data collection, the school provides only a Chinese translation of the newsletter due to the high number of Chinese speaking families. There are teachers who can speak both Mandarin and Cantonese and only Mandarin to provide interpretation. Also, during the period of observation, the researcher worked as an interpreter for Korean parents to ensure students’ success in education and to prevent foreseeable miscommunication. In summary, the program provides an effective language
program, promotes positive attitudes of students, facilitates learning in the classroom and establishes positive networks amongst teachers, students and parents.

Fifth, 7A and 7B has an opportunity to learn a part of Korean culture through Tae Kwon Do (a Korean martial art). Mr A and Mr B do not mention this as part of the curriculum which promotes intercultural communication. This may be because they have overlooked the fact that Tae Kwon Do is culturally influenced. At the time of planning this activity, they might have thought this would be a good replacement for physical activity that students might have not experienced before. In any case, this lesson is considered as a part of the curriculum because it provides students with a different cultural experience which expands students’ knowledge of a small portion of Korean culture.

The Tae Kwon Do lesson takes place in the hall three times as a part of physical education over three weeks. Cort’s father volunteers to provide the lesson since he works as a Tae Kwon Do master. He brings his assistant who is also a Korean. Students are asked to take off their shoes before the lesson begins. Students are then asked to stand in lines and ensure enough space around them. Cort’s father bows in a respectful manner and students follow. This style of bow is common in Korean when younger people greet older ones. The lesson starts with meditation. During the meditation, Cort’s father goes around and corrects students’ posture. Then, students learn new movements by listening to Korean words describing the movements and watching them simultaneously. After viewing the movements, students are asked to repeat as Cort’s father yells out Korean words for the movements. By doing so, students are able to connect new Korean words with the movements. Later, students apply these new movements as a form of self-defence. Finally, the lesson ends with another bow. From this lesson, students learn a little bit of Korean martial art and some Korean words.

Sixth, one workshop from Enrichment Day is taken into particular account as promoting intercultural communication. At the time of data collection, Studies of Society and Environment (SOSE) is a chosen Key Learning Area (KLA) for Year 4 though to 7 students. Prior to the Enrichment Day, students have been given an opportunity to
number 16 different workshops from the most preferred to the least. The Head of Curriculum organises and determines which three workshops students are doing in which order. Before the day, students are given the list back to make sure they know which classrooms they will be going. On the day, students have to move around to find the classroom which offers the workshop for which their participation has been approved.

Out of the 16 workshops, three workshops appear to promote intercultural communication: ‘comparing cultures’, ‘the influence of soccer on South American culture’ and ‘Chinese customs’. From the list that students were given, ‘comparing culture’ gives students to explore different cultures and the elements that make cultures different. ‘The influence of soccer on South American culture’ examines the way of life in South America and the influence of soccer on the culture of South America. ‘Chinese customs’ explore various Chinese customs. These workshops give students from Year 5 to 7 opportunities to explore different cultures so that they may be able students to reduce possible barriers to intercultural communication.

Out of the three different workshops, the researcher has only been able to acquire planning documents of ‘comparing cultures’. The lesson plan is based on SOSE Years 1 – 10 syllabus (The State of Queensland: The Office of the Queensland School Curriculum Council, 2000). The plan includes level statements stating:

- Level 2 statement: students understand that traditions, objects and events can symbolise membership of a group and can compare some practices of another culture with their own.
- Level 3 statement: students understand influences on their own developing identities.

Based on these statements, core learning outcomes are elaborated as:

- Students investigate aspects of diverse cultural groups.
- Students share their sense of belonging to a group to analyse cultural aspects that construct their identities.
Through this workshop, students are expected to be able to explore different facets of cultures. Students learn that different ways of life exist in the world. This leads students to realise that their way of life is not the only way or necessarily the best way in that matter. Also, students are expected to understand and acknowledge their own identities by recognising their sense of belonging to a group. This encourages students to be able to realise that everyone belongs to a group which influences one’s identity. Nevertheless, this outcome overlooks that students may belong to more than one group in the course of their lives.

The activities are provided to accomplish the outcomes in this workshop include: sharing stories of children’s lives in different countries, making students’ own stories in terms of food, clothing, school, language, house and hobbies, sharing their stories and drawing a Venn diagram comparing their own stories with those of children from the books. These activities encourage students to explore their own identities and appreciate the different ways of life of others’. This may help students to reduce their uncertainty when encountering people from different cultures. Also, having considered similarities between different ways of life, students appreciate that others’ ways of life may appear to be different but there are also similar aspects between different groups of people.

Last, the KLA, LOTE is considered as curriculum that promotes intercultural communication. At this school, students start learning Chinese as a part of LOTE from Year four. There is one LOTE teacher who speaks English as an additional language in this school. The LOTE lessons start with greeting in a Chinese way in Chinese language. The teacher writes down dates and chooses one student to read them. LOTE lessons are composed of repetition of simple sentences with pronunciation of Chinese characters written in English and recognising Chinese characters. The teacher draws cultural knowledge into his lessons whenever it is applicable. For example, when explaining a sentence about offering some food to others, the teacher adds that Chinese people are so generous that they always ask their guests at home to eat a lot. However, the main activities of LOTE lessons appear to focus more on practising, comprehending and composing language forms rather than learning cultural aspects.
During the interview, students are asked whether they like learning Chinese and why they like or do not like it. Students who speak Chinese as a first language like learning Chinese because they already know the language. On the other hand, students who do not speak Chinese tend to dislike learning Chinese because of different reasons. Most students reason that it is too difficult to learn and it is boring. Akili says that it is useless to learn since she does not plan to go to China. Students seem to think the language is difficult to learn which discourage them from learning it. Also, repetition of activities appears to be the factor that students think is boring. Overall, students do not seem to consider language learning as a life skill which is useful for living in a globalised world.

Not every non-Chinese speaking student dislikes learning Chinese. Lacey who speaks Vietnamese at home says that she likes learning Chinese because “you [she] can speak another language and be able to understand other people”. She seems to know the purpose of learning different language and other students who like learning Chinese agree with her. Julie, an ESL student, says that she can learn new words in English and Chinese from learning Chinese. Learning a different language seems to expand one’s vocabulary capacity in learning second and third languages.

Individual teachers’ and students’ perspectives and behaviours
As previously explained, this theme incorporates a few events or issues that are relevant to this study but could be observed as mundane. Firstly, this theme begins with students’ and teachers’ perspectives on having people from different cultures in the school. Secondly, this includes students’ choice of friends which may be pertinent to sitting arrangements and cooperative work. Thirdly, students’ willingness to help others is examined. Finally, the situation of one ESL student who was identified most frequently by others during interview as ‘not liked’ is described.

This study represents students’ perspectives on positive and negative aspects of having people from diverse cultural backgrounds. Students’ perspectives are presented based on students’ responses to the questions “what are the good things about having people from
different cultures?” and “what are the bad things about having people from different cultures?” The positive aspects of having people from different cultures are experiencing and learning about different cultures from others, meeting new people and making friends and getting used to being with people from different cultures. Most students respond that it is beneficial to experience and learn about new cultures through people from different cultures. One of the cultural experiences is that people from different cultures bring culturally specific food to school so that they can share. In addition, students learn about different cultures such as language and the way of life. Justin explains that “you learn more about different cultures and then if you go to that country it’s easier to adapt to the people … and make friends with them since you’ve already known someone like them (Justin, personal communication, July 25, 2007)” He explains that possessing cultural knowledge and experience minimise possible culture shocks when entering into different cultures.

In addition, students think it is good to have people from diverse cultural backgrounds so that they can make friends with them. Keiran says that “you get to know other people not from the same country, you know other people from different countries” (Keiran, personal communication, July 27, 2007). It appears that other people’s difference initiates building a new relationship rather than deters them from interacting with them. Some students think that having people from different cultures enables them to get used to being with people from different cultural backgrounds. Raviv explains that “[we] won’t feel weird being around different people because we are already used to it” (Raviv, personal communication, August 2, 2007). Similarly, Duc states that:

it’s that you get to get together with um other people. You get to know. Whereas if you go to one culture you just used to one culture. And now, if you go to this school, you get to used to many cultures which is the world. That’s the good thing (Duc, personal communication, August 2, 2007)

Duc acknowledges that diverse cultures co-exist in the world in the way that this school has lots of people from different cultures. This implies that experiencing different
cultures in the school may prepare students to be accustomed to living peacefully with people in a multicultural society.

While students easily explain the positive aspects of having people from different cultures, some students seem to have difficulty in finding negative aspects. Most students respond that there is nothing negative about having people from diverse cultures. However, as previously discussed in the Language section, some students think it is a negative when people speak languages other than English. At the same time, the same number of students think that it is not easy to communicate with others due to their poor English. This implies that students do not feel the barrier of interacting with others because of their different cultural backgrounds but different language may become an obstacle to communication. One student responds in a different way stating “it can be uncomfortable because of the difference, some might say this is right and some might say this is wrong” (Julie, personal communication, July 31, 2007). She acknowledges the different value judgment that different cultures uphold. Overall, students do not think that there are many negative aspects to having people from different cultures at school.

Teachers are asked a similar question to express their perspectives on having students from different cultures. The question is “what is it like to teach students from different cultural backgrounds?” Teachers generally express their belief in the benefits of teaching students from different cultures. Mr A explains:

I like it, yeah I do, I like it. It’s eh ah, it’s kids of often from their backgrounds a lot of things to bring in. Like, Akili. The stuff that Akili has experienced in her life that can um, put every other kid in the class make look pathetic in their problems and worries they have … this is mainstream and you have to fit somewhere within that mainstream and um, the, but you can still maintain your cultural diversity and cultural identity. That’s fine. I [he] think[s] that’s what school does very well … I think it’s one of the great values that school has and something I value. … once you have basics how to operate in place … it’s advantage in classroom in lots of ways. (Mr A, personal communication, August 23, 2007)
Mr A regards the different cultures and experiences students bring to the classroom as a benefit for other students to learn from. These students’ cultural resources are available to other students. He believes that students require help in adapting their lifestyles to mainstream Australian culture. At the same time, they are allowed to maintain their cultural identity.

Mr B expresses his passion for the English language and justifies that having ESL students might become a barrier due to their language ability. He explains that

I plan and prepare for as best as I can but I think I just teach generally too. I sort of teach in English using English as a base and um my kind of goal is always that I want to push forward English as a highest point like I want to expand kids’ vocabularies so I’ve attempted to use. If I explain something to … ESL I would try to dumb down my language to the point to make understandable um which I’m struggling with. So in times I find that the cultural gap when a kid’s English is second language um and and they have English is not at a high level of English I find it hugely difficult trying to explain myself. But probably it’s because I see, I really like the English language so I love to kind of experiment words and language that sorts of things (Mr B, personal communication, August 28, 2007).

Mr B indicates his struggle with teaching ESL students due to their language ability. His desire to teach students with high level of English to expand their vocabulary appears to clash with the need of simple language when teaching ESL students. However, as previously addressed, he attempts not only to cater for students’ excellence in English but also to facilitate ESL students’ learning by using simples words and speaking slowly and clearly.

Mrs C was also asked to describe what it is like to teach students from different cultures. She states that:

[it is] very enriching. My passion is to travel but I can’t travel all my life without working. … so to me the next best thing to travel and learning about other cultures is teaching children from other cultures and relating to their parents and learning about their cultures (Mrs C, personal communication, August 31, 2007).
Mrs C appears to enjoy teaching ESL students because of the cultural knowledge and experience that they bring. Her passion for travel seems to transfer to her teaching of students from different cultures. She believes that teaching students from different cultures enables her to learn about different cultures from them.

Overall, both teachers confirm that it is beneficial to teach students from different cultures. Mr A uses students’ different cultural experiences as an asset from which other students may learn. Mrs C learns about different cultures from students and their parents which she refers it as “the next best thing to travel”. Both of them think it is an advantage to teach students with diverse backgrounds due to the different cultural experiences they bring. For Mr B, it seems a little bit of a problem when teaching ESL students because their lower level of English clashes with his passion for the English language.

Subsequently, students are asked a few interview questions such as “what do you like about coming to school?” combined with “who do you hang out with at school?” and “what do you like about your friends?” To the first question, the majority of students respond that seeing or playing with friends is their favourite part of coming to school. This response indicates that students enjoy or even value their time with friends at school more than their time with teachers in the classroom. To the second question, students’ answers show that their choice of friends is not limited to similar cultural and linguistic backgrounds. This has been observed through the times when students are able to play with their friends at lunch breaks and in-between lessons. Especially, during the lunch breaks it is clear that students get together with their close friends. At the designated upper eating area, students do not seem to be segregated by their cultural and linguistic backgrounds but they do seem to be separated by their gender. Linguistic and cultural backgrounds do not seem to affect the most in terms of sitting and playing with their friends during breaks. The influential aspects of being friends with someone appear to be ‘funny’, ‘nice’ and ‘cool’ in this order. Students seem to care more about the characteristics of people than their backgrounds. However, to the certain extent, these
aspects could be subjective and culturally influenced due to the fact that humour, niceness and cool characteristics may be measured by a cultural yardstick.

Conversely, Cort and Kent, do not appear to be able to find a group of students with whom they eat or play together. It is conspicuous that both of them are found eating alone a lot more than other students. At lunch times, Cort looks around carefully and decides with which group of people to sit. Even though he finds a group of students, they tend to leave him alone and move to another group after a short period of time. By the same token, Kent appears to eat alone most of the time. Over a few weeks, Kent moves completely away from the upper eating area. He is found to eat and talk with lower grade students who speak Mandarin. Kent wants to hide this incident from the researcher even though she tells him what she has observed. Incidentally, both students have been in Australia just over a year. Also, they are the most mentioned students during interviews of other students for being ‘annoying’ people. Students find Cort annoying because he teases other students and makes up stories about them. On the other hand, students find Kent bothersome because of his loud voice, behaviour and for no particular reason.

In terms of doing group work, friends are the ones with whom the majority of interviewed students prefer to work with when asked specifically. The reason for this is that students know each other well enough to do work more comfortably. On the contrary, some students prefer to work with others than their friends. Raviv says that he likes to do group work with “the nerds” because “they think of better points for you [him]. If you [he] hang[s] out with your [his] friends, they generally mess around” (Raviv, personal communication, July 27, 2007). For similar reasons, Elise states that she prefers to work with “people who actually help out like, not just sit there and muck around” (Elise, personal communication, July 23, 2007). Raviv and Elise agree that it is important to have people in the group who are efficient and focused so that the group work becomes more successful. Moreover, Gabrielle, a school captain, says that “I [she] really like[s] doing with children who are about the same level you are like in maths or English or anything like that” (Gabrielle, personal communication, July 19, 2007). She prefers to work with someone whose academic level is similar to her own including
language ability. Keiran also prefers someone who “understand[s] the activity” (Keiran, personal communication, July 27, 2007). It is obvious that students who can cooperate and contribute to the group work are preferred group members. In some cases, language ability may be a desirable part of element to become a part of group. This may affect ESL students for obvious reasons. Kent says that he is a ‘spare boy’ during group work. On the other hand, Julie and Akili work together. Julie explains that it is because their English level is similar. Due to their language ability, ESL students may miss a chance to socialise with other students and vice versa.

Students are also asked, “who do you prefer not to do group work with?” The majority of interviewed students answer that they prefer not to work with Kent. There was no unanimous reason for this; however, the reasons may be listed as follows: ‘rude’, ‘annoying’, ‘uncomfortable with him’ and ‘no apparent reason’. These reasons seem to be pertinent to his personality. On the other hand, Dave comments that Kent is ‘stupid’ since his English is not comprehensible. He also adds that he will not work with him even though he has to. The rest of the interviewees agree that they will work with the students regardless of their dislike of working with them. According to Lacey, “I just try to stay calmly and cooperate” (Lacey, personal communication, July 27, 2007). Elise also says that she will “try to put everything behind me that I don’t like about them and I just try to get the work done” (Elise, personal communication, July 23, 2007). Students appreciate that they will have to complete their group work in any cases. This seems to be the only reason for them to get together with those with whom they might not be comfortable to work. It is not because they attempt to get to know other people just because they are compelled to complete the work.

While activities such as sitting, eating and working with others engage close friends, helping others does not appear to be limited to friends. In this classroom, there is a public speaking session when students need help from others to create a short role-play or even to hold props or books for the presenter. During observation, it is apparent that students help others for the short role-plays or assisting to hold props. Consequently, students are asked whether they will not help others with any reasons during the
interview. Most students express the view that they enjoy helping others during the public speaking session because it is fun. They also add that they will help anyone who needs their help regardless of gender or language ability.

Also, willingness to help others does not appear to be based on popularity. On one morning, Kent walks past James and Jasmine and greets them. James and Jasmine completely ignore him putting on a disgusted face and whispering to each other. Generally, neither of them interact with Kent. Later that afternoon, Kent needs help with his spelling and James willingly helps him. This may be because James is proud to help someone with his English even though he gets learning support himself or because he helps others, whoever they are, if necessary. However, Julie says she will not help boys. Julie seems to withdraw from interaction with boys. Furthermore, Peter and Dave say that they will not help Kent because they simply do not like him. Duc agrees with them that he will not help Kent; however, he explains that this is because Kent blames Duc for mistakes if Duc helps him.

During the observation, it is apparent that Kent who is from Taiwan is not liked and even discriminated against to a certain extent by a few students in the classroom. In order to have a better understanding of Kent’s characteristics; it may be useful to acknowledge his home life. He had been living in Australia for about a year when the data collection occurs. Due to his level of English, he receives ESL support from the school. He lives with a host family who speak Mandarin not far from the school. Even though he does not enjoy living with the host family (Mrs C, personal communication, August 28, 2007) he does not have a choice about staying with them. It is because the rest of his family, mother, father and older brother, live in Taiwan. According to Kent, his mother comes and visits him once in a while.

Now that Kent’s living situation has been partially explained, his school life can be described. The first time when Kent draws the researcher’s attention is when Justin talks to himself while walking past the researcher. In between lessons when everyone is asked to sit on the carpeted area, Justin is walking and saying “I don’t want to sit next to Kent”
(Justin, personal communication, April 03, 2007). He clarifies that he ‘hates Kent’ because Kent thinks ‘he is too good’. It is obvious that Justin does not like Kent because of his boastful manner. On another occasion, Kent tries to sit close to a group of boys (Peter, Brady, Long and Justin) and they ignore him trying to talk to them. While he leaves the seat to get a newsletter from Mr A, Long pushes his chair away. Once Kent comes back to his seat, he ignores the fact that his seat is now away from the group and he sits alone quietly.

Some students express their dislike of Kent openly and directly to him. Kent tries to use a computer next to the one Kamea is using. Kamea kicks Kent’s chair shouting “Go away from me Kent”. He does not protest or react to her but leaves the area. Joshua takes the seat instead. On another occasion, Dave is talking to the researcher and Kent approaches him casually. Dave shouts out in disgust “Mr Wu is coming” (Dave, personal communication, July 12, 2007) then he moves away. Dave makes unpleasant comments even when Kent quietly reads his book. He shouts at Kent “I don’t like you” (Dave, personal communication, July 23, 2007). Kent does not respond to him or his comment and continues to read his book. Then Dave asks him whose book he is reading and Kent answers it is his. During the interview, Kent tells the researcher that some students call him names such as ‘it’, ‘idiot’, ‘arsehole’ and ‘female’. None of these names appears to be influenced by his cultural background; however, the names affect Kent’s perception of self from others. Also, he is asked how he deals with name-callings and he says that “I [he] chose to go away and ignore them. … when … I am really angry sometimes do some reaction” (Kent, personal communication, August 14, 2007). Kent is the one of the two respondents who says that he is called names at school.

During the interviews, students are asked to disclose who or what bothers or annoys them at school. Kent’s name is the most frequently uttered by interviewed students. The reasons why students think he is annoying are because of his annoying or loud voice, behaviour, rumours about him and without any particular reasons. Kent is not the softest speaker in the classroom as other students, teachers and the researcher are aware. He tends to speak louder when he gets excited about something. He lets others hear his
thoughts. This has become one of the characteristics that some students do not like about him. The behaviours of Kent that people do not appreciate are chasing them, talking to them and doing things that students tell him not to and brushing dandruff on a student’s desk.

Chasing behaviour may be a reaction from Kent to other students who mock him. On one occasion, the researcher observes Kent chasing Brady who mocks him in his face by pulling faces and saying incomprehensible words as if he is mimicking Kent’s English. Later on, Brady says that Kent starts saying things that he does not understand. Brady starts saying incomprehensible words back to make fun of Kent’s incomprehensible use of English. Then, Kent starts chasing Brady. According to Kent, on the other hand, Brady has called him ‘gay’ which initiates the chase. Whoever’s version of the episode is correct, it clearly shows that Brady has started teasing Kent which has sparked the chase. On the other hand, one of the disliked behaviours of Kent, ‘talking to them’ sounds a completely normal interaction unless Kent talks too loud or speaks in incomprehensible English. The latter reason becomes a barrier in intercultural communication as previously discussed. Two other reasons, doing things that students do not want him to do and brushing dandruff on students’ desk does not appear to be completely unusual behaviour.

Some students share the rumors about Kent during the interviews. Peter explains that he has heard the rumours about him through his friends. Apparently, he is ‘homosexual’ and this can be supported by an episode where Kent touches Gary’s backside. He adds that “nobody else likes him” (Peter, personal communication, July 23, 2007). He justifies his dislike of Kent by saying that he is not the only one who does not like him. Another student, Dave, says that everyone stays away from him because “you [people] get Kent Wu the virus” (Dave, personal communication, July 19, 2007). He admits that this is made up by students. He is the only one who starts talking about his dislike of him when he is asked the question, “what are the bad things about having people from different cultures?” His response is that “I [he] have [has] a grudge against Kent Wu” (Dave, personal communication, July 19, 2007). This statement implies that he acknowledges
Kent’s cultural difference which may cause him to dislike Kent. Based on his account during the interview, he thinks Kent’s English is incomprehensible which may be a part of the reasons why he does not like him.

From Kent’s point of view, he thinks he has ‘failed’ to make friends because his English is ‘not good enough’ to talk. Also he thinks it is because “my [his] living way is different from them so they think I’m [he is] weird”. His experience with students has led him to think that his English is not good because his English has been ignored, mocked and ridiculed by others. He expresses his feeling about this issue,

… I’m really lonely but I don’t really care because that’s that’s I don’t think that’s gonna get fixed for, for because it hasn’t been, I hasn’t been here for long time here so I don’t think it’s gonna get fixed yet. So I still need more time so I don’t care (Kent, personal communication, August 14, 2007).

It is obvious that he feels lonely at school because he does not have any friends and he thinks nobody likes him. He believes that once his English gets better the situation will get better. He is convinced that his English is not good enough to talk to other people. He adds that he has tried to do “whatever … they do”. He tries to adapt to his new environment and new classmates by behaving like other students.

Since Kent’s predicament seems conspicuous, Mr A, Mr B and Mrs C are asked to share their thoughts about Kent’s situation. Mr A shares his opinion about Kent’s situation; however, he does not want this to be disclosed in any way. Therefore, this study only includes opinions about Kent from Mr B and Mrs C. Around the time of the interview with Mr B, Kent deliberately has not submitted his assignment even though he has already completed it. Mr B mentions the incident and expresses his view on this matter as follows:

… he’s either a perfectionist therefore won’t hand a work in or he’s very worried as part of his cultural family background of history. He’s
probably more likely worried about the results that he’s going to get. So rather than receive those results and feel embarrassed and shamed which is part of his culture. … I think he’s probably gotta small bit of Autistic Spectrum Disorder, I think he’s got little bit of Asperger … I don’t think it’s indicative at all of cultural problem because I’ve got plenty other kids from Taiwan places like that who have absolutely no problems with knuckling down and doing their job and completing their task so (Mr B, personal communication, August 28, 2007).

Mr B attempts to analyse the situation from different perspectives: cultural and possible social behaviour point of views. Mr B initially acknowledges his recent behaviour as a result of his Taiwanese cultural background; however, he denies subsequently that it is influenced by his cultural background justified by his experience with other Taiwanese students. Mr B’s justification of Kent’s behaviour implies that he understands that his behaviour might be influenced by his cultural backgrounds and personality. He adds that Kent may have a socialisation issues naming Autistic Spectrum Disorder and Asperger’s Syndrome.

On the other hand, Mrs C’s opinion about Kent’s situation takes a different direction. She says that:

… I would call him at-risk student. … in terms of his self-esteem and his confident, his emotional state. … I’m a bit more worried because he actually hasn’t, in ESL group, hasn’t improved very much this year and he hasn’t been handing in his work which is just recent development and I often see him sitting alone and he said to me he has no friends. I asked him to get a card signed by his classmates for a girl who was leaving and he said ‘they won’t do it if I ask them to, they all hate me.’ … And he just spoke to one of my teacher teacher-aides in Mandarin and said that he’s very stressed in his life … (Mrs C, personal communication, August 31, 2007)

Mrs C is worried about Kent’s emotional status and academic situation. She does not consider his problem as culturally influenced. However, she acknowledges that she might be able to understand Kent’s situation better by engaging a Mandarin-speaking
teacher to talk with Kent. From Mrs C’s account, Kent’s low self-esteem may be result
from his belief that no one likes him.

During the observation, Elise appears to try to communicate with Kent even though he
does not respond warmly. She expresses her views that Kent “tries to be like everyone
else. That’s what [in an unkind manner] like, all the boys say to all the girls
sometimes…” (Elise, personal communication, July 23, 2007). She adds that

… I [she] think[s] because he shows off too much. … cause he tries to
fit into everyone else and since English is his second language, he can’t
really speak English clear… I [she] think[s], cause he’s just different
from everyone else … he just gets teased way too much more than
anyone else gets teased and it’s just really unfair…. just cause he’s
different it doesn’t mean that …um it doesn’t mean that he should get
 teased because he’s different. Everyone has a right to be different …
(Elise, personal communication, July 23, 2007).

She appears to be emotional during her account. This may be influenced by her
‘different’ cultural background that she does not like to talk about which results in
empathy from her. Elise implies that Kent is misunderstood due to his personality, his
poor English language ability and his differences.

No matter what the reasons are for students to dislike him, it is apparent that Kent does
not feel included in the classroom due to his English and different way of life. Also, this
appears to have affected his self-esteem which may lead him to isolate himself from other
students. His isolation from other students is partially influenced by his cultural
background especially his English language ability. Additionally, his personality does
not help him to fit into mainstream culture. Even though dislike of Kent may not be
influenced by his cultural differences, it is extremely unfortunate that a student feels
lonely and excluded at school where most students seem to be happy being with their
friends.

Kent’s situation demonstrates how difficult it is for students who are from different
backgrounds to be able to quickly adapt their different ways of life to mainstream culture.
These students try to learn to behave appropriately amongst people from different cultures. Not only that, they must attempt to learn the English language as quickly as possible. For students like Kent, loneliness and low self-esteem may become another obstacle to be able to successfully adapt into the new culture and engage in positive intercultural communication.

Summary
This chapter has described the findings of observation, interview and document data. In order to provide vicarious experience of the classroom, this chapter has included contextual description, description of participants and an overview of the classroom. The findings have been analysed according to three themes: the contribution of language, the influence of curriculum and individual teachers’ and students’ perspectives and behaviours. The theme ‘language’ includes: students’ diverse language ability, teachers’ perspectives on speaking languages other than English at school, negative and positive use of languages other than English, other students’ positive and negative reaction to languages other than English and positive and negative reactions to incomprehensible English. The theme curriculum includes: ‘virtue of the week’, teaching strategies, ‘ESL program’ and Tae Kwon Do and a workshop in the Enrichment Day. Finally, the theme individual teachers’ and students’ perspectives and behaviours incorporate: students’ and teachers’ perspectives on having people from different cultures, sitting arrangements, group work, willingness to help others and the predicament of an ESL student. With these findings in mind, the next chapter will offer comments on the limitations and strengths of this research, recommendations and conclusions of this study.
Chapter Five: Conclusion and Recommendations

This chapter concludes the study and incorporates a summary and discussion of findings. It identifies strengths and limitations of the research and makes recommendations for further research and for future enhancements and promotion of intercultural communication in schools. As previously addressed in Chapter One, this study was designed to investigate:

1) the nature of communication amongst primary children with different cultural backgrounds;
2) the nature of communication between teachers and children with different cultural backgrounds; and
3) the nature of curricular elements implemented with the attention to enhance intercultural communication skills in classrooms.

With these components in mind, the research was carried out by observation, interviews and analysis of curriculum and school-based documents. Findings of the research will be summarised according to the themes which emerged during the research process. The summarised findings will be discussed in the light of previously identified and reviewed literature. Then, the strength and limitations of this research will be addressed. Finally, this chapter will be concluded with recommendations using this research study.

Research Findings

The research was designed to examine intercultural communication in a single primary classroom using an ethnographical case study methodology. Due to unexpected circumstances, the research was carried out in two Year 7 classes in a large single classroom. The proposed research questions have shaped the study as they have guided data collection and analysis processes. The questions are:

1) To what extent does the school promote intercultural communication competence for students?
2) How effectively do students in a multicultural classroom communicate?
3) How effectively do students and their teacher communicate in a multicultural classroom?
4) What kinds of breakdowns/barriers in intercultural communication do students and teachers experience?

Based on research findings presented in Chapter Four, these research questions are now addressed.

1) To what extent does a school promote intercultural communication competence for students?

The school was observed to provide programs that promote intercultural communication competence both explicitly and implicitly. The workshop at the Enrichment Day was a part of curriculum that promotes students’ knowledge of other cultures. This approach is based on the expectations that knowledge of other culture may reduce students’ stereotypes and prejudice of other cultures. On the grounds that stereotypes and prejudice are often based on limited knowledge of other cultures (Locke & Johnston, 2001) and that this may result in lack of interaction with others (Antonopolulos et al., 1997). Also, understanding and learning about other cultures enable students to appreciate their own cultures as well as those of others (Wiseman et al., 1989). By the same token, people with ethnocentric beliefs were found to have little knowledge of others (Wiseman et al., 1989). Thus the modular was the school’s effort to address precisely this interaction.

In addition, the school promotes intercultural communication competence through messages during assembly, the behaviour management plan, the ESL program, LOTE lessons and translated newsletters. During the weekly assembly, students were provided with a ‘virtue of the week’ and one of these was observed to promote intercultural communication competence. Also, the behaviour management plan encourages students to respect and treat others equally. Jaasma’s (2001) study found that these features were the basis of positive intercultural communication. The ‘virtue of the week’ promotes
positive attitudes and the behaviour management plan encourages appropriate skills in intercultural communication. Learning about different cultures is important; however, positive attitude and skills are equally important in intercultural communication competence (Spitzberg & Cupach as cited in Gudykunst, 1993; Wiseman, 2002). In addition, the school provided Chinese translated newsletters to cater for those parents whose Chinese language ability is better than English. This demonstrated that the school endeavoured to create a community where language does not become a barrier in intercultural communication at least as far as Chinese language is concerned.

In addition, the ESL program facilitated ESL students’ learning English so that they were able to communicate with others more easily. This supports multiculturalism as identified by the National Multicultural Advisory Council (1999) that people are encouraged to maintain their own languages as well as to acquire the Australian national language, English. Mrs C, the ESL teacher, respected students’ linguistic backgrounds and supported them in maintaining their first languages. At the same time, she implemented ESL programs in such a way that students could learn English in order to be able to participate in the Australian community. Last, LOTE was considered a program that promotes intercultural communication by teaching students Chinese language and aspects of Chinese culture. As Ingram (1994) suggested, learning different languages promotes positive attitudes towards others from different cultures.

The classroom teachers recounted that they did not have specific units that promote intercultural communication. However, they had teaching strategies which catered for students with linguistic differences. Teachers provided ESL students with modified assignments and tests so that they were neither excluded nor evaluated unfairly based on their language ability. Also, teachers facilitated ESL students’ learning of English language so that they could become more fluent in communication with others. Furthermore, they invited Cort’s father to teach the Tae Kwon Do classes as a part of Physical Education. This was observed as cultural learning as students experienced a part of Korean culture through its martial art.
The collaboration of teachers and the school worked towards: Australian multiculturalism as defined by the National Multicultural Advisory Council (1999); the Adelaide Declaration (*National Goals for Schooling in the 21st Century: The Adelaide Declaration*, 1999); and revised multicultural policy (*Multicultural Australia: United in diversity*, 2003) after September 11 and the Bali Bombings. These three policy frameworks acknowledge and respect individual cultural differences by encouraging people to maintain their cultural heritage. At the same time, they require people to acquire the common language, English and respect the law of Australia as citizens. In addition, they encourage people to acknowledge diversity as an asset to Australian society.

2) How effectively do students in a multicultural classroom communicate?

Students appeared to engage in positive intercultural communication despite the researcher’s initial concerns based on the complexity of contemporary issues such as September 11, Bali Bombings and Cronulla Riots. These incidents appeared to have been caused by co-existence of cultural differences. However, students did not seem to have serious breakdowns or barriers in intercultural communication in these two classes. Most students stated that it was good to have people from different cultures. For instance, languages other than English initiated students’ intercultural communication. Students became curious when Julie was reading Korean books or writing in Korean. Also, the use of incomprehensible English by ESL students enabled some students to build positive self-esteem by being able to help these ESL students with their English ability. However, using languages other than English and incomprehensible English were also observed to cause breakdowns in intercultural communication from time to time. Contrary to suggestion of Milojevic et al. (2001) who suggested that such incidents may be cased by racism against people who speak languages other than English, students in this classroom appeared to feel excluded because of not being able to be part of conversations. The inability to use a common language to communicate effectively appeared to be the reason for exclusion or discrimination against certain students.
Students did not appear to withdraw from intercultural communication when sitting together at lunch time, socializing during breaks, doing group work and helping others. Students appeared to sit separately based on gender rather than on cultural backgrounds. In terms of socializing during breaks, students chose friends on the basis of their personalities and common interests. Making friends based on common interest could be interpreted as a barrier in intercultural communication as was explained in Chapter Two (Jandt, 2004; Samovar & Porter, 2004). However, it did not totally deter students from socializing with others from different cultural backgrounds. For ESL students, their language ability played a role when socializing with others as Akili and Julie were close friends. When choosing a person with whom to do group work, students had a tendency to choose their friends or someone who could contribute to their work. On the other hand, students did not mind helping other students no matter what their cultural background. Overall, it was observed that students’ different cultural backgrounds were not the biggest factor when communicating with each other.

3) How effectively do students and their teacher communicate in a multicultural classroom?

Teachers did not appear to have significant breakdowns in intercultural communication. In this study, the findings of communication between students and teachers were limited to during class sessions. Both classroom teachers endeavoured to facilitate ESL students’ understanding of lessons using different methods. In order to improve students’ understanding, teachers speak clearly, using simple language and repeat their explanations. It is likely that these strategies benefited all students and not just ESL students. In addition, both classroom teachers appeared to be mediators of intercultural communication when a problem arises amongst students. Mr B reinforced the value of respecting all when students got impatient with Kent’s English.

4) What kinds of breakdowns/barriers in intercultural communication do students and teachers experience?
Chapter Two outlined the possible barriers in intercultural communication as identified by Samovar and Porter (2004). These included seeking similarities, uncertainty reduction, withdrawal, stereotyping, prejudice, racism and ethnocentrism. From the findings of this study, students appeared to look for similarities and withdraw from others at times. When socialising with others, students found friends based on common interests and personalities. Also, similar English language ability became a deciding factor when choosing someone with whom to do group work. In addition, incomprehensible use of English and use of languages other than English caused withdrawal from others. However, seeking similarities and withdrawal are not necessarily breakdowns in intercultural communication and should not be regarded either as racist or otherwise negatively.

Other potential barriers to intercultural communication such as uncertainty reduction, stereotyping, racism and ethnocentrism were also not observed to be prevalent. While the prejudice against Kent was conspicuous; however, the study did not generalise the issue to be a barrier of intercultural communication in this classroom because his difficulties seemed to be based on his personality and poor communication skills generally rather than his cultural background.

Unlike existing research e.g. (Antonopolulos et al., 1997), this study found that language appeared to be the major barrier in intercultural communication for students and teachers. Mr B expressed his frustration at not being able to use a wide range and higher level of vocabulary during lessons because of students with language difficulties. For students, language ability was one of the deciding factors when students chose a person with whom to do group work. Different languages other than English made some feel excluded which led to withdrawal from intercultural communication. On the other hand, English became a barrier when it was incomprehensible to others. Students admitted that it was difficult to interact with others with poor English which led some of them to ridicule those who used incomprehensible English. Some students appeared not to attempt to become a part of conversation when communicating with other students whose English was not recognisable to the listener. Although some analysts may interpret this as
evidence of covert racism, the experience of intercultural communication in this classroom would indicate that language barriers rather than racism were at the root of such behaviour.

As noted above, one child in particular stood out from the rest. A Mandarin speaking ESL student, Kent, was observed to have difficulties fitting in with other students in the classroom. He was subject to dislike based on rumours that might or might not have been true. Bolgatz (2005) and Jandt (2004) identified this as prejudice. The prejudice against him was manifested in various ways. Other students talked about their dislike of Kent based on their personal experience and rumours. Due to their dislike of Kent, students avoided communication with him and treated him unfairly. Dave even explicitly expressed his dislike of Kent in his presence. To a certain extent, these manifestations of dislike of Kent could be explained in terms of Allport’s (1958) outline of degrees of prejudice. The outline included: antilocution (e.g. slight aversive action), avoidance, discrimination and physical attack (verbal and non-verbal attack). However, this study does not suggest that Kent was subject to prejudice based on his cultural background. However, observation and interviews suggested that there was prejudice against him due to his peculiar characteristics. In addition, his language ability in English did not help him to be able to communicate with others effectively and this exacerbated the situation.
The structure of intercultural communication in the classroom

The findings of intercultural communication in this classroom may be presented in terms of an adaptation of Barnett and Lee’s (2003) structure of intercultural communication which was discussed in Chapter 2 and provided the theoretical basis for this study.

Figure 3. The structure of intercultural communication in 7 A and 7B

- In the above diagram, unlike Barnett and Lee’s (2003) structure, Mr A and Mr B share the same language of English.
Mrs C communicates with students in English, but her personal circumstances may enable her to empathise more with students, whether working with their general needs or language ability.

Students use English to communicate with teachers and other students with 21 different first languages.

Student interactions may or may not be between students who share a common first language.

The complexity of links in the diagram represents the wide range of interactions caused occurring communications during the school day.

In Chapter Two, the structure of intercultural communication (Barnett & Lee, 2003) was presented to demonstrate the complexity of interactions between speakers from two different cultures. This structure may be modified to represent the nature of intercultural communication within this classroom. The diagram does not represent specific occurrences of intercultural communications between students but rather provides a conceptual representation of the complexity of communications that occur constantly in this classroom. Barnett and Lee’s structure of intercultural communication merely represents the communication between two cultures along with one subject descending from the two different cultures. This diagram clearly shows that co-existence of 21 different cultural and linguistic differences generate a more complex structure. When communicating with other students in this classroom, students had not only to deal with multiple cultural and linguistic differences but were also faced with the pursuit of friendship, clashes of different personalities and issues of gender differences. This indicates intercultural communication in a classroom may be much more complex than it is represented in Barnett and Lee’s structure of intercultural communication. Furthermore, it may be concluded that despite the potential for covert racism in this classroom, difficulties between cultural entities in this classroom were based on lack of shared language rather than racial prejudice.

Strength of Research
This study aimed to provide a vicarious experience of intercultural communication in a multicultural classroom. By using ethnographical case study, the study was able to include those incidents that could have been missed in a survey or interview study. In addition, the researcher’s Korean language ability has enabled the study to provide Korean students’ accounts that could have been missed by others without knowledge of the Korean language. The English ability of ESL students could have been a limitation to this study; however, the researcher’s ability to speak Korean facilitated more in-depth discussion with Cort and Julie. The resulting snapshot of Korean students’ communication patterns may provide deeper understanding of what students with other language backgrounds might also be experiencing in the classroom.

The researcher’s own background as a migrant to Australia is congruent with the characteristics of ethnographical case study as an ethnographical study which includes emic and etic perspectives (Creswell, 2005; Johnson & Christensen, 2004). The researcher provided emic data since she was able to analyse and represent data as a person who has experienced positive and negative intercultural communication in an Australian classroom setting as an adult. To a certain extent, this might have helped the researcher to become more sensitive when observing and interpreting intercultural communication. By the same token, the researcher interpreted the data as a person who has not been in the Australian primary education system as a teacher or a student. In other words, this study was able to observe and represent intercultural communication in a multicultural classroom with different perspectives because the researcher possesses specific cultural understandings and experience.

The longer than planned period of observation may have given more insights of intercultural communication in this classroom. The flexibility of the timeline that was provided by both classroom teachers and the ESL teacher allowed the researcher to observe students and teachers in more depth. Towards the end of the observation period, the patterns of findings appeared more convincing and clear. Also, due to the amount of time that the researcher spent with students in the classroom, students appeared more relaxed and become friendlier with her. These were shown during interviews when
talking about their thoughts, perspectives and experiences of intercultural communication and even their personal lives.

As previously discussed in Chapter Two, research on intercultural communication has relied heavily on studies from other countries such as the United States of America and England. Due to the different history and nature of intercultural communication of each country, Australia needs more empirical studies of intercultural communication in classroom settings. This study adds more knowledge and understanding of students’ intercultural communication in a multicultural classroom in Australia by acknowledging the unique characteristics of Australian multiculturalism.

**Limitations of Research**

There were unexpected incidents and events during data collection which have resulted in some limitations to the research. The initial plan to study a single classroom had to be changed because of the organisation of this classroom offered. The classroom included two classes which comprised 56 students in a big area. Due to the number of students and the size of the classroom, it was inevitable that the researcher would miss some students during observation.

The researcher’s cultural and linguistic background could have become a limitation of the research for a few reasons. This process of translation from Korean to English and in reverse might have resulted in the loss of the original connotation of Korean students’ accounts. Also, due to the fact that the researcher’s English is not her first language, students and teachers could have been misinterpreted or misunderstood by the researcher to a certain extent. Last, personal experience of intercultural communication might have sensitised the researcher and influenced her observations. The researcher might have endowed certain incidents with meanings other than those understood by participants. However, every attempt was made to verify the interpretations with both teachers and participating students through conversations and interviews, this maintains the integrity of emic data. The process of translation is always potentially controversial and idea expressed in one language may not be adequately represented in another.
The characteristics of this school which include social economic status and cultural diversity might have limited research findings. The school where the research was carried out generally speaking had high socio-economic status. To a certain extent, this might have influenced the data. Also, the presence or absence of certain cultures might also have affected the data. Due to the characteristics of culture, culture is reflected in people’s behaviour (Brislin, 1993; Gudykunst & Kim, 1997; Lustig & Koester, 1999), the presence and absence of particular cultures might have influenced the present manifestation of intercultural communication.

**Recommendations**

The findings of this study have added to knowledge of intercultural communication in a multicultural classroom. These findings could be used by policy makers, educators and other researchers of intercultural communication. The researcher makes a few recommendations to facilitate positive intercultural communication in school settings.

The school where the research was carried out demonstrated what a school could do to promote intercultural communication. The school created an explicit environment where everyone should be respected and treated as equal human beings, regardless of their cultural backgrounds, and facilitated learning to become a part of such environment. The environment was created and managed by the behaviour management plan which clearly stated the importance of respecting each other and valuing others’ cultural differences. The behaviour management plan was reinforced and encouraged by teachers in this school. This encouraged positive interpersonal skills that are needed in intercultural communication. Also, students were encouraged by ‘virtue of the week’ during assembly. This encouraged positive attitudes towards people from different backgrounds. In addition, the school provided cultural knowledge and understanding through workshops during Enrichment Day. This school endeavoured to provide students with knowledge of different cultures, skills in interpersonal communication and positive attitudes of people from different cultures. As Spiutzberg and Cupach (as cited in Wiseman, 2002) outlined, this school incorporated knowledge, skills and motivation for intercultural
communication competence. This shows the success of promoting positive intercultural communication involves harmonisation of knowledge, skills and motivation.

This school has the benefit of an ESL teacher who has first-hand experience of learning another language in a foreign country. Her experience of learning another language in a country where English was not commonly used has influenced her teaching. She understands how difficult it is for a person to switch from the home language to English frequently. She encourages students to maintain their home language so that they do not lose their cultural identities and learn English more easily. In addition, she makes ESL students feel welcome and comfortable by engaging a buddy system and preventing foreseeable problems due to linguistic differences. Some might consider her ESL program and teaching strategies to be a common practice. However, her personal experience has given her more insight into being an ESL student and has instilled in her empathy towards people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds. This indicates having a teacher who has different linguistic ability and has herself needed to call on others’ intercultural communication skills might influence programs that promote intercultural communication competence. The teacher’s empathy and insight into intercultural communication will make this program more meaningful.

Even though this school demonstrated a positive model of promoting intercultural communication which corresponds to current multicultural policies, the school’s LOTE lessons could be improved and become more meaningful and enjoyable. As Ingram (1994) suggested, LOTE lessons benefit students to have more cultural knowledge which forms their positive attitudes. Also, learning another language creates empathy for others as students experience what others undergo to learn another language. In order to maximise the effectiveness of LOTE lessons, students need to be able to see the needs and benefits of learning languages other than English living in the current time and in a multicultural society. Language learning should be fun and applicable to life otherwise it may become difficult and tedious. LOTE teachers may need to perceive LOTE lessons as a stepping stone for students to become competent to live in such a complex world.
The researcher believes that this study could be used as the basis for further research. First, this study could be replicated by another researcher who speaks English only. This may indicate how differences of researchers’ linguistic and cultural backgrounds influence the observation data and its analysis and interpretation. Second, the situation of Kent could be used as the basis of a longitudinal study. The influence of his early experience in a new cultural environment on his adult life could be studied. Based on findings of the longitudinal study, educators could implement teaching strategies accordingly. Third, the study could be replicated in other Australian primary schools located in different socio-economic areas and also in schools which include different ‘mixes’ of cultural and linguistic diversity. Last, this study could become the basis of future comparative studies. The comparing factors could include social economic status, the degree of diversity and presence of particular cultural groups.

**Conclusion**

This study has investigated intercultural communication in two multicultural classes in a double teaching space in the Brisbane metropolitan area. The school is located in a multicultural area with high social economic status where more than 40% of the population speak languages other than English. Amongst enrolled students, 25% of students are from non-English speaking backgrounds. The classroom where the research was carried out has 56 Year 7 students. Out of 56 students, only 20 students and their parents speak English only. On the other hand, the rest of students can speak languages other than English or their parents speak languages other than English at home. In general, students had positive attitudes towards others from different backgrounds. Also, students were accustomed to studying and socialising with others from different cultural and linguistic backgrounds.

Despite initial concern about students living in uncertain times with problems of co-existence of different cultures highlighted by current events such as September 11, Bali Bombings and the Cronulla Riots, students were observed to have few hostile problems when communicating with others from different cultural and linguistic backgrounds. The breakdowns that were observed were based on language rather than cultural backgrounds.
Students did not appreciate others speaking languages other than English since they felt excluded by it. While some abused their language abilities to criticise others most students used languages other than English to express their thoughts more freely. In addition, incomprehensible English was not tolerated by some which caused withdrawal and mockery to a certain extent. On the other hand, languages promoted intercultural communication. Languages other than English initiated some intercultural communication. Finally, the incomprehensible English of some students promoted high self-confidence in other students who chose to help them with their English or other study.

Students’ socialisation with others was based more on a common interest than cultural backgrounds. Students were separated by gender during lunch time. For grouping, students preferred friends to be in their groups. Language ability was a factor in choosing a person with whom to do group work. In terms of helping others, students were willing to help whoever needed their help regardless of cultural background. Nevertheless, there were some exceptions even in this seemingly friendly classroom: an ESL student who was not liked by many students because of his peculiar personal characteristics.

The school offered programs to promote intercultural communication and teachers encouraged, implemented and reinforced them. Classroom teachers promoted intercultural communication by facilitating ESL students’ understanding using simpler English with repetition of instructions and lessons. They created an environment where students’ cultural backgrounds became assets to learning. The ESL teacher constructed modified assignments, encouraged students to maintain their home language and prevented foreseeable difficulties. Teachers’ efforts were also supported by the school. The school provided the behaviour management plan, ‘virtue of the week’, workshops and LOTE. The behaviour management plan promoted students’ interpersonal skills. The ‘virtue of the week’ instilled positive attitudes towards people from different cultural and linguistic backgrounds. The workshops facilitated students’ learning of different cultures. Even though LOTE lessons did not appear to maximise the benefits of learning another language, the lessons encouraged students to become more aware of different cultures and language.
Some may believe that eating food from different cultures makes people become tolerant of others from different cultural backgrounds and become sensitive to cultural differences. Trying food from different cultures might show a small portion of one’s cultural awareness; however, it does not necessarily make someone able to engage in positive intercultural communication. Becoming competent in intercultural communication is not as simple as trying different food. In order to become competent in intercultural communication, people need to gain knowledge of other cultures, maintain positive attitudes towards others from different cultures and acquire interpersonal skills. These could be promoted throughout our education system to facilitate students to become competent in intercultural communication. Also, there are advantages in training all teachers to become aware of intercultural communication competence as such training would improve communication with all students.

Becoming an effective intercultural communicator is neither a personal choice nor a given talent. Living in current times in multicultural Australia faced with global issues of cultural differences, it is essential that everyone becomes competent in intercultural communication and achieving this competence will occur through learning necessary knowledge and skills. This is not as simple as eating different types of food but it is more beneficial to oneself as well as to the rest of the human race. Such learning and competence will help the co-existence of different cultures with fewer breakdowns and maximise the advantages to be gained by sharing the most beneficial aspects of cultures worldwide.
Appendix A: A letter from the principal to QUT Ethics Committee

Dear Research Ethics Officer,

As Principal of [redacted], I have discussed the Master of Education (Research) project of Ms KO Min-Jeong with her and have approved her proposal to visit this school during Semester 1 2007 to gather her data and to work in classrooms as a voluntary teacher-aide.

Since Min is not intending to do overtly more than observe and talk with the children as part of the normal interactions of a teacher’s aide and is focusing on broad patterns of interaction rather than on individual cases, I do not believe that it is necessary for her to obtain explicit consent from individual parents in this project.
Appendix B: A letter from the principal to parents

30 April 2007

Dear Parents

I would like to inform you that Min-Jeong [Omitted for confidentiality purposes], a research student from Queensland University of Technology (QUT) is visiting [Omitted for confidentiality purposes] to collect data to complete her study. The topic of her study is intercultural communication in a primary classroom. In summary, it is a study about interaction amongst primary students from different cultural backgrounds.

Ms Ko will work with teachers and students in the classroom as an assistant, while also observing student-student and student-teacher interactions discreetly.

In terms of confidentiality and privacy, she is obliged not to disclose anyone's personal identity. The findings of her observation and interactions will be reported using pseudonyms. In her study, the name of the school, and those of individual students and teachers will not be identified in any way.

Ms Ko is a registered teacher in Queensland, holding a Blue Card, and is therefore of great assistance as an extra helping hand for students with their classroom activities.

Please feel free to contact me if you have any queries on this matter.

Yours sincerely,

Signature removed for confidentiality purpose

Footnote removed for confidentiality purpose
### Appendix C: Fieldnotes (Excerpt)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Observation</th>
<th>Perspectives</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Children went out for the daily P.E session. A few students were left behind because of their physical conditions. James was playing with computer and Ross was working on his project. Kamea and Michelle (both are at 7A) were working on their project in another area. I was wondering around the room and trying to memorise students’ name. Then I stood in between James and Ross’s seats in front of computers. J(James) M(Min) R(Ross) J: We’ve never had an Asian teacher before. We had lots of Canadian teachers. I like Asians’ hair. It’s boofy. (pointing at my hair) 5 minutes later M: Did you notice any differences between Canadian teachers and Asian ones? J: Their accents are different but both are nice. R: Which country do you like better? (He was asking this question to J) J: … Cort walked in after two and a half laps from running two and a half laps of cross country track as a part of daily P.E. Cort (Korean) was curious about my background. (Continuation of the conversation I had with Julie on 3/4/07) M (Min) Julie (J) M: You said the other day, it’s good that I’m in your class. Why is it good? J: I want Korean teacher in my class. M: Why do you like to have a Korean teacher in your class? J: I don’t know. M: (I thought she couldn’t explain it because of her lack in English ability) Do you think you can explain that in Korean? J: No, I don’t know.</td>
<td>The child acknowledged the difference but it didn’t give him to have a bad impression nor to prevent him from finding a similarity. I was not sure whether James heard Ross’s question. Also, I didn’t want to put James on a hot seat. Nobody else except Julie has asked me about my backgrounds. A couple of children asked me why I was there. Either she wasn’t capable of expressing her feelings like I couldn’t at her age or she is just happy that there is someone with whom she can relate her situation.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

119
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Observation</th>
<th>Perspectives</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Julie (J) was reading a Korean comic book during the silent reading session. Holly (AC) was walking pass Julie and realized that Julie was reading a Korean comic. L: what is it about? J: (appeared to be annoyed) I don’t know L: (pointing at the sentences) What does it say? J: (She translated Korean into English) Akili went out of the class to attend other activities leaving her assignment file open in the computer. Kamea went to Akili’s computer and started Akili’s work for her. Everyone was asked to sit in the common area. I was standing next to the group trying to decide where to sit. Justin was walking pass and talking to himself. J: I don’t want to sit next to Kent (who came to Australia less than a year ago from Taiwan). M: Why don’t you like sitting next to Kent? J: Because I hate him and he hates me. M: Why do you hate him? J (native English speaker): Because he’s a weirdo. M: Why is he a weirdo? J: Because he thinks he’s too good. He thinks he can lift a cinema. (I was confused what it meant) M: So, why does he hate you? J: He doesn’t hate me. I hate him. There were two boys speaking in Cantonese. They spoke in their language when others aren’t around. Only thing I could understand was one boy was asking the other to go somewhere. Both of them speak fluent English. Students were sitting at the common area. Teacher was trying to figure out who has completed their assignments and whether they are ready to submit them. He asked one of students: T: Akili, you have done your assignment right? A: umm T: You only need to print things out right? A: ahhmmm T: (ignored her and didn’t clarify his statement and asked other students)</td>
<td>I would like to ask whether it is such a good idea for ESL students to read a book in their own language. My concern here is whether it would slow down ESL students’ learning English. Maybe I should find a literature about this. It might be a part of promoting multiculturalism. It might not matter from what cultural backgrounds people come. They are just little children. Disliking others who are from different cultural background doesn’t necessarily mean it’s a racially discriminated. A child can hate others because of some other reasons. I should find out what he meant. Possible interview questions for Gabriel and Long such as:  - Do you speak Cantonese often?  - When do you speak Cantonese? Mr B might have just wanted to get things done as quickly as possible since it was the last day before the holiday. Or, he was convinced that Akili has finished her work and she didn’t understand what he said. He might not want to waste time on her. I found Akili’s English is quite good. Maybe she gets too nervous to speak when she is in crowd. I should ask her. Akili is from Sudan and spent 4 years in a refugee camp in Egypt before coming to Australia.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Observation</td>
<td>Perspectives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------</td>
<td>--------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(In the morning) Before the school started, I asked Julie whether she had done her homework. She showed me her poem. While I was reading her poem, Kathy walked up to us. M: Good morning K: Good morning. M: How was your weekend? K: I didn’t do much. M: nothing special? J: (in Korean) I went to garage sale. M: So, you went to garage sale. K: … J: (in Korean) we left at 8 o’clock. M: (facing Kathy) She went to garage sale early in the morning. J: (started explaining in English but it did not come out well) K: (quietly left) M: (facing Julie) when we are with someone who doesn’t speak English, let’s speak in English) Akili came up to us and Julie started reading her poem to her. (cross country) Cort, Ella, Hannah were left behind because of physical condition. I asked Cort whether he wanted help with his poetry writing. Cort said because he was writing poems in English his is very poor. He added that he was awarded five times for his writing skill in Korea. Then I told him to write in Korean. He didn’t start. He said, he couldn’t write it because I was watching. (maths lesson with Mr A) Students came back from cross-country running. Mr. L asked both classes to gather around at 7A area. Cort wandered around till majority of students found their seats. Then, he grabbed a chair and sat next to Kent. Mr A Asked a Q to Jamie and then Gabrielle. Joshua got into trouble for not listening. Joshua had to stand for a minute. Joshua was sitting next to Dave. Kent got into trouble for not focusing. He had to stand for a minute. Louisa was sitting next to Kamea.</td>
<td>I am not sure whether Julie deliberately spoke in Korean so Kathy would leave. In the classroom, Kathy sits close to Julie but they hardly talk to each other.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
T said the class was going to be for knowing Chinese characters.

Kamea walked towards her seat from 7B area and she stopped in front of her seat and posed like a model. (For the record, she once didn’t come to school because of her catwalk) Akili looked at Kamea with admiration until Kamea left with her book.

T handed out laminated worksheets. In the worksheet, Chinese characters were written on a grid paper. Students were asked to cut each little box. Some of them were given already cut ones.

S then asked to open their books and looked up the characters from their books.

T read the first Chinese sentence and asked S to find the character.

T pronounced Chinese words and asked S to find the corresponding characters.

S are to repeat after T.

S had to find the characters and arranged them in order.

T said a word in English and S were to find the corresponding character.

After the Chinese lesson, 7B joined 7A at 7B area.

Joshua asked Upala where she got the book that she had it on her desk. He eventually grabbed it and she took it away.

Joshua was kicking Ben’s chair. Ben looked at him expressing his annoyance and turned around.

Akili might have been envious the fact that:
   a. she is confident
   b. she is a model
   c. she is an average Anglo-Celtic Australian whereas Akili has a distinctive physical difference.

I should add this into Akili’s interview session.

It was a fun way to learn Chinese characters. Cultural aspect of language learning wasn’t introduced.

Ben usually doesn’t express her anger.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Observation</th>
<th>Perspectives</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>(lunch)</strong></td>
<td>She asked me because she might think every Asian girl has straight hair.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ben, Cory and Cort were sitting alone.</td>
<td>Kent rarely gets involved in verbal communication. He tends to use his actions to get engaged in communication with others.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I was sitting on the stairs and Zeena came up to me followed by Michelle and Kathy. She said hello. She told me that William was wearing a skirt. Michelle reassured me. It turned out it was a prop for Zeena’s public speaking.</td>
<td>It is one of the most frequently asked questions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>(corridor during lunch time)</strong></td>
<td>It is hard to observe year 7 students during big lunch hour.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elise came up to me and asked whether my hair was naturally curly.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kent was hitting Raviv’s back and stepped away. Raviv turned around when he did it. Raviv had a smile and did not care. Kent repeated about three times then Raviv yelled “Bugger off”. Then Kent had a smile and walked away.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Julie was alone and pleyed with Damagochi.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>(classroom right after lunch)</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The relief teacher asked me:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T R: What part of the world are you from? Japan?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M: Korea</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>(7B and 7A sitting on the carpet for public speaking)</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presenter: Helper(s)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zeena: Michelle, Elise, Gabrielle, Seth, Kathy</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>: William</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jasmine: Eleni</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ross: Raviv, Gabriel</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kamea: Louisa, Holly, Sara</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>: Gabrielle</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>(Lunch)</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>On the way to lunch, Lesley asked Amy.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L: Where is Elise?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A: (with smile) I don’t know, I don’t care</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I went to lunch area but most S were other places so I went back to the classroom. The classroom was locked and I stood there and started observing.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix D: Interview Questions for Students

School
1. Do you like coming to school?
   - If so (not), any reasons?
2. Which time of the school day do you like (or dislike) the most?
3. Which subject do you like the most?

Perspectives on different cultural background
4. What’s the good/bad thing about having people from different cultures?
5. What do you think the differences/similarities are between different cultures?

Learning Chinese
6. Do you like learning Chinese?
   - What do you like the most (or least) about learning Chinese?

Cultural background
7. Do you speak any other language than English at home?
   - Do you speak the language at school?
   - When do you speak the language at school?
   - What language do you speak at home?
8. Do your parents speak any other language than English?
9. What is your cultural background?
   - Do you like talking about your cultural background?
   - If so (not), any reasons?
   - Do you like people asking you about your cultural background?
   - If so (not), any reasons?

Friends
10. Who do you hang out mostly at school?
11. What do you like the most about your friend(s)?
    - What makes your to become friends with them?
    - Who do you like to spend time with during breaks?
14. What (or who) bothers you at school?
15. What sorts of behaviour/characteristic annoys/bothers you?
16. Do you like helping others during public speaking session? Any particular reasons?

Group work
17. Who do you like to do group work with?
   - Could you tell me any reason for that?
18. Are there any people you prefer not to work/hang out with?
   - Could you tell me any reason for that?
19. What do you do if you find yourself with those people?

Do people call you any name that you don’t like to be called?
Appendix E: Interview Questions for Teachers

Cultural background
Do you speak any other language than English at home?
What is your cultural background?
Is cultural background important to you?

Teaching class with diversity
How many different linguistically diverse groups are represented in your class?
What is it like to teach such a variety?
   - positive
   - negative
How do you handle this variety?
Can you tell me about a time when the variety was particularly useful to the class?
Can you tell me about a time when the variety caused problems?
How did you deal with the problems?
Do you have any particular strategies to prevent problems stemming from different cultural backgrounds in your classroom?
Please tell me some time when you are aware of cultural problems.
How often does it arise compare to other classroom problem?

Teaching Kent
I’ve noticed that Kevin has a few problems in the classroom. How do you think he is doing?

Curriculum
Please tell me about the units that you implement to promote intercultural communication.
Please tell me about the teaching strategies you use to promote intercultural communication.
With grouping, what do you consider the most?
References

ACSSO, & Australian Parents Council Inc. (n.d.). It is important to keep your first languages.


126


Queensland Studies Authority. (n.d.). Languages other than English years 4 -10 syllabuses. Brisbane: The Author.


(2000). Studies of Society and Environment: Years 1 to 10 Syllabus, from
(2001). Equity considerations for the development of curriculum and test
materials, from www.qscc.qld.edu.au
Tilbury, D., & Henderson, K. (2003). Education for intercultural understanding in
Australian schools: A review of its contribution to education for a sustainable
Massachusetts: Allyn and Bacon.
Wilkinson, S. (2004). Focus group research. In D. Silverman (Ed.), Qualitative research:
B. Mody (Eds.), Handbook of international and intercultural communication (2nd
communication competence. International Journal of intercultural relations, 13,
349-370.
Wren, D. J. (1999). School culture: exploring the hidden curriculum. Adolescence,
34(135), 593 - 596.