

University of Warwick institutional repository: <http://go.warwick.ac.uk/wrap>

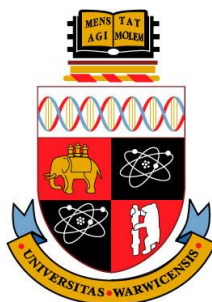
A Thesis Submitted for the Degree of PhD at the University of Warwick

<http://go.warwick.ac.uk/wrap/77629>

This thesis is made available online and is protected by original copyright.

Please scroll down to view the document itself.

Please refer to the repository record for this item for information to help you to cite it. Our policy information is available from the repository home page.



**Children's Perceptions of Intercultural Issues:
An Exploration into an Iranian Context**

By

Samaneh Zandian

A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the
requirements for the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) in
English Language Teaching and Applied Linguistics

Centre for Applied Linguistics

University of Warwick

July 2015

Contents

List of Tables	vii
List of Figures	vii
List of Charts.....	viii
List of Pictures	ix
Acknowledgements.....	x
Declaration.....	xi
Abstract.....	xii
Abbreviations.....	xiii
Chapter 1	1
1.1. Introduction.....	1
1.2. Motivation for the Study	1
1.3. Significance of the Study	2
1.4. Aims and Objectives	3
1.5. Education in Iran.....	3
1.5.1. English Language in Iran	6
1.5.2. Textbooks in Iran	8
1.5.3. Intercultural Awareness in Iran.....	9
1.6. Data Collection Sources in Iran	10
1.7. Structure of the Thesis	12
Chapter 2	14
2.1. Introduction.....	14
2.2. Frameworks of Cross-cultural Adaptation/ Intercultural Competence	15
2.2.1. Compositional Models	16
2.2.2. Co-orientational Models	20
2.2.3. Developmental Models	23
2.2.4. Anderson's Obstacle Model of Cross-cultural Adaptation	29
2.3. Empirical Research on Children and Intercultural Encounters.....	34
2.3.1. Selective Overview of Studies on Child Immigrants.....	36
2.3.2. Studies on Iranian Child diaspora	38
2.3.3. International Schools	42
2.4. Adaptation Challenges	46
2.4.1. Furnham and Bochner's Measurement of Social Difficulty in a Foreign Culture	47
2.4.2. Ward and Kennedy's Measurement of Sociocultural Adaptation.....	49

2.4.3. Black and Stephens' study of spouse and expatriates adjustment	51
2.4.4. Spencer-Oatey and Xiong's study of Chinese Students' Psychological and Sociocultural Adjustments to Britain	53
2.5. My Philosophy of Research with Children	54
2.5.1. Children in Research	56
2.5.2. Innovative and Participatory Research Methodologies	58
2.5.3. Middle Childhood: Characteristics of Children	61
2.6. Summary and Point of Departure	62
Chapter 3	65
3.1. Introduction	65
3.2. Research Approach	65
3.2.1. Paradigmatic Position	66
3.2.2. Methodological Approach	67
3.3. Research Design	68
3.4. Phase 1: Preparation Sessions	70
3.4.1. Procedure	72
3.4.2. Children's Suggestions	73
3.5. Phase 2: Data Collection	74
3.5.1. Questionnaire	74
3.5.2. Group Interviews	80
3.6. Phase 3: Follow-up Sessions	88
3.7. Validity and Reliability of Instruments	91
3.8. Ethical Issues, Dilemmas and Considerations	92
3.9. Nature of Data Analysis	95
3.9.1. Data Coding and Identification of Themes	96
3.9.2. Transcribing	100
3.9.3. Translating	101
Chapter 4	102
4.1. Introduction	102
4.2. Questionnaire Findings	102
4.2.1. Part 1: Transition	103
4.2.2. Part 2: Intercultural interaction as a host-national	124
4.3. Role of Gender, Age, and Children Travelling Experience	132
4.4. Summary of Findings and Conclusion	134
Chapter 5	135
5.1. Introduction	135

