A Study on Acculturation Strategies of International University Students

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ABSTRACT

This study focused on the preferences of acculturation strategies among Arab and African international students studying at a university in North Cyprus. The study further investigated the role of learners' cultural, motivational, and personal factors that interplay, and the influence of these factors on their language learning performance within the acculturation process. The study adopted a mixed methods research design. The first phase included a survey with 210 students while the second phase consisted of in-depth interviews with 19 student selected based on demographic information. Findings revealed that integration was preferred over other acculturation strategies while female students generally had a higher level of acculturation than males, and African students preferred integration as an acculturation strategy more so than did Arab students. Overall, results indicated that students from abroad perceived themselves in a positive light in relation to their acculturation in North Cyprus. Findings reflected very little antipathy towards the host nation or disappointment with the university, especially teachers not always using English as a medium of instruction in class even though Eastern Mediterranean University is an English-medium university. Overall, participants adopted different strategies to deal with stress, tension, and homesickness. In conclusion, the results indicated that the safe environment with the absence of fear, war, and civil conflict made the university attractive to many students from countries experiencing social unrest.

Keywords: Acculturation, North Cyprus, Foreign Language Education, Language Learner Motivation, Cultural Diversity, Multicultural Environment.

ÖZ

Bu çalışma, Kuzey Kıbrıs'taki Arap ve Afrikalı üniversite öğrencilerinin kültürlenme strateji tercihleri ve bu tercihlerin ne gibi faktörlerle etkileşim içerisinde olduğunu incelemiştir. Bunun yanında öğrencilerin kültürel, güdülenme durumu ve kişisel özelliklerinin etkileşimlerinin ne şekilde konumlandığı ve bunların kültürlenme temelinde öğrencilerin dil öğrenme performansları üzerindeki etkileri irdelenmiştir. Bu çalışma karma yöntem araştırma tasarımı çevçevesinde sürdürülmüştür. Çalışmanın ilk aşamasında 210 öğrenciye yapısal bir anket uygulanmış, bunun takibinde ise demografik özellikleri de dikkate alınarak rastgele seçilen 19 öğrenciyle yüz yüze mülakat gerçekleştirilmiştir. Bulgular ilk etapta kültürlenme stratejileri arasından en çok bütünleşme stratejisinin tercih edildiğini göstermiştir. Bu bağlamda, erkek öğrencilere kıyasla kadın öğrencilerin daha yüksek kültürlenme puanlarına sahip oldukları saptanmıştır. Aynı zamanda, Arap öğrencilere kıyasla Afrikalı öğrencilerin bütünleşme stratejisini daha çok tercih ettikleri ortaya çıkmıştır. Bulgular genel anlamda Kuzey Kıbrıs'ta öğrenim gören yabancı öğrencilerin kendilerini olumlu bir kültürlenme durumunda algıladıklarını göstermiştir. Bulgular, Doğu Akdeniz Üniversitesinin öğretim dili ingilizce olan bir eğitim kurumu olmasına rağmen özellikle öğretim görevlilerinin ingilizce dilini sınıflarda her zaman kullanmamaları ev sahibi ülkeye karşı çok az düzeyde antipati ve hayal kırıklığı algısı olduğunu işaret etmiştir. Genel olarak, bulgular farklı öğrencilerin aynı zamanda stres, gerginlik ve yurt özlemi gibi durumlarla başetmek için farklı yöntemler kulladıklarını göstermiştir. Sonuç olarak, özellikle bazı toplumsal veya ekonomik sıkıntılar yaşayan ülkelerden gelen öğrencilerin güvenli, savaştan uzak ve

korkunun olmadığı üniversite ortamlarını çekici ve cazip bulduklarını da göstermiştir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Kültürlenme, Kuzey Kıbrıs'ta Dil Eğitimi, Öğrenci Motivasyonu, Kültürel Çeşitlilik, Çok Kültürlü Ortam

To my beloved mother, father and the Memory of Mustafa Kemal Atatürk (founder of modern Turkish world, who was recorded with his speech: "Peace at Home and Peace in the World")

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It is a pleasure to pay tribute to the research literature that provided the basis for this study, in particular the area of multicultural education that pays crucial attention to not just native English-speaking countries but also in countries like North Cyprus where international students meet with their international peers in a peaceful study abroad environment despite the political embargoes that the country still experiences. This thesis will indeed contribute to the future of university education in North Cyprus, and at Eastern Mediterranean University in particular, as well as to the other educational institutions in other parts of the world.

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INTRODUCTION

This chapter introduces the construct of acculturation and discusses its emergence as a contemporary model evolving from different methods and approaches. The chapter then presents the purpose of the study, the research questions employed, and the significance of the study. Finally, definitions of key concepts in the study are presented.

1.1 Background to the Study

Given the phenomenon of globalisation and the intercultural contact that has occurred in recent decades, acculturation has become a contemporary issue within cross-cultural studies (Ozer & Schwartz, 2016). In recent years, following the increase of global migration, new terms such as biculturalism, multiculturalism, integration, and globalization emerged. These terms have been applied interchangeably with the term acculturation as an alternative concept (Sam & Berry, 2010).

Duff (2008) noted language socialisation studies "pay particular attention to social, cultural, and interactional contexts in which language and other kinds of knowledge are learned (p. xiii)." Vickers (2007) stated "language, culture, and cognition are interconnected (p. 622)", which shows how the term acculturation emerged from a wider study of language socialisation and sociolinguistics.

Although the construct of "acculturation" in English as a second language (ESL) context has been researched from multiple perspectives, this study reviews students' awareness in the diverse cultural context of the English as a foreign language (EFL) classroom, exploring the relationship between acculturation in such EFL settings and sets it in comparison to ESL classrooms. The social and cultural aspects of target-language culture recently have become a trendy topic and a topic of discussion among foreign language students and teachers. The most common reviews (Knouse, 2013; Spenader, 2011; Kubota, 1999; Berry, 2003; Jiang, Green Henley & Masten, 2009) of such constructs claim that language teachers and students in naturally occurring settings embody a wide range of social and cultural roles and identities. In particular, in EFL classrooms, issues of sociocultural identity and representations are crucial. The relative paucity of research in this field shows that there is a need for more research to investigate different cultural backgrounds that meet in North Cyprus and for our purposes specifically at Eastern Mediterranean University (EMU), where multiculturalism and diversity are key characteristics within the institution.

EMU is located in the Eastern Mediterranean region, on the east coast of Cyprus. This study aimed to contribute to the welfare of the local society as well as to peace in the region and the wider world at a time when rapid change and vast immigration movements are taking place within this geographic region. For migrants moving to another country to live, study, or work, immigration entails predicting how to secure better life satisfaction, academic achievement, career success, and social skills. International students may choose to study in North Cyprus because of recently accelerated immigration movements and the need to escape from wars and civil wars, terrorist incidents, and social strife that are occurring in countries such as Syria,

Palestine, Libya in the wider region, but not in North Cyprus. Therefore, North Cyprus is attractive as one of the safest places in the region, and EMU, with its diversity of English-medium academic programs, provides academic opportunities for students from the nearer geography. The benefits are two-way, which the students concerned acting as "cultural carriers" (Klienberg, 1970).

Another possible reason why many students might choose to study at EMU is the history of Cyprus and the years of British colonial rule under which English became a common language and was taught as a second language. As Arkin (2013) stated:

> ESL would illustrate the pre-1960 situation in Cyprus, where Turkish and Greek Cypriots were under the British rule. After its takeover by the British Empire from the Ottoman rule in 1878, Cyprus had been under British sovereign for almost a hundred years until 1960, when the island was handed over to the Turkish and Greek under the Republic of Cyprus. When British governed Cyprus, English was one of the official languages alongside Greek and Turkish. Therefore, English use among people was very common, especially in formal and official settings with British officials, and between Greeks and Turks who did not know one of the languages. In education, too, English had a very important place. During the colonial times, English-medium secondary schools and colleges were regarded as the gate to privilege, power, and job opportunities at the government offices and institutions. (pp. 3-4)

Education was an important element of British rule in Cyprus, and it was, of course, generally an English-medium education. This meant that several generations grew up with the English language and with an ethos of British culture and mind-set. More than most places in the near and Middle East, Cyprus is a 'Western' country. This is an important element of the present research context. Education is generally of a Western variety, with discovery learning a major factor (Morgan, 2010). Students coming from countries such as Syria, Palestine, Libya, Jordan, and Saudi Arabia may find the education system very different from that which they have experienced previously. Although 'spoon-feeding' and passive acceptance on the part of the

learner of what is handed down from on high may be what many experienced in their own countries, in North Cyprus they encounter a more learner-centred approach.

The present researcher's institution (i.e., EMU) offers English-medium academic programs with the opportunity of learning English as a foreign language in an international teaching context characterized by multicultural diversity and a learner-centred teaching approach, which is very different from the students' home academic contexts. There are approximately 20,000 students from 106 different countries studying at EMU and 1,100 academics from 35 different countries teaching programs in English, offering students the opportunity to learn and study in English. As stated on the university's official web site:

> With its highly developed infrastructure, prominent academic staff members, 20,000 students from 106 and 1,100 academics from 35 different countries, quality programs in English, the opportunity of learning a second foreign language, student exchange programs, rich sports, social and cultural activity opportunities, international accreditations, an international teaching context, and a diploma recognised throughout the world, EMU prepares its students for their international careers by educating them in becoming creative and competitive individuals with entrepreneurial skills. EMU has been offering quality education through 100 undergraduate and school programs and 81 postgraduate and doctoral degree programs provided by 11 faculties, 5 schools and Foreign Languages and English Preparatory School. (Retrieved fromhttps://www.emu.edu.tr/north-cyprus-universities)

This study particularly focused on students who were enrolled in the School of Foreign Languages and English Preparatory School. These students had taken English courses in their previous years of study to learn and improve their language skills and then had continued their learning in English-medium departments.

1.2 Purpose of the Study

It is often argued that culture has a significant influence on teaching and learning a target language, whether learning takes place inside or outside of formal classroom

environments. Therefore, it is crucial for language teachers to implement certain strategies in relation to students' psychological and sociocultural adaptation to help them through the process of acculturation at EMU and North Cyprus. This study, therefore, aims to identify and overcome obstacles learners may have while learning and integrating with the host culture, and when trying to move beyond the plateau to obtain language gains and become more aware of sociocultural factors affecting their learning in the target language.

As mentioned in Duff (2007), learners of a second language (L2) have a set of "linguistic and cultural traditions" from their first language (L1) when they try to join the L2 community. Wang (2010) pointed out that the new communities may include host families, classmates, those in dormitories, and other communities in such settings like public transportation, stores, and religious or hobby groups.

Knouse (2013) suggested that by integrating oneself completely in the language learning process and target culture, learners can improve themselves in a study abroad context insofar as they have plenty of L2 input through contact with native speakers in the classroom and outside. Wang (2010) reported that study abroad students became more sociable, extroverted, self-confident, and independent in contrast those who had no experience in a study abroad context. Wang (2010) claimed that the study abroad context gave learners opportunities to benefit from language input and interactions.

However, Spenader (2011) highlighted the fact that many researchers have focused on the linguistic achievements of study abroad programs. In terms of linguistic achievement, some studies found that students who studied abroad achieved more

oral proficiency than students who did not go abroad. For example, Lafford (1995) found that students who studied abroad outperformed their peers at home when it came to communicative strategies. Similarly, according to Freed's (1995b) work, study abroad participants seemed to outperform their at home peers when it came to fluency development.

However, adapting to life and study or work in a foreign country can be a difficult experience. According to Masgoret, Bernaus, and Gardner (2000), expectations and attitudes toward the members of host culture are influential determinants of cross-cultural contact. Mancheno (2008) found that when homestay and non-homestay settings were compared, the homestay setting was more beneficial than the non-homestay setting in relation to study abroad students' language gains. Mancheno (2008) furthermore claimed that homestay context provides more opportunities for meaning negotiation, and thus more language gains. Allen (2007) pointed out those learners who have the homestay experience as part of their study abroad program had significantly higher linguistic gains than those without homestay experiences.

Jiang, Green, Henley, and Masten (2009) referred to some studies that investigated how L2 learners' degree of acculturation affected L2 acquisition in different populations. They suggested that in order to enhance L2 oral proficiency, later- life L2 learners should consider becoming more immersed in American culture. For example, in addition to English language learning, learners could benefit from obtaining more knowledge about American history and customs, contacting American people in real life, and also practicing more unfamiliar features of the American lifestyle. Jian, Green, Henley, and Masten (2009) suggested real life-

related activities and cultural events could be introduced into the L2 classroom to provide learners with opportunities to become familiar with American culture.

Overcoming obstacles related to integration and implementing strategies to enhance integration becomes more challenging, however, when cultural and linguistic differences are greater as is the case of international students studying at EMU. This raises the question of which culture students should be exposed to in an EFL classroom: the traditional target culture model, or, the local culture, study abroad context, and/or global culture. These questions need further research to investigate this matter in more depth and to contribute to this particular field of study as the development of globalisation and cultural diversity continues to play significant role.

In addition, research has suggested that motivation and personality factors play an important role in adaptation when individuals study abroad in a new culture. For example, Masgoret, Bernaus, and Gardner (2000) discussed the importance of the role of personality factors such as 'integrativeness', 'motivation', 'adjustment', and 'self-confidence' in second language learning, . Hammer (1978) suggested that the ability to communicate, the ability to establish interpersonal relationships, and the ability to cope with psychological stress are three major dimensions that affect cross-cultural adaptation. And it is not only the personality of students that may have an effect---the teacher's personality also makes a difference in how effectively s/he can communicate. In fact, Masgoret, Bernaus, and Gardner (2000) suggested that teachers who are perceived as more extroverted and less anxious are able to communicate more effectively in the classroom setting, which is important for students and teachers alike. According to Gudykunst and Hammer (1988), effective communication has been regarded as one of the key components of cross-cultural

adjustment, and one important contributor to effective communication is foreign language proficiency. Moreover, Wang (2010) suggested that motivation also could play an influential role in the acquisition of L2. Accordingly, the complex relationship between motivation, acculturation, the development of social networks, and exposure to the target language may be the driving force behind language acquisition in the study abroad context.

Spenader (2011) highlighted the fact that many studies have examined the real linguistic benefits of study abroad programs, but that research into the cultural factors that interact in the acculturation process are limited. According to Spenader (2011), more research is needed to understand what advantages exist in studying abroad prior to college, both socially and psychologically. In fact, research has suggested that the individual's culture and personality play an important role when individuals study abroad and adapt to a new culture. In relation to that, Sam and Berry (2010) argued the cultural values, norms, attitudes, and personality factors at play between two cultural communities in contact need to be further investigated to understand the acculturation process. It is important to understand the nature of relationships between groups. Here the question of whether the relationship is based on the domination of one group by the other arises, along with whether the relationship is based on mutual respect or hostility. Moreover, there is a need to understand the cultural changes that result in both groups that emerge in the mutual process of acculturation. According to Sam and Berry (2010), there is no cultural group that remains unchanged after cultural contact, meaning that acculturation is a two-way interaction that results in actions and reactions in the contact situation.

There are many unanswered questions about the process of second language socialisation, self-identity, and study abroad, which justify an exploratory qualitative approach. The study of language socialization, understanding language development, requires detailed data on all aspects of the language socialization process. Likewise, the complexity of language acquisition and the nature of self-identity formation and adjustment in a study abroad context require further research. Moreover, existing research findings suggest a need for further investigation on the role of integrative motivation as related to both communities of learners and communities of speakers, and the need for further analysis of the perspectives and experiences of language learners' heritage (Anya, 2011). However, a factor to be considered in conducting this research is that those travelling for education for a relatively short time prior to returning to their home countries will have a different perspective on the issues we have raised than people who migrate and build their lives in another country.

For further research Kubota (1999) suggested that both teachers and learners need to develop a critical awareness of the sociocultural consequences of using the dominant language. Therefore, teachers, schools, institutions, and wider society need to ensure that individuals have opportunities to develop skills that allow them to participate fully in a dominant society. As Anya (2011) pointed out, L2 learning can be recognised as a form of language socialization involving the explicit and implicit communication of cultural norms and ideals through linguistic interactions between experts and novices in social groups or communities. The evidence above suggested that there are society-wide implications for greater multicultural awareness and the promotion of pluralism and linguistic diversity through which learners are stimulated and motivated toward success in L2 learning.

Although the construct of "acculturation" in the ESL context has been researched from multiple perspectives, the present research explores students' awareness in the diverse context of the EFL classroom, exploring the relationship between acculturation in such EFL settings and in comparison to ESL classrooms. In multicultural and linguistically diverse EFL classrooms functions of sociocultural identity and representations are crucial and thus challenging.

1.3 Research Questions

The main goal of the study was to discover the preferences of acculturation strategies among international students at EMU, North Cyprus, and to investigate factors associated with the acculturation strategies of these students. Students' perceptions of studying in an international context were examined for a nuanced and in-depth understanding of their lived experiences to discern how cultural, societal, motivational, and personal factors interplay in the acculturation process. To this realize this aim, the study sought to answer the following research questions:

1. How do students perceive themselves in relation to acculturation at EMU and in North Cyprus society at large?

2. What cultural patterns can be drawn from their acculturation continuum?

3. How do international students perceive the experience of studying abroad in North Cyprus?

4. What is the predominant acculturation strategies used among students in EMU, North Cyprus context?

5. What strategies can be adapted further to help learners improve themselves in the acculturation continuum and achieve the learning outcomes of English courses in an international study abroad context?

1.4 Significance of the Study

Various studies have been carried out on issues of language learning and acculturation. These involve issues concerning studying abroad and at home (Chilin Wang, 2010), and the relationship between acculturation and language learning in ESL study abroad programs (Spenader, 2011). However, there are not many studies about teachers' and students' awareness of the diverse context of the EFL classroom or about the consequences of experiences students face in the acculturation process. Therefore, this study intends to contribute knowledge in the field of second language acquisition, foreign language education and acculturation, particularly within an EFL setting. Emphasizing the development of cultural diversity, intercultural competence, and empathy within the institution and in the society as a whole is a contribution of this study. Thus, this study is significant as a local study and as a source of information for EFL instructors at EMU, and language teachers and students in the School of Foreign Languages as there is limited research in this particular field of study to the best of the researcher's knowledge. All in all, this study aims to analyse students' perceptions of their acculturation process and to analyse the usage of strategies implemented by learners themselves in an effort to help language teachers to enhance learning of English in the School of Foreign Languages and English-medium programs as wider scope.

1.5 Definition of Terms

Almost every person living in a culturally diverse society experiences some form of acculturation. Most acculturation studies have focused on refugees, travellers, immigrants, and indigenous or ethnic minorities. With the increase of global migration, there has been the development of new terms such as **biculturalism,**

multiculturalism, integration, and globalization, and these terms have been used fairly interchangeably as alternative expressions of acculturation.

"Acculturation" refers to the "process of cultural and psychological change that results following meeting between cultures" (Sam & Berry, 2010, p. 472). Berry (2005, p. 698) explained ".....acculturation is the dual process of cultural and psychological change that takes place as a result of contact between two or more cultural groups and their individual members". Berry (2005, p. 700) further explained that acculturation entails "learning each other's languages, sharing each other's food preferences, and adopting forms of dress and social interactions that are characteristic of each group." Berry et al., (2006) on the other hand, described acculturation as the social and psychological development that follows intercultural contact. Ward (2001) held that there are two distinct dimensions of adapting to the host society. The first one is psychological adaptation, which represents personal well-being and good mental health. The second is sociocultural adaptation, which refers to individuals' social competence in managing their daily lives in an intercultural setting. Accordingly, as stated by Yu and Wang (2011), acculturation involves learning to cope with a new cultural atmosphere. Organista, Marin, and Chun (2010, p. 105) defined it as "a dynamic and multidimensional process of adaptation that occurs when distinct cultures come into sustained contact." According to these scholars, acculturation is dynamic because it is a continuous and fluctuating process, and it takes place in different aspects of a person's life. Thus, it is multidimensional because it is affected by the personal and social experiences of individuals undergoing acculturation.

1.5.1 Models of Acculturation

According to Berry (2003), an individual's acculturation can be described according to one of four strategies that are the product of the interaction:

1. Assimilation: "when an individual wishes to diminish or decrease the significance of the culture of origin and desires to identify and interact primarily with the other culture, typically with the dominant culture" (Organista, Marin, & Chun, 2010, p. 105).

2. Separation: "whenever the individual wishes to hold on to the original culture and avoids interacting or learning about the other culture(s)" (Organista, Marin, & Chun, 2010, p. 105).

3. Marginalization: "individuals show little involvement in maintaining the culture of origin or in learning about the other culture(s)" (Organista, Marin, & Chun, 2010, p. 105).

4. Integration: "when a person shows an interest in maintaining the original culture and in learning and participating in the other culture(s)" (Organista, Marin, & Chun, 2010, p. 105).

In terms of acculturative stress, Berry (2003) suggested that integration involves the lowest levels of stress, while marginalization is associated with the highest levels of stress. Berry (2003) argued that individuals can choose integration as an acculturation strategy primarily in societies that have open and inclusive orientations toward ethnic and cultural diversity. This means that if acculturating individuals choose an integration strategy, they are expected to experience lower levels of personal stress since they are able to acquire cultural characteristics of the new culture while continuing to value their culture of origin.

1.5.2 Study Abroad

Study abroad is a term given to a program based and often run through a college or a university that provides students with the opportunity to live and study in a foreign country and perhaps to attend a foreign university rather than staying in one's home or resident country (Retrieved from https://study.com/academy/lesson/what-is-study-abroad-definition-benefits.html)

1.5.3 Intercultural Communication (or cross-cultural communication)

Intercultural communication (or cross-cultural communication) is a discipline that studies communication across different cultures and social groups, or how culture affects communication. It also involves understanding the different cultures, languages, and customs of people from other countries. The study of intercultural communication requires intercultural understanding, which is an ability to understand and value cultural differences. Language is an example of an important cultural component that is linked to intercultural understanding. Intercultural communication is in a way the 'interaction with speakers of other languages on equal terms and respecting their identities' (Retrieved from https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Intercultural_communication)

1.5.4 Types of Motivation

1. Instrumental motivation: this refers to wanting to learn a language for the purpose of obtaining some concrete goals such as a job, graduation, or the ability to pursue academic studies (Gardner, 2010).

2. Integrative motivation: learners want to learn the language so that they can better understand and get to know the people who speak that language. In an international EFL setting learners need to adapt to multiculturalism and language differences with

English as the global language spoken within that learning context, as is similar to the case in ESL settings (Oxford & Shearin, 1996).

1.5.5 English as an International Language (EIL)

English is an international language, and is spoken and studied in many countries as a native and as a second or foreign language. Many countries and institutions teach and communicate in English, sometimes as a tool for business purposes. English is spoken by over 300 million people worldwide as their native language and millions more speak it as an additional language (Bryson, 1990).

Chapter 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter presents the overview research studied in relation to the model of acculturation. It starts with presenting the definition and rationale of acculturation and then moves to presenting the theoretical underpinnings of the concept of acculturation, which provides the theoretical framework behind the model. Then, the chapter presents the role of acculturation in relation to language learning and motivation. Finally, it presents the role of acculturation in relation to the study abroad experience, culture, and ethnicity.

2.1 Acculturation: Definition and Rationale

The concept of acculturation had been utilized in the fields of psychology, anthropology, and sociology before the strategies of acculturation model came into place. Nevertheless, in contemporary research, acculturation has prompted scholarly interest due to the large flow of migrants and intercultural contact around the world. In recent years, the concept of acculturation has been well developed and investigated in relation to different settings and situations (Berry, 1980, 2006b; Tadmor, Tetlock, & Peng, 2009). In addition to various research articles, at least three acculturation books have been published since 2003 (e.g., Berry, Phinney, Sam, & Vedder, 2006; Chun, Organista, & Marín, 2003; Sam & Berry, 2006), and a cursory search of the PsycInfo literature database seeking journal articles with the word acculturation in the title returned 107 records from the 1980s, 337 from the 1990s, and 727 from the 2000s. However, a gap remained in regards to operational

definitions, contextual forces, and relationships to psychosocial and health outcomes (Rudmin, 2003, 2009). Therefore, primary goals of the research were to find answers to these questions, highlight issues that interact in answering these questions, and to develop a broad, multidimensional model of acculturation.

Acculturation, therefore, is said to refer to the changes that take place when culturally different people, groups, and social influences come into contact (Gibson, 2001). At the group level, it shows its implications in terms of culture, customs, and social institutions. Noticeable group level effects of acculturation often include changes in food, clothing, and language. Although these changes can take place anywhere, individuals experience intercultural contact (e.g., globalization; Arnett, 2002), for the most part acculturation is studied in individuals living in countries or regions other than where they were originally born or grew up—that is, among immigrants, refugees, asylum seekers, or travellers (e.g., international students, seasonal farm workers; Berry, 2006b).

A number of researchers have worked on the development of acculturation. Therefore, the literature on cultural adaptation is wide. Berry and Sabatier (2001) for example, identified two acculturation dimensions: home culture maintenance, and host culture participation, which developed into the four distinct acculturation strategies of assimilation, separation, integration, and marginalization. Moreover, Berry (1997) developed a model of acculturation that cast receiving-culture acquisition and heritage-culture retention as independent dimensions. Within Berry's model, these two dimensions intersect to create four acculturation strategies: assimilation (adopts the receiving culture and discards the heritage culture), separation (rejects the receiving culture and retains the heritage culture), integration

(adopts the receiving culture and retains the heritage culture), and marginalization (rejects both the heritage and receiving cultures). The assimilation and integration strategies emphasize a preference for intercultural contact in which context integration seeks to maintain the heritage culture within a multicultural society. Those seeking assimilation, however, do not value 'cultural maintenance' to the same extent. The other two phenomena- separation and marginalization-represent an avoidance of intercultural contact; separation refers to retaining one's heritage and rejecting (to an extent) the 'cultural stream' in which an individual finds him or herself while marginalization refers to rejecting both the heritage and receiving cultural streams (Lebedeva, Tatarko, & Berry, 2016; Ozer & Schwartz, 2016). Nguyen and Benet-Martinez (2013) found that the integration strategy (biculturalism in their terms) had a positive impact on psychological adaptation, which they defined in terms of life satisfaction, positive effects, and self-esteem. They also linked the integration strategy to sociocultural adaptation, which they defined in terms of academic success, career achievements, social skills, and lack of behavioural problems.

Acculturation also has been discussed in relation to the concerns of the current situation where countries have become culturally diverse and the concerns that emerge for multicultural societies. In relation to that, Fredrickson (1999) suggested that attitudes of the society to acculturation at large, and thus the acculturation strategies available, have not been consistent over time. According to Fredrickson (1999) most acculturation studies have been concerned with ethnic hierarchies-with the expectation of one-way assimilation for European immigrants. This calls for more attention on other ethnic and cultural studies that involve multicultural factors other than those directly associated with Western or, more specifically, American,

immigration. Therefore, acculturation is also defined in terms of multicultural ideology. Sam and Berry (2010) stated:

> In a melting pot society, in which a harmonious and homogenous culture is promoted, assimilation is the endorsed acculturation strategy. In segregationist society, in which humans are separated into racial groups in daily life, a separation acculturation strategy is endorsed. In a multiculturalist society, in which multiple cultures are accepted and appreciated, individuals are encouraged to adopt an integrationist approach to acculturation. In societies where cultural exclusion is promoted, individuals often adopt marginalization strategies of acculturation. (p. 472)

The above explanation identified the classification of preference for acculturation strategies in different situations. Thus, the studies above identified how, in multicultural societies, there are society-wide implications for greater multicultural awareness and the promotion of pluralism through which individuals are encouraged to integrate into the society. In societies where cultural exclusion is promoted, however, individuals tend to adopt the marginalization strategy, which has the highest levels of stress since individuals reject both home culture maintenance and the receiving culture.

2.2 Theoretical Background: Emergence of Acculturation up to the Present

Acculturation has been under investigation since 1918, and has been examined in relation to the fields of psychology, anthropology and sociology, and various theories and terms have been defined to talk about different aspects of the acculturative process.

One of the most notable forms of acculturation is imperialism, a powerful agent of direct change (Said, 1994). Although cultural changes may seem simple, the results

are more complex because the process of cultural changes varies and implies interference in the cultural system of one group by members of another.

Similarly, the history of Western civilization, and in particular the histories of Europe and the United States, are largely defined by patterns of acculturation. J. W. Powell is credited with coining the word "acculturation" in 1880, defining it as "the psychological changes induced by cross-cultural imitation" (Retrieved from; https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Acculturation). The first psychological theory of acculturation was proposed in Thomas and Znaniecki's (1918) study, *The Polish Peasant in Europe and America*. From studying Polish immigrants in Chicago, they illustrated three forms of acculturation corresponding to three personality types: Bohemian (adopting the host culture and abandoning their culture of origin), Philistine (failing to adopt the host culture but preserving their culture of origin), and creative-type (able to adapt to the host culture while preserving their culture of origin. Redfield, Linton, and Herskovits (1936) provided the first widely used definition of acculturation:

> Those phenomena which result when groups of individuals having different cultures come into continuous first-hand contact, with subsequent changes in the original cultural patterns of either or both groups...under this definition acculturation is to be distinguished from...assimilation, which is at times a phase of acculturation. (p. 149)

Since the early 1980s, cultural psychologists have recognized that acquiring the beliefs, values, and practices of the receiving country does not automatically imply that an immigrant will discard (or stop endorsing) the beliefs, values, and practices of her or his country of origin (Berry, 1980).

Recent studies and research, however, have primarily focused on different strategies of acculturation and how variations in acculturation affect how well individuals adapt to society. Gudykunst and Kim (2003) defined cross-cultural adaptation as an "upward-forward progress of acculturation that brings about change in strangers in the direction of assimilation, the highest degree of adaptation theoretically conceivable. It is the process by which strangers re-socialized into a new culture so as to attain an increasing functional fitness...complete adaptation is a lifetime goal" (p. 360).

In relation to acculturation and cross-cultural adaptation, Gudykunst and Kim (2003) postulated a utopian or ideal type person they call an "intercultural person" or a "universal person" with "transcultural identity" (p. 383–384). They claimed that in order to achieve functional fitness and communication, immigrants must "unlearn" and "de-culturize" themselves and avoid "ethnic communication activities".

Acculturation model studies investigate sociocultural adaptation factors that are grounded in sociocultural theory. Moreover, acculturation model studies examine effects on the language learning process, which is based on the foundation of language socialisation theory. Duff (2007), for example, noted that language socialisation studies "pay particular attention to social, cultural, and interactional contexts in which language and other kinds of knowledge are learned" (p. xiii). The importance of scaffolding (Vygotsky, 1978) and collaboration in L2 learning grounded in sociocultural theory with emphasis on cognitive psychology explains the phenomenon of language socialisation. That is, students with a high level of socialisation reportedly have benefitted most from studying abroad (Wang, 2010).

In terms of language socialisation, Masgoret and Ward (2006) stated that L2 proficiency and communication competence are deeply involved in all cultural learning approaches as well as in sociocultural adaptation. Accordingly, they claim that language skills are related both to daily communication in the new culture and in maintaining interpersonal relationship in the society. According to cultural learning approaches there is a direct connection between language fluency and sociocultural adaptation. As stated by Ward and Kennedy (1999), a high level of language proficiency is strongly related to the amount of contact with members of the new culture and sociocultural adaptation. Masgoret and Ward (2006) pointed out that cultural learning approaches recommend identifying cross-cultural differences in communication (both verbal and nonverbal), rules, conventions, norms, and practices that contribute to intercultural misunderstandings as a starting point to minimize confusing and dissatisfying encounters.

Furthermore, Redfield et al. (1936) asserted that acculturation encompasses all forms of change. Berry (1980) indicated that these changes could be biological, social, physical, and so on. In relation to psychological acculturation, Ward (2001) has identified three main areas of human life that change during acculturation, referring respectively to affective, behavioural, and cognitive aspects of the acculturation process. According to Sam and Berry (2010), these areas are respectively linked to different theoretical perspectives: a stress and coping theoretical framework, a culture learning approach, and a social-identification orientation to acculturation.

In terms of the effects of acculturation such as stress, coping, adjustment, and well-being, Sam and Berry (2010) highlighted the idea that acculturative stress results when serious challenges are encountered and seem problematic because of

inadequate attempts to address them through behavioural change. According to Sam and Berry (2010), acculturative stress is the result of becoming frustrated due to real life experiences rooted in the acculturation process. However, related to Lazarus's and Folkman's (1984) stress model, all acculturation experiences do not end with acculturative stress since there are various moderating and mediating factors that interplay, such as personal characteristics (e.g., age and gender) and social support, which affect the perceptions and experiences of those experiencing acculturation.

Based in the roots of social psychology, and with major influence from Argyle's (1969) work on social skills and interpersonal behaviour, the cultural learning approach underlines the hypothesis that people in cultural transitions may lack the necessary skills needed to engage satisfactorily with the new culture, which may result in difficulties managing everyday social encounters. According to Bochner (1972), individuals are expected to learn or acquire the culture-specific behavioural skills (such as the language) that are necessary to handle this new cultural milieu to overcome these difficulties. More specifically, Sam and Berry (2010) argued that the cultural learning approach entails gaining an understanding of intercultural communication styles that encompasses their verbal and nonverbal components, as well as rules, conventions, and norms and their influences on intercultural effectiveness.

The affective and behavioural approaches to acculturation are ultimately concerned with stress and emotional feelings, and with skills for dealing with everyday encounters and behavioural changes (Sam & Berry, 2010). The cognitive approach deals with how people perceive and think about themselves and others in intercultural encounters. When individuals and groups experience everyday tasks

related to acculturation, they encounter the questions "Who am I?" and "To which group do I belong?" (Sam & Berry, 2010, p. 475). According to Sam and Berry (2010) these two questions form the basis of one theoretical stand within cognitive approaches: social identity theory (Tajfel & Turner, 1979, 1986). This theory is concerned with why and how individuals identify with and behave as part of social groups since they need to belong to a group in order to feel secure and have a sense of belonging (Sam & Berry, 2010). They argue that, within the context of acculturation, social identity theory deals with how groups and individuals view their identity in relation to their own ethnic group within the culture to which they are acculturating.

2.3 Acculturation in Relation to Language Learning

As a background for the study, literature in relation to language learning, motivation, studying abroad, culture, and ethnicity have been reviewed. Learner acculturation is often said to affect language learning. Spenader (2011) highlighted the fact that many research studies have focused on the linguistic achievement part of study abroad programs. As argued by the researcher, a higher level of acculturation among international students is associated with higher levels of language proficiency, while rejection of the host culture is associated with lower levels of proficiency (Spenader, 2011). The findings of this study supported the notion that language learning was associated with acculturation with the acculturation strategy of assimilation related most strongly to high levels of oral proficiency. The findings also suggested that some absolute beginners participating in high school and gap-year programs can reach high levels of oral proficiency.

Acculturation also is studied in terms of L2 acquisition as well as L2 learning. Jiang, Green, Henley, and Masten (2009), for example, examined the effect of acculturation on L2 acquisition in relation to Chinese-English late learners. This study considered whether acculturation was related to L2 acquisition among Chinese international students studying in the US. Jiang, Green, Henley, and Masten (2009) noted that "learners who begin to acquire a second language (L2) in a naturalistic environment after puberty are thought to be constrained by biological age factors and to have greater difficulty obtaining native-like L2" (p. 481). However, studies by Masgoret and Gardner (1999) and Schumann (1990), hypothesised that L2 acquisition would be positively affected by post-maturational factors, such as acculturation, since students began to acquire English in an English-medium environment in the US after puberty. These results suggested that participants were more deeply immersed in their original culture than in the local American culture. Participants were still closely aligned with their ethnic heritage, eating Chinese food, socialising with Chinese friends and speaking Chinese whenever English was not required. Jiang, Green, Henley, and Masten (2009) suggested that these habits were due to the fact that most of the participants had little interest in staying in the US long term, thus had little motive to distance themselves from their native culture. In relation to attitudes toward target language group, Jiang, Green, Henley, and Masten (2009) claimed that the more positively learners identify with themselves, and the more psychologically integrated they become into the target language group, the more likely they are to succeed in L2 acquisition.

While considerable research has focused on the process and factors affecting acculturation, little research has investigated how members of minority and majority groups define acculturation in educational settings. In relation to that, Praag, Stevens,

and Houtte (2016) investigated teachers' and ethnic minority students' acculturation strategies and expectancies in Belgium. They conducted an ethnographic study that involved a group of classroom observations in three schools in a large multi-ethnic city in Flanders (northern part of Belgium) from 2009 through 2012. The participants included 129 students from 33 different countries-: Belgium, Turkey, North-African countries, Eastern European countries, and sub-Sahara African countries, with an age range from 16 to 23 years old. In addition, 29 teachers were interviewed from each school. The analyses suggested that although teachers and ethnic minority students differed with respect to their acculturation strategies and expectancies, there were also points of agreement. The ethnic minority students and their ethnic majority teachers shared similar ideas about contact and participation in dominant Belgian society. When discussing how ethnic minorities might establish interethnic contact and engage in activities of the dominant Belgian society, both groups mainly referred to two interrelated topics, namely improving the 'Dutch language proficiency' of immigrant youth and 'having Belgian friends.' Dutch language proficiency was perceived as a crucial factor in the acculturation of people of immigrant descent in the region in question. Suad, a participant of Albanian descent, agreed with this objective and is quoted as saying:

> I really cannot stand it that they [students of Turkish descent] speak Turkish. It really makes me angry because you should speak Dutch at school. They say it [Turkish] is their mother tongue but if you hear them talking Dutch, they do not know the difference between 'he' and 'she.' (Praag, Stevens, & Houtte, 2015, p. 1358)

The above statement showed the importance of Dutch language proficiency. In addition, most students agreed that the environment had a crucial influence on their acculturation expectations. Students of immigrant descent identified the demand of

the wider community to speak Dutch. For example, Marjan, of Algerian descent, stated:

> I speak Dutch to avoid the unwelcome gazes of people. I try to do that because I do not want that people discriminate against me and treat me different based on the ways I behave or dress. So, I adapt. (Praag, Stevens, & Houtte, 2015, p. 1358)

Dutch language attainment was generally seen by all students as a priority in establishing contact with the ethnic majority, and similarly, having Belgian friends was perceived as enhancing learning Dutch. The researcher asked a student of Turkish descent what she thought about teachers telling her to speak Dutch:

> Serife (student): actually, they are right.
> Researcher: Why do you think that?
> Serife: We are in a Dutch speaking school. Teachers just say that to help us, so we could learn more things. But we never listen. I would like to speak Dutch at school but all my friends are - of course I have some friends of Belgian descent - but I usually hang out with my Turkish friends [...] and then it's normal you start speaking Turkish. (Praag, Stevens, & Houtte, 2015, p. 1358-1359)

The conversation above illustrated how the participant wanted to improve her Dutch language competence and suggested that having more friends of Belgian origin made it easier. As a result, most students, like Fenerli, preferred 'ethnically mixed schools' (schools with a majority of students of immigrant origin); they thought this would support them learn more about Belgian society. Fenerli, a student of Turkish origin stated: "I think it [schools] should be [ethnically] mixed, having people with a lot of different cultures. It is a lot better; you learn something from them" (Praag, Stevens, & Houtte, 2016, p. 1359). This quote also showed how having ethnically mixed schools helps people to learn from each other and improve their language proficiency. This shows how important it is to adapt in multicultural societies where exposure to the language spoken by the majority is crucial. However, those students

who are the majority among the ethnic minority groups have more opportunities to speak their mother tongue in class. For instance, one teacher, Mrs Baeten, reflected on the lack of Dutch language proficiency among a large number of students from one ethnic group:

> Mrs Baeten: I do not think the contact between different ethnic groups runs smoothly.
> Interviewer: How come?
> Mrs Baeten: Often because all those Turkish girls very often speak Turkish which excludes other students. Sometimes I really have the feeling that they do not go very well together. They [Turkish girls in Sales] form 'clans'. Previously, you did not have clans, but they were not enrolled in large numbers, it was more spread out. No we mainly have Turkish girls [...] they lag behind with respect to language because they do not speak Dutch sufficiently. They often have to read the same sentence ten times to understand what it means. (Praag, Stevens, & Houtte, 2015, p. 1360)

The extract above pointed to the fact that many immigrants grouped together in their own ethnic/cultural/language groups to the detriment of attaining the language of the country in which they had arrived. In the case of the study above, thes host language was Dutch. English was more prevalent.

Likewise, acculturation is said to have an effect on L2 learners' language learning when L2 learners are involved in study abroad programs. For example, Knouse (2013) suggested that travelling to another country to study L2 had linguistic advantages, particularly in the area of L2 pronunciation. Wang (2010) argued that the immersion experience in study abroad settings helps students develop a wider range of conversational strategies, gain better L2 grammar skills, improve L2 writing and motivation to write in L2, and facilitate reading and encourage L2 production. Lafford (1995) found that students who studied abroad outperformed their at-home peers in terms of communicative strategies. Similarly, Freed's (1995b) study abroad

participants appeared to outperform their at-home peers in terms of fluency development.

In a similar vein, Mancheno (2008) indicated that the homestay was more beneficial than the non-homestay setting in relation to students' language gains, and his work claimed that the homestay environment provided more opportunities for meaning negotiation and thus language gains. Allen (2007) wrote that those learners in the homestay group had significantly higher linguistic gains than those in the non-homestay group. In contrast, River's (1998) study found that homestay has a negative effect on speaking gains, has no apparent effect on listening gains, but has a positive effect on reading gains.

Moreover, in relation to the effectiveness of the study abroad context, Garcia (2010) described the acquisition of Spanish in relation to gender. He wanted to ascertain whether differences among individuals and the level of language contact may affect this acquisition rate. This study of learners' linguistic development in the study abroad context provided information about what can be expected from students' performance, and compared the results with those of learners who studied in the traditional, at-home context. The findings showed no significant difference between the two learning contexts, and that social behaviour and language contact abroad had minimal influence on acquisition rates. Thus, the findings suggested that at-home students pay more attention to form than meaning.

In addition to the effects of the study abroad context and language learning achievements, Spenader (2008) concluded that even 'absolute' beginners can make impressive language gains during a year-long study abroad program. The gains were

found in both oral proficiency and global proficiency. In another study, Huebner (1995) indicated that even for beginners, study abroad may be appropriate and beneficial for early-stage L2 literacy development.

Although considerable research has focused on the process and factors affecting acculturation mainly in ESL contexts, very little research has investigated acculturation strategies of students more specifically in an EFL context. Therefore, Gürsoy and Kunt (2018), in particular, investigated learner acculturation in the English Preparatory School of EMU in North Cyprus, and the role of learners' social and cultural identities conveyed through teaching English in a foreign language context. The study used participants of Turkish, Azeri, Uygur (China), and Palestinian origin to gain a nuanced understanding of how the acculturation process was experienced and what role cultural and motivational factors play (Gürsoy & Kunt, 2018). The findings of this study revealed that participants were closely aligned with their home cultures, and thus had little motivation to distance themselves and integrate into the host culture (Gürsoy & Kunt, 2018). Although Turkish students had more motivation to integrate with the host culture, the results revealed that all students involved in the acculturation process displayed a separation strategy, and therefore found themselves facing difficulty integrating within different cultures in the English as a Foreign Language context (Gürsoy & Kunt, 2018).

Thus, their study supported Masgoret et al. (2000) who believed that individuals who developed higher levels of instrumental motivation over the duration of the program developed higher levels of overall motivation to learn the language; and those who perceived less instrumental value in learning became less motivated to learn the language. The study by Gürsoy and Kunt (2018) also parallels that of Jiang and

colleagues (2009) who explored the relationship between acculturation and L2 acquisition in a study abroad context, and suggested that participants tended to be more deeply immersed in their home culture than in the culture of the target language—which could be an obstacle to language learning. Gürsoy and Kunt (2018), therefore, suggested this study may contribute to foreign language learners overcoming such obstacles during learning and help them obtain more language success as well as to become more aware of sociocultural factors affecting their learning in the context of the EFL classroom. Thus, the results from Gürsoy and Kunt (2018) showed that acculturation varied according to motivation, life experiences, and the home culture of students in an EFL context.

2.4 The Acculturation Process in Relation to Motivation

Moving to a different country is an important life-changing decision, and it seems evident that various reasons and motives, including economic, political, and religious ones, play a role therein. Accordingly, many models of migration and cultural adaptation have included motivational factors as important determinants of both the migration and adaptation processes (Berry, 1997; Kim, 2001; Rumbaut, 1991; Scott & Scott, 1989; Ward, Bocher, & Furnham, 2001). The current study also investigated the role that motivation plays in enabling L2 learners to interact with other groups, and consequently to improve the target language. Motivation can roughly be comprehended in two main categories, namely instrumental motivation and integrative motivation (Muftah, 2013). Instrumental motivation is when learners wish to get a job, access higher in education, access world media, the internet, technologies on the ground, politics, and diplomacy. The top of the pyramid (i.e., self-realisation) is certainly an educational outcome in the minds of many (Maslow's

Motivation Pyramid, 1943, 1954). In light of motivational orientations (i.e., instrumental and integrative motivation), Muftah (2013) explained:

> L2 learners experience and choose such orientations according to their goals, desires and attitudes towards the target language. So, they tend to be interactively motivated when they have positive attitudes towards the target language culture and a desire to become like TL speakers whom they value and admire. (p. 1536)

In relation to integrative motivation, Berry (2003) suggested that acculturating individuals are expected to experience lower levels of personal stress if they choose an integration strategy since they are able to acquire cultural characteristics of the new culture while continuing to value their culture of origin.

A large body of research has demonstrated how affective variables influence the success of individuals in learning a second or foreign language in classroom settings. For example, research by Gardner (1985) was based on a set of attitude and motivation measures involving integrative attitudes toward the target language group, attitudes towards the learning situation, and motivation. As argued by Masgoret, Bernaus, and Gardner (2000), integrativeness, motivation, adjustment, and self-confidence are important dimensions in second language learning. Research has shown that individuals who develop higher levels of instrumental motivation over the duration of their programmes develop higher levels of motivation to learn the language; and those who perceive less instrumental value in learning become less motivated to learn the language (Masgoret, et al., 2000).

In relation to motivational factors affecting acculturation, Anya (2011) conducted a pilot study into the experiences and motivation patterns of Black Americans who did and did not achieve an advanced level of second language acquisition (SLA). The

study investigated how successfully African American language learners were motivated to meaningfully participate and remain in foreign language and culture programs at the advanced level. The findings suggested that successful Black college L2 learners had positive formative experiences in which they felt a sense of investment, belonging, and engagement with others in a community of learners. The participants gave reasons for their choice to pursue the study of an L2 at an advanced level, relating it to career objectives, life goals, and academic interests. Although there were individual differences among successful learners, their experiences shared a common link: similar feelings of community, connection, and appreciation for the cultural aspects of language learning. Sam and Berry (2010) further argued that there are no cultural groups that remain unchanged following intercultural contact since acculturation is a two-way interaction, resulting in actions and reactions in all parties concerned.

Acculturation is also influenced by an individual's personality and communication skills. Hammer (1978), for example, suggested that the ability to communicate, establish interpersonal relationships, and deal with psychological stress is three major dimensions influencing cross-cultural adaptation. According to Gudykunst and Hammer (1988), effective communication is a key component of cross-cultural adjustment, and foreign language proficiency is, in turn, an important contributor to effective communication. Spenader (2011) argued that personality factors influence cross-cultural adaptation and language learning. Schumann (1986) noted that an extroverted personality could be a positive factor in acculturation. Similarly, personality variables such as persistence and assertiveness also promote successful cross-cultural adaptation. Jiang, Green, Henley, and Masten (2009) claimed that the more positively the learner identifies with and the more psychologically immersed

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the learner becomes into the target language group, the more likely it is that the learner will be able to achieve L2 acquisition. Psychological stress also is considered a factor affecting learners' preference for acculturation strategies. Sam and Berry (2010) have argued that acculturation strategies are linked to discrimination insofar as those who experience a great deal of discrimination are more likely to prefer separation, whereas those who experience less discrimination are likely to prefer integration or assimilation in the process of their cultural contact.

Masgoret, Bernaus, and Gardner (2000) also investigated British university students who worked as English monitors (instructors) in an "Enjoy English" program in Spain. This study assessed the monitors' attitudes toward Spain and Spanish people, motivation to learn Spanish, adjustment to Spanish culture, and self-ratings of Spanish proficiency as well as their supervisors' ratings of their personalities and their success as instructors in the program. The study also examined changes in a number of variables shown to influence adaptation in such situations including attitudinal/motivational models of second/foreign language acquisition. The results demonstrated that a number of attitudinal changes can take place in those travelling abroad for language teaching purposes. The participants tended to exhibit less positive attitudes towards Spanish people, lower levels of integrative orientation, higher levels of anxiety in their use of Spanish, and higher levels of instrumental orientation, sociocultural adjustment, and self-reported proficiency in Spanish. The areas of change that were identified over the four-week period were integrativeness, motivation, sociocultural adjustment, and self-confidence in relation to the Spanish language.

These results have implications for individuals planning to go to another country to teach English. As Masgoret, Bernaus, and Gardner (2000) suggested, teachers who plan to move to another county to teach English might well expect a number of changes in their attitudes and self-perceptions. This suggests that personality variables may help predict success in teaching abroad, which can be a difficult experience that requires one to adapt to life and work in a foreign country. According to Masgoret, Bernaus, and Gardner (2000), expectations and attitudes towards members of the host culture are important factors in effective cross-cultural contact.

In particular to the EFL context, a limited number of studies have examined the effect of learner motivation in relation to acculturation. Gürsoy and Kunt (2018), for example, observed that those who developed higher levels of instrumental motivation over the duration of the program developed higher levels of overall motivation to learn the language; and those who perceived less instrumental value in learning become less motivated to learn the language. In the study by Gürsoy and Kunt (2018) the results indicated that the students were highly motivated. These students wanted to learn English not because it was obligatory, but because they wanted to improve themselves for their future goals and careers, which showed high instrumental motivation (Gürsoy & Kunt, 2018). Thus, the students were aware of the importance of English spoken worldwide, and this worldwide phenomenon was one reason why they chose to study English at EMU (Gürsoy & Kunt, 2018). Furthermore, results showed that motivation and experiences studying in the host culture versus at home were interrelated (Gürsoy & Kunt, 2018). According to these results, more effective learning took place if learners were motivated and culturally integrated. In addition, personality factors were found to play a role as students became integrated into the

new culture during the process of learning in an EFL context. The study asserted that those who were more introverted performed less well compared to those who were extroverted, socially oriented, independent learners (Gürsoy & Kunt, 2018). Therefore, results suggested that motivation and personality factors played an influential role in learning a foreign language.

In addition to the integrative and instrumental forms of motivation proposed by Muftah (2013), Chirkov, Vansteenkiste, Tao, and Lynch (2007) proposed intrinsic motivation and internalized extrinsic motivation in their study investigating the role of motivation to study abroad in predicting Chinese international students' adaptation to new environments in Belgium and Canada. Intrinsic and internalized extrinsic forms of motivation were distinguished in relation to the goals of this research. When intrinsically motivated, people engage in an activity for its own sake and because of the interest and enjoyment that it generates. For instance, if students move to a foreign university because they find this move challenging and exciting, they are said to be intrinsically motivated.

Intrinsic motivation is the prototype of autonomous motivation, because people are willingly engaging in the activity only for its own sake, because the activity meets their interests and not because of the expectation of rewards. However, people can also be autonomously motivated if the behaviour they are involved in is relevant to their values and personally important to them. Furthermore, Chirkov, Vansteenkiste, Tao, and Lynch (2007) explored the content of international students' goals and the relations these goals have to students' adjustment outcomes. The content of motivation is well presented in the acculturation and migration psychology literature. For example, research has focused on migration motivation (Richmond, 1993),

family or work orientations (Frieze et al., 2004), and preservation, materialistic and self-development motives (Tartakovsky & Schwartz, 2001). In relation to the research goals, the following hypotheses were tested in Chirkov, Vansteenkiste, Tao, and Lynch (2007). First, they expected that international students' motivation to study abroad could be described by two parameters, that is, by the level of their self-determined motivation to study abroad and by the type of goals they set for themselves (i.e., goal content) when moving to a foreign country. They predicted that if international students were self-determined in their decision to study abroad, meaning that they felt themselves standing personally behind this decision and not driven by other people's expectations or external circumstances, then their adaptation to a new cultural environment would be more successful in comparison to situations in which they were driven by non-self-determined reasons. Second, they anticipated that these two components of motivation would independently predict various indicators of students' cultural adaptation and functioning. In conclusion, they discovered that preservation goals, which reflected the desire to avoid unfavourable conditions in the students' home country, tended to be externally motivated and have negative associations with several indicators of adjustment to a new country. The self-development goals, which reflected a desire to obtain a good education that could support their successful professional career for studying abroad, tended to be more intrinsically motivated, but did not correlate with indicators of adaptation. Chirkov, Vansteenkiste, Tao, and Lynch (2007) suggested their results support this expectation, that such people will work harder, will be more proactive and finally will attain better results with regard to their cultural adjustment in comparison to people who experience that they were forced by various external factors—political

and economic conditions, the opinions and expectations of other people, etc.—to move to another country.

In a recent study, Chirkov, Vansteenkiste, Tao, and Lynch (2007) argued that the motivation of international college students who go to a foreign country for studying is an important factor in predicting their adjustment. More recently, Chirkov, Safdar, De Guzman, and Playford (2008) investigated the role that self-determined motivation and the goals for studying abroad play in international students' adjustment to life in Canada. In an exploratory mode, they further explored the role of several demographic parameters, such as gender, marital status, and country of citizenship, in moderating the effect of motivation on the students' adjustment. Finally, they explored the role that certain factors, such as social support, cultural competence and acculturation motivation, play in predicting students' adjustment outcomes. The results of this study confirmed that the autonomous motivation for moving abroad to get an education is a powerful predictor of international students' adjustment. The results from these studies indicated that when international students' decisions to move to a foreign country to further their education is based on self-determined motivation, the chances of succeeding in a new setting become higher in comparison to students who were forced and/or controlled by others into making this decision to study abroad. In relation to our other research goals, they reported that the women demonstrated a higher level of relative autonomy than the men did in their motivation to study abroad. This higher level of relative autonomy in women is accompanied in this study by more psychosomatic symptoms in women in comparison to men. This fact that female international students have more somatic and mental health problems than their male counterparts is well- known (Church, 1982). They also discovered that the marital status of students (living with a partner

or married) relates positively to their adjustment, whereas the single students have more difficulties with their adjustment. As many researchers discovered (Church, 1982; Halualania, Chitgopekarb, Thi, Morrisonc, & Dodge, 2004; Lee, Koeske & Sales, 2004), Chirkov, Safdar, De Guzman, and Playford (2008) also discovered interactions with host nationals are one of the most important factors in the successful long-term adjustment of international students. According to Chirkov, Safdar, De Guzman, and Playford (2008), the nationality of students is also an important factor to consider when analysing international students' motivation to study abroad and their overall adjustment. Thus, they analysed the East Asians could be characterized by a high level of interjected motivation for moving abroad, when the expectations of others and the desire 'not to lose one's face' are the predominant motivations for making the decision to study abroad. Conversely, the Westerners (Europeans, North Americans and Australians) demonstrated low levels of self-development goals so their move to Canada was probably determined by other reasons, such as the less expensive cost of education in Canada, having a Canadian boyfriend/girlfriend, and other family and life circumstances. Another logical result is that the Western students experience fewer difficulties in adjusting to life in Canada in comparison to non-Western students. The same results obtained by other researchers (Chirkov, Lynch, & Niwa, 2005; Furnham & Bochner, 1982; Searle & Ward, 1990; Ward, Bocher, & Furnham, 2001; Ward & Searle, 1991) gave rise to a so-called 'cultural distance hypothesis', which stated that students from the countries that are culturally close/similar to the host country experience less stress and difficulties in adjusting in comparison to students from the culturally distant countries. Completely in line with this explanation, the East Asians students in this

study had lower well-being and the students from Africa reported more social difficulties than Westerners.

According to the literature reviewed above, research has indicated that learners will acquire L2 only to the degree that they acculturate and psychologically integrate themselves into the dominant or local culture even when students are learning English in an EFL or ESL context. However, more research is needed to explore what advantages and limitations exist both socially and psychologically for those studying abroad in an EFL context in contrast to an ESL context. In fact, the roles of motivation and assertiveness as personality variables appear to warrant further study, and thus have been included in the current research study.

2.5 Cultural Factors and Study Abroad Experiences Affecting Acculturation

People carry within themselves patterns of thinking, feeling, and potentially acting, all of which have been learned throughout their lifetimes (Hofstede, 1994). According to Hofstede (1994) culture is learned through the social environment in which one grows up and collected through one's life experiences rather than inherited. Hofstede (1994) furthermore argued that culture is always a collective phenomenon that starts within the family and continues within the neighbourhood, at school, in youth groups, at the work place, and in the community. Thus, Hofstede (1994) argued that researchers who study culture find intergroup differences in how people think, feel, and act, but there are no scientific standards that establish one group as intrinsically superior or inferior to another.

Teachers of English as a second or foreign language in English speaking countries have long recognized the need to teach the way of life and culture of the host country

to L2 learners. The subject of teaching culture has been broadened to include culturally-influenced beliefs and perceptions, especially as expressed through language, but also through cultural behaviours that affect acceptability in the host community. Robinson (1985), an American researcher in the area of cross-cultural education, reported that when teachers were asked what culture meant to them, the most common responses fell into three interrelated categories: products, ideas, and behaviours.

Acculturation also employed a cross-national, cross-cultural study. For example, Fedi, Mannarini, Brodsky, Rochira, Buckingham, Emery, and Gattino (2018) explored the bidirectional and interactional process of acculturation from the perspectives of immigrants and receiving community members. The study explored the experiences and interactions of different ethno-cultural groups and their impact on the functioning and dynamics of multicultural communities. They conducted a cross-national, cross-cultural study of acculturation processes, across two countries (Italy: urban regions of Torino and Lecce; U.S.: Baltimore/Washington corridor) and three distinct groups of immigrants – Moroccans and Albanians in Italy and Latin Americans in the U.S. – and receiving community members in Italy and U.S. Findings showed that acculturation is a complex, situated, and dynamic process, and is generally conceived as an unbalanced and individual process of accommodation, which expects the immigrant alone to adapt to the new context. In relation to research goal, integration was the most frequently discussed acculturation strategies. Some differences emerged between ethnic groups and generation of immigration who differed by level of contact with immigrants. The need for more flexible models and for a critical perspective on acculturation is discussed.

Based on the Berry's acculturation model, another study examined how student sojourners' acculturation orientations predicted their career exploration and career adaptability, and whether cultural distance served as a significant moderator on these effects (Guan, Liu, Guo, Li, Wu, Chen, and Tian, 2018). According to the Berry's model of acculturation (Berry, 1996, Berry, 2005), home culture orientation and host culture orientation are the two basic dimensions that sojourners use to meet the challenges of living in a new culture. Home culture orientation helps individuals maintain and identify with their own cultural heritage whereas host culture orientation motivates individuals to participate in and identify with the host society's culture. The research examined how acculturation orientations predicted career exploration and career adaptability among a sample of Chinese student sojourners (Guan, Liu, Guo, Li, Wu, Chen, and Tian, 2018). Among these participants were undergraduates, Master students, and Doctoral students who majored in natural sciences and majored in social sciences or humanities. The host countries (regions) for these participants included: USA, UK, Germany, Japan, Australia, Canada, South Korea, Netherlands, Belgium, Hong Kong, France, Spain, Singapore, Ireland, Italy, Taiwan, Denmark, Sweden, and Russia. They found that both host culture orientation and home culture orientation were positively related to environmental career exploration, which in turn predicted career adaptability. In addition, it was also found that the indirect effect of host culture orientation on career adaptability via environmental career exploration was only significant among participants who were in a cultural environment with high cultural distance from their home country. These findings suggested that in a new cultural environment, environmental exploration, rather than self-exploration, is the key link between cultural orientations and career adaptability.

Figure 1. Elements of Culture

According to Robinson (1985), the study of culturally-influenced behaviour should arise out of the language material being studied, but should nevertheless be clearly identified and systematically treated as a regular feature of the language lesson. In teaching culture, Tomalin (2007) suggested ways of incorporating culture into practical teaching principles for facilitating the development of cross-cultural communication skills. Tomalin (2007) suggested that students needed to be trained to extract appropriate information from the material. Tomalin (2007), for example, recommended a task-oriented approach towards teaching culture. This type of approach is characterized by cooperative learning tasks in which students 1) Work together in pairs or small groups to gather precise segments of information, 2) share and discuss what they have discovered in order to form a more complete picture, and

3) Interpret the information within the context of the target culture and in comparison with their own cultures.

The role of culture in foreign or second language teaching has been a delicate issue that has generated debate in language education for more than half a century (Weninger & Kiss, 2013). Language teachers and students in any setting naturally represent a wide array of social and cultural roles and identities: as teachers or students, as gendered and cultured individuals, as immigrants or nationals, as native speakers or non-native speakers, as content-area or Teaching English as a Second Language (TESL)/English language specialists, or as individuals, organizations, and society at large (Duff & Uchida, 1997). A number of studies have examined the role of learners' social and cultural identities in learning English and the role of the Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL) profession in reconstructing people's identities and roles (Duff & Uchida, 1997). Thus, in EFL classrooms, issues of sociocultural identity and representations are very important (Duff & Uchida, 1997). Accordingly, in educational practice, identities and beliefs are co-constructed, negotiated, and transformed on an on-going basis by means of language (Duff & Uchida, 1997). Therefore, Duff and Uchida (1997:452) observed the following:

- Foreign language teachers and students commonly discuss the social and cultural aspects of other ethno linguistic groups, particularly those associated with the target language.
- Problems may arise when teachers' or students' identities and beliefs related to gender roles, nationality, ethnicity, teaching methods, and language use

conflict with those of colleagues, students, professional publications, popular media, or local cultures.

- The English language teaching industry is not culturally, politically, socially, or economically neutral; rather, in the international (EFL) sphere it plays a powerful role in the construction of roles, relations, and identities among teachers and students.

Also, the educational traditions and norms in L1 learners' cultures affect L2 learners' acculturation and language learning process. Over the last few decades, one of the research and pedagogical interests in TESOL has been the kind of cultural characteristics students with non-English backgrounds bring into the ESL classroom (Kubota, 1999). From the perspective of L2 literacy pedagogy, Carson (1992) proposed that the process of acquiring literacy in the L1 influences learners' approach to acquiring literacy in an L2. As mentioned in Duff (2007), L2 learners have a set of "linguistic and cultural traditions" from their L1 when they try to join the L2 community. Anya (2011) pointed out that L2 learning is a form of language socialization that involves the explicit and implicit communication of cultural norms and ideals and is conveyed through linguistic interactions between experts and novices in social groups or communities.

Kubota (1999) argued that the way people think, speak, write, and behave is influenced by the culture in which they are brought up. Kubota (1999), therefore, argued that ESL teachers should respect the cultures that students bring with them into the classroom, which, in the present study, include the cultures that international university students bring into EFL classroom. Land and Whitley (1989), therefore,

suggested that teachers should change the way they read, respond to, and assess ESL, and in our case, written EFL work. Recent studies have challenged widespread notions of cultural representations such as homogeneity, groupism, and lack of self-expression, creativity, and critical thinking found in current applied linguistics literature (Kubota, 1999). From this perspective, Carson (1992) proposed that the process of acquiring literacy in the L1 influences learners' approaches to acquiring L2 literacy. The study by Carson (1992) took Japanese culture as an example and attempted to critique cultural labels found in the applied linguistics literature. According to Carson (1992):

> Language in Japan is viewed less as a tool for self-expression than as a medium for expressing group solidarity and shared social purpose…Language teaching encourages children to express what is socially shared rather than what is individual and personal. Choral recitation and memorization are pedagogical techniques for accomplishing this. (p. 41-42)

This shows that the cultural values and norms which are conveyed through L1 may affect L2 learners' acculturation. According to Carson (1992) teaching methods in a Japanese language class in Japan, for example, emphasize traditional techniques such as memorization, repetition, and drilling rather than creativity and innovation. According to Yoshino (1992), the Japanese preferred non-logical, non-verbal, and empathetic modes of communication, referring to groupism and homogeneity, compared to the logical, assertive, and objective modes used by Westerners. In these studies authors stressed cultural differences between ESL learners' social and educational background, and that of the target language community.

Given the importance of cultural values and norms, further studies focused on the cultural values represented in L2 learners' work, values that also affect their acculturation. For example, contemporary studies have challenged cultural

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representations such as homogeneity, groupism, and lack of self-expression, creativity, and critical thinking found in the current applied linguistics literature (Kubota, 1999). Accordingly, what is suggested is the need to understand the meaning of labels such as individualism and creativity within a specific cultural context. Yoshino (1992) suggested that teachers need to be aware of cultural differences and expose, accommodate, or exploit these differences when appropriate. Kubota (1999) furthermore suggested that one pedagogical implication is to acculturate ESL students to the target discourse community through explicit teaching of the discourse conventions. Another implication is to respect the cultures that students bring with them to the ESL classroom.

Furthermore, Atkinson (1997) suggested that the concept of critical thinking presupposes individualism, self-expression, and learning by using language, which is incompatible with Asian cultural values. Kubota (1999) argued that there is a need to understand the meaning of labels such as individualism and creativity within a particular cultural context. For further research Kubota (1999) suggested that a critical awareness needed to be developed for both learners and teachers in order to cope with social-cultural consequences of using the dominant language. Therefore, teachers, schools, institutions, and wider society need to ensure that individuals have opportunities to develop skills that allow them to participate fully in an adopted society.

These implications may be most useful for those students who study abroad in a context where cultural and linguistic differences are great. According to Collentine and Freed (2004), "the study abroad (SA) context is where learners study the L2 in the target culture, and often live with host families." (p. 156). Wang (2010) indicated

that the new communities for L2 learners may include host families, classes, dormitories, and other communities such as public transportation, stores, and religious or hobby groups. Therefore, study abroad students are in an environment where they have to make themselves understood in a target language in all aspects of their daily lives.

Lafford (1995) and O'Donnell (2005) noted that comparing and contrasting outcomes of those who studied abroad and those who studied in their home countries has been the focus of many studies. Wang (2010) pointed out that study abroad students become more sociable, extroverted, self-confident, and independent when compared to students who have not studied abroad. Wang (2010) suggested that both immersion in the target language society and positive acceptance of ethnic identity may be necessary for successful L2 learning. According to Jiang et al. (2009), immersion within the native culture could offer a sense of belonging and emotional security, thus providing people with the psychological capacity to deal with acculturation stress during the L2 learning process. According to Wang (2010), studying abroad provides learners with rich opportunities for language input and interactions.

Also, Jiang, Green, Henley, and Masten (2009) referred to some studies that investigated how L2 learners' degree of acculturation affected L2 acquisition in different populations. They suggested that in order to enhance L2 oral proficiency, late-life L2 learners should consider becoming more immersed within American culture. Jian, Green, Henley, and Masten (2009) furthermore suggested that activities related to real life and cultural events could be introduced into the L2 classroom to better expose learners to American culture. According to them, these implications

may be most useful when cultural and linguistic differences are great such as the case with Chinese-English bilinguals who study and work in America. They furthermore claimed that both immersion into American society and positive acceptance of ethnic identity may be necessary for successful L2 learning.

In addition to studies employed in an ESL context, in EFL contexts in particular Gürsoy and Kunt (2018) argued that culture has a great influence on teaching and learning the target language, whether it takes place inside the classroom environment or as an extension of formal classroom environments. According to Gürsoy and Kunt (2018), it is crucial for language teachers to implement certain strategies to help students through the acculturation process. According to Gürsoy and Kunt (2018) the complex relationship between motivation, acculturation, the development of social networks, and exposure to the target language may be a driving force behind language acquisition in the host country context. Furthermore, they suggested that it is possible for acculturating individuals to both achieve a high level of host–culture competence and maintain their cultural heritage if a broader perspective, open-mindedness, and empathy are enhanced among learners and teachers alike in a mutual process of language socialization throughout the acculturation process.

In similar studies, Wang (2010) has argued that the complex relationship between motivations, acculturation, the development of social networks, and exposure to the target language may be the driving force behind language acquisition in the study abroad context. However, there are many unanswered questions about the process of L2 socialisation, self-identity, and study abroad, which justify an exploratory qualitative approach. The study of language socialization and understanding language development requires detailed data in all aspects of the language

socialization process. Also, the complexity of language acquisition and the nature of self-identity formation and adjustment in a study abroad context require further research. Yu and Wang (2011) wrote:

> In multicultural societies, individuals and groups need to work out how to live together, adopting various strategies that will allow them to achieve a reasonably successful adaptation to the new culture as well as society. Many modern acculturation theories claim that ethnic minorities, including immigrants, refugees, and sojourners can favour either the dominant culture, or their own minority culture, or both, or neither. (p. 193)

The evidence above suggested a need for greater multicultural awareness in plural and linguistically diverse L2 contexts through which learners are stimulated and motivated toward success in L2 learning. Lebedeva, Tatarko, and Berry (2016) suggested that developing a multicultural ideology is important in facilitating social interaction between members of the society in culturally plural milieus by promoting intercultural contact. Lebedeva, Tatarko, and Berry (2016), therefore, proposed a need to establish a mutual approach to understanding acculturation and intercultural relations among all individuals and groups in a plural society.

Kumaravadivelu (2008) and Byram (2008) argued that in a globalised world where political, social, and economic boundaries are increasingly difficult to define, language educators should actively encourage and facilitate the "cultivation of a critically reflective mind that can tell the difference between real and unreal, between information and disinformation, between ideas and ideologies" (Kumaravadivelu, 2008, p. 164). Byram (2011) argued that current foreign language education often lacks this and called for new strategies and approaches in teaching and in materials development as well. According to Kumaravadivelu (2008) and Byram (2008, 2011), language education, including EFL education, must have a transformative goal that

can be achieved only through cultural reflection and understanding within a critically oriented pedagogy. According to these scholars such pedagogy needs to be facilitated by materials that promote the development of a reflexive, open, and globally aware language learner.

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All in all, research has shown that acceptance of multicultural ideology is crucially important in pursuing the intercultural strategy of integration and achieving mutual

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adaptation among cultural groups in a pluralistic society (Lebedeva, Tatarko, & Berry, 2016).

2.6 Intercultural Communicative Competence (ICC)

Current trends in research conducted since 2000 represent almost exclusive attention to a "transnational or global/local approach, focusing on cultural complexity and hybridity" (Risager, 2011, p. 485). The key words of this era are "critical citizenship" (Guilherme, 2002), "intercultural competence of the world citizen" (Risager, 2007), "global cultural consciousness" (Kumaravadivelu, 2008), and "intercultural citizenship" (Byram, 2008, 2011). These approaches clearly move beyond a mere understanding of the target-language culture or integration of cultural content into the language syllabus. This implies that students should acquire intercultural communicative competence, and, in addition, learn to be politically consciousness citizens of a modern society.

According to Byram, Gribkova, and Starkey (2002), when two people talk to each other they do not just speak to the other to exchange information, but they also see each other as individuals and as people who belong to specific social groups. This has an influence on what they say, how they say it, what response they expect, and how they interpret the response. According to these scholars, when people talk to each other their social identities are an unavoidable part of the social interaction between them. In language teaching, the concept of 'communicative competence' takes this into account by emphasising that language learners need to acquire not just grammatical competence but also the knowledge of what is 'appropriate' language (Byram, Gribkova, & Starkey, 2002). Thus, when two people in conversation are from different countries speaking in a language that is a foreign or second language

for one of them, or when they are both speaking a language that is foreign to both of them, this often influences what they say and how they say it because they see the other person as a representative of a country or nation (Byram, Gribkova, & Starkey, 2002). So, while language teaching continues to help learners to acquire the linguistic competence needed to communicate in speaking or writing, to formulate what they want to say, write in correct and appropriate ways, it also develops their intercultural competence (Byram, Gribkova, & Starkey, 2002).

The concept of communicative competence, therefore, has been developed into the concept of 'intercultural communicative competence' (ICC) proposed by Mike Byram (1997). According to Byram, Gribkova, and Starkey (2002) intercultural competence involves developing students' ability to ensure a shared understanding among people of different social identities, and their ability to interact with people as complex human beings with multiple identities and their own individuality. According to Bayram, (1997) ICC requires that students acquire the knowledge, skills, attitudes, and critical cultural awareness necessary to communicate interculturally. The components of intercultural competence are knowledge, skills and attitudes, complemented by the values a person holds as a part of belonging to a number of social groups (Humphrey, 2007). Humphrey (2007, p. 60) identified the following components of ICC:

2.6.1 Knowledge Based Component of ICC

This component includes knowledge of world geography, conditions, issues, and events, knowledge of one's own culture and history, knowledge of effective communication (including knowledge of a foreign language), and understanding the diversity found in the world in terms of values, beliefs, ideas, and worldviews.

Collectively this knowledge can be defined as having two major components: knowledge of social processes and knowledge of illustrations of those processes and products; the latter includes knowledge about how other people are likely to perceive you as well as some knowledge about other people (Humphrey 2007). The other component is skills needed to communicate interculturally.

2.6.2 Skills Based Component of ICC

This component includes technical skills that enhance students' capacity of to learn about the world, critical and comparative thinking skills (including the ability to think creatively and integrate knowledge rather than uncritical acceptance of knowledge), communication skills (including ability to use another language effectively and interact with people from other cultures), as well as coping and resiliency skills in unfamiliar and challenging situations (Humphrey 2007).

Humphrey (2007) further identified the skills of interpreting and relating component, which involves the ability to interpret a document or event from another culture, to explain it and relate it to documents or events from one's own. Humphrey (2007) also identified the skills of discovery and interaction component, which is the ability to acquire new knowledge of a culture and cultural practices and the ability to apply knowledge, attitudes, and skills under the constraints of real-time communication and interaction. Finally, Humphrey (2007) identified a critical cultural awareness component, which is the ability to evaluate critically and on the basis of explicit criteria, perspectives, practices and products in one's own and other cultures and countries.

2.6.3 Attitudes Based Component of ICC

The final component is attitudes, which details specific attitudes that are necessary for effective intercultural communication. Attitudes of openness to learning and a positive orientation to new opportunities, ideas, and ways of thinking are necessary. Furthermore, attitudes of tolerance for ambiguity and unfamiliarity, sensitivity and respect for personal and cultural differences, empathy or the ability to take multiple perspectives, and self-awareness regarding own identity and culture and a well-developed self- esteem are necessary components for ICC (Humphrey, 2007). Humphrey (2007) explained that the attitudes component involves curiosity and openness, readiness to suspend disbelief about other cultures and belief about one's own. This means a willingness to relativize one's own values, beliefs and behaviours, not to assume that they are the only possible and naturally correct ones, and to be able to see how they might look from an outsider's perspective with a different set of values, beliefs, and behaviours.

According to Humphrey (2007), the competences identified above are necessary for students to develop if they are to be successful in their global residencies. Humphrey (2007) also presented examples of possible indicators of ICC that would be fully integrated with the activities for classroom practice to support ICC as a pedagogical approach (see Table 1).

Table 1. Examples of Possible Indicators of Intercultural Competence

Intercultural competencies	Awareness of intercultural competencies
• I can describe other cultures • I can notice and record similarities and differences between cultures. • I can explain similarities and differences between cultures. • I can understand and accept aspects of other cultures which are surprising/new to me. • I can reflect on the sometimes challenging/enriching nature of intercultural encounters. • I can empathise with members of other cultures.	• I can identify the factors influencing my attitudes towards other cultures. • I can assess my own abilities as an intercultural communicator.

These sets of "I can do" statements presented in Table 1 are based on the levels of intercultural competence. These intercultural "Can do" statements would help learners to self-assess their intercultural competence, set objectives, and they would be able to display evidence of their intercultural progress. These would be integrated with activities for classroom practice to enhance and test students' intercultural competencies. Byram, Gribkova, and Starkey (2002) pointed out that the acquisition of intercultural competence is never complete and perfect but that being a successful intercultural speaker and mediator does not require complete and perfect competence. According to Byram, Gribkova, and Starkey (2002) the first reason for this is obvious: it is not possible to acquire or to anticipate all the knowledge one might need in interacting with people of other cultures since those cultures are themselves constantly changing. The second reason why complete and perfect competence is not required is that everyone's own social identities and values develop. That is, people acquire new ones throughout their lives as they become members of new social groups, and those identities as well as the values, beliefs, and behaviours they symbolise are deeply embedded in one's sense of self. This means

that as people have new experiences and are exposed to unexpected beliefs, values and behaviours, they must be constantly aware of the need to adjust, accept, and understand other people, which is never a completed process. The role of the language teacher is therefore to help students develop skills, attitudes, and awareness of values just as much as to develop knowledge of a particular culture or country.

2.7 Summary of Literature Review

Overall, based on the literature reviewed, it can also be claimed that learners will acquire L2 only to the degree that they acculturate and integrate psychologically with the local culture, as in our context of international students who study in an international university in North Cyprus. Research showed that both immersion within the target culture and positive acceptance of ethnic identity may be necessary for successful L2 learning (Jian, Green, Henley, & Masten, 2009). This view was supported by motivational experts who emphasised the positive effects of integrative motivation on language learning acquisition (Dornyei, 1990; Gardner, 1998; Gardner, Day, & MacIntyre, 1992).

Likewise, previous research has suggested that integration is the most preferred acculturation strategy, and that it produces the best results in the adaptation stage during acculturation while marginalization produces the worst results in the adaptation process (Berry, 2006). However, Yu and Wang (2011) have argued that although integration appears to be the most preferred strategy, there appears to be differences in the use of strategies based on differences in features existing prior to acculturation, for example, the closeness between cultures, cultural plurality in the culture of origin, level of education, perception of the original culture or their cultural identity, language, age, and gender. According to Yu and Wang (2011) the

four strategies are not static but dynamic, and are not clear-cut. Thus, different people have different strategies, and even the same person may adopt differing strategies at different stages of acculturation.

In the present study English is the medium of instruction and is spoken by the majority of international students studying at EMU. Using the medium of instruction is essential in multicultural study abroad contexts to assure that all students have equal opportunity to engage in classroom conversations and prevent the exclusion of students from minority backgrounds. This issue is particularly important to teachers of English-medium courses where it becomes necessary to avoid the use of the mother tongue and encourage all students in the class to use the medium of instruction in order not to induce segregation among students from particular ethnic groups.

In many international study abroad settings English is the dominant language. Therefore, using English as a medium of classroom instruction in all ethnically mixed classrooms would give an equal chance for all students to participate in classroom conversations. All in all, most students living temporarily or permanently in a dominant society need to establish interethnic contact and engage in activities in class as well as be involved in extra-curricular activities in the target language that they are learning.

As stated by scholars, developing the intercultural dimension in language teaching helps learners develop both intercultural and linguistic competences, which prepare them to interact with people from other cultures. Developing these competences

enables students to understand and accept people from other cultures as individuals with distinct perspectives, values, and behaviours (Byram, Gribkova and Starkey, 2002). However, having new experiences and encountering unexpected beliefs, values, and behaviours can often shock and disturb those deeply embedded identities and values. Everyone, therefore, has to be constantly aware of the need to adjust, accept, and understand one another. This process never ends, however, since cultures themselves are constantly changing and there are many cultures and languages within any one country, so there is no perfect model to imitate or a notion of a perfect native speaker anymore (Byram, Gribkova, & Starkey, 2002). There are cultural similarities, diversities, and individual factors, and certain cultural differences indeed exist. Therefore, it is worth exploring diversity within a culture in regard to race, ethnicity, language, class, gender, age, geographical conditions, and cross-cultural influences (Kubota, 1999).

The literature review exposed the need to revisit and re-examine the process of acculturation in greater depth, especially with the increase in the international student population in an emerging multicultural study abroad context that demands the necessary language teaching and learning context for both learners and teachers. From the research underlined in the literature review, it is obvious that acculturation has not been researched sufficiently from different perspectives, particularly in an EFL context. Therefore, this research aimed to examine preferences in acculturation strategies of Arab and African students, and, moreover, to investigate factors that influenced their acculturation at EMU, which is a multicultural and international university in the region.

Chapter 3

METHODOLOGY

This chapter presents the details of the methodology employed in the research study. It starts with presenting the overall study design. Discussion then moves to the research context and participants, the instruments and procedures for data collection, and the piloting stage. Finally, data analysis procedures are presented.

This study focused on examining preferences regarding acculturation strategies among international students at EMU, North Cyprus, and the factors associated with the acculturation strategies of these students. The aim was to investigate whether the acculturation process had a vital role in learners' social adaptation and its role in their academic achievement while learning English in the Foreign Languages and English Preparatory School. This is to further examine the role of learners' cultural, motivational, and personal factors that interact, and the influence on their language learning performances within their acculturation process.

The questions addressed in this study were:

1. How do students perceive themselves in relation to acculturation at EMU and in North Cyprus society at large?

2. What cultural patterns can be drawn from their acculturation continuum?

3. How do international students perceive the experience of studying abroad in North Cyprus?

4. What is the predominant acculturation strategies used among students in EMU, North Cyprus context?

5. What strategies can be adapted further to help learners improve themselves in the acculturation continuum and achieve the learning outcomes of English courses in an international study abroad context?

This chapter gives the details of the methodology used in the research study. It starts with the overall design of the study, and then focuses on the details in relation to the context and participants, the instruments and the procedures for data collection. Finally, procedures for data analyses are presented.

3.1 Design of the Study

To address the research questions the study adopted a mixed method design in which data is collected through both qualitative and quantitative measures.

Figure 2. Design of the Study: Mixed Method Design

The study adopted an exploratory case design that included a survey of student perceptions (Appendix A), and interviews using stimulated recall (Appendix B). In order to enrich the analysis of the data collected from the survey, a qualitative analysis was employed based on interview data to optimise findings. This form of analysis is not easy to assess with any pinpoint accuracy, yet it is, as we argue below, suitable for the current study. Smith (2008) pointed out:

> Given that we make sense of our social world and express that sense-making to ourselves and others linguistically, qualitative researchers emphasise the value of analytical strategies that remain as close as possible to the symbolic system in which that sense-making occurs. (p. 2)

The experience of moving to another country and another culture, the experience of learning a foreign language and a wider foreign discourse, the issues of culture shock and cultural empathy with the society of the target language, cannot be plotted on a graph as can, for example, petrol consumption.

Moreover, this study can be defined as an exploratory case study. It involved collecting data through in-depth interviews using stimulated recall. The data collection stage included amassing information through the medium of interviews. The study used semi-structured interviews because these provide a better opportunity for the researcher to understand how the interviewee is thinking than is afforded by employing only quantitative forms of data collection. Pre-determined open-ended questions were used with the aim of providing more opportunities for the researcher to explore certain themes and responses. Therefore, to avoid restricting participants to a range of pre-determined answers, individuals were interviewed separately. This also helped avoid peer influence.

The researcher was aware that qualitative analysis is difficult to analyse in a precise way. Yet, the researcher recognised that subjective perspectives of the participants are highly valuable for the following reasons. First, the undertaking of learning a foreign language is something to be approached subjectively (Smith, 2011). Because of the nature of this part of the research, qualitative analysis could be seen as the route to be selected "inevitably."

A vital part of this research is the element of interpretation. All participants can impart knowledge, emotions, worries, and other subjective factors that they may desire to share with the researcher, but for every two participants involved there are two different opinions, two differing interpretations. This is a difficult matter, and understanding can be hard to arrive at. Qualitative research is not structuralist or determinist as proscriptive outcomes are not looked for or, indeed, wanted, and the research is open-ended (Smith, 1995). Mcleod (2011) describes open-ended qualitative research as 'holistic', 'nuanced', 'personal', 'contextualised', 'incomplete'.

The main attention of the researcher as mentioned above is interpretation. This may seem like returning to a way of thinking than predates 'logical positivism'– 'structuralism', even 'determinism', with 'existentialist preoccupations' with 'self' and with how choices are superseded by preoccupations concerning structures and relationships (Piaget, 1971). Yet qualitative analysis does not have to be limited by any of these philosophies. We will not be.

A greater emphasis on qualitative analysis arises from an acceptance that it can be a useful instrument in addressing the way people view the surroundings they find themselves in. Logical positivism, born in the Vienna School in the 1920s and 1930s, held that metaphysics could be discarded, and that only empirical evidence could be accepted as worth consideration (Ayre, 1959). Structuralism and determinism have a great deal in common with this, and tend to lead to empirical studies based on relationships between structures, and tend to imprison thinking within the limits of the language environment that one is born into (Piaget, 1971). Needless to say, this is

exactly what the researcher wishes to get away from, given the pragmatic approach to acculturation addressed below.

These views are largely seen as out-dated, and a 'softer' approach to what we think we 'know' prevails. Strict adherence to evidence of one's senses cannot fully comprehend the more nuanced reality relating to a person's perception of themselves in their environment, or comprehend significant factors in people's lives in relation to social class, religious faith, national and racial (sense of) affiliation, and so on. Macleod (2011) and Smith's (1995) approach is interpretive phenomenological analysis, which was the approach used in the current study.

At a later stage, the study combined the qualitative interview study with a quantitative survey that targeted issues exposed in the first phase of research and focused on generalizing a new hypothesis to wider populations. Quantitative analysis can be useful when "... counting occurrences, volumes, or the size of associations between entities" (Smith, 2008, p. xii). This, of course, is to be used to analyse participant origins, ages, genders, and so on (Dove, 2012, p. xxi). The psychological state of our participants was something to be explored subjectively.

Dealing with cultural, political, interpersonal, motivational, life goals, emotional and many other concerns presents great challenges in relation to interpretation. The complicated mass of input is not an easy thing to comprehend or impart to others (Douglas & Davis, 2014). Yet, in this study it is believed that this is the most valuable aspect of data collection. It is not necessarily limited by its imprecise nature, as mentioned above in reference to Macleod (2011). The fact that it is incomplete negates any charge that a piece of research pretends to be conclusive rather than

disprovable, open-ended, and subject to critical revision in subsequent studies. The following section introduces the context and the participants of the survey, the targeted context, the reasons for targeting these particular cases, the data collection instruments, and the procedures for data collection and analysis.

3.2 Context and Participants

Eastern Mediterranean University (EMU) has a high profile of international students coming from many countries (mostly from the Middle East, Arabic speaking countries, Africa, Eastern Europe, and Turkic states of the former Soviet Union). EMU is a 'good model' with its multicultural student diversity providing English-medium programs with the opportunity of learning in an international teaching context with its 20,000 students from 106 different countries studying in English programs from different departments.

This study selected a profile of student-participants from Arabic speaking countries in the Middle East and African countries who had been placed in their departments at EMU, which is an international English-medium University. Students from these regions were selected for the study because they comprised the largest proportion of international students studying at EMU compared to the total number of cultural groups that EMU hosts. The study took place at the School of Foreign Languages (FL).

The participants in the study were placed in their departments in social sciences and science engineering departments. In their previous years participants had taken pair of academic English courses (i.e., ENGL181/182 or ENGL191/192) to raise their English knowledge to an intermediate level and enhance their academic English

skills. Students took these courses according to their needs and levels of academic English. Some passed, some failed and repeated the courses, and others passed the courses but repeated them to attain higher grades while studying in their departments. The study took place in the 2017/2018 fall academic semester but began in the 2017 summer period when students were asked to participate. The students who took part in this research took these courses in their previous years or at the beginning of their education at EMU.

ENGL181/191, English for Academic Purposes I, is a one-semester university course in academic English that freshman students take during their first semester of study. It is designed for students to develop their English level to B1, as specified in the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages. The purpose of the course is to consolidate students' knowledge and awareness of academic discourse, language structures, and lexis. The main focus is on the development of productive (writing and speaking) and receptive (reading) skills in academic settings. In addition, the aims, objectives, and learning outcomes involve students enhancing speaking skills throughout pre- and post-reading group discussions, actively participating in the discussions and activities, improving critical and reflective thinking skills, and developing an autonomous and self-directed approach to learning. Moreover, on completion of the course students are able to write a thesis statement identifying their topic, focusing on one specific point about the topic, and expressing belief, observation, or attitude. The students are then be able to produce a well-structured academic essay by preparing an outline and writing a rough draft that is revised and edited according to their teacher's feedback. They are able to speak, give reasons, and express opinions in discussion in an academic environment.

The course that follows ENGL181/191 is ENGL182/192, English for Academic Purposes II, which is a one-semester university core course. This course is designed to further develop students English to a B2 level as specified in the Common European Framework of References for Languages. The course aims to reconsolidate and develop students' knowledge and awareness of academic discourse, language structures, and critical thinking. The course focus on reading, writing, listening, speaking and introducing documentation, and focuses on production skills in academic contexts. The aims of the ENGL182/192 course are to improve and develop English language skills and knowledge within an academic context. Moreover, it is planned for students to improve and develop critical thinking skills, develop an interest in and knowledge of a wide range of academic issues across the curriculum, and to develop an understanding of interdisciplinary links as well as to develop an autonomous and self-directed approach to learning. On successful completion of the course, students are able to demonstrate their understanding and knowledge and have the skills to write a formal essay on a particular issue, identifying the main idea and specific information in theme-based texts. Moreover, identifying cues and inferring meaning from a variety of texts and preparing and presenting a PowerPoint presentation on a specific topic in academic settings is involved.

3.3 Instruments and Procedures for Data Collection

The following procedures were followed during the study. Before conducting the study, ethical approval (Appendix A) was obtained from the Ethics Committee at EMU. Permission for data collection was then obtained from the School of Foreign Languages and the English Preparatory School (Appendix B).

First, the researcher applied a quantitative approach in which the questionnaire targeted issues uncovered in the preliminary phase of research, and investigated the inclusiveness of the new hypothesis in broader populations. The survey (Appendix C) is based on closed-ended questionnaires with a total of 210 students.

The researcher adopted a questionnaire that contained altogether fifty-eight questions related to acculturation strategies. The questionnaire was divided into three sections (Appendix C):

1. This first section was designed to elicit preferences regarding acculturation strategies.

2. The second section was designed to look into linguistic proficiency, attitudes, and motivations about target language learning.

3. The last section addressed sociocultural adjustment factors concerning culture shock and acculturative stress (i.e., sociocultural and psychological adjustment factors).

Second, the researcher combined the quantitative work with a qualitative approach that collected data using in-depth interviews (Appendix D) with 19 students. Participants for the interview were selected based on the demographic information from the groups surveys conducted previously. All interviews started with a semi-structured questionnaire to gain more information about students' ethnic and educational background, experiences in learning English, perceived pros and cons in relation to learning English at EMU, social and cultural factors that had affected their learning, and problems and challenges they had faced in learning English in this context (Praag, Stevens, & Houtte, 2015).

Before the final versions of the survey and interview questions were established, a pilot study was conducted to determine which items measured the type of information that was needed. The researcher perceived the purpose of a pilot study as related to the aim of the research project of which it formed a part. The primary goal of a pilot study is to collect information that can be used to facilitate the success of the research project as a whole, which is described in the below paragraphs.

3.4 Pilot Study

The term pilot study is used in two different ways in social science research. It can refer to a so-called feasibility study, which is a "small scale version, or trial run, done in preparation for the major study" (Polit, Beck, & Hungler, 2001, p. 467). It is also used to refer to "the pre-testing or trying out, of a particular research instrument or research procedures" (Baker, 1994, p. 182-183). The use of pilot studies also is supported by the following quotes concerning their value and goals: "to see if the beast will fly" (De Vos, 2002, p. 410), "reassessment without tears" (Blaxter, Hughes & Tight, 1996, p. 121), and "Do not take the risk. Pilot test first." (Van Teijlingen & Hundley, 2001, p. 2). According to Blaxter, Hughes, and Tight (1996), piloting is a way of testing all research techniques and methods that the researcher has in mind to see how well they will work in practice. If necessary, these can be adjusted and revised accordingly.

The goal is thus to first examine the study on a small scale to resolve all potential problems that might result in failure of the research procedure. It might, indeed, minimize the risk of failure. "A pilot study is a mini-version of a full-scale study or a trial run done in preparation of the complete study. The latter is also called a 'feasibility' study. It can also be a specific pre-testing of research instruments, including questionnaires or interview schedules" (Compare Polit, et al. & Baker in

Nursing Standard, 2002, p. 33-44; Van Teijlingen & Hundley, 2001, p.1). Welman and Kruger (1999) list the values of a pilot study: "A pilot study is also valuable to identify unclear or ambiguous items in a questionnaire. The non-verbal behaviour of participants in the pilot study may give important information about any embarrassment or discomfort experienced concerning the content or wording of items in a questionnaire " (p.146). Other advantages of pilot studies include the following as listed in *Nursing Standard* (2002): "It can give advance warning about where the main research project can fail. It indicates where research protocols might not be followed. The pilot study can also identify practical problems of the research procedure. It indicates whether proposed methods or instruments are inappropriate or too complicated" (p. 33-34). De Vaus (1993) advises researchers to "check to see if there are any ambiguities or if the respondents have any difficulty in responding" (p. 54). All in all, the researchers above suggest that a pilot study can give advance warning of shortcomings in a proposed study as well as inform the researcher regarding the research measures and about possible outcomes. Thus, it is crucial to present the findings of pilot studies. Therefore, both the procedure and findings of the pilot study included in the current research design are discussed in the following paragraphs.

3.4.1 Piloting Procedure

The pilot phase was conducted at EMU, Foreign Languages and English Preparatory School, during summer school over a period of two weeks in August 2017. The piloting sessions included students for a mix of cultures who were taking the English for Academic Purposes II ENGL192 course. A total of 16 students answered the questionnaire, and eight of these students volunteered to be interviewed. The researcher ensured that the focus group that answered the questionnaire and

participated in the interview did so in a non-threatening environment by explaining that this was a voluntary research study. They were told that they did not have to participate if they chose not to. In order to test the feasibility of the research design and instruments, various techniques were used as a pre-test in the pilot study to gain a more in-depth understanding of the focus group's perceptions and experiences. This included testing the items to evaluate their effectiveness and clarity. According to these results some items were reformulated to reduce language confusion and ambiguity. This process also included conducting interviews with key informants, reviewing the questions, and discarding some questions. Any difficulties and/or needs that arose from the use of these are discussed in the following paragraphs.

3.4.1.1 Questionnaire

First, the questionnaire had to be tested to discover whether or not it was effective. These were the items in the questionnaire which needed confirmation of effectiveness. The use and application of this questionnaire was adopted from another source and then revised accordingly. The questionnaire was adapted based on the Questionnaire on Acculturation Strategies of Chinese Students in Germany (Yu & Wang, 2011). The original survey is in Appendix E.

To generate the present questionnaire on Acculturation Strategies of International Students at EMU, North Cyprus the following demographic questions and questionnaire items were modified and subsequently adapted to serve the purpose of this study and localise it within the present context.

Personal Information

Name and Surname: _____ Course enrolled: _____

Country of Origin: _____ Nationality: _____ Language (s)

spoken: _____ Gender: _____ Age: _____ Age of arrival

in North Cyprus: _____ Resident City in North Cyprus: _____

Duration of sojourn (living) in North Cyprus: _____ Duration of studying

English _____. IELTS or TOFEL score if any: _____ English

Proficiency score: _____ (the highest one if you've taken several tests) Your

mobile phone in North Cyprus_____ Your e-mail

address in North Cyprus_____

Table 2. The Revised and Modified Items in The Survey Are Shown Below

No	Items
	Section A
1	I behave like a local in many ways.
2	Most of the music I listen to is in my own language.
3	*I would be just as willing to marry a local or foreigner as from someone from my own country.*
4	Generally, I find it difficult to socialize with anybody, from my own country or other.
5	When I am in my apartment/house, I typically speak English.
6	*My closest friends are from my own country.*
7	*I think as well in English as I do in my own language.*
8	I sometimes feel that neither local nor people from my own country like me.
9	If I were asked to write poetry, I would prefer to write it in English.
10	I prefer going to social gatherings where most of the people are local or from other countries.
11	*I have close friends from both my own country and from other countries.*
12	*I prefer to have friend both from my own country and other.*
13	I get along better with local or others than my own country.
14	I feel that foreigners don't treat me the same as they socialize with other foreigners.
15	*I feel that both my own people and others value me.*
16	I sometimes find it hard to communicate with people.

17	I feel that foreigners understand me better than people from my country do.
18	I would prefer to go out on a date with someone from my country than with others.
19	*I feel very comfortable around both people from other countries and my own country.*
20	I sometimes find it hard to make friends.
21	Most of my friends are from my own country.
22	I feel more relaxed when I am with a foreigner than when I am with someone from my own country.
23	Sometimes I feel that my own people and foreigners do not accept me.
24	I feel more comfortable socializing with foreigners than I do with my own people.
25	People from my country should not date with a foreigner.
26	Sometimes I find it hard to trust both foreigners and my people.
27	*I like taking part in both my own culture and others' social activities.*
28	I find that both my own people and foreigners often have difficulty understanding me.
	Section B
29	I study English well in order to be integrated into EMU and North Cyprus society.
30	I study English well in order to make more foreign friends.
31	*I study English well in order to understand other cultures.*
32	I study well only for the sake of study.
33	Studying English well is very important to both my studying and living.
34	*It is very important for me to study both my own language and English well.*
35	*Generally speaking, I have high English language proficiency.*
36	*I can talk with foreign people in fluent English.*
37	*I can participate in class discussion in fluent English.*
38	I feel it is very difficult to understand what my English teachers and other friends say.
39	It is extremely difficult for me to write my thesis in English.
40	*I can speak English without worrying about mistakes.*
41	*I can write English without worrying about mistakes.*
42	*I find memorizing English vocabulary easy.*
43	*I find understanding English grammar easy.*
44	I fear to deal with official affairs on my own because of the language barrier.
	Section C
45	I prefer to be dressed in Western culture.
46	*I prefer English music to my own music.*
47	*I love my own culture, history and traditions.*
48	Being part of my own culture is embarrassing to me.
49	I sometimes find it hard to make friends.
50	Physically, I feel tired.

51	In my daily life, I feel tense and anxious.
52	I feel lonely even if I am with people.
53	I often feel helpless in dealing with problems of my life.
54	I am not used to the pace of life here.
55	I am threatened by belonging to different ethnic groups.
56	I feel unaccepted by the local and foreign people I know.
57	I feel uneasy when I am with people.
58	I sometimes find it hard to socialize with people.

59. Is there anything else that you want to add?

………………………………………………………………………………………

………………………………………………………………………………………

Following the modifications and revisions, the survey needed to be piloted to find whether it was possible to apply it in a different group situation. Questionnaires are piloted to avoid misleading, inappropriate, or redundant questions. The students were kindly asked to go over each item and see if any miscommunication or ambiguity existed. Based on the observations, the researcher noted instances when students hesitated or needed clarification. The main difficulty experienced with the questionnaire was language issues related to one item that needed minor language correction to make it clearer for the main research study. The researcher used this data to revise the instrument as it is the researcher's responsibility to modify evaluative tools to optimize accuracy.

Table 3. The Item Which Was Corrected is Shown Below

No	Item	Corrected
12	I prefer to have friend from my own country and other.	I prefer to have friend *both* from my own country and other.

After concluding the pilot study, the researcher decided to distribute the surveys and start data collection. All participants signed a consent form, and were assured that their identities would be confidential. Surveys were distributed and left to students to

complete so that the participants could complete the surveys comfortably and not feel that they were under scrutiny. Survey distribution took about two months to reach the necessary number of participants.

3.4.1.2 Interview Protocol

Following the pilot test for the questionnaire a total of eight students from the same group volunteered to participate in the interview phase. All interviews were conducted between or after class time so as not to disrupt learners' programmes. All the open-ended and closed-ended questions were reviewed with students individually to see if any required revision, should be eliminated, or should be further developed. The researcher paid attention to cases where participants felt uncertain as to how to respond or asked for simplification, as this may indicate questions that were ambiguous, difficult to interpret, or had more than one meaning in the mind of the participant. The researcher made a note of where this occurred. After receiving feedback from the first pilot interview session, questions participants found too complicated and questions for which participants could not elaborate on their answers were revised and modified. After these revisions, questions 2, 3, and 10 were dropped from the interview protocol and the other questions were reorganized for clarity and to promote the free flow speech and detailed conversation. The interview protocol piloted was adapted from *Acculturation among International Students' Writing Identity at a North American University* (Nesfield, 2014; see Appendix F).

According to the researcher the pilot study was important and had great value. The usefulness was clear at the end of the process when the researcher was able to identify factors that possibly could have had a negative influence on the quality of

the final research product. The pilot study was of value for both the quantitative and the qualitative phases of this research project.

After concluding the pilot study, the researcher initiated the qualitative phase of the research study based on the revised interview questions. The interviews were face-to-face so that the researcher and interviewee were able to interact effectively. During the interviews participants seemed comfortable and involved in the conservation. The interviews averaged 60 minutes in length, and were conducted by the researcher in English only. The setting of the interviews and the manner in which they were conducted had to be carefully considered. It was decided that an empty classroom in the language unit would be an appropriate place to conduct the interviews. The students' familiarity with this environment was a factor. Each individual was interviewed separately. This helped avoid any possible peer influence. Second, the seating arrangement was considered as an important factor and a distance was maintained between the interviewer and the interviewee in order to create a comfort zone. The interviewer's body language and style of discourse also was carefully considered. Talking time was deemed as being mainly for the participant with minimal interviewer intervention as good listeners elicit better results than profuse talkers (Jones, 1991). Occasionally it was necessary to interrupt if the interview was going off course, but this was done in a gentle and minimal way so as not to cut the train of the participant's thoughts thereby missing out on a potentially important point (Dörnyei, 2007, p. 143).

According to Patton (1990) "there are no fixed rules of sequence in organizing an interview" (p. 294). Therefore, the researcher asked questions according to the way

the activity was going rather than sticking to a rigid schedule. Similarly, "a fairly relaxed and gentle style of body language was adopted. Too much eye contact and too much assertive body language can make a participant uncomfortable, perhaps leading to less reliable data collection" (Gillham, 2000, p. 31). "Introductions were deemed important, and the researcher began with a general 'chit-chat' to put the participants at ease, and particularly to give them the idea that they are not embarking on a difficult or taxing activity" (Patton, 1990, p. 294).

3. 5 Data Analyses

After careful consideration of the instruments and procedures for data collection, the following discussion presents the data analysis procedure, including steps for the analysis of both quantitative and qualitative data.
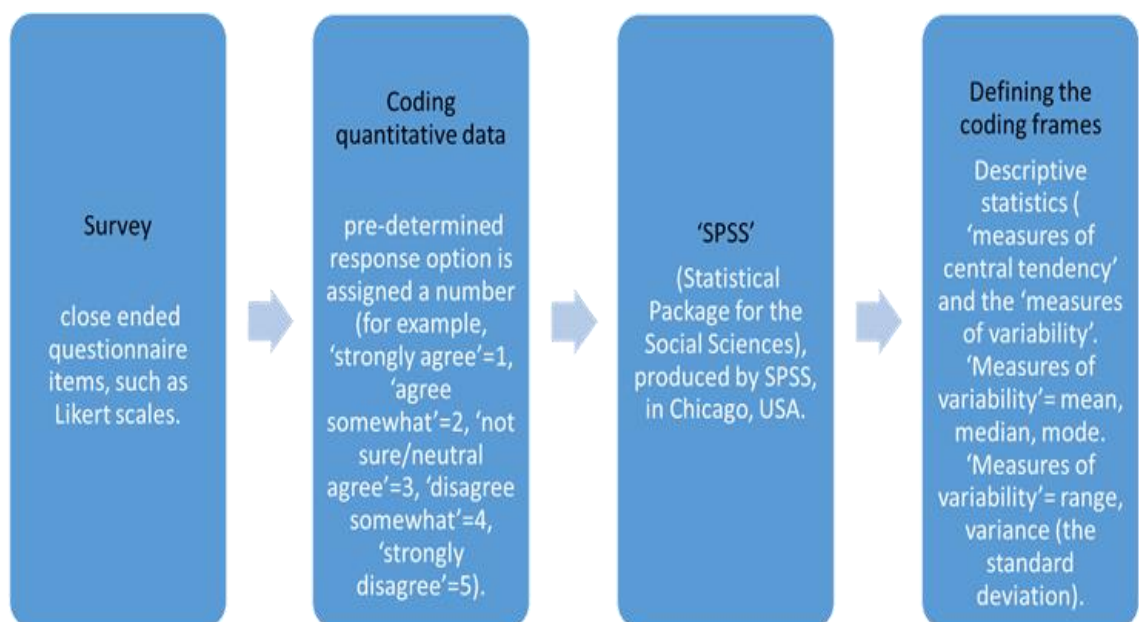
Figure 3. The Order for Quantitative Data Analysis

Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS, version 15) was used for quantitative data analyses. Although 220 surveys were distributed only 210 surveys were

considered as valid and therefore were included at the end of the data collection procedure. After data collection completed, collected data were analysed through factor analysis and later the responses to the items were analysed using descriptive measures, namely percentages and means. Responses to the open-ended items were analysed qualitatively through categorization of responses and identification of recurring patterns. The recorded content of all interviews was fully transcribed. The procedures for qualitative analyses were to categorize data, and then identify any emerging concepts and themes from categories (Merriam, 1998; Saldaña, 2009).

Qualitative data analysis started with carefully collecting the data from transcribed interviews. Data analysis followed the constant comparative method, which refers to a cyclic process of data collection, analysis and theorising as formulated in grounded theory (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). First, open coding is applied during and after each stage of data collection in each setting (a single class group), and involves asking questions about the data and identifying and naming categories (Strauss & Corbin, 1990). After transcribing the data, the researcher worked constantly with the text, interpreting it closely ('coding') to understand participants' experiences and their perceptions of the open-ended questions. As the analysis developed the codes that emerge were classified and later examined for patterns, which provided the themes.

Larkin, Watts, and Clifton (2006) wrote that themes are reappearing patterns of meaning (ideas, thoughts, and feelings) throughout the text. Themes are likely to describe both something that *matters* to the participants (e.g., an object of concern, topic of some import) and also transferring something of the *meaning* for the participants. The processes for qualitative analysis are to classify data and then define any arising ideas and themes from the categories (Merriam, 1998, Saldaña,

2009). Reactions to the open-ended elements are analysed qualitatively through classification of reactions and defining of reappearing patterns. The recorded content of all the interviews are fully transcribed.

For quantitative analysis, this research focused on the existence of diversity within a culture in regard to cultural background, language(s), geographical conditions, and cross-cultural differences. The following are the points addressed for the quantitative measure, which was adapted from Yu and Wang's (2011) Acculturation Strategies of Chinese Students in Germany. The questionnaire included the following sub-scales:

1. Demographics: nationality, gender, age, resident city, arrival time and length of residence in North Cyprus.

2. Acculturation strategies: (Section A, 28-eight-item-scale) Berry's four dimensions of acculturation.

Examples= 1. Assimilation → "I get along better with Cypriots and/or others than people from my own culture".

2. Separation
"I prefer going to social gatherings where most of the people are Cypriots or from other countries."

3. Integration "I feel very comfortable around both people from other countries and my own country."

4. Marginalization "Sometimes I feel that my own people and foreigners do not accept me."

Figure 4. Acculturation Model for the Present Study

3. Language proficiency: items are designed to elicit three kinds of information about target language acquisition.

   1. Self-assessment of English language ability in reading, writing, listening, and speaking.

2. Self-assessment of English language learning confidence.

3. The various purposes of learning English, and the learners' motivation.

4. Language learning motivation: The attitude and motivation questionnaire designed by Gardner (2010) includes three-subscales:

   1. Attitude toward learning L2

   2. Motivation intensity

   3. Desire to learn the target language

5. Cultural identity: language, food preference, social groups, music preference, and degree of assimilation to the host culture (e.g., "I love my own culture, history and traditions."). Two forms of social group identity were assessed in this section:

   1. Self-identity

   2. Other identity

6. Social adaptation: the degree of stress and anxiety when the participants initially experienced Cypriot culture, situations related to culture shock, psychological well-being, and social adaptation.

7. Symptoms outcome: assessing possible depression, anxiety, and psychosomatic symptoms of students (e.g., "I feel tired", "I feel tense and anxious" and "I feel lonely.").

8. Stressful experience adaptation: These include experiences such as making friends and racism. Higher scores are indicative of greater social difficulty in negotiating with the host culture (i.e., poorer social adaptation).

Chapter 4

DATA ANALYSIS

This chapter first presents the analyses conducted on the questionnaire, and brief descriptions of survey content are presented. Following the descriptions, there is a detailed presentation of the steps in preparing the data for quantitative analyses. Finally, the findings of the quantitative analyses are presented. The same procedure is followed for the presentation of the qualitative findings.

4.1 Analysis of Student Perceptions from the Questionnaire

The aim of the questionnaire was to gather data on international students' views and perceptions of the acculturation process and to investigate factors associated with the acculturation strategies of these students. The first phase of the data collection was to test the hypothesis in wider populations. Although 220 students participated, data from 210 of these participants was valid and considered in the actual data analysis. Of the 210 students, 182 were male and 26 were female. These students were then classified into two main cultures of origin. Arabs numbered 115 students and the others were Africans with a total of 95 students. In addition, the 210 students were categorised into three age groups, 99 students were less than or equal to 20 years old, 63 students were between 21 to 22 years old, and 48 students were above 22 years old. The researcher also considered the duration of students' residence in North Cyprus. Seventy-nine students had spent 12 months or less in North Cyprus, 92 had spent between 18-36 months in North Cyprus, and 39 students had been there for more than or equal to 42 months. Moreover, students were classified into two main

types of courses they were undertaking at the time of the study: 29 were in social science fields and 120 were in more technological fields.

Following analysis of the background information section, the three main sections of the questionnaire remained for analysis with a total of fifty-eight questions. The three sections included: Section A with 28 items (items 1 to 28) designed to elicit the different preferences of the acculturation strategies, Section B with 16 items (items 29 to 44) examining linguistic proficiency, attitudes, and motivational factors regarding the target language learning, and Section C with 14 items (items 45 to 58) investigating sociocultural and psychological adjustment factors concerning culture shock and acculturative stress. Before analyses of the descriptive data, all items in these three sections were submitted for factor analysis to define possible factors "that may be used to represent relationships among sets of interrelated variables" (George & Mallery, 2001, p. 232).

In this study, the Questionnaire on Acculturation Strategies of Chinese Students in Germany was adapted from Yu and Wang (2011). The overall scores generated from this scale provided a measure of the dependent variable for the study. This overall score included 10 sub-scale scores: Preference of Acculturation Strategies, Language Proficiency, Integrative Learning Motivation, Language Anxiety, Language Confidence, Instrumental Learning Motivation, Physical Symptoms, Psychological Stress, Self-Identity/Own Identity, and Other identity. The independent (categorical) variables of the study were gender, duration of living in North Cyprus, course type, origin, and age.

In determining the overall tendency of the participants regarding each sub-group, one-sample *t*-test procedures were used. The SRA Classification-Tree Method was used to find a structure affecting predictor variables. In order to analyse possible differences in scores on each sub-scale among sub-groups, *Mann-Whitney U* and *Kruskall-Wallis* tests were used. Analysis for related measures and items were applied using the *Friedman* test procedures accompanied by *Nemenyi* paired comparisons. For the sub-scales including only two items *Wilcoxon Sing* ranks test procedures were used at item level.

In order to determine the strength of the relationship between the variables and the magnitude of the differences, Cohen *r* ($r = z / \sqrt{n}$) and *d* effect size measures were used. Cohen (1988) characterized $r = 0.2$ as a small effect size, $r = 0.3$ as a medium effect size, and $r = 0.5$ as a large effect size. The same boundaries were used for Cohen's *d*. Except for in *Nemenyi* procedures ($p = .005$), the level of significance used throughout the study was .05.

Following the analyses conducted on the questionnaire, brief descriptions of interview content are presented. Following the descriptions, there is a detailed presentation of the steps taken to prepare the data for qualitative analyses.

4.2 Analysis of Student Perceptions from the Interview

Following the analysis of student perceptions from the questionnaire, the next step was putting the quantitative data to the test with in-depth interviews with 19 students. The researcher selected the participants for interview based on their demographic information written on the cover page of the questionnaires, so students' cultural and educational backgrounds were cross-checked before the selection of students for the

interviews. All interviews started with a semi-structured questionnaire (items 1-6) to obtain more information about students' ethnic and educational backgrounds. The interviews then aimed answer open-ended questions (items 7-15). These questions were conducted to record students' experiences learning English, their perceptions in relation to learning English at EMU, social and cultural factors that had affected their learning, and problems and challenges they had faced learning English in this context.

The recorded content of all the interviews was fully transcribed. Data analysis started with the data collected in the transcribed interviews. Data analysis followed the constant comparative method, which refers to a cyclic process of data collection, analysis, and theorising as specified in grounded theory (Glaser & Strauss, 1967).

After transcribing the data, the researcher worked closely and intensively with the text, annotating it ('coding') for insights into the participants' experiences and their perspectives on the open-ended questions. As the analysis developed, the codes that emerged were catalogued and subsequently examined for patterns, which are called 'themes'. For the qualitative phase, responses to the open-ended items were analysed through categorization of responses and identification of recurring patterns. The procedures for qualitative analyses were to categorize data, and then identify any emerging concepts and themes from categories (Merriam, 1998; Saldaña, 2009).

Larkin, Watts, and Clifton (2006) noted that themes are recurring patterns of meaning (ideas, thoughts, and feelings) throughout the text. Themes are likely to describe both something that matters to the participants (e.g., an object of concern, topic of some import) and also convey the meaning of something for the participants.

Following the analyses conducted on the questionnaire, and presentation of the steps in preparing the qualitative analyses, the same procedure is followed for the presentation of the findings for both the quantitative and qualitative analysis.

4.3 Findings of the Student Perceptions from the Questionnaire

4.3.1 Exploratory Factor Analysis and Reliability Analysis Results of the Acculturation Strategies of International Students at EMU, North Cyprus

The scale Acculturation Strategies of International Students at EMU, North Cyprus was created based on the Questionnaire on Acculturation Strategies of Chinese Students in Germany (Yu & Wang, 2011). This scale included 58 Likert items with five response alternatives: strongly agree (5), agree somewhat (4), not sure/neutral agree (3), disagree somewhat (2), and strongly disagree (1). In order to test if the Acculturation Strategies of International Students at EMU, North Cyprus scale was factorable or not KMO and Barlett's tests were used. $KMO = 0.82$ and $\alpha = 0.00$ values revealed that the sample size was sufficient for using a factor analysis for this scale (Cerny & Kaiser, 1977). To decide on the rotation method, first *promax* was tested. Since most of the correlation coefficients in the factor correlation matrix were less than 0.32, the *varimax* rotation method was used (Tabachnick & Fiddell, 2007). It is suggested to include all factors with eigenvalues greater than 1 (Kaiser, 1960). But it also has been argued that this criteria may result in confusion in the number of factors elicited (Costello & Osborne, 2005; Field, 2009). Therefore, the screen test in contrast with the eigenvalues also was used to determine the number of factors to possess. In line with these analyses 10 factors was extracted, which explained 55.45% of the total variance. Table 1 shows the factors extracted, eigenvalues, and variances explained by each factor.

Table 4. Factors Extracted

Factor No	Factor Name	Eigenvalue	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	Preference of Acculturation Strategies	10.52	11.92	11.92
2	Language Proficiency	5.11	6.21	18.13
3	Integrative Learning Motivation	3.60	5.77	23.90
4	Language Anxiety	2.65	5.49	29.39
5	Language Confidence	2.28	5.24	34.63
6	Instrumental Learning Motivation	1.88	4.72	39.35
7	Physical Symptoms	1.84	4.39	43.74
8	Psychological Stress	1.58	4.36	48.10
9	Self-Identity/Own Identity	1.43	3.73	51.83
10	Other identity	1.32	3.62	55.45

Table 2 shows the items in each factor and their factor loadings. Factor loadings less than 0.40 are not displayed.

Table 5. Items and Factor Loadings

Factor Name	Items and Loadings
Preference of Acculturation Strategies	**1**[a] *(0.67)*[b], **2** *(0.43)*, **3** *(0.56)*, **4** *(0.45)*, **5** *(0.72)*, *6 (0.63)*, **7** *(0.48)*, **8** *(0.78)*, **9** *(0.61)*, **10** *(0.46)*, **11** *(0.40)*, **12** *(0.53)*, **13** *(0.64)*, **14** *(0.55)*, **15** *(0.41)*, **16** *(0.62)*, **17** *(0.45)*, **18** *(0.77)*, **19** *(0.54)*, **20** *(0.46)*, **21** *(0.40)*, **22** *(0.57)*, **23** *(0.72)*, **24** *(0.66)*, **25** *(0.45)*, **26** *(0.51)*, **27** *(0.68)*, **28** *(0.52)*
Language Proficiency	**35** *(0.44)*, **36** *(0.46)*, **37** *(0.63)*, **42** *(0.56)*, **43** *(0.42)*, **44** *(0.61)*
Integrative Learning Motivation	**29** *(0.52)*, **30** *(0.43)*, **31** *(0.66)*, **33** *(0.42)*
Language Anxiety	**38** *(0.67)*, **39** *(0.56)*
Language Confidence	**40** *(0.81)*, **41** *(0.67)*
Instrumental Learning Motivation	**32** *(0.46)*, **34** *(0.58)*
Physical Symptoms	**50** *(0.76)*, **51** *(0.72)*, **52** *(0.62)*, **53** *(0.41)*, **56** *(0.68)*
Psychological Stress	**49** *(0.53)*, **54** *(0.46)*, **55** *(0.64)*, **57** *(0.70)*, **58** *(0.43)*
Self-Identity/Own Identity	**47** *(0.56)*, **48** *(0.43)*
Other identity	**45** *(0.55)*, **46** *(0.41)*

[a] Bold numbers stand for item number.
[b] Italic numbers stand for loadings of the items.

The Cronbach's α value of the Acculturation Strategies of International Students at EMU, North Cyprus scale was 0.84. Since the corrected item-total correlation coefficients of all items were greater than 0.2 (Everitt, 2002; Field, 2005), no items were eliminated. The Cronbach's α values of the sub-scales of the Acculturation Strategies of International Students at EMU, North Cyprus scale are shown in Table 3.

Table 6. Cronbach's alpha Reliability Coefficients of Sub-Scales

Sub-Scale	α value	Number of Items
Preference of Acculturation Strategies	0.72	28
Language Proficiency	0.70	6
Integrative Learning Motivation	0.75	4
Language Anxiety	0.64	2
Language Confidence	0.71	2
Instrumental Learning Motivation	0.60	2
Physical Symptoms	0.76	5
Psychological Stress	0.62	5
Self-Identity/Own Identity	0.60	2
Other identity	0.61	2

4.3.2 Two-Step Cluster Analysis Results in Forming Homogenous Groups for the Duration of Living in North Cyprus, Age, and Total Score

As *duration of living in North Cyprus* and *age* of the participants came from different layers of the population, a two-step cluster analysis was performed to separate the data set into homogeneous subgroups (Chiu, Fang, Chen, & Wang, 2001). The total score from the scale was also classified as low-medium-high through two-step cluster analysis, and the dependent variable was converted to a categorical variable (see Table 4). Analysis revealed acceptable values of cohesion and separation, all > 0.7 and group ratio, all < 3 (Rousseeuw, 1987). For duration of living in North Cyprus three sub-groups emerged. The duration of the participants living in North Cyprus ranged from 4 months to 264 months ($M = 28.7$, $SD = 25.7$). For the age of the participants three sub-groups also emerged. The age of the participants ranged from 18 to 37 ($M = 21.1$, $SD = 2.36$).

Table 7. Two-Step Cluster Analysis Results Regarding Duration of Living in North Cyprus, Age, and Total Score

Cluster	Sub-Group	f	%	Min.	Max.	$\bar{X}$	sd
Duration of living in North Cyprus (in months)	Less than or equal to 12	79	36	3.6	37	11.45	1.77
	18 to 36	92	43	18	36	28.87	6.23
	More than or equal to 42	39	19	42	264	62.62	43.37
	Total	210	100	3.6	264	28.50	26.12
Age (in years)	Less than or equal to 20	99	47	18	20	19.32	0.64
	21 to 22	63	30	21	22	21.41	0.50
	Greater than 22	48	23	23	37	24.42	2.40
	Total	210	100	18	37	21.09	2.34
Total score	Low	69	33	142	170	159.75	7.06
	Medium	86	41	171	193	182.83	6.92
	High	55	26	195	230	206.47	9.59
	Total	210	100	142	230	181.44	19.50

Normality Analysis Results

Univariate *Kolmogorov-Smirnov* normality tests revealed that total scores for the Acculturation Strategies of International Students at EMU, North Cyprus scale for all the independent variables (i.e., gender, duration of living in North Cyprus, course type, origin, and age) did not significantly deviate from normality, all $D(210) \geq 0.106$, all $p \geq .121$. On the other hand, univariate *Kolmogorov-Smirnov* normality tests on scores of sub-scales included in the Acculturation Strategies of International Students at EMU, North Cyprus for all independent variables (i.e., gender, duration of living in North Cyprus, course type, origin, and age) revealed that all sub-scale scores significantly deviated from normality, all $D(220) \leq 0.103$, all $p \leq .043$. In line

with these results, non-parametric analyses were used to analyse differences in sub-scale scores.

General Tendency of the Participants

In order to produce comparable scores ranging from 1 to 5, the total score was divided into the number of items (58). As total scores on the Acculturation Strategies of International Students at EMU, North Cyprus scale were normally distributed normally ($D(210) = 0.040$, $p = .200$), one-sample t-test procedures were used to test if the average score of participants was different than the median (neutral) score 3 or not. Results of the one-sample t-test indicated that the total mean score on the Acculturation Strategies of International Students at EMU, North Cyprus scale was greater than the neutral score of 3 ($M = 3.62$, $SD = 0.37$), $t(209) = 21.85$, $p < .001$, $d = 1.68$). As seen in Table 5, the Acculturation Strategies of International Students at EMU, North Cyprus scale average score is greater than 3 regarding all the sub-groups. Very large effect size values (all > 0.5) indicate that the differences of the average score from 3 are also quite large in all sub-groups (Cohen, 1988).

Table 8. One-Sample T-Test Results Regarding the Independent Variables (Test Value = 3)

Group	Sub-Group	N	$\bar{x}$	sd	Df	t	p	d
Gender	Male	182	3.62	0.38	181	19.80	0.00	1.63
	Female	26	3.60	0.28	25	9.73	0.00	2.14
Origin	Arab	115	3.60	0.35	114	15.21	0.00	1.71
	African	95	3.63	0.37	94	15.22	0.00	1.70
Course	Social	29	3.72	0.33	28	11.36	0.00	2.19
	Technical	120	3.64	0.38	119	17.19	0.00	1.68
Age	Less than or equal to 20 years old	99	3.62	0.34	98	16.72	0.00	1.88
	21 to 22 years old	63	3.67	0.41	62	11.65	0.00	1.63
	Greater than 22 years old	48	3.56	0.39	47	8.86	0.00	1.44
Duration of Living in North Cyprus	Less than or equal to 12 months	79	3.63	0.37	78	15.22	0.00	1.70
	18 – 36 months	92	3.63	0.37	91	15.52	0.00	1.70
	More than or equal to 42 months	39	3.66	0.40	38	9.21	0.00	1.65

Classification Tree Analysis Regarding the Total Score

After turning the dependent variable (total score) into a discrete variable, the SRA Classification-Tree Method was used to find a structure affecting predictor variables. Visually presenting the results makes this technique superior to other regression techniques. This method is advantageous as the interaction model is represented in the form of a diagram, which provides the expansion of significant relations between independent and dependent variables (Hébert, Collin-Vézina, Daigneault, Parent, & Tremblay, 2006).

As seen in Figure 1 (The SRA classification procedure used has a risk estimate of 0.2), participant gender was the major independent variable affecting the dependent variable. In the tree, acculturation score level of females (medium + high = 88.5%) was generally higher than males (medium + high = 64.1%). As seen in the tree, there was an association between male participants and type of course they followed. Male participants who studied social science related courses had higher acculturation scores (36.4%) than males who were planning to study an engineering-science related course (25.3%). There was no connection between females' acculturation and the type of course. There was an association, however, between engineering-science oriented participants and their origin. A seen in Figure 1, the ratio of engineering-science oriented male Arab participants who had lower level acculturation scores (43.2%) was larger than engineering-science oriented male African participants (32.8%). Males oriented toward studying in the social sciences had no other connections. There was, however, an association between being African and age. The ratio of engineering-science oriented male African participants younger than or equal to 20 years old who had lower level acculturation scores (19.4%) was larger than engineering-science oriented male African participants who were older than 20 (44.4%). Finally, there was a connection between engineering-science oriented male Arab participants and the duration of living in North Cyprus. As seen in Figure 1, the ratio of engineering-science oriented male Arab participants whose duration of living in North Cyprus was less than or equal to 12 months having low level acculturation scores (48.9%) was larger than engineering-science oriented male Arab participants whose duration of living in North Cyprus was more than or equal to 18 months (38%).
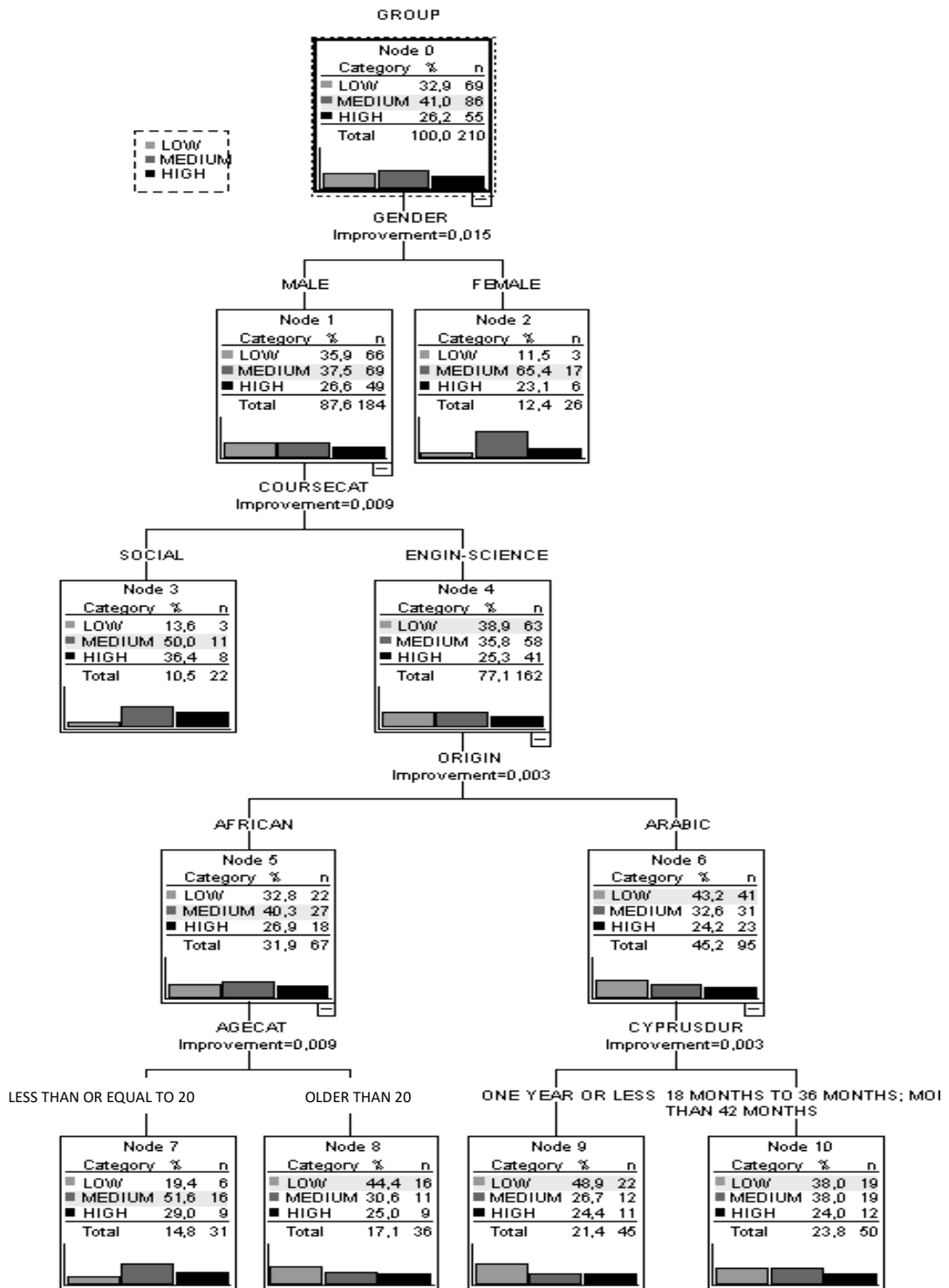
Figure 5. Classification-Tree Diagram Showing the Effect of Independent Variables on Participants' Acculturation Level of.

4.3.3 Results Regarding Preference of Acculturation Strategies

Twenty-eight items were divided into four sub-categories of acculturation strategies as Berry et al. (2006) and Barry (2001) suggested: assimilation, separation, marginalization, and integration. The reliability values of the sub-scales are in Table 6.

Table 9. Cronbach's alpha Reliability Coefficients of Acculturation Strategies Sub-Scales

Sub-Scale	α value	Items
Assimilation	0.63	1, 5, 9, 13, 17, 22, 24
Separation	0.69	2, 6, 14, 18, 21, 25
Marginalization	0.80	4, 8, 16, 20, 23, 26, 28
Integration	0.71	3, 7, 10, 11, 12, 15, 19, 27

In order to produce comparable scores ranging from 1 to 5, the total score of each sub-scale was divided into the number of items in that sub-scale. Since none of the acculturation category sub-scores were found to be normally distributed, all D (210) $\leq .095$, all $p \leq .04$, preferences for each global strategy (i.e., assimilation, separation, marginalization, and integration) were compared using *Friedman* test procedures accompanied by *Nemenyi* procedures. As seen in Table 7, *Friedman* test results revealed significant differences among the mean rank of the sub-scale scores. In order to find possible paired differences, *Nemenyi* post hoc analysis was used. As seen in Table 8, *Nemenyi* test p values less than 0.005 revealed that the integration strategy (*Mdn = 4*) was preferred more than other strategies.

Analysis also revealed no significant differences among preferences for the strategies of assimilation, separation, and marginalization. Further analysis showed no

differences in terms of independent variables (gender, age, origin, course type, and duration of living in North Cyprus) except integration strategy scores, χ^2 (4, $N = 210$) = 304.03, $p < .00$.

Table 10. Acculturation strategies sub-scale scores Friedman test results.

Sub-Scale	Median	Mean Rank	χ^2	p
Assimilation	3.14	2.14		
Separation	3.17	2.07		
Marginalization	3.29	2.41	139.74	.000
Integration	4.00	3,38		

Table 11. Acculturation Strategies Sub-Scale Scores Nemenyi P Values

	Assimilation	Separation	Marginalization	Integration
Assimilation	1	-	-	-
Separation	0.936	1	-	-
Marginalization	0.154	0.037	1	-
Integration	0.000	0.000	0.000	1

Correlation Analysis among Acculturation Strategies

As seen in Table 9, both separation and marginalization were negatively correlated with assimilation. This reveals that participants who felt assimilated were feeling neither separated nor marginalized or vice versa. On the other hand, although it was a very weak correlation (Evans, 1996), some participants may have felt both integrated and assimilated ($r = .149$).

Table 12. Pearson Product Moment Correlation Confidents of Acculturation Strategies Sub-Scale Scores.

	Assimilation	Separation	Marginalization	Integration
Assimilation	1	-	-	-
Separation	-.195	1	-	-
Marginalization	-.496	.561	1	-
Integration	.149	.106[*]	.218	1

[*]Not significant at $p < .05$

Classification Tree Analysis Regarding the Acculturation Strategies

After turning the integration strategy score into a discrete variable (1= do not prefer, 2 = neutral, 3 = prefer), the SRA Classification-Tree Method was used to find a structure affecting predictor variables. The SRA classification procedure used has a risk estimate of 0.1.

As seen in Figure 2, participant origin was the major variable affecting the dependent variable. In the tree, African participants' level of preferring integration (93.7%) was higher than Arab participants (87%). As seen in the tree, there was an association between African participants' age, duration of living in North Cyprus, and preferred acculturation strategy. African participants' (21-22 years old) level of preferring integration (96.9%) was higher than African participants younger than or equal to 20 or older than 22 (92.4%). African students' preferred acculturation strategy in the age groups of less than or equal to 20, or older than 22, was connected to duration of living in North Cyprus. In these groups those who had been living in North Cyprus for less than or equal to one year, or more than or equal to 42 months, had a higher level of preference for the integration strategy (96.9%) than those who had been living in North Cyprus for 18 to 36 months (89.2%). There also was an association between Arab participants' gender and preferred acculturation strategy. Female Arab participants preferred the integration strategy more (100%) than male Arab

participants (85.3%). As seen in Figure 2, male Arab participants' preferred acculturation strategy was associated with duration of living in North Cyprus. Those who had been living in North Cyprus for less than or equal to 12 months preferred integration (80.9%) less than those who had been living in North Cyprus longer (89.1%). Subsequent analyses illustrated that this group was influenced by the duration of living in North Cyprus and age. Arab males aged 21 to 22 who had been living in North Cyprus for less than or equal to 12 months had a lower preference level for the integration strategy (58.3%) compared to Arab males older than 22 or less than or equal to 20 years old, who had been living in North Cyprus for less than or equal to 12 months (86.6%). On the other hand, Arab males 21 to 22 years old who had been living in North Cyprus for more than or equal to 12 months had a higher preference level for integration (95.2%) compared to Arab males older than 22 or less than or equal to 20 years old who had been living in North Cyprus for more than 12 months (85.3%).
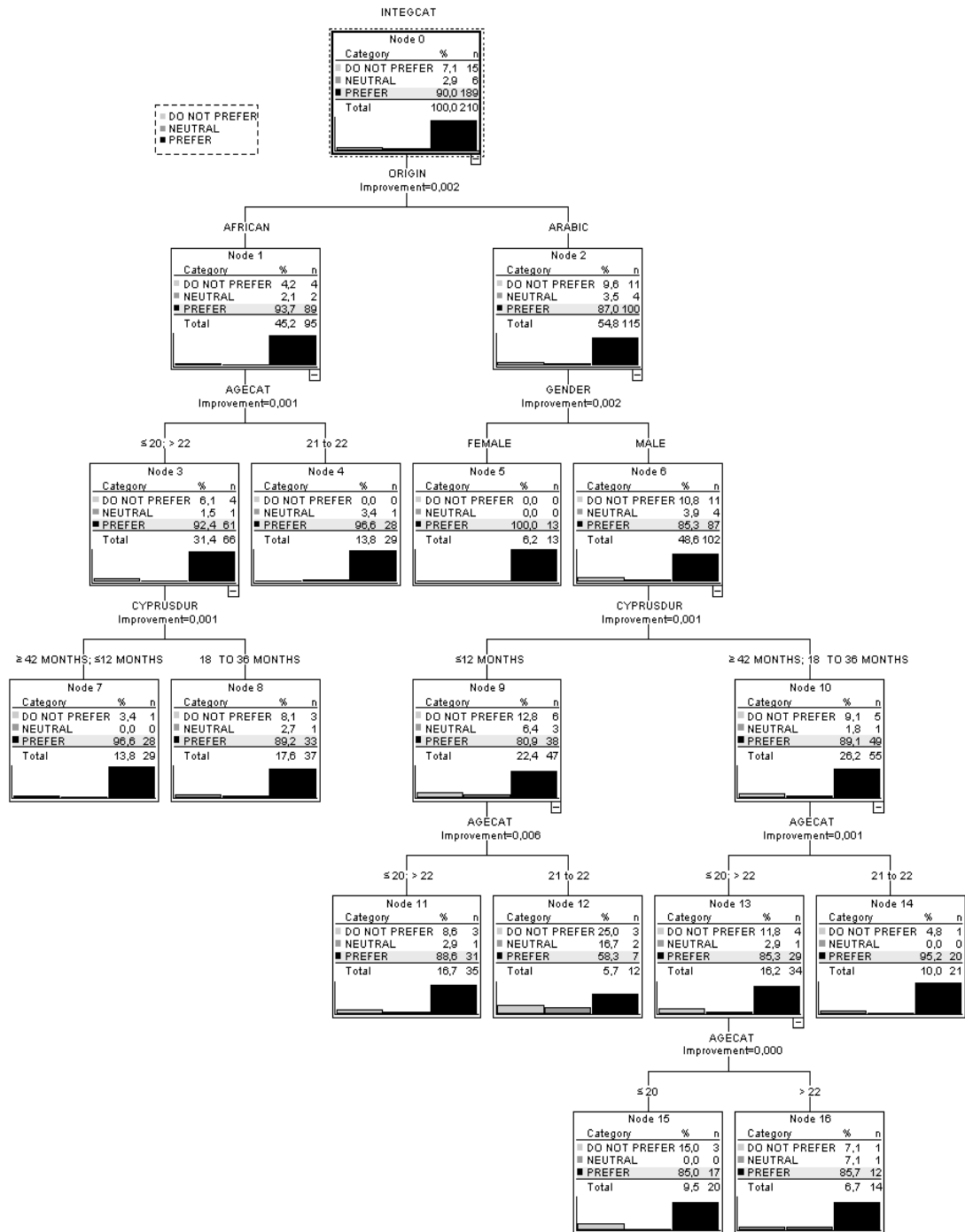
Figure 6. Classification-Tree Diagram Showing the Effect of Independent Variables on Preference of Integration Strategy.

4.4 Student Interviews

Students' perceptions about EMU and the strategies they adopted to acculturate to North Cyprus culture.

The results from the survey analysis were similar to the results in the interview analysis. First of all, it should be pointed out that in the interest of the integrity of the texts, the researcher did not correct the English, and the mistakes stand considering that the micro-errors do not impede comprehension. The first question in the interview protocol was in relation to eliciting students' perceptions of choosing to study in English at the university level, which was later combined with the question regarding why they decided to study in North Cyprus.

Interview question: What are the reasons for wanting to study English at a university level?

The student responses below were selected to represent the perspectives of both male and female students from different countries. Adama from Jordan indicated:

> I am interested in a lot of cultures. I read articles about top ten things. I like to try strange foods. I like to have a big picture of nations…Being in Cyprus teaches you what is rude in one culture and it makes a room for doubt to see what is accepted and not accepted. For example, in Nigerian culture, you shouldn't make eye-contact. In Jordanian culture, you have to make eye-contact.

Benjamin from Nigeria said: "It helps to communicate better. To improve my English level I study Business admin. So I want to be businessman. So, English helps to communicate with other people." Emmanuel, another participant from Nigeria, indicated: "Everyday life I use English to talk to my friends. I sometimes make grammatical errors. English helps a lot in reading, understanding, speaking with people who understand English." Hassan from Jordan said: "English is wide spoken

language. I can use the language to communicate with other people. I also want to improve it make it better." Akram from Syria said: "English is language of century. Most of students here speak English. I have to make groups, friends. I have to speak in English. I have friends from Nigeria, Brazil, US, Kyrgyzstan, Turkmenistan, Turkey, Kurdish."

After eliciting reasons why students chose to study English at the university level, the following question aimed to obtain students' reasons for choosing to study in North Cyprus in particular.

Interview question: Why did you decide to study in North Cyprus?

In relation to this question, Benjamin from Nigeria stated: "To be more exposed to different cultures." Similarly, Mohamed from Egypt indicated: "People from different cultures, nationalities. EMU is a highly-ranked university. EMU is multicultural place." Similarly, Akram from Syria said: "I chose here because of English. I can develop myself. The university's level is better than the other universities in the region." In relation to the question, Victoria, a participant from Nigeria, said: "EMU was very attractive in academic system and environment, Cyprus is very peaceful. There are a lot references for EMU, people telling me EMU is good, student friendly, EMU is good, it is peaceful, not a lot of crises." Ismail from Saudi Arabia highlighted how EMU provided the opportunity to experience new cultures and develop himself:

By coming here, I wanted to experience different cultures, meeting different people from different cultures, improve my speaking skills and social skills. Back in my

country in Saudi Arabia I find local people and same culture. If I stayed there I would lose my English.

These responses show students' intention and willingness to engage with the local culture of EMU and interest in diversity in general. These findings parallel the survey results indicating that students preferred to integrate as a means of acculturating to EMU with its diverse learning environment. The academic context at EMU includes a mix of different cultures that have come together and thereby provides students with the opportunity to explore differences and similarities between other cultures and their own culture, to communicate with other students, and to improve their language skills. These results show students' instinctive willingness and motivation to study at EMU and their reasons for living in North Cyprus society. Participants were aware of the advantages of studying at EMU. The fact that the island is conflict-free creates a good learning atmosphere in learners' eyes. Thus, participants confirmed that they would like to explore the culture at EMU and outside of university where multiculturalism and diverse cultures show their effects and some concerns the students had that studying at EMU helped resolve. The subsequent question took up problems and issues that participants faced while studying in North Cyprus, however, and the strategies they had developed to cope with those problems in everyday life.

Interview question: What problems have you overcome that have helped you to become better at interacting with people and carrying on with your daily life in North Cyprus?

Students from different countries highlighted a range of issues. Benjamin from Nigeria commented:

> Communicating with people was a problem. I had to adapt and learn a bit of Turkish to be able to understand people. Some Turkish people know a bit of English but majority outside EMU don't know English. Food, I just had to eat it. For example Kebab but it feels different.

Sami from Syria said: "Transportation is bad. My home is far. So I bought bicycle. Buses here are crowded so I can't come to school by bus." Miran from Syria commented: "You need time to adjust. It took me like a month to be adapted. I take this as not a problem but a challenge." Hassan from Jordan added: "First month I didn't have many friends. I met a lot of friends to overcome this problem."

Meanwhile, Omar from Egypt commented:

> When you come as a new student by force you will need to speak with other students and that helped me to adapt and interact. My roommates from three different cultures. They helped me to learn about their culture. I helped them to learn about my culture sharing different culture.

These excerpts confirmed that students felt positive about studying in a North Cyprus university, particularly at EMU, where they had the opportunity to discover and explore new cultures, food, and further develop global citizenship. Most of the participants preferred the idea confirming that they were integrated at EMU, North Cyprus. Some reasons for this can be the idea that students prefer to study in a peaceful country and that North Cyprus is seen as a means of escape from wars and crises that continue around the region today. Moreover, similarities can be found between customs and traditions in North Cyprus and other countries in the region.

Also, North Cyprus is a safe country to many university students, it has suitable weather conditions for studying, and it has a peaceful and less populated environment compared to many other countries.

Interview Question: In what ways have your experiences in North Cyprus been similar and/or different to experiences in other countries where you have lived?

Mohamed from Egypt commented: "Cyprus is calm place and suitable for students to study. If they ask me about Cyprus- it is good place to study. I would tell them. I would advise them. I brought students from my school and fathers' friends." Ismail, from Saudi Arabia, pointed out: "I found Cyprus great. People are kind and nice and generous. People here are friendly and helpful. I'm meeting new people, different atmosphere, and peaceful place. I feel safe." In a similar vein, Zahid from Saudi Arabia said: "I lived in Saudi Arabia and the USA, weather in North Cyprus is better." Another participant from Nigeria, Emmanuel, made similar comments: "In terms of climate, Cyprus is way better than Nigeria. You can experience all climates here." In relation to living conditions in Cyprus, Mohamed from Egypt said: "People are friendly and generous. Turkish and Arabic have similar words." Furthermore, Omar from Egypt said "My country and Cyprus have same religion, the way of dressing, the food." Hassan from Jordan said:

> "In Jordan same whether, similar food, same lifestyle. In Jordan, academic education is very tough not simple to get into university. I don't like complicated lifestyle. In Cyprus life is simple. Social life here is better. I have many friends from many nationalities all over the world. But is Jordan, I don't have many friends. My social life here is better. I lean about their culture, their country, what's their lifestyle in their country, what they like and don't like."

These extracts enumerate the similarities between students' own cultures and that of North Cyprus. Participants confirmed that their cultures and ways of living were

similar to that of North Cyprus when analysing these in terms of nature, food, family relations, and language. This shows students' potential to adapt to EMU culture and further to acculturate to North Cyprus culture. Moreover, participants seemed comfortable with the lifestyle. Rifat from Syria commented: "Local people are nice; they're very generous, treating people kindly. This island not crowded. Cyprus is still natural place, still has its own Mediterranean culture. You can find Mediterranean life here. For example, flowers, sea, food." Sayid from Syria endorsed these same sentiments: "The cuisine is similar in Syria. The customs are similar to some extent. People are warm-blooded, social, and friendly because of Mediterranean influence."

However, participants pointed out differences in North Cyprus when compared to their countries. One participant from Syria, Sayid, pointed out: "Significant difference in beliefs and behaviours. I find people here more educated and aware. They're not driven by their emotions too much. I found significant difference in education." Another participant, Akram from Syria, who once studied in Saudi Arabia, reflected by saying:

> It's completely different when you compare Cyprus to Saudi Arabia, how government treat its people. How people treat you. The social life is completely different. Here nobody interfere your social life, order you what to do or not to do. In short, that's not their business. You're free here in Cyprus. In the law you completely free. In Saudi Arabia, it's conservative social. You can't drink, smoke. In schools, universities, they order you to change your hairstyle and dress. They are racist.

In a similar vein, Khaled from Saudi Arabia commented: "Girls can travel easily here, move from one place to another place during the night. Crime here is very low. It is a culture shock- in Saudi Arabia, all people working are men. The way people dress." Another participant from Nigeria, Victoria, reflected on her experience living

in her own country: "Nigeria is diverse in religion, ethnicity and political perceptions. We don't use religion to create laws in Nigeria. We don't rule by Sharia law, but it has influenced in decision making law." In relation to differences, Emmanuel, also from Nigeria, said: "There're a lot of fun places to go in Nigeria. In aspects of education, Nigeria gives more exams." Also, Benjamin from Nigeria said: "School- the way to teach at EMU more friendly atmosphere. In Nigeria school is more strict. Teaching here gives more detail about teaching. In Nigeria is not detail. You have to study on your own."

While students were aware of the similarities, they also were aware of the differences in relation to their experiences and perceptions of their own and Turkish Cypriot culture. Considering North Cyprus as part of the Middle Eastern region, students from these countries may had more similar cultural backgrounds to that of North Cyprus compared to students from countries in other parts of the world. However, it is essential to consider what kind of differences and experiences students may have faced while living in North Cyprus where Western culture may have influenced the lifestyle to be quite close to actual Western culture given the island's historical ties to Britain and other civilizations on the island. The current linguistic educational policy (i.e., the university provides education through the medium of English language), and English having been one of the official languages on the island as part of the official history of the island of Cyprus, may have affected international students' decisions to study on the island and at EMU. Further, these may be reasons why international students preferred to study at EMU and live in North Cyprus culture: to explore its advantages and benefits when compared with other universities in the same region.

Interview Question: How do you feel about yourself after studying in North Cyprus?

In relation to the question, Victoria from Nigeria expressed her feelings by stating:

> Cyprus has changed my view about people, made me diverse, considering people of different races, ethnic groups and cultures. Also, the technical change, how I view, think and perceive life. When I came here, I was 17, now 20, I have matured a lot, it has changed me.

Ismail from Saudi Arabia said:

> I became more patient and open minded. Over here everyone is in peaceful manner. People are positive about everything. Here attitudes towards foreigners are welcoming and calming and friendly, always good. Over here people do not interfere with other people's issues…It made me become patient. When you're patient, it makes you understand what others are saying. It helped me to be open-minded and be acceptable to accept other cultures, religions.

Participants confirmed that studying abroad in North Cyprus changed their perceptions about themselves and others. They seemed to have positive feelings regarding studying at EMU and North Cyprus culture because they had been able to improve themselves in terms of manner, relationships, attitude, and personality. Although most students seemed integrated and happy within the context of campus life at EMU, they seemed to have problems outside the university and thought they needed to be more integrated into the society and explore local culture further to have new experiences with people outside of the campus. In relation to that, participants suggested ideas for how they could improve themselves and adapt to the local culture.

Do you think culture in textbooks helps you learn English?

In relation to the question, Sami from Syria commented: "Culture is textbooks not helpful. When you watch films, read books and stories more helpful than textbook. More than ¾ countries speaking English and they have different culture."

Adama from Jordan further replied:

> If I learn about activities people do in Cyprus, I will be more in touched with Cypriots. If people take you around and show you activities about Cyprus culture, I will live like Cypriot person. If we are given a text for example about what happened in the past, how people lived here, and then when we go outside we can make connections about what we read about past and what we see in the present.

Similarly, in relation to cultural boundaries, Mohamed from Egypt commented:

> It's good to know about history of Cyprus and its culture. It's good to have information about the places and culture. For example, Arab instructors just know about Arabic culture. But here you want to see teachers from different cultures.

Rifat from Syria, in addition, commented:

> I am going to live here for four years. It's a good idea to put course / elective course about history of Cyprus and the culture. Cypriot culture is better to learn. Every country represent its culture. We don't need British / American culture because we don't live there. There're many things happened here so it's better to know them.

Furthermore, Akram from Syria said:

> It's better to learn Cyprus culture by trips, meet Cypriot people, old Cypriot people to talk about their history. Cyprus is developing very fast. It's better to learn Cyprus culture because I'm here and not everyone has this chance to learn about the culture here.

These comments from the participants above illustrate the importance of learning about the local culture in which students are studying abroad. Some of the students were in North Cyprus to study and live not only temporarily, but also were thinking

about relocating to North Cyprus permanently. Their comments indicated that students were interested in learning about North Cyprus society and its history because they wanted to be accepted into the community and to integrate with the local people for the betterment of everyday living conditions such as having fun, doing activities, shopping, and trying Turkish Cypriot food, as well transportation issues outside the campus. Some students confirmed that they wished to live in North Cyprus permanently, and therefore wished to integrate and explore the local culture.

The comments showed that international students were happy to live in North Cyprus and learn from each other. They also showed how a multicultural environment could be advantageous for both the society and the international students who are willing to explore the local culture and present their own cultures through education, which ultimately could contribute to the welfare of the country and, hopefully, help bring peace and understanding in the country and in the wider world. Therefore, the syllabus for teaching English needs to be adjusted according to students' needs to promote multicultural education for wider cultural student groups and to serve the needs of all students who study for general English or in their English-medium departments at EMU. The participants confirmed that it was essential to learn about the local culture and other cultures in order to cooperate with other students and share and present their own values. This can be passed through the materials students are required to study or assignments students are given. In relation to that, participants were asked to analyse textbooks in terms of the influence of cultural factors explained to them. Regarding learning from textbooks, Victoria from Nigeria said:

> Learning English here wasn't influenced by the culture of Cyprus. It was influenced by the textbook which is from America. There is a course in which

we learn about Cyprus in economics department. We learned about conflict between Greek and Turkish side. Why Turkish side of Cyprus did not join European Union and the reason why Cyprus is still divided. There should be a course in which we learn everything about Cyprus, history, colonization of Cyprus, how Turkish people came to Cyprus, how Greeks came to Cyprus, how there should be solution and theories about solution.

The participants above confirmed the idea that integrating into the local and other cultures within the education system helps learners to adapt within a context where students study the global language but at the same time learn about the local culture, as well as other cultures brought into the classroom by other students. Following this approach, students will have the common goal of better connections with other students who are in the same boat in order to learn about the local culture outside the classroom as well as share their own cultures that they bring to the classroom. Miran from Syria commented:

Sometimes we go to trips with our department, e.g. we go to picnic. That's not a lot, only two times in three years. It's good and important to connect with students. If no connections between teacher and students, it's much more difficult to explain the course.

In relation to getting involved in social and cultural activities on campus, Emmanuel from Nigeria said:

To be honest, I feel bored. I think there should be activities something fun to do in the school. Sometimes I study a lot because there is nothing else to do except eating in the café or hang out with friends.

Moreover, Samer from Iraq said: "Life is boring in Cyprus, don't feel at home, and don't know many people, in my country I get out." In relation to that Aimar from Syria commented: "There is not enough facilities. For example, transportation if we go a little outside campus as a foreigner. For a local not a big problem they are adapted to the environment."

The comments from these participants show how multicultural education is more valuable and can teach English in a more practical and realistic way that creates a positive atmosphere for the students since they use English to share their cultural values. However, this can only be promoted when they feel accepted and integrated into the local culture of EMU and North Cyprus society with its developing and emerging multicultural concerns. Some of these concerns are mentioned below by other participants. Mohamed from Egypt compared his experiences in North Cyprus to living in Saudi Arabia. He said: "In Saudi Arabia only foreigners speak English. Here everyone should speak in English which is good you contact with many people I love to know about other cultures. It is good experience to learn about other cultures." Mohamed continued: "For students when they come without English it's difficult for them. Study abroad forces you to speak English. You have to communicate with international language and that is English. English is a world-wide language." Similarly, Omar from Egypt said:

> When study abroad you meet people from different accents, here you have to speak English because English is the most dominant language. It connects all people on campus. Here you speak more English than Arabic. That's because I have more foreign friends than Arab.

The participants' experiences show how some students may have had problems with the official language (i.e., Turkish) spoken within and beyond the campus, which is a problem that is particularly important when students first move to study in North Cyprus. However, after a while they may have felt more at ease speaking with others in English, moved beyond the language barrier, and improved their language skills even further. So, participants confirmed that English should be the dominant language and that they believed that studying at EMU forced them to speak English.

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Moreover, participants confirmed that studying the international language that is English in multicultural environment gave them the opportunity to learn from others and to integrate with other students from different cultures. Therefore, EMU is a good example of the ideas and methods students suggested for how to explore and learn from others during their English language learning process.

Omar from Egypt stated: "Maybe there should be a topic about different cultures not a single one. It will expand the way of thinking. And it will not give you a culture shock when you move to another country." Similarly, Aimar from Syria said:

> Basically language teaching is different. In text when you study in English you see some cultural ambiguity. And I prefer cultural ambiguity in case of English. And that's because English is international language and you can't associate it with a specific culture.

Another participant from Saudi Arabia, Khaled, suggested: "If it educates people, bring new ideas, better ideas for better lifestyles because culture influence your lifestyle- if it educates may be teach some culture that is better and that is developing lifestyles." In relation to exploring different cultures, Ismail from Saudi Arabia suggested: "When people born they learn their culture from their parents. But the lack is in learning international culture. You should learn other cultures because you don't know where you will be in ten or fifteen years later." Ismail further stated:

> Mixed people/cultures living together. It shows us how the peaceful the world will become if we live in harmony. Everyone is unique and everyone is a single person and they're together. In our countries- people believe other nationalities are bad, this religion is bad and stick with their own culture. And they don't learn and adapt to new things.

Participants confirmed that having studied English as a global language, one should learn about local and global cultures where all majority and minority cultures come together in one classroom and they share and represent their own cultures and

improve their own cultures while learning about others. Below, students analysed if the textbook helped them accomplish these aims and influenced their learning of English.

Do you think culture in the textbook helps you learn English? Why?

Accordingly, Victoria from Nigeria replied to the question:

> We should be able not to acquire only American/ British but embed it into our culture. Our culture should also be involved in presenting the way we speak, dress. We shouldn't get rid of our culture. Our culture should also influence what we present, see.

In relation to the culture explained in textbook, Ismail from Saudi Arabia commented:

> I prefer to learn English by communication. I used to watch mostly movies and music. This helped me with my English. I learned new words compare to textbooks. You need practically to learn not just textbook. What you need to say and when to say it, in a proper way, you can do it with practically rather than reading from the textbook.

Overall, participants confirmed that culture explained in the textbook did not help or influence their learning of English much since it was not practical; reading from textbook is passive rather than active learning. Participants confirmed that learning English could be best practiced when used in real life within the cultural context. This kind of learning procedure can be practiced in pedagogical models that guide classroom teachers to simulate this kind of learning process. Below is the analysis explaining whether the teacher's culture influences learning, whether it motivates learners, and if so, how it does that and in which way.

How does the culture of the teacher influence your learning? Does is motivate or demotivate you? Why?

In relation to the question, some participants gave responses about teachers affecting their learning in a positive way. For instance, Aimar from Syria said:

> If teacher's expression of culture is affected me in negative way, I would not appreciate it. But if teacher's expression of culture is affecting me in a positive way, I would appreciate it…For example in ENGL 191 academic English course, a local teacher's class, I put snail shells on my desk. And my teacher told me did you eat them? It's common to eat snail in Cypriot culture, she said. And I thought this is interesting, amusing. And I would like to have dish like that before I leave this country. It made me curious. Knowing about the local culture, it enriches my perspective, culture, makes me open minded towards different cultural perspectives.

Khaled, a participant from Saudi Arabia commented:

> If the teacher, the way he teaches us, motivates, helps us to make more interest, subject more interesting, if the way he approaches ideas is unique, helps us to think like that. For example when my teacher is more friendly, I have confidence to discuss my issues related to course or subject.

Overall, the analyses of responses from participants showed that teachers building positive relationships with their students and having good report with the students created a constructive learning atmosphere in which learning could be positively achieved. The students also highlighted that the way teachers explained and presented the culture they belonged to drew attention to it, influenced students' learning, and increased their curiosity about the subject and learning process. Below are a few more examples of how the teacher's culture influenced learning.

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How does the culture of the teacher influence your learning? Does is motivate or demotivate you? Why?

In relation to the question, Ismail from Saudi Arabia stated:

> It does motivate. English can be learned by anyone. And a different culture person speaking English help you motivate to become just like her or him. Or we can even see the struggle they've gone through to become successful in what they do…During ENGL191 English course, my teacher explained everything in detail and she was so patient and calm to everyone that it felt like I'm learning a different language not English. And she made a friendly environment. She made a cake for us on New Year day. Her culture/accent seemed like I was learning a different language because she created friendly environment. She mostly did communication rather than writing and that made me feel better.

This example above confirms how the educational policy at EMU needs to satisfy the needs of all learners and in particular the international students who have moved to live and study in North Cyprus. These students have a purpose to be here, which is to peruse their education, and spend their time to live here and learn with their peers. However, in order to achieve this learning atmosphere, the education system needs to prepare the platform that works best for all international learners and teachers accordingly.

Results Regarding the Factors (Sub-Scale Scores)

Since none of the independent groups were found to be normally distributed regarding the sub-scale scores, *Mann-Whitney U* and *Kruskall Wallis* tests were used when appropriate. *Mann-Whitney U* test results indicated a significant difference between male (*Mdn* = 7) and female participants (*Mdn* = 8.00) in terms of mean *Language Anxiety* scores favouring females, *U* = 1734, *p* = .021, *r* = .16. Another *Mann-Whitney U* test indicated a gender difference regarding *Psychological Stress* scores. Female participants (*Mdn* = 18) had higher *Psychological Stre*ss scores than

male participants (*Mdn* = 17), *U* = 1805.5, *p* = .042, *r* = .14. Other *Mann-Whitney U* tests revealed no gender differences in any of the remaining sub-scale scores (i.e., Preference of Acculturation Strategies, Language Proficiency, Integrative Learning Motivation, Language Confidence, Instrumental Learning Motivation, Physical Symptoms, Self-Identity/Own Identity, and Other identity), all *U* ≤ 2356, all *p* ≥ .149.

Mann-Whitney U test results indicated a significant difference between Arab (*Mdn* = 7) and African participants (*Mdn* = 8.00) in terms of mean *Instrumental Learning Motivation* scores favouring Africans, *U* = 4684.5, *p* = .043, *r* = .14. Another *Mann-Whitney U* test indicated differences in origin regarding *Self-Identity/Own Identity* scores. African participants (*Mdn* = 8) had higher *Self-Identity/Own Identity* scores than Arab participants (*Mdn* = 7), *U* = 4605, *p* = .027, *r* = .15. Other *Mann-Whitney U* tests revealed no origin differences in any of the remaining sub-scale scores (i.e., Preference of Acculturation Strategies, Language Proficiency, Integrative Learning Motivation, Language Anxiety, Language Confidence, Physical Symptoms, Psychological Stress, and Other identity), all *U* ≤ 5432, all *p* ≥ .114.

Mann-Whitney U tests revealed no differences regarding the course to be taken in any of sub-scale scores, all *U* ≤ 1697, all *p* ≥ .150.

Since there were more than two sub-groups regarding age and duration of living in North Cyprus, *Kruskall Wallis* test procedures were used to analyse sub-scale score differences. Results of the *Kruskall Wallis* test were significant, χ^2 (2, *N* = 210) = 9.63, *p* = .008; the mean ranks of *Instrumental Learning Motivation* were significantly different among the three age groups, with a mean rank of 101.81 for participants less than or equal to 20 years old, 103.13 for participants aged 21 to 22,

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and 116.21 for participants older than 22. Paired comparison analysis revealed no significant difference between participants younger than or equal to 20 years old (*Mdn* = 8) and participants older than 22 years (*Mdn* = 8), U = 2161, p = .366, r = .06. Analysis revealed that both of these groups had higher *Instrumental Learning Motivation* scores than participants aged 21 to 22 (*Mdn* = 7), all $U \geq$ 1022.5, all $p \leq$ .017, all $r \geq$ .17. The results of the *Kruskall Wallis* tests were not significant in any of the sub-scale scores regarding the *duration of living in North Cyprus*, all χ^2 (2, N = 210) $\leq$ 6.004, all $p \geq$ .05.

Item Based Results Regarding the Factors (Sub-Scales)

4.4.1 Preference of Acculturation Strategies

There were 28 items in the Preference of Acculturation Strategies sub-scale. *Friedman test* results revealed significant differences among the mean rank of these items, χ^2 (27, N = 210) = 814.1, p = .00. Since there were many items in this category, the most preferred five and the least preferred five items were selected for further analysis to observe precise differences. With the aim of finding paired differences, a *Nemenyi* post hoc analysis was used. In a Nemenyi test, p values less than 0.005 are used as the level of significance. Table 10 shows the comparison of the least preferred five and the most preferred five item results.

Table 13. The Most Preferred Acculturation Strategies Nemenyi P Values.

	Item 7	Item 11	Item 12	Item 19	Item 27
Item 7	1	-	-	-	-
Item 11	0.019	1	-	-	-
Item 12	0.000	0.854	1	-	-
Item 19	0.998	0.047	0.000	1	-
Item 27	0.991	0.068	0.003	0.999	1

Item 7. I think as well in English as I do in my own language. (*Mdn* = 4)

Item 11. I have close friends from both my own country and from other countries. (*Mdn* = 5)

Item 12. I prefer to have friends both from my own country and others. (*Mdn* = 5)

Item 19. I feel very comfortable around both people from other countries and my own country. (*Mdn* = 4)

Item 27. I like taking part in both my own culture and others' social activities. (*Mdn* = 4)

As can be seen in Table 10, the mean score of item 12 (*Mdn* = 5) was significantly different than the mean scores of item 7 (*M* = 4), item 19 (*M* = 4), and item 27 (*M* = 4). In this respect, participants preferred the idea "*to have friend both from my own country and another*" (item 12) rather than "*I think as well in English as I do in my own language*" (item 7), "*I feel very comfortable around both people from other countries and my own country*" (item 19), and "*I like taking part in both my own culture and others' social activities*" (item 27). As seen in Table 11, there were no pair differences among items 6, 17, 21, 24, and 26 (all p > .005).

Table 14. The Least Preferred Acculturation Strategies Nemenyi P Values

	Item 6	**Item 17**	**Item 21**	**Item 24**	**Item 26**
Item 6	1	-	-	-	-
Item 17	0.993	1	-	-	-
Item 21	0.494	0.758	1	-	-
Item 24	0.140	0.318	0.954	1	-
Item 26	0.009	0.032	0.436	0.861	1

Item 6. My closest friends are from my own country. (*Mdn* = 2)

Item 17. I feel that foreigners understand me better than people from my country do. (*Mdn* = 3)

Item 21. Most of my friends are from my own country. (*Mdn* = 3)

Item 24. I feel more comfortable socializing with foreigners than I do with my own people. (*Mdn* = 3)

Item 26. Sometimes I find it hard to trust both foreigners and my people. (*Mdn* = 3)

Preference of Language Proficiency Strategies

There were 6 items in the Preference of Language Proficiency Strategies sub-scale. *Friedman test* results revealed significant differences among the mean ranks of these items, χ^2 (5, *N* = 210) = 145.9, *p* = .00. Table 12 shows the comparison of the items in this category. As is seen in Table 12, the mean rank of item 44 was significantly different than the mean ranks of all other items. In other words, the median of item 44 (*Mdn* = 3) was significantly less than the median of items 35, 36, 37, 42, and 43 (all *Mdn* = 4, all *p* < .005). There were no mean rank differences among items 35, 36, 37, 42, and 43 (all *p* > .005). So it seems that the participants had no fear of dealing with official affairs on their own because of the language barrier.

Table 15. Language Proficiency Strategies Nemenyi P Values

	Item 35	Item 36	Item 37	Item 42	Item 43	Item 44
Item 35	1	-	-	-	-	-
Item 36	0.999	1	-	-	-	-
Item 37	0.921	0.991	1	-	-	-
Item 42	0.980	0.878	0.526	1	-	-
Item 43	0.999	1.000	0.983	0.912	1	-
Item 44	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	1

Item 35. Generally speaking, I have high English language proficiency. (*Mdn* = 4)

Item 36. I can talk with foreign people in fluent English. (*Mdn* = 4)

Item 37. I can participate in class discussion in fluent English. (*Mdn* = 4)

Item 42. I find memorizing English vocabulary easy. (*Mdn* = 4)

Item 43. I find understanding English grammar easy. (*Mdn* = 4)

Item 44. I fear to deal with official affairs on my own because of the language barrier. (*Mdn* = 3)

Preference of Integrative Learning Motivation Strategies

There were 4 items in the Integrative Learning Motivation Strategies sub-scale. *Friedman test* results revealed significant differences among the mean ranks of these items, χ^2 (3, *N* = 210) = 165.5, *p* = .00. Table 13 shows the comparison of the items in this category. As it is seen in Table 13, the median of item 33 (*Mdn* = 5) was significantly different than the medians of all other items. In other words, the median of item 33 was greater than the medians of items 29, 30, and 31 (all *Mdn* = 4, all *p* < .005). There were no mean rank differences among items 29, 30, and 31 (all *p* > .005). So it seems that the participants relied heavily on the idea that "*studying English well is very important to both my studying and living.*"

One participant from Saudi Arabia quite assertively confirmed overall students' beliefs about their motivation to study in North Cyprus. In regard to the interview question inquiring **"Which one helps to learn English more; study abroad or in your own country?"**

Zahid from Saudi Arabia stated:

> If I am at home, my English will get worse. If study abroad, you interact more. EMU is good in this way. You can communicate with other people. You use words to help you in your daily life. World is facing diversity, people are becoming liberal to words education. If you know English, you are considered educated.

This participant confirmed that studying abroad was very beneficial in his case, and that North Cyprus was a good example of a multicultural atmosphere where students

can interact with each other to improve their English in a place where they need to speak in English to survive in everyday real life situations. Participants confirmed that having the opportunity to study in a multicultural context brought them various in terms of interactions and sharing culture with others, which showed that they were motivated and integrated to this learning context. Thus, perceiving the learning of English as an essential global language and perceiving its importance for communication, showed students' integrative motivation to study abroad. In that regard, Zahid, stated:

> When people interact in diversity they improve their culture and language, knowledge about other cultures and languages. One language means one person; two languages mean two person. English is universal language. If you want to survive in this world, you have to know English.

Also, Ismail from Saudi Arabia commented: "Study abroad- diverse nationalities. You learn more words in English. You can communicate to improve your English speaking skills. And our accent will also develop in better way." This student furthermore confirmed how living in diversity benefited them and increased their knowledge about other cultures, enabled them to interact with other foreign students, and improved their interaction and communication skills as well as their English language skills. This is a good example of where intercultural communicative competence (ICC) has its potential and is a good model to be used in this multicultural and diverse educational atmosphere. This case study can be used as an example to suggest how the ICC model can help students increase their awareness of other cultures, increase their kowledge about other cultures, improve their empathetic skills, and make them more competent in terms of multiculturalism and intercultural relations.

Table 16. Integrative Learning Motivation Strategies Nemenyi P Values

	Item 29	Item 30	Item 31	Item 33
Item 29	1	-	-	-
Item 30	0.987	1	-	-
Item 31	0.074	0.030	1	-
Item 33	0.000	0.000	0.000	1

Item 29. I study English well in order to be integrated into EMU and North Cyprus society. ($Mdn = 4$)

Item 30. I study English well in order to make more foreign friends. ($Mdn = 4$)

Item 31. I study English well in order to understand other cultures. ($Mdn = 4$)

Item 33. Studying English well is very important to both my studying and living. ($Mdn = 5$)

Preference of Language Anxiety Strategies

There were two items in the Language Anxiety Strategies sub-scale. A *Wilcoxon Signed-ranks test* indicated that participants preferred the idea "*I feel it is very difficult to understand what my English teachers and other friends say*" (*Mdn* = 4) more compared to the idea "*It is extremely difficult for me to write my thesis in English*" (*Mdn* = 4), *z* = -2.18, *p* = .029, *r* = .15.

The educational context at EMU is different compared to many other universities in other parts of the world, especially in the region, since EMU is highly-ranked. However, studying in such context there emerge issues for stakeholders to improve their education system and, on the other hand, encourage society, especially those who work in the areas of education, trade, tourism, and public service, to learn and communicate through the international language that is English. In an effort to identify areas that could be improved for international students, participants responded to the interview question asking **"What problems have you overcome that have helped you to become better at interacting with people and carrying on with your daily life in North Cyprus?"**

A participant, Benjamin, from Nigeria stated:

> First, it was a bit difficult because of language. I couldn't speak Turkish to Turkish people. Communicating with people was a problem. I had to adapt and learn a bit of Turkish to be able to understand people. Some Turkish people know a bit of English-but majority outside EMU –they don't know English.

In relation to language barrier, Issa from Nigeria made similar comments:

> At first, language barrier was problem. Most of the people don't speak or understand English- different people from different countries. After that, I only met friends who can speak and understand English in order not to stress

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myself. Most of my friends are from Nigeria, Saudi Arabia and Iran who can speak English well.

These participants' comments in the interview seemed to parallel what results of the survey analysis. Mostly students had difficulty to communicate through the global language that is English. The reason behind this was that the general population in North Cyprus had insufficient English background to communicate with them, and this could cause anxiety on behalf of international students when they were forced to decide which language to use: English (the medium of instruction at EMU) or Turkish (the official language of North Cyprus). However, though this may have caused a dilemma for the international students, after spending a certain amount of time in North Cyprus, some students preferred to choose elective courses in Turkish to try and learn the language in order to survive in the country. Nevertheless, it must be pointed out that learning Turkish can bring advantages to the students inside and outside the campus, but not using English as a tool for communication may bring some drawbacks on behalf of the international students as a whole. That is because there can be separation and isolation between students and this can bring problems for some groups. For instance, Ismail from Saudi Arabia talked about his experiences coping with the language barrier:

> Some of the people don't speak English. I find hard to communicate because of language barrier…My first weeks, I wanted to get directions for CL (central lectures) building in campus or any department. And people on the street said; "Ingilizce bilmiyorum" (I can't speak English). And at that time I didn't know any Turkish. I met with a Cypriot girl and she knew English and she told me the directions. It took time. But experience teaches the person. Going to supermarkets buying things, it helped me to learn few Turkish. And I had friends they taught me some Turkish words. First Turkish word was "cok güzel" (very nice).

Another participant, Sami from Syria, commented: "When I go to market to do shopping, I have problem with speaking English. People out of university not good with English." I start to learn Turkish, the local language." Similarly, Akram from Syria said: "If I go to shop or get a taxi, they don't speak English and that makes my life hard. I use body language and some Turkish words." In relation to that Hassan from Jordan further stated: "Some Cypriots only speak Turkish and that makes it difficult to communicate with people. For example, when I go to restaurant and order food they only speak Turkish. So, now I learned to speak a little bit Turkish."

Although the language of instruction at EMU is English, students face language barriers when they go out of the campus, especially when socialising. This shows how students may have language anxiety due to their inability to speak Turkish. This anxiety may be compounded for students coming from countries where English is not spoken. These students will have a limited background in the English language and will have to face the same problems of not speaking very much in English except for studying purposes only. It is also highly unlikely that they will speak Turkish on arrival. Therefore, this can cause additional language anxiety for international students in the first stage of their education because they are unable to speak in either the local language (i.e., Turkish) or the academic/global language (i.e., English) in order to survive in North Cyprus. In relation to that, Ali from Syria commented:

> At first, I found communicating with people difficult. I didn't know how to talk and deal with people. I never had relationship with other people like this. I still have problem with people like the owner of the house, I can't communicate with him too much. I learned to speak little bit Turkish in order to talk with local people. We already took Turkish course.

Students may have problems communicating with their instructors when they have to deal with subject-related topics in and outside of class, and also in using the language

to communicate with their teachers. Moreover, some teachers may switch to their native language when it becomes difficult to teach, especially Turkish students, and this may cause problems for students from various cultural backgrounds in the classroom. Therefore, teaching through the medium of English is essential to prevent problems that may constantly emerge during class time. This confirms how students face difficulties in terms of language, especially in cases where a study abroad country is in a non-English speaking countries where English is not the native tongue. Although Cyprus was a British colony, English language skills have waned among the Turkish community since independence in 1960. Therefore, this can be a problem and would not meet the expectations of international students who move to live and study in North Cyprus.

Preference of Language Confidence Strategies

There were two items in the Language Confidence Strategies sub-scale. A *Wilcoxon Signed-ranks* test indicated no significant difference between preference for the idea "*I can speak English without worrying about mistakes*" ($Mdn = 4$) and "*I can write English without worrying about mistakes*" ($Mdn = 4$) in terms of preference, $z = -1.59$, $p = .112$, $r = .11$. Overall, students reported that they had language confidence, which was confirmed in the interview questions. For example, Adama from Jordan reported:

> People tend to study what they good at. So I believe I am good at English. I've always been the best in class…In Jordan, I was bullied because of my accent, pronunciation. I had accent close to American accent because of media. I was listening to rap music in third grade and people judged me and I was isolated. I always watch TV shows and listen to rap music in English which also helps my vocabulary… One of the major things I developed about my character, I came to conclusion, I shouldn't worry. I should be my own way.

In relation to improving language confidence, Khaled from Saudi Arabia commented:

> I have gained my confidence more, like English courses; I gave presentation, for example, presentation skills in more professional way. When comes to particular topics about presentation- people discuss about their cultures. Most people discussed their lifestyles in their own country… If study abroad, most of the time you interact with people and speak in English. If I study in my country, I interact with people not speaking English which is not helping you to improve English. You gain confidence when living alone.

The participants above confirmed that language confidence had a strong impact on their learning of English. While interviewing Khaled it was observed how he was self-confident and motivated to realize his goals of self-improvement and continuing his studies. Furthermore, this underlines that students having such confidence and motivation can simultaneously provide them with a means of dealing with language difficulties and improving their language learning. This self-confidence may reflect in their further education further, which may also have a positive affect later on their life careers. Overall, results from the interviews and surveys showed that students mostly developed strategies and abilities to improve their communication and language skills. Participants mostly had high language confidence, which made them integrate with peers in other groups. Participants who come to study abroad at EMU have already learned survival English, which helps them to improve their language learning and build their language confidence further. However, based on the analysis of the interviews, problems still persist, especially when other participants have to integrate with Turkish students who have very little or no English. This may have caused misunderstandings and decreased motivation for participants when they were in class to share their cultures and learn from each other, and such misunderstandings could have interfered with the flow of the lesson. Therefore, the examples given by

participants above show the importance of English as a medium of instruction, which serves the needs of all students as well as teachers themselves.

Preference of Instrumental Learning Motivation Strategies

There were two items in the Instrumental Learning Motivation Strategies sub-scale. A *Wilcoxon Signed-ranks* test indicated that participants preferred the idea "*It is very important for me to study both my own language and English well.*" (*Mdn* = 5) compared to the strategy "*I study well only for the sake of study*" (*Mdn* = 3), $z = -9.09$, $p = .000$, $r = .63$. That is, participants preferred the idea of learning English not only for the sake of study, but for socialising with others. A participant from Palestine, Adama, reported:

> In your country you just speak your language. For example, Turkish people here. If they stay in Turkey, they will not learn English. Here they have to speak English with other students. The only way to teacher to explain further is in English. In your own country just resort by translating.

In relation to that Sayid from Syria said:

> I thought if I study in English, I would have more access to information, opportunities, connection related to my major. English is the most spoken language. It is very essential for people to speak at least two languages. For my second language I chose English.

These excerpts capture reasons why it is important for students to integrate with the student population where English language is used as a tool for communication as well as for studying purposes. The participants underlined advantages for those studying in a multicultural student population, such as in our context, where they have the opportunity to share their knowledge and abilities to communicate and help each other improve their language. Adama further stated: "It's very important to speak English. Those who don't speak English, they think they help conserve their

language, but I think, if you learn other languages, it's easier to spread yours." This confirms the idea that language is a tool for sharing the culture and spreading one's own values through communication and understanding of each other with a common language that both interlocutors understand.

These views were reported by participant responses to the interview question **"What are the reasons for wanting to study English at university level?"** Mohamed from Egypt responded by indicating:

> Nowadays English is the international language- you can contact others- social media-to have career you have to know English- to have multicultural friends- you should speak English…In Cyprus there are people from different cultures, nationalities; EMU is a highly-ranked university. EMU is multicultural place.

In relation to advantages of having international language competence, Khaled from Saudi Arabia stated:

> Since this language is acceptable all over the world. Socialising with others, this language helps me. It helps me a lot in my department. If instruction wasn't in English, It would have been difficult. When it comes to research, it helps me. When you apply for a job, it is one of the best option to know this language.

Similarly, Omar from Egypt indicated: "

> I chose English because first it will motivate me. For my career, you have to be good in order to work in international companies…This university has good ranking in the world and accreditations where it can help me to work later in Europe." I chose to come here to involve in different cultures and people. I will help me in my career. It can allow me to learn another language that is Turkish as a third language.

This is in line with the survey results indicating that participants knew the advantages of studying English in a multicultural context and what advantages they could gain from this if their learning was facilitated. As in this participant's case, learning English as a global language gives speakers the opportunity to pass on their cultural

values, create mutual understanding, and engender empathy to other cultures, which may, at the end, create peaceful environments in the globalised world. This means that education and learning another language, which is an international language, is the first step towards global citizenship.

Preference of Physical Symptoms Strategies

There were five items in the Physical Symptoms Strategies sub-scale. *Friedman test* results revealed significant differences among the mean ranks of these items, χ^2 (4, N = 210) = 46.99, p = .00. As displayed in Table 14, the mean score of item 56 (*Mdn* = 4) was significantly different from the mean scores of item 50 (*Mdn* = 3) and item 51 (*Mdn* = 3). In this respect, participants preferred the idea "*I feel unaccepted by the local and foreign people I know*" (item 56) more compared to "*Physically, I feel tired*" (item 50) and "*In my daily life, I feel tense and anxious*" (item 51). As seen in Table 14, there were no pair differences among items 50, 51, 52, and 53 (all p > .005).

Table 17. Physical Symptoms Strategies Nemenyi P Values

	Item 50	Item 51	Item 52	Item 53	Item 56
Item 50	1	-	-	-	-
Item 51	0.995	1	-	-	-
Item 52	0.014	0.046	1	-	-
Item 53	0.064	0.166	0.985	1	-
Item 56	0.000	0.000	0.703	0.370	1

Item 50. Physically, I feel tired. (Mdn = 3)

Item 51. In my daily life, I feel tense and anxious. (Mdn = 3)

Item 52. I feel lonely even if I am with people. (Mdn = 4)

Item 53. I often feel helpless in dealing with problems of my life. (Mdn = 3)

Item 56. I feel unaccepted by the local and foreign people I know. (Mdn = 4)

These results appear to be in line with what participants reported in the interviews. Although participants chose the integrative preference strategy, they reported that they were not accepted by the students around them when responding to the interview question **"In what ways have your experiences in North Cyprus been similar and/or different to experiences in other countries where you have lived?"** Adama from Jordan indicated:

> People tend to be territorial and like to divide things and group each other. Students here tend to divide themselves. Nigerians, Turks stick alone…Coming to Cyprus, seeing different divided groups…….knowing that you don't have to fit into group and be myself and create my own atmosphere. Moving to another country will make you learn more and knowing that I don't have to change myself to fit into a group.

Another student from Nigeria, Victoria, said: "Problems with friends mostly because of associating pair groups (having friends and making friends), different views and characters." This can be an indication that students at EMU, with its multicultural student population, need to be further encouraged to explore different cultures and show empathy to other cultural groups. Within the classroom this may be accomplished by getting students to do more pair or group work and by involving students in collaborative activities with their classmates from various cultures. Such learning environments may also increase students' motivation and learning further.

Adama compared his experience to the one in Jordan, and he said: "In Jordan, they tend to force culture, the way they present their food, culture. Jordanians like to involve you in different cultures. That's because of history. It's a mixture of cultures." Furthermore, in relation to the question in the interview **"What problems do you face in your daily life in North Cyprus?"** Akram from Syria said:

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> To be honest some other nationalities treat me in judgemental way because of
> my nationality, culture, and language. If this university wants to become one
> of the best universities in the world, then should have only one main language
> and that is English or Turkish.

Similarly, Sayid from Syria said:

> The vast majority of foreigners are Turkish here. And they tend to have this
> ethnocentrism that they are better than other people. They don't put effort to
> communicate with other cultures. I'm more selective about the people I be
> friend and spend time.

In relation to that, Omar from Egypt said: "Here people are more friendly if you speak their language." Overall, the results from the interview data confirmed that students found themselves in groups separated by culture. For example, Turkish students, as mentioned in the example above, socialised mainly within their own national group while Nigerians did the same. This means that there is isolation among students according to their backgrounds. The reason behind this can be a lack of mutual understanding and empathy among students themselves. For the betterment of educational policies, students may be encouraged, indeed forced by necessity, to interact more widely.

Psychological Stress Strategies

There were five items in the Psychological Stress Strategies sub-scale. *Friedman test* results revealed significant differences among the mean ranks of these items, χ^2 (4, N = 210) = 46.99, p = .00. As it is seen in Table 15, the median score of item 58 (*Mdn* = 2) was significantly different from the median scores of item 49 (*Mdn* = 4), item 54 (*Mdn* = 4), item 55 (*Mdn* = 4), and item 57 (*Mdn* = 4). In this respect, participants did not agree with the idea "*I sometimes find it hard to socialize with people*" (item 58) compared to the ideas "*I sometimes find it hard to make friends*" (item 49), "*I am not used to the pace of life here*" (item 54), "*I am threatened by belonging to different*

ethnic groups" (item 55), and "*I am threatened by belonging to different ethnic groups*" (item 57). As seen in Table 15, there were no pair differences among items 49, 54, 55, and 57 (all $p > .005$).

Table 18. Psychological Stress Strategies Nemenyi P Values

	Item 49	Item 54	Item 55	Item 57	Item 58
Item 49	1	-	-	-	-
Item 54	0.979	1	-	-	-
Item 55	0.999	0.993	1	-	-
Item 57	0.986	1.000	0.996	1	-
Item 58	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	1

Item 49. I sometimes find it hard to make friends. (Mdn = 4)

Item 54. I am not used to the pace of life here. (Mdn = 4)

Item 55. I am threatened by belonging to different ethnic groups. (Mdn = 4)

Item 58. I sometimes find it hard to socialize with people. (Mdn = 2)

Item 57. I feel uneasy when I am with people. (Mdn = 4)

The above participants' choice of preference in accordance to psychological stress strategies were in line with those that emerged from the interviews. For example, students' responses to the interview question **"What problems have you overcome that have helped you to become better at interacting with people and carrying on with your daily life in North Cyprus?"** illustrated these ideas. A student from Saudi Arabia, Zahid, stated: "I was hosted to cultural nights, for example Pakistani culture, I gave speech, and this gave me confidence to interact with other people. Before I was shy, now I can talk with other foreign people without hesitation." In relation to participants having difficulty in coping with life in North Cyprus, Khaled from Saudi Arabia said:

Cyprus was completely different compared to where I have lived. It was kind of culture shock. But I managed this. I've learned many things, how to live alone, how to manage time here, communication skills, how to socialize with students from different countries.

Accordingly, the above students confirmed how participants easily adapted to the context at EMU and gradually developed psychological comfort zones to interact with others with confidence. This suggests that students are psychologically ready to accept other cultures and socialise with other groups. If this type of interaction is promoted and students are given the opportunity to share their cultures and traditions to teach and learn from each other it will increase solidarity and collaboration between students, which will increase their performance in academic life as well as off-campus life in North Cyprus society.

Preference of Self/Own Identity Strategies

There were two items in Self/Own Identity Strategies sub-scale. A *Wilcoxon Signed-ranks test* indicated a significant difference between the preference of the idea "*I love my own culture, history and traditions*" (*Mdn* = 5) and "*Being part of my own culture is embarrassing to me*" (*Mdn* = 4), z = -5.20, p = .000, r = .36. In other words, participants preferred the first strategy more than the second. The majority of participants preferred the idea *"I love my own culture, history and traditions"*. This showed that students celebrated their own cultures, history, and traditions, which is in line with the interview findings. Benjamin, a student from Nigeria, responded to the interview question **"Which one helps you to learn English more; study-abroad or in your own country?"** by stating: "Nigeria is colonized by British. We use British English. Teaching in Nigeria is in English. Studying in my own country is better. Everybody speaks English. They will have better teachers of English." This

idea from the participant seems to be in line with those in the survey. African students, especially those from Nigeria, have groups where they stick together in isolation from other groups. One reason may be because their culture is far more different from that of North Cyprus compared to Arab students, and when they come to study in North Cyprus they expect the role of English language to be greater than it really is. Thus, participants seemed to be unhappy that English was not spoken in society or on campus as widely as they had expected, and that teachers did not always use English as the medium of instruction in class. Nevertheless, Nigerian participants were found to be more integrated into North Cyprus society compared to Arab students. The reason behind this can be their level of English, which is at the peak compared to other international students. More importantly, Nigerian culture is closer to Western culture and the influence of British culture in Cyprus is notable compared to other cultures in the region.

Other Identity Strategies

There were two items in the Other Identity Strategies sub-scale. A *Wilcoxon Signed-ranks test* indicated that a significant difference between preferences for the ideas "*I prefer English music to my own music*" (*Mdn* = 4) and "*I prefer to be dressed in Western culture*" (*Mdn* = 3), $z = -4.54$, $p = .000$, $r = .31$. In other words, participants preferred the first strategy more than the second.

Overall, participants in the interviews confirmed that they loved to represent their own cultures and self-identity. Nevertheless, they were also happy with and accepting of learning about new cultures, especially the local one in North Cyprus. These ideas are illustrated in the student responses to the interview questions discussed below.

Interview question: How would you describe your experience in North Cyprus to this point? How do you feel about yourself after studying in North Cyprus? How did your experience in North Cyprus change the way you feel about yourself?

Benjamin, from Nigeria, reported:

> I am more exposed to know things about Cyprus-the way of life and culture in Cyprus compare to Nigeria. Everything is different; school- the way to teach at EMU- more friendly atmosphere- in Nigeria school is more strict. Teaching here gives more detail about teaching. In Nigeria is not detailed, you have to study on your own. Teachers are more friendly in Cyprus- you can learn better by asking questions, you can communicate better.

In relation to that Emmanuel from Nigeria made similar comments:

> If you want to learn other cultures, you probably would go to that country if you can afford. If you want to interact with Turkish people you should learn the culture or adapt to their way of life. You can start by learning Turkish, understand what they like and what they want. And the things they love to do for fun, places they love going to and also music is part of it.

Overall participants seemed happy with the democracy of education in North Cyprus. They were open to learning about other cultures and motivated to learn from each other. The above comments show that creating such learning situation provides students with opportunities to ask more questions and talk about other cultures, which can be motivating and interesting for the entire student population. The comments above gave an overall idea that students were open to learning about other cultures, and they were happy to represent other cultures besides their own.

Meanwhile a participant from Syria, Akram, had similar opinions and experiences about other identities. He said:

> I learned how to treat my foreign friends and instructors. I have to respect local culture, the other cultures, because I know their culture. My friends

taught me what's wrong / right in their culture. I started to treat people according to their personality and not because of their culture. I don't generalise people because of their cultures. Because when people treat me according to my personality I feel good. That's the right thing to do.

Hassan from Jordan said:

When interested learning about culture, you can improve your English language. It's good to learn about other cultures. To learn how they think, behave their lifestyle. It's also important to learn about local culture. When you come to country where you study you learn their lifestyle, language, food, what activities they do.

Hassan provided an additional example:

For example, I had one Cypriot and the other British Cypriot, I learned about their culture. They gave us stories that they had experienced in life and that was motivating for the class. For example, if the subject about food, all the students in class would start talking about their cultural food. Our teacher used to give us recipes and said you should try making this food. She said I do it for my husband. Pretty much it was fun story she gave. It makes the class more fun and less boring.

These participants confirmed that they were motivated to live and study in North Cyprus, and that they were integrated. The reasons behind this can be the multicultural atmosphere at EMU and how similar some students' cultural backgrounds are to Turkish Cypriot culture. More importantly, students are not forced to assimilate to the local culture since EMU is a study abroad destination and an English-medium international university. The environment provides a tranquil haven in a very troubled region and wider world. Therefore, North Cyprus is attractive for many who have suffered from armed conflict, political failure, as well as religious and ethnic divisions. Here, we speak the language of peace.

Chapter 5

CONCLUSION AND DISCUSSION

The aim of the present study was to investigate, through five research questions, students' perceptions throughout the process of acculturation at EMU and in North Cyprus society at large, the cultural patterns that could be identified from their acculturation continuum, how international students perceived the experience of studying in North Cyprus, the predominant acculturation strategies used among international students at EMU, and strategies that could be adapted further to help learners improve themselves in the acculturation continuum and achieve the learning outcomes of English courses in an international study abroad context. This chapter presents the discussion of the findings, which have been analysed based on survey data and in-depth student interviews. The chapter also presents suggestions in terms of immediate pedagogical implications and long-term language planning implications. The chapter concludes with study limitations and suggestions for further research.

5.1 Discussion of Findings

This study addressed five research questions in an effort to gain a comprehensive understanding of the perceptions of international university students' regarding their acculturation process while studying at EMU. The research questions were:

1. How do students perceive themselves in relation to acculturation at EMU and in North Cyprus society at large?

2. What cultural patterns can be drawn from their acculturation continuum?

3. How do international students perceive the experience of studying abroad in North Cyprus?

4. What is the predominant acculturation strategies used among students in EMU, North Cyprus context?

5. What strategies can be adapted further to help learners improve themselves in the acculturation continuum and achieve the learning outcomes of English courses in an international study abroad context?

5.1.1 How Do Students Perceive Themselves in Relation to Acculturation at EMU and in North Cyprus Society at Large?

Results reflected that students from abroad perceived themselves in a positive light in relation to their acculturation in North Cyprus. From food to social life, from the main point of being here, education, to getting around with the necessary English language skills, there was an overwhelmingly positive take on the overall experience among the participants. Overall participants seemed happy with the democracy of education in North Cyprus. They were open to learning about other cultures and motivated to learn from each other. The positive perceptions in the findings far outweighed the negative perceptions, and when there are negative factors the students concerned tended to turn to each other for support. They also mostly trusted and respected their teachers, an important factor when they are in full-time education. From the analysis, it seemed that student-participants mostly knew the advantages of studying English in a multicultural context and what advantages they could gain from this if their learning was facilitated. As in this context, learning English as a global language gives speakers the opportunity to communicate their cultural values to one another as well as to create mutual understanding and empathy to other cultures, which, at the end, may create a more peaceful environment in this

globalized world. The statistics showed this convincingly, as did the qualitative parts of the study in terms of the interviews and the researcher's analysis.

5.1.2 What Cultural Patterns Can Be Drawn from Their Acculturation Continuum?

The cultural patterns were largely characterized by a growing sense of empathy and an expanding range of cultural interests. The participants gave an overall idea that they were open to learning about other cultures and that they were happy to represent cultures other than their own. More importantly, students are not forced to assimilate to local culture since EMU, as an English medium international university, is a study abroad destination. The findings support this argument as results showed very little antipathy towards the hosting nation, and very little disappointment with EMU. There was the tendency for students of a certain culture to gather together, perhaps not interacting with those outside their perceived national/ethnic group as much as some would desire, but this seems understandable and in no way leading to serious conflict. One of the most heartening findings of the study was the absence of conflict.

5.1.3 How Do International Students Perceive the Experience of Studying Abroad in North Cyprus?

Different people adopted different strategies to deal with stress, tension, and homesickness. Mostly, the researcher found that dealing with living away from one's country of origin resulted in the participants embracing the local culture and 'getting on with it.' The pros in the findings far outweighed the cons, and when there were cons the students tended to turn to each other for support. They also mostly trusted and respected their teachers, an important factor when they are in full-time education. Study abroad is clearly not easy, but the environment at EMU facilitated

the desired educational outcome and the emotional well-being of incoming students commensurate with global standards.

5.1.4 What is the Predominant Acculturation Strategies Used Among Students in EMU, North Cyprus Context?

It is clear from the findings that overwhelmingly the most important acculturation strategies were interaction with a diverse number of people in the English language accompanied by a suspension of prejudices and assumptions coming from the homeland. We have also established that the safe environment, free of war and civil conflict, made EMU attractive to many students from parts of the world not so blessed. The findings clearly showed that there is a priceless factor attracting students to study in North Cyprus: the absence of fear. These results are in line with the results of studies by Berry et al. (2006) suggesting that integration was the most preferred acculturation strategy and that it produces the best the adaptation outcomes during acculturation. The results of the current study also support the view of motivational experts (Dornyei, 1990; Garner, 1988; Gardner, Day, & MacIntyre, 1992) who emphasise the positive effects of integrative motivation on language learning and acquisition. The findings also parallel those of Nguyen and Benet-Martinez (2013) who found that integration had a significant and positive relation with psychological adaptation, which they defined in terms of life satisfaction, positive affect and self-esteem, as well as with sociocultural adaptation, which they defined in terms of academic performance, career success, social skills, and lack of behavioural problems. The quantitative and qualitative results parallel those of Masgoret et al. (2000) who found that students who are instrumentally oriented with high motivation over the duration of the program also became motivated to learn the

language, whereas students who are less instrumentally oriented in learning become less motivated to learn the language.

5.1.5 What Strategies Can Be Adapted Further to Help Learners Improve Themselves in The Acculturation Continuum and Achieve the Learning Outcomes of English Courses in an International Study Abroad Context?

When it comes to acculturation, the main strategy can be taken out of the purely academic sphere. The present study highlighted that the abilities to empathize, respect, and, if possible, love, constitute the highest forms of human expression. These things lie at the heart of acculturation. This is in line with Byram (1997) who noted that although cultural issues may differ in many respects, the personal qualities that professionals need to apply effectively are very much the same: "curiosity and openness, readiness to suspend disbelief about other cultures and beliefs about one's own" (p. 50). According to Byram (1997) people improve their inter-cultural skills when they think about who they are in terms of their backgrounds, education, personality, and experiences rather than what they can practice in terms of various skills. This study parallels the study by Risager (2011, as cited in Weninger & Kiss, 2013) that highlighted the importance of current trends in research and paid almost exclusive attention to a "transnational or global/local approach that focus on cultural complexity and hybridity." Accordingly, the key words of this era are "critical citizenship" by Guilherme (2002), "intercultural competence of the world citizen" by Risager (2007), "global cultural consciousness" by Kumaravadivelu (2008), and "intercultural citizenship" by Byram (2008).

The studies mentioned above parallel the analysis in the current study, which was situated in a contemporary, globalized world where political, social, and economic

boundaries have become difficult to interpret. Within this context language educators should foster and promote critical thinking and a critically reflective mind that can identify the difference between the real and unreal. This ability is essential because students need to learn to be aware within a modern, pluralistic society. In that sense Byram (2011, as cited in Weninger & Kiss, 2013) suggested that this is particularly relevant for foreign language education nowadays because the field has lacked new methods, techniques, strategies and approaches in teaching, and as well as a new generation of materials. According to Kumaravadivelu (2008) and Byram (2008, 2011), language education, including EFL, must change its target and this can be achieved only through cultural reflection and understanding within a critically oriented pedagogy. Accordingly, such pedagogy needs to be structured by materials that foster the development of a reflexive, open, and globally aware language learner. Kumaravadivelu (2008, as cited in Weninger & Kiss, 2013) noted:

> The task of promoting global cultural consciousness in the classroom can hardly be accomplished unless a concerted effort is made to use materials that will prompt learners to confront some of the taken-for-granted cultural beliefs about the Self and the other. (p.189)

Kramsch (1993, as cited in Weninger & Kiss, 2013) explained that cultural understanding is a means of social interaction that involves different perspectives from key participants in the learning process (e.g., students, teachers, and materials). Moreover, this study supports Brumfit (1982) who proposed that successful affective teaching is promoted when students are in social contact with the community and experience desired behaviour patterns in a real context rather than when students are presented with the patterns that are built into some kind of syllabus structure. Results from the interviews and surveys support Lebedeva, Tatarko, and Berry (2016) who suggested the need to establish mutual understanding and perceptions of

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acculturation and intercultural contact between individuals and groups in a plural society. This supports the idea from Lebedeva, Tatarko, and Berry (2016) that in a pluralistic society, and in our case a pluralistic study abroad context, a multicultural ideology should be developed to facilitate social interaction between students and promote use of the integration strategy and intercultural contact among students from different cultures. This kind of ideology may be developed through a facilitating rather than a proscriptive approach achieved by both management and front-line staff initiating a zero tolerance approach to aggression against the 'other' and a constant programme of get-togethers that celebrate diversity. This is the essence of a university, (and the base words for 'university' are 'universal' and 'unity'), and at the same time encourages empathy within the institution and in the society as a whole.

This study also parallels the results of studies by Dewale and van Oudenhoven (2009), Van der Zee and van Oudenhoven (2000), and Barker (2015). Results of these studies showed that acculturating individuals who achieve a high level of host culture competence maintain their cultural heritage if cultivating a broader perspective, open-mindedness, and empathy are enhanced among learners and teachers in a mutual acculturation process. In fact, Byram (1997) suggested that living within a culture for a good period of time, that is, spending enough time within a culture to become a 'sojourner' rather than a tourist, is necessary in order to develop inter-cultural skills. In that regard, Barro et al. (1998) stated that acculturating individuals need to experience the culture from inside by taking an active role in the community. This means that culture is not something learned but rather an active-meaning system of experiences that is constructed within every act of communication (Barro, 1983).

5.2 Conclusion

This study focused on the preferences of acculturation strategies among Arab and African international students studying at a university in North Cyprus. The study also investigated the role of learners' cultural, motivational, and personal factors that interact, and the influence of these factors on their language learning performance within the acculturation process. Findings revealed that integration was preferred over other acculturation strategies while female students generally had a higher level of acculturation than males, and African students preferred integration as an acculturation strategy more so than did Arab students. The results indicated that students from abroad perceived themselves in a positive light in relation to their acculturation in North Cyprus. From food to social life, from the main point of being here, education, to getting around with the necessary English language skills, there has been an overwhelmingly positive take on the overall experience among the subjects of the study. From the analysis, it seems that participants were familiar with the advantages of studying English in a multicultural context and what advantages they could gain from this if their learning was facilitated. The statistics showed this convincingly, as did the qualitative parts of the study in the shape of the interviews and the researchers' analysis thereof.

Furthermore, findings reflected very little antipathy towards the host nation or disappointment with the university, especially teachers not always using English as a medium of instruction in class even though Eastern Mediterranean University is an English-medium university. Also, in the present study the researcher detected some tendency for people of a certain culture to isolate themselves within their own cultural group, perhaps not interacting with those outside their perceived

national/ethnic group as much as would be desirable. However, this did not lead to serious conflict among students. Overall, the results indicated that the safe environment with the absence of fear, war, and civil conflict made the university attractive to many students from countries experiencing social conflict.

5.3 Teaching Implications

Research findings on the mechanics of English language learning indicate that participants feel that being compelled to use the target language is positive. In terms of practical implications, when classroom teachers facilitate group/pair work among students, for example, when a peer is sitting next to someone who does not speak the other's native tongue, speaking English becomes imperative. This does not just help students master the subject, but also may bring about the best forms of acculturation indicated above. Therefore, this study may help students overcome obstacles they encounter while learning and help them obtain more language gains and become more aware of sociocultural factors affecting their learning in the context of the EFL classroom. This means those teachers, schools, institutions, and the wider society in North Cyprus need to ensure that individuals have opportunities to develop skills that engage them and allow them to participate fully in the dominant society, which is Turkish Cypriot culture, lifestyle, cultural activities, and excursions. For example, in addition to English language learning, learners can obtain more knowledge about Cypriot history and customs, socialising with Turkish Cypriot people outside of the school, and also try more unique elements of the Turkish Cypriot lifestyle. The results of this study reinforce those of Barker (2015), which suggested that the acculturation process is concerned with the depth of social interaction with host country nationals and the ability to make meaningful friendships, which provide social acceptance and a sense of belonging in the host culture. The participants

confirmed the idea that bounding the local culture within the education system helps learners to integrate within the context where students study English but to also learn about the local culture as well as other cultures students bring into class at the same time. Following this approach, students will have a common goal for better connections with other students who are in the same boat to learn about the local culture outside the classroom as well as share their own cultures that they bring into the classroom.

The results are also in parallel with the work by Tomalin (2007) who, for example, recommended a task-oriented approach towards teaching culture. The approach is characterized by cooperative learning tasks in which students work together in pairs or small groups to share and discuss what they have discovered. A teacher, for example, can design a series of activities to enable learners to discuss and draw conclusions from their own experiences of the host culture based on what they have heard or read. The results also are in parallel with research by Byram, Gribkova, and Starkey (2002) who suggested similar to a task oriented approach, experiential learning is beneficial for developing self-awareness and encouraging learners to become more observant of various subtleties in cultural behaviours and develop their perceptions of other countries. In regard to this the results also parallel those of Gürsoy and Kunt (2018), which suggested teachers could implement strategies such as a contrastive analysis approach that necessitates including students' native culture, the local culture, and the target culture in their teaching. In this way students can identify commonalities and differences at play, find ways to adapt to the local culture and the EFL context, and be willing to learn about the target culture.

In terms of other practical implications, the teacher, for example, can provide factual information related to current lifestyles in the culture(s) and patterns usually followed by members of these cultures, but the important thing is to encourage comparative analysis with learners' own cultures. For example, others' views of a learner's country as represented in travel guides or tourist brochures might be compared with the learners' own experiences and views of their own country, which they will quickly discover to be different. Then, they can be asked to think about whether their perceptions of the foreign country will be the same as those of the inhabitants themselves. This method can include simulations and role-plays, which will activate students' schemata and background knowledge about other countries and cultures. For example, learners act the role of visitors to a country and meet with other learners acting as themselves and not as the stereotypes that the visitors are expecting. This kind of experiential learning is powerful in developing self-awareness as well as perceptions of other countries. In this way, students can learn from these experiences, become much better prepared to communicate with other intercultural speakers, and tolerate the differences and handle everyday situations they are likely to encounter in a foreign country. Furthermore, it is beneficial to combine authentic material and materials from different origins with varying perspectives to enable learners to compare and to analyse the materials critically. Thus, it is important that learners acquire skills of analysis as defined in the components of intercultural communicative competence (ICC) model proposed by Byram (1997).

Byram, Gribkova, and Starkey (2002) argued that promoting the intercultural dimension requires a framework of accepted classroom procedures that allows for the

expression of and recognition of cultural differences, and that these procedures should be based on human rights such as equal dignity and equal rights. Byram, Gribkova, and Starkey (2002) pointed out procedural ground rules that need to be established and adopted for discussion and debate in class. Whether the context is pair work, group work or whole class discussions, specific guidelines may apply. For example, participants should listen to each other, take turns, and show respect when commenting on and describing people portrayed in visuals or texts. Discriminatory remarks, particularly racist or sexist expressions, should be unacceptable at any time. Thus, all learners involved in classwork should have the responsibility to challenge stereotypes within a framework of mutual respect. With this in mind the present study highlighted that the ability to empathize with others and with other cultures, to respect others, and to share cultural values and create mutual understanding lie at the heart of acculturation, which at the end may create a more peaceful environment in this globalized world and help EFL learners improve their language learning. Participants confirmed that having studied English as a global language, one should learn about local culture as well as promote the idea of the "glocal culture" in which students from all of the different majority and minority cultures come into contact in one classroom to share, represent, and improve their own cultures as well as to discover other cultures while learning the global language.

5.4 Limitations

Limitations of this study concern constraints on generalizability and interpretation of the findings. One limitation would relate to the ability to draw descriptive or inferential conclusions based on the sample of African and Arab students. Although there were some minority students from different cultural groups within these two groups, drawing conclusions about other cultural groups may be problematic. For

instance, although EMU has many international students, a great number of Turkish students from Turkey study through English medium instruction, but they did not contribute to this study. Moreover, all participants constituting the sample in this study were from one educational context. That is, the study relied on the investigation of international students from EMU, North Cyprus. Although EMU is the oldest and the only state university, and it has the highest number of international students, there are more private universities in North Cyprus, most of which also offer English-medium instruction and serve international students. The present study, however, had to exclude these universities due to limited time and feasibility even though their inclusion would have contributed to more comprehensive results upon which more valid generalizations about international students' experiences studying abroad in English-medium academic programs could have been made, especially in reference to North Cyprus.

Regarding the delimitations, the present study limited the scope of research inquiry based on conscious decisions of what to include and exclude. One limiting decision concerned the choice of the research (i.e., the case of international students studying through English-medium instruction at a university level), acknowledging the fact that a thorough investigation and analysis of the perceptions and experiences of international students in secondary education in the context of North Cyprus would be necessary to draw more comprehensive conclusions. Thus, any conclusions drawn from this study should be applied to international students studying through English-medium instruction at the undergraduate level only rather than at other levels (e.g., postgraduate level). Another limiting decision, due to time and feasibility, was the number of cases explored and the duration of the study. Inclusion of more cases that

represented a wider population from both cultural groups, and conducting a longitudinal study, would have produced more comprehensive findings and increased the generalizability of the results.

5.5 Suggestions for Further Research

For future studies I recommend examining the outcomes of English language and departmental courses in which teachers implement strategies to help international students become more motivated and integrated with the local culture as well as the EFL context, and to encourage international students to show interest in the target language culture. Future studies should investigate culture more in-depth and broadly to obtain valid measures of acculturation. Longitudinal research is recommended for investigating how acculturation strategies change over time in the host country. Hofstede (2007) stated "cultures are merging, technology is changing the way we communicate, and globalisation is changing the way we trade and interface" (p. 7). Therefore, as Hofstede (2007) indicated, more research is needed to evaluate culture in terms of contemporary standards. From this study it is evident that the process of acculturation needs to be revisited and re-examined in greater depth, especially with the increase in the international student population in multicultural study abroad contexts. This research has focused on the existence of diversity within a culture in regards to race, language, class, gender, age, motivation, geographical conditions, and cross-cultural differences. For further research, personality variables that conceptualize culture clearly among study abroad learners may be further investigated to help predict success in learning L2. Accordingly, more research is needed to understand what social and psychological advantages and limitations exist in studying abroad in an EFL context compared to an ESL setting.

Moreover, further research needs to focus more deeply on what influences the acculturation process, in other words, what aspects of acculturation experiences such as cultural change, acquisition of a new language, and maintenance of the culture of origin influence adapting to a new culture. In my opinion, it is specifically worth exploring how EFL teachers can incorporate minority students' or majority students' diverse identities, backgrounds, and cultural traditions in an L2 curriculum in order to understand and enhance the learning experiences of all students. The current study confirmed that in an EFL context, the teacher needs to mediate between students' native cultures, the host culture, and the target language culture in order to achieve successful learning and meet the needs of a rapidly increasing multicultural student population in EFL classrooms. Globally, this is a mutual process involving local schools, institutions, and the wider society around the world to take action and help students in the process of acculturation in the globalised world and growing multicultural societies. From the review of the students' experiences, it is obvious that study abroad contexts influence students' English learning and that the acculturation process depends heavily on particular experiences in the study abroad setting as well as factors such as gender, ethnicity, and student motivation. The educational context at EMU is different compared to many other universities in the region as EMU is a highly-ranked university with many multicultural students. However, in such a context, issues and needs emerge for stakeholders to improve acculturation. Acculturation outcomes can be improved by investigating how to apply, encouraging, and teaching society to be better communicators in English, especially those who work in the areas of education, trade, tourism, and public service.

From this perspective, it is clear that participants are aware of the advantages associated with studying English in a multicultural context and what advantages they could gain from this if learning is facilitated. As in this case, learning English as a global language gave speakers the opportunity to pass on their cultural values and create mutual understanding with others and to engender empathy toward other cultures, which, at the end, may create a peaceful environment in this globalized world. This means that education in and teaching of English as an international language is the first stage to developing global citizenship.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A: Ethical Approval by the University's Ethics Committee

Eastern Mediterranean University
Doğu Akdeniz Üniversitesi
"Uluslararası Kariyer İçin"
"For Your International Career"

P.K.: 99628 Gazimağusa, KUZEY KIBRIS / Famagusta, North Cyprus, via Mersin-10 TURKEY
Tel: (+90) 392 630 1995
Faks/Fax: (+90) 392 630 2919
bayek@emu.edu.tr

Etik Kurulu / Ethics Committee

Sayı: ETK00-2017-0153   16.05.2017

Sayın Salih Gürsoy
İngiliz Dili Eğitimi Bölümü
Doktora Öğrencisi

Doğu Akdeniz Üniversitesi Bilimsel Araştırma ve Yayın Etiği Kurulu'nun **08.05.2017** tarih ve **2017/42-13** sayılı kararı doğrultusunda, *Acculturation of University Students in North Cyprus* adlı çalışmanızı, Doç. Dr. Naciye Kunt'un danışmanlığında araştırmanız, Bilimsel ve Araştırma Etiği açısından uygun bulunmuştur.

Bilginize rica ederim.

Doç. Dr. Şükrü Tüzmen
Etik Kurulu Başkanı

ŞT/sky.

www.emu.edu.tr

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Appendix B: Ethical Approval by the School of Foreign Languages and the English Preparatory School

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Eastern Mediterranean University
Foreign Languages & English Preparatory School

Research Request Form

Please fill in the form below and **attach** the necessary documentation (*e.g. cover letter, sample questionnaire, interview questions, and consent forms*). All documentation should be error free.

Name: __Salih Gürsoy_____

Contact no: _0533 835 0093_   **Email:** salih.gursoy@emu.edu.tr

Institution / Dept: _English Language Teaching   **Supervisor:** Assoc. Prof. Dr. Naciye Kunt

Title of Research: Acculturation of International Students at EMU, North Cyprus

Proposed period of research (to be checked against the Academic Calendar)**:** September 29, 2017- January 29, 2018

Research to be carried out in:
☐ English Preparatory School (EPS)   ☒ Foreign Languages (FL)   ☐ both EPS & FL
                                        (English taught at Dept. Level)
☐ Turkish Preparatory School

Research to be carried out with:
☒ teachers ☒ students ☐ both ☐ other *(please specify)* _____

Level of students:
☐ beginners   ☐ elementary   ☒ pre-intermediate   ☒ intermediate
☐ other *(please specify)* _____

No. of teachers required: _____   **No. of students required:** 200 (maximum)

Research to be carried out by (indicate in parenthesis specific dates for data collection)**:**
☐ online questionnaire (...........................)   ☒ paper based questionnaire (September 29, 2017- January 29, 2018)
☒ interview (September 29, 2017-January 29, 2018)   ☒ classroom observation (September 29, 2017-January 29, 2018) ☐ other *(please specify)* _____ (..........................)

Aim(s) of Research:
☐ thesis (masters)   ☒ thesis (PhD)   ☐ conference presentation
☐ other *(please specify)* _____

Any other relevant information:

Upon completion of my research, I agree to submit a copy of my findings to the FLEPS administration and do a presentation if requested. I understand the administration have the right to intervene at any time during my research period and that any further requests on my behalf may not be accepted if I violate the code of conduct and ethics of research.

Date: .29.../.09.../.2017....   Signature _____

To be completed by the FLEPS Administration
☒ Approved   ☐ Disapproved (reason):

Comments:

Date: 3/10/2017   Signature:

Appendix C: Student Questionnaire

A Study on Acculturation Strategies of International Students in North Cyprus

Consent Form

You are requested to participate in a survey conducted by Salih Gursoy, a Ph.D. candidate in FL (Foreign Languages Department, Education Faculty), Eastern Mediterranean University, North Cyprus. You have been selected on a voluntary basis and this study aims to explore your perceptions and experiences of acculturation process and its impact on you as international students in Foreign Languages and English Preparatory School.

If you agree to participate, the researcher will administer a questionnaire. I assure you that your identity will remain confidential and your questionnaire data will be used for research purposes only.

Your decision whether or not to participate will not prejudice your future relation with institution. You are free to withdraw from the study at any time.

Should you have any further questions please do not hesitate to contact the researcher.

Salih Gursoy (salih.gursoy@emu.edu.tr)

_____   _____

Date   Name, Surname

_____

Signature

Personal Information

Country of Origin: _____ Nationality: _____ Language (s)

spoken: _____ Gender: _____ Age: _____ Age of

arrival in North Cyprus: _____ Resident City in North Cyprus: _____

Duration of sojourn (living) in North Cyprus: _____ Duration of studying

English _____. IELTS or TOFEL score if any: _____ English

Proficiency score: _____ (the highest one if you've taken several tests)

Listed below are a number of statements concerning your beliefs and perceptions about your preferences of acculturation strategies, in relation to English language learning, and in relation to sociocultural and psychological adjustment factors that affect you in the process of acculturating to EMU, and North Cyprus culture.

Please decide how much do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements? Tick (✓) the one based on your own experience.

Your honest answers are very much appreciated. Please respond to each statement.

No	Items	Strongly Agree	Agree somewhat	Not sure / Neutral agree	Disagree somewhat	Strongly disagree
	Section A					
1	I behave like a local in many ways.					
2	Most of the music I listen to is in my own language.					
3	I would be just as willing to marry a local or foreigner as from someone from my own country.					

4	Generally, I find it difficult to socialize with anybody, from my own country or other.					
5	When I am in my apartment/house, I typically speak English.					
6	My closest friends are from my own country.					
7	I think as well in English as I do in my own language.					
8	I sometimes feel that neither local nor people from my own country like me.					
9	If I were asked to write poetry, I would prefer to write it in English.					
10	I prefer going to social gatherings where most of the people are local or from other countries.					
11	I have close friends from both my own country and from other countries.					
12	I prefer to have friend both from my own country and other.					
13	I get along better with local or others than my own country.					
14	I feel that foreigners don't treat me the same as they socialize with other foreigners.					
15	I feel that both my own people and others value me.					
16	I sometimes find it hard to communicate with people.					
17	I feel that foreigners understand me better than people from my country do.					
18	I would prefer to go out on a date with someone from my country than					

	with others.					
19	I feel very comfortable around both people from other countries and my own country.					
20	I sometimes find it hard to make friends.					
21	Most of my friends are from my own country.					
22	I feel more relaxed when I am with a foreigner than when I am with someone from my own country.					
23	Sometimes I feel that my own people and foreigners do not accept me.					
24	I feel more comfortable socializing with foreigners than I do with my own people.					
25	People from my country should not date with a foreigner.					
26	Sometimes I find it hard to trust both foreigners and my people.					
27	I like taking part in both my own culture and others' social activities.					
28	I find that both my own people and foreigners often have difficulty understanding me.					
	Section B					
29	I study English well in order to be integrated into EMU and North Cyprus society.					
30	I study English well in order to make more foreign friends.					
31	I study English well in order to understand other cultures.					
32	I study well only for the sake of study.					

33	Studying English well is very important to both my studying and living.					
34	It is very important for me to study both my own language and English well.					
35	Generally speaking, I have high English language proficiency.					
36	I can talk with foreign people in fluent English.					
37	I can participate in class discussion in fluent English.					
38	I feel it is very difficult to understand what my English teachers and other friends say.					
39	It is extremely difficult for me to write my thesis in English.					
40	I can speak English without worrying about mistakes.					
41	I can write English without worrying about mistakes.					
42	I find memorizing English vocabulary easy.					
43	I find understanding English grammar easy.					
44	I fear to deal with official affairs on my own because of the language barrier.					
	Section C					
45	I prefer to be dressed in Western culture.					
46	I prefer English music to my own music.					
47	I love my own culture, history and traditions.					
48	Being part of my own culture is embarrassing to me.					
49	I sometimes find it hard					

	to make friends.				
50	Physically, I feel tired.				
51	In my daily life, I feel tense and anxious.				
52	I feel lonely even if I am with people.				
53	I often feel helpless in dealing with problems of my life.				
54	I am not used to the pace of life here.				
55	I am threatened by belonging to different ethnic groups.				
56	I feel unaccepted by the local and foreign people I know.				
57	I feel uneasy when I am with people.				
58	I sometimes find it hard to socialize with people.				

59. Is there anything else that you want to add?

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Thank you for your time and attention.

Note: To generate the present questionnaire on Acculturation Strategies of International Students at EMU, North Cyprus the Questionnaire on Acculturation Strategies of Chinese Students in Germany (Yu & Wang, 2011) was adapted to serve the purpose of this study.

Appendix D: Student Interview Protocol

Interview on Perceptions of International University Students at EMU, North Cyprus

Personal Information

Name and Surname: _____ Course enrolled: _____ Country of Origin: _____ Nationality: _____

Language (s) spoken: _____ Gender: _____ Age: _____

Age of arrival in North Cyprus: _____ Resident City in North Cyprus: _____ Duration of sojourn (living) in North Cyprus: _____

Duration of studying English _____ .

1. How old are you?

2. Where were you born?

3. What is your nationality?

4. What is your native language and what other languages do you speak?

5. How many months have you currently been in North Cyprus?

6. Have you engaged in a study of English program before?

   – Did you study English before at a secondary or university level?

Open-ended questions

7. What are the reasons for wanting to study English at a university level?

   – What are your reasons in terms of career objectives, life goals, and academic interests?

8. Why did you decide to study in North Cyprus?

9. How would you describe your experience in North Cyprus to this point? Please explain, using examples if necessary.

- How do you feel about yourself after studying in North Cyprus?

- How did your experience in North Cyprus change the way you feel about yourself?

10. In what ways have your experiences in North Cyprus been similar and/or different to experiences in other countries where you have lived?

- What is similar and/or different when you compare your experiences in North Cyprus to the ones in your own country?

11. What problems have you overcome that have helped you to become better at interacting with people and carrying on with your daily life in North Cyprus?

- What problems did you face with in your daily life in North Cyprus?

- How did you cope with these problems?

12. How do you think culture explained in textbooks influence your learning English?

- Do you think culture in the textbook helps you learn English? Why? Why not?

13. Which one helps you to learn English more; study abroad or in your own country?

14. How does the culture of the teacher influence your learning? Does it motivate or demotivate you? Why?

15. Anything you would like to add?

Appendix E: Student Questionnaire

Questionnaire on Acculturation Strategies of Chinese Students in Germany

Dear Sir or Madam,

This questionnaire aims at investigating the acculturation strategies of Chinese students in Germany. Your honest answers are very much appreciated. Your information will be kept confidential and used for the purpose of this research only.

Best wishes,

Personal Information

Gender: _____ Age: _____ Age of arrival in Germany: _____

Resident City in Germany: _____ Duration of sojourn in Germany: _____

DSH score: _____ (the highest one if you've taken several tests)

How much do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements? Circle the one based on your own experience.

Strongly agree – 1 Agree somewhat - 2 Not sure/ Neutral agree – 3

Disagree somewhat – 4 strongly disagree – 5

Section A

1. I behave like a German in many ways.

2. Most of the music I listen to is Chinese music.

3. I would be just as willing to marry a German as a Chinese.

4. Generally, I find it difficult to socialize with anybody, Chinese or German.

5. When I am in my apartment/house, I typically speak German.

6. My closest friends are Chinese.

7. I think as well in German as I do in Chinese.

8. I sometimes feel that neither Germans nor Chinese like me.

9. If I were asked to write poetry, I would prefer to write it in German.

10. I prefer going to social gatherings where most of the people are Chinese.

11. I have both German and Chinese close friends.

12. I prefer to have both Chinese and non- Chinese friends.

13. I get along better with Germans than Chinese.

14. I feel that Germans don't treat me the same as they socialize with other

    Germans.

15. I feel that both Chinese and Germans value me.

16. I sometimes find it hard to communicate with people.

17. I feel that Germans understand me better than Chinese do.

18. I would prefer to go out on a date with a Chinese than with a German.

19. I feel very comfortable around both Germans and Chinese.

20. I sometimes find it hard to make friends.

21. Most of my friends are Chinese.

22. I feel more relaxed when I am with a German than when I am with a Chinese.

23. Sometimes I feel that Chinese and Germans do not accept me.

24. I feel more comfortable socializing with Germans than I do with Chinese.

25. Chinese should not date non-Chinese.

26. Sometimes I find it hard to trust both Germans and Chinese.

27. I like taking part in both Chinese and non-Chinese social activities.

28. I find that both Chinese and Germans often have difficulty understanding me.

Section B

29. I study German integrated well in order to be into German society.

30. I study German well in order to make more foreign friends.

31. I study German well in order to understand German culture.

32. I study German well only for the sake of study.

33. Studying German well is very important to both my studying and living.

34. It is very important for me to study both Chinese and German well.

35. Generally speaking, I have high German language proficiency.

36. I can talk with German people in fluent German.

37. I can participate in class discussion in fluent German.

38. I feel it is very difficult to understand what my German teachers and friends say.

39. It is extremely difficult for me to write my thesis in German.

40. I can speak German without worrying about mistakes.

41. I can write German without worrying about mistakes.

42. I find memorizing German vocabulary easy

43. I find understanding German grammar easy.

44. I fear to deal with official affairs on my own because of the language barrier.

Section C

45. I prefer to be dressed in Western styles.

46. I prefer Western music to Chinese music.

47. I love Chinese culture, history and traditions.

48. Being part of the Chinese culture is embarrassing to me.

49. I sometimes find it hard to make friends.

50. Physically, I feel tired.

51. In my daily life, I feel tense and anxious.

52. I feel lonely even if I am with people.

53. I often feel helpless in dealing with problems of my life.

54. I am not used to the pace of life here.

55. I am threatened by belonging to different ethnic groups.

56. I feel unaccepted by the German people I know.

57. I feel uneasy when I am with people.

58. I sometimes find it hard to socialize with people.

Thank you for your time and attention.

Appendix F: Interview Protocol

Interview on Perceptions of International University Students at EMU, North Cyprus

(Adapted from *Acculturation among International Students' Writing Identity at a North American University* [Nesfield, 2014])

1. What language(s) do you speak and write in, in your native country?

2. What was your first experience like learning in your native language?

3. When did you first learn to speak and write in English?

4. Have you attended a university in your country? (If no skip #5)

5. If so, what was it like studying English at your university? (Applicable to #4 only)

6. What was your first experience with learning English at EMU? What has been changed compared to the present?

   • Social and cultural factors

   • EMU context (multicultural atmosphere)

7. Compare your experiences learning English in your native country to your experiences at EMU?

   • Likes/dislikes about the general atmosphere (e.g. multicultural atmosphere) in EMU.

   • What are the challenges/problems you encountered here in learning English?

   • What helped/not helped you to learn English in this context?

8. How have teachers/tutors and peers been helpful to approaching you through the process of learning English?

9. How have teachers/tutors and peers not been helpful to approaching you through the process of learning English?

10. Do you have any recommendations to instructors/ tutors for helping you through the process of learning English at EMU?