5.2. Background	136
5.2.1. MAH	136
5.2.2. KHER.....	137
5.2.3. MOB	138
5.2.4. HES	139
5.2.5. INTL	139
5.3. The Conceptual Model of Study	140
5.4. Cultural Encounter	142
5.4.1. Anxiety.....	143
5.4.2. Excitement	152
5.4.3. Ambivalent Feelings (swings in impressions)	162
5.4.4. Curiosity.....	164
5.4.5. Exploration (See, hear, taste, smell the new/ fascination with new).....	166
5.4.6. Learning	168
5.4.7. Stereotyping/ Generalizing.....	170
5.4.8. Home Culture Appreciation (craving for home)	175
5.4.9. Expectations Unrealistic	179
5.4.10. Summary	180
5.5. Obstacle.....	182
5.5.1. Social Incompetency	184
5.5.2. Lack of Environmental Support	192
5.5.3. Different Values, Attitudes, and Beliefs	204
5.5.4. Summary	206
5.6. Response Generation	207
5.6.1. Changing Oneself.....	208
5.6.2. Changing the Environment	219
5.6.3. Walking Away (avoidant or passive coping style)	226
5.6.4. Summary	230
5.7. Conclusion	231
Chapter 6	234
6.1. Introduction.....	234
6.2. Outline of the Session	234
6.3. What is a Questionnaire?	235
6.4. What is a Participatory Interview?.....	237
6.5. Representation of Research Project	238
6.6. Spontaneous Questions	243

6.7. Transcription	246
6.8. Why this Research?.....	251
6.9. Pseudonyms	253
6.10. Summary	256
Chapter 7	258
7.1. Introduction.....	258
7.2. Summary of the Findings	260
7.2.1. Ambivalent feelings	260
7.2.2. Schooling	264
7.2.3. Friendship	269
7.2.4. Language	272
7.3. Boundaries of Child-focussed Research	276
7.3.1. Rapport Building between Children and Researcher	277
7.3.2. Engaging Children in Design of Child-friendly Research Instruments	278
7.3.3. ‘Child-friendly’ Questionnaire.....	279
7.3.4. Group Interview and Participatory Activities	288
7.3.5. Children’s Interpretation of Research	292
7.3.6. Ethical Considerations in Iran.....	298
Chapter 8	303
8.1. Introduction.....	303
8.2. Summary of the Research	303
8.3. Summary of Research Contributions	304
8.4. Implications of the Study	306
8.4.1. Implication for Research and Researchers	306
8.4.2. Implications for Anderson’s Model	307
8.4.3. Pedagogical Implications	309
8.5. Research Limitations	318
8.6. Future Research Directions.....	319
8.7. Concluding Remarks.....	320
References.....	322
Appendices.....	340
Appendix 1. Initial permission letter for schools	340
Appendix 2. The questionnaire	341
Appendix 3. The Persian version of the questionnaire (for Boys)	348
Appendix 4. The objective of each question and the multiple items in the questionnaire	356

Appendix 5. Question 1: codes of mixed feelings	362
Appendix 6. An example of the thematic analysis of open responses in the questionnaire	363
Appendix 7. Comparison of the responses in the questionnaire and the participants' gender.....	364
Appendix 8. Comparison of the responses in the questionnaire and the participants' age	369
Appendix 9. Comparison of the responses between the respondents with(T) and without(N) the experience of travelling abroad	374
Appendix 10. Participatory activities: outcome of Hopes-&-Worries activity	379
Appendix 11. Participatory activities: outcome of Diamond-Ranking activity	382
Appendix 12. Example of the transcription: interview at INTL	384

List of Tables

Table 1. Data collection sources for the questionnaire	11
Table 2. Data collection sources for the interviews	12
Table 3. Categories of individuals emerging from the adjustment cycle.....	32
Table 4. The Social Situations Questionnaire	48
Table 5. The Sociocultural Adaptation Scale.....	50
Table 6. Adjustment related items in Black and Stephens' (1989) questionnaire	52
Table 7. Summary of methods used in this study	70
Table 8. Summary of the questionnaire respondents in 5 schools	79
Table 9. Participants of the group interviews	84
Table 10. Outline programme of group interviews.....	86
Table 11. The outline of the Follow-up session.....	89
Table 12. Examples of the comments in the 'other' section in question 1	105
Table 13. Examples of the comments in the 'other' section in question 3	107
Table 14. Main emerging categories from responses to question 6a	111
Table 15. Main emerging categories from response to question 10a.....	117
Table 16. Main emerging categories from response to question 12a.....	120
Table 17. Themes in Culture encounter stage.....	142
Table 18. The emerging themes which match the elements in cultural encounter stage in the Anderson Model.....	180
Table 19. Components of cultural encounter stage in the Anderson Model which did not emerge in this data set.....	181
Table 20. Themes in Obstacle stage.....	183
Table 21. Themes in Response generation stage	208
Table 22. Example of responses to Q6a.....	285
Table 23. Examples of drawings in Question 1	286

List of Figures

Figure 1. Intercultural Competence Components Model.....	17
Figure 2. Deardorff Pyramid Model of Intercultural Competence.....	19
Figure 3. Intercultural Communication Competence Model (Byram 1997).....	21
Figure 4. Intercultural Maturity Model (King and Baxter Magolda 2005).....	24
Figure 5. Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity (Bennett 1986)	26
Figure 6. Cross-Cultural Adaptation Model	30
Figure 7. Visual representation of the relation between the literature and this study	64
Figure 8. Bag of Beans Activity: the overall format of the instrument.....	72
Figure 9. Diamond ranking: the overall format of the instrument	83
Figure 10. Visual presentation of the interaction during the participatory activities.....	87
Figure 11. Sample of the initial codes.....	98
Figure 12. Using contextualization in the questionnaire: Section 1.....	104
Figure 13. Using contextualization in the questionnaire: Section 2.....	124
Figure 14. Interview pattern and distribution of the parts at MAH	137

Figure 15. Interview pattern and distribution of the parts at KHER	138
Figure 16. Interview pattern and distribution of the parts at MOB.....	138
Figure 17. Interview pattern and distribution of the parts at HES	139
Figure 18. Interview pattern and distribution of the parts at INTL.....	140
Figure 19. Summary of the themes and categories	233
Figure 20. Schooling and education in relation to Cross-cultural adaptation model	268
Figure 21. Friendship in relation to Cross-cultural adaptation model	272
Figure 22. Language theme in relation to Cross-cultural adaptation model	275
Figure 23. Children's notes on the margins of the questionnaires	280
Figure 24. Example of notes on the margin of the questionnaire	282
Figure 25. Relationship within the three influential elements in cross-cultural adjustment	304
Figure 26. An adaptation of Anderson's Model	308

List of Charts

Chart 1. The usage of the 'other' section in each question in the questionnaire	103
Chart 2. Responses to question 1 in percentage	104
Chart 3. Responses to question 2 in percentage	106
Chart 4. Responses to question 3 in percentage	107
Chart 5. Responses to question 4 in percentage	109
Chart 6. Responses to question 5 in percentage	110
Chart 7. Responses to question 6 in percentage	110
Chart 8. Responses to question 7 in percentage	113
Chart 9. Responses to question 8 in percentage	114
Chart 10. Responses to question 9 in percentage	115
Chart 11. Responses to question 10 in percentage	116
Chart 12. Responses to question 11 in percentage	119
Chart 13. Responses to question 12 in percentage	120
Chart 14. Responses to question 13 in percentage	122
Chart 15. Responses to question 14 in percentage	125
Chart 16. Responses to question 14a in percentage	126
Chart 17. Responses to question 14b in percentage	127
Chart 18. Responses to question 15 in percentage	128
Chart 19. Responses to question 16 in percentage	129
Chart 20. Main categories of responses to question 17	131

List of Pictures

Picture 1. Camellia doing Activity 1	83
Picture 2. Reza doing Activity 2	71
Picture 3. Hopes-&-Worries activity: the overall format of the instrument.....	82
Picture 4. Interview at HES	93
Picture 5. Interview at MOB	88
Picture 6. Drama at MOB	90
Picture 7. Poster of the research process.....	90
Picture 8. Poster showing the transcriptions	91
Picture 9. Question 12: Example of comment on the margin	121
Picture 10. Note on the margin of question 10	125
Picture 11. Examples of drawings in response to question 17	130
Picture 12. Poster of interview transcript and related literature	246
Picture 13. Lucy's note on the post-it	291

Acknowledgements

My sincere gratitude goes to my first supervisor, Dr. Annamaria Pinter, who believed in me, guided me, and always supported me whichever way she could; to my second supervisor, Dr. Keith Richards, for his encouragements and valuable feedback on my thesis; to my panel members for their constructive comments; to my friend, to Dr. Erkan Külekçi who kindly accepted to read the final version of this work; to Dr. Harry Kuchah Kuchah who inspired me to pursue my further education. to my first language teacher, Mr. Hossein Kabiri, who encouraged me to continue my further studies in ELT; to Warwick Mountains Sport club for the epic trips on which I met amazing people and practiced to be steady and strong in life; to friends and colleagues at the Centre for Applied Linguistics with whom I grew academically and personally during the last four years, particularly the ‘residence’ of research room S1.85 with whom I shared invaluable moments of friendship, solidarity, and companionship. Erkan Külekçi, Züleyha Ünlü, Ceren Öztabay, Bushra Ahmed Khurram, Priscilla Pang, Rachel Lewis and Christina Efthymiadou thanks for sharing this remarkable journey with me.

I would like to express my gratitude to the schools and children who participated in this study, and also to Warwick Chancellor’s International Scholarship which generously supported part of study expenses in the UK.

My deepest gratitude goes to my family for their unconditional love and never-ending support; to my mum, my role model, from whom I learnt to never give up and always smile; to my dad from whom I learnt to be ambitious and persistent; to my brother who is always there for me; to Farzan for being so understanding of my passion for education and research; and to Ollie for being my best friend in the last four years.

Thank you all! It is because of you that this journey has been so special.

Finally, I want to dedicate this thesis to all the people in my country who deserved to be in a similar situation as mine but, unfortunately are not, due to the various political and economic restrictions and limitations, with the hope that this research will contribute to a more egalitarian world.

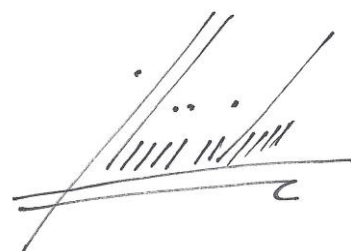
Declaration

I declare that the work presented in this thesis is my own except where stated otherwise. The research reported here has not been submitted, either wholly or in part, in this or any other academic institution for admission to a higher degree. Some parts of the work reported and other work not reported in this thesis have been published, as listed below. It is anticipated that further parts of this work will be submitted for publication in due course.

Zandian, S. 2014. 'Developing intercultural education in Iran: Starting with young foreign language learners' in J. Enever, E. Lindgren, and S. Ivanov (eds.). *Conference Proceedings from Early Language Learning: Theory and practice in Umeå 14 June 2014*. Umeå: Umeå Universitet.

Pinter, A. and **S. Zandian.** 2014. "“I don't ever want to leave this room” - researching with children'. *ELT Journal* 68/1: 64-74.

Samaneh Zandian



Abstract

In its recent history, Iran has exhibited the highest rates of brain drain in the world and simultaneously has been recognized as one of the world's largest refugee havens. Consequently, Iranians inside and outside this country have come to closer contact to a wider range of cultures than ever before. Recognizing the importance of fostering intercultural sensitivity, there is a growing need to introduce intercultural learning into the Iranian educational curricula. The first step in this involves understanding current levels of awareness of children in Iran and the potential for creating opportunities for intercultural learning. Therefore, this research aims to explore how children educated at primary level in Iran make sense of/understand concepts such as intercultural interaction and adjustment. The conceptual framework for this research draws on Anderson's Obstacle Model to cultural adaptation. In this study, the child-participants were asked to either reflect on their real intercultural experiences or imagine what it would be like to move to and live in another country. This study is also an attempt to explore the boundaries of child-focussed research methodologies. Hence, it consisted of three phases: designing the child-friendly research instruments, data collection, and sharing the data with the child-participants. The data collection was via the administration of 294 'child-friendly' questionnaires and conducting five group interviews in five primary schools in Tehran with children of age 10 to 12.

The findings of this study revealed children's ambivalent feelings about experiencing intercultural encounters. Schooling, friendship, and language were found to be the key influential elements in children's understanding of intercultural interaction and adjustment. These three elements are related to one another. These findings contribute towards developing a model which incorporates children's views about cross-cultural adjustment in a more comprehensive way. The findings also have far-reaching implications for EL teachers in Iran.

Abbreviations

EL	English Language
EFL	English as a Foreign Language
ELT	English Language Teaching
FLT	Foreign Language Teaching
ESL	English as a Second Language
IT	Information Technology
MC	Multiple Choice
SCAS	The Sociocultural Adaptation Scale

Chapter 1

Introduction

1.1. Introduction

In this introductory chapter, I first talk about my motivations for exploring Iranian children's understandings and experiences of intercultural issues. Next, I explain the significance of this study and present the aims and objectives of this research. Then, I provide some essential information about the context of the research. Finally, I map out the structure of the entire thesis.

1.2. Motivation for the Study

The main idea in this research emerged as a result of my previous Master's study in a similar area focusing on children's understanding of the adjustment processes and intercultural encounters in a local primary school in England. Findings of my Master's study emphasized the importance of children's intercultural awareness in the world in which cultural mobility has become a global and transnational phenomenon (Zandian 2011a). Considering the huge differences between the education systems in England and Iran, I was keen to explore how children in Iran would make sense of concepts such as intercultural interactions and cross-cultural adjustment.

Despite the general assumption that during the past decades, Iran has been isolated from much of the outside world, this country has witnessed abundant flows of emigration and immigration. Statistics show that Iran in its recent history was amongst the countries with the highest rates of brain drain. Simultaneously, Iran has been one of the world's largest refugee havens, mainly for Afghans and Iraqis. What makes this country an even more interesting context to study is that Iran also exhibits one of the

steepest urban growth rates in the world, mainly driven by internal migration from rural areas (Hakimzadeh 2006). However, it seems that the society does not integrate with the immigrants either from the neighbouring countries or the rural regions of the country. And this might be due to the lack of intercultural communication skills amongst the members of the society.

1.3. Significance of the Study

Due to this simultaneous emigration and immigration to extreme degrees, both Iranians inside and outside this country have come into contact with a wider range of cultures than ever before (Hakimzadeh 2006). However, there is very little emphasis on intercultural education in the Iranian educational curriculum (The International Bureau of Education of UNESCO 2011). Therefore, this study can raise awareness amongst families, teachers, schools and policymakers about the need for intercultural education in the Iranian education system. It may help schools and teachers develop critical cultural awareness and intercultural competence amongst their students. Findings of this research can also help Iranian immigrant families to facilitate the process of adjustment for their children.

In today's world, change is inevitable; hence, 'we are all of us to some degree immigrants in this strange new world' (Anderson 1994:300), and 'real-life adjustments involve working toward a fit between person and environment' (Anderson 1994:301). This study perceives cultural adaptation as a subcategory of 'transition experiences', which is 'defined as responses to the significant changes in life circumstances that generate the tensions and anxieties we face whenever change threatens the stability of our lives' (Bennett 1977:45 cited in Anderson 1994:299). That is why this study can contribute to the increasing benefit of children irrespective of whether they experience physical intercultural encounters.

1.4. Aims and Objectives

In this study I aim to explore how students educated at primary level in Iran make sense of issues such as intercultural interactions and adjustment processes. Through understanding their current levels of awareness, I am also investigating the potential for creating opportunities for intercultural learning. The followings are the research questions in this study:

1. How do Iranian children make sense of /understand cross-cultural interactions and adjustment processes?

While the first research question is designed to guide the investigation, the second question emerged during the data collection process; this ‘meta question’ addresses the methodological issues about using innovative participatory tools.

2. What are the advantages and limitations of using innovative participatory research methodologies with children in the given context?

1.5. Education in Iran

Based on the document approved by the Supreme Council of Education in 1998, the primary aims of education in Iran is national development and national integration, establishment of social, moral and spiritual values with particular emphasis on the faith of Islam (The International Bureau of Education of UNESCO 2011). The formal education system in Iran is under the administration of the Ministry of Education. The Supreme Council of Education, which is the highest legislative body in education, approves all policies and regulations with respect to non-university education (The International Bureau of Education of UNESCO 2011). In 2004, there were approximately 92500 public educational institutions at all levels, with a total enrolment of approximately 17488000 students (World Education Service 2004). All schools in

Iran are single-sex, and gifted and special needs children are educated separately. Every academic year starts in October and ends in September. In academic year 2012-2013, the education system was changed. The new education system is divided into two cycles: primary and secondary. Each cycle lasts for 6 years and is divided to 2 three-year sub-cycles (National Curriculum of Islamic Republic of Iran 2013). In the new system, one year is added to the primary cycle and the lower secondary cycle is removed. Having finished the sixth year of the primary cycle, students proceed to the secondary cycle, and in the third year of the secondary school, they choose between either vocational/technical or academic branches (National Curriculum of Islamic Republic of Iran 2013). After graduating from the secondary cycle, they receive a 'diploma'.

In the two- year optional pre-primary programme, children of five and six years of age receive the essential preparation for entering primary schools. They learn basic scientific concepts and some personal and social Islamic principles. One of the objectives of this programme is to develop pupils' Persian language, particularly in regions where different languages are spoken (The International Bureau of Education of UNESCO 2011). Children in this programme proceed automatically to the primary cycle without any assessment. In the current system, the first three years of primary cycle also mainly focus on developing pupils' Persian language, particularly in disadvantaged regions and areas where different languages are spoken (National Curriculum of Islamic Republic of Iran 2013). According to the Iranian constitution, primary education is compulsory, but there are some inequalities in respect to the availability of schools and programmes in different regions, particularly between urban and rural areas. The primary cycle covers grades 1-6 for children 7 to 12 years of age. At the end of grade 6, students take a nation-wide examination. Those who pass

the exam are eligible to proceed to the next cycle. In general, primary education in Iran mainly aims to provide an appropriate environment for moral and religious development. Other objectives of the primary education are to enable students' talents and creative abilities to flourish, develop pupils' physical strength, improve their numeracy and literacy skills, and provide necessary training on appropriate social behaviour (The International Bureau of Education of UNESCO 2011).

According to Articles 10 and 11 of the principles governing the education system, compulsory education covers the last nine years for the age group of 7 to 15 (The International Bureau of Education of UNESCO 2011). Although educational provision is part of the government's responsibility and is free of charge, private schools are very common in Iran, particularly in the big cities. These schools are highly selective and design their own entrance examinations. Private schools retrieve tuition fees from students, and in return provide extracurricular courses and activities, although they are still managed under the supervision of the Ministry of Education, and their curriculum textbooks and exam regulations should be in alliance with the rules and criteria of the Ministry of Education. In 2004, approximately 6% of upper secondary institutions were private (World Education Service 2004).

According to the National Curriculum, one of the main aims of education in Iran is to train school children to be devout Muslim citizens (National Curriculum of Islamic Republic of Iran 2013). To this end, the main priority in the education programme is focusing on the principles of Islam (Ministry of Education 1999).

With respect to the teacher training programmes in Iran, since 2012, all teacher training programmes are offered by the Teacher Education University (Farhangian University) driven by the Ministry of Education to provide specialized and vocational training for

teachers. With respect to language teachers in private schools or language institutes, no particular degree is required, and each institute provides its own teacher training programmes as part of the employment process.

1.5.1. English Language in Iran

English is regarded as a foreign language in Iran, and in the Iranian education system it is taught around 50 to 80 minutes per week from grade seven (Davari and Aghagolzadeh 2013). German, French, Italian, Spanish and Russian are the other foreign language choices in the Iranian education system; however, due to lack of teachers as well as applicants for these languages, English is the most dominant foreign language in the education system (Farhady et al. 2010).

Although this language is a compulsory subject in the Iranian curriculum, it can be argued that it has been neglected within the Iranian education system (Dahmardeh 2009). The integral relationship between language and culture has made the interpretations of the state of ELT in Iran a controversial topic. Accordingly, the role and impact of ELT range from English linguistic imperialism and cultural invasion to cultural neutrality (Davari and Aghagolzadeh 2013). On the one hand, English is negatively addressed as a tool to represent and introduce Western culture to Iranian students. On the other hand, studies show that English as it is taught as a school subject in Iran is nothing but a representation of the Persian or Islamic ideology (Davari and Aghagolzadeh 2013; Rashidi and Najafi 2010). Many statements in English textbooks published under the supervision of the Ministry of Education and used nationally either convey Islamic traditions (e.g. you can break your fast as soon as the sun sets; the 15th of Sha'ban is a religious celebration.), or have no reference to a target cultural groups associated with English (Aliakbari 2004).

In the world of globalization, English is widely used around the world and has become the global lingua franca which is not only used to communicate with native speakers but as an international language universally used everywhere (Jenkins 2009). According to Smith (1976), one of the characteristics of the international language is that it is 'de-nationalized'. In other words, it belongs to any country which uses it. However, most people in Iran still associate English with the USA or Britain (Davari and Aghagolzadeh 2013); what Wallace (2003) and Phillipson (2009) explain as the language of power which belongs to the 'others'. There is evidence of hostility in teaching materials provided by the Iranian Ministry of Education toward Western countries, particularly America. Phrases such as 'the Great Satan' are used for referring to America, and 'the Arrogant Ones', 'World Devourers' and 'the Diabolic Powers' are the other phrases used addressing western powers (Groiss and Toobian 2006). This explicit hostility could be one of the reasons that the importance of this language has been neglected in the Iranian curriculum (Davari and Aghagolzadeh 2013).

On the other hand, in private sectors, English is introduced at primary or even pre-primary level, and receives striking attention (Davari and Aghagolzadeh 2013). In some cases, the quality of the English programme offered in each school influences the number of the students who enrol in that school (Aliakbari 2004). In private schools and language institutes, the resources available to English language teachers are more adequate compared to those of the public schools. The majority of the books used in private schools and language institutes are mostly pirated American ELT textbooks. Private language institutes are very popular in Iran, and despite the lack of attention to this language in the educational curriculum, Aliakbari (2004:2) believes that 'English seems to have found its way smoothly right to the heart of Iranian society, proving itself to be a necessity, rather than a mere school subject'.

1.5.2. Textbooks in Iran

After the Islamic revolution in 1979, schools and university textbooks went through the process of ‘de-culturalization’. Consequently, certain words and concepts were replaced with a-cultural or neutral alternatives. Then new materials and textbooks were designed with the main objective of boosting students’ Islamic knowledge (Aliakbari 2004; Davari and Aghagolzadeh 2013). Research about Iranian textbooks also found that religion, Islam, and particularly the Shia sect featured as the main thematic lens through which subjects and themes were viewed. Iranian textbooks have very little focus on developing tolerance toward different religions and cultures (SAIC 2007).

Regarding the cultural content of the current ELT materials which are used in public schools, studies argue that textbooks in Iran do not aim to familiarize students with cultural matters of other countries (Aliakbari 2004; Khajavi and Abbasian 2011; SAIC 2007). Aliakbari (2004) argues that these materials are shallow and superficial; accordingly, they do not provide sufficient content to broaden students’ worldview, or to develop their cultural understanding and intercultural competence. Evaluation of the secondary school ELT materials also highlights the absence of reference to the ancient history of Iran, and avoidance of cultural matters relating to foreign countries. Khajavi and Abbasian (2011) investigated cultural patterns of English language materials taught at public schools of Iran to explore to what extent these materials are appropriate in terms of developing national identity and globalization. According to this research, activities and passages related to national identity and international issues constitute less than 7% of the ELT textbooks, which is assumed inadequate for educating students in the age of globalization (Khajavi and Abbasian 2011). In this regard, Aliakbari (2004:13) points out that ‘shallow presentation of culture can reinforce inaccurate stereotypes’ which can be problematic in the multicultural world of English.

1.5.3. Intercultural Awareness in Iran

It is difficult to picture the situation of Iranians with respect to intercultural experiences and awareness, as this is not a straightforward issue. Iranians are in contact with a wider range of cultures than before; however, for those who live inside Iran, the opportunities for direct intercultural encounters are mainly limited to brief interactions with refugees who have not successfully integrated to the society. The occasional short visits to other parts of the world, mainly to Turkey and the UAE are the other possible opportunities for intercultural encounters. This is due to the close foreign relations in the last decades as well as the visa restrictions for Iranian passport holders to enter the borders of the European countries and the USA. However, since 2012 with the new president in power it seems that Iran is moving toward a more open foreign policy.

In addition, globalization is inevitable in the world today, and in spite of all the existing limitations and the emphasis of the culture of Islam in the education system, the students in Iran are affected in various ways by the global culture (Paivandi 2006). This influence is mainly through social media, refugees in Iran, and occasional visits to other countries. However, a lack of a systematic and well planned intercultural component in the education system can cause confusion and misunderstanding of other cultures, and lead to prejudice and stereotyping. Considering these issues, it cannot be denied that within the framework of a segregationist society, change in perspective is a necessity. Given that children may acquire intercultural knowledge from their surrounding environment regardless of a general lack of intercultural education in the curriculum, in this study my main focus is to explore the Iranian primary students' understanding of issues such as the adjustment processes and intercultural interactions. Moreover, I believe this research project may trigger child-participants' curiosity and

interest in the phenomenon of intercultural interaction, and also highlight the need for intercultural education.

1.6. Data Collection Sources in Iran

During my visit to Iran in February 2012, I started initial negotiations with a number of the schools and language institutes I used to work or study at. After the initial negotiations, I realized that there would be very little chance for me to get permission to carry out my research in public schools. Being a research student in a foreign country and the political situation at that time, as well as long bureaucratic process in public schools were the main reasons preventing me from contacting the schools in the public sector. Private schools, which are mostly located in the privileged regions of the capital city, Tehran, welcomed me and showed interest in further collaboration; however, they all asked to preview my research tools. In return, I offered to provide them with a final copy of the thesis and run workshops explaining the findings of the research to both staff and students. A less bureaucratic process, positive attitudes toward researchers, comparatively more flexible educational environments, and more chance of having participants with intercultural experiences were some of advantages of carrying out research in private schools. Moreover, collecting data in the well-known upper middle-class schools helped me to control the socioeconomic status of the participants; however, there was no measure to control for this variable. It is important to note that these schools are not representative of the general education system in Iran. Hence, I do not intent to generalize the result of this study. Nevertheless, the findings of this study can contribute to our better understanding of children's perspective about different aspects of intercultural issues.

MAH, KHER, MOB, HES, and INTL are the pseudonyms used for the five data collection sources in Iran. All these five schools are amongst the high quality primary

schools in the capital. Requirements for admission to these private schools are passing the entrance exams and attending interviews. Although education is free in Iran, these private educational complexes require high tuition fees as part of students' enrolment and in return provide various extracurricular activities including French, English, music and ballet. Therefore, students educated in these schools generally represent high socio-economic groups. MAH and KHER are exclusively for girls. These two schools cover all educational divisions. English and French are widely practised from pre-primary level in these schools. INTL is the international section of MAH. The medium of instruction in this school is English and the majority of the students are Iranians who have dual nationalities and have the experience of education in other countries. MOB and HES are the other sources which are two branches of one educational complex. MOB provides educational facilities for girls, and HES is the boy's branch. These two branches follow fairly similar education guidelines, and also share some English language teachers. MOB and HES cover pre-primary to secondary cycles. In these schools, English is offered as an after-school subject from the pre-primary level. Tables 1 and 2 illustrate the general information about the data collection sources in Iran.

Table 1. Data collection sources for the questionnaire

Schools	Gender	Grade	Population	Total No.	Background
MAH	Girls	4	23	65	Travelled:61 Not travelled:4
		5	17		
		6	25		
KHER	Girls	4	24	98	Travelled:95 Not travelled:3
		5	47		
		6	27		
INTL	Girls	4	12	31	All respondents had the experience of being child sojourner.
		5	8		
		6	11		
MOB	Girls	4	17	63	Travelled:50 Not travelled:13
		5	22		
		6	24		

HES	Boys	4	13	37	Travelled:30 Not travelled:7
		5	10		
		6	14		

Table 2. Data collection sources for the interviews

Schools	Gender	Grades	Population	Total No.	Background
MAH	Girls	4	2	6	With the experience of travelling abroad
		5	2		
		6	2		
KHER	Girls	4	0	5	With the experience of travelling abroad
		5	3		
		6	2		
INTL	Girls	4	2	6	With the experience of being child sojourner.
		5	2		
		6	2		
MOB	Girls	4	2	4	Without the experience of travelling abroad
		5	2		
		6	0		
HES	Boys	4	2	6	Without the experience of travelling abroad
		5	2		
		6	2		

After considering various options, and keeping the number of the participants reasonable, I administered the questionnaire among 294 students in the five above mentioned private schools. 27 students participated in the second phase of this research. These children were divided into groups of 4-6 for each interview. One group interview was carried out in each school. In three of the schools (MAH, KHER, INTL) the interview participants had the experience of travelling abroad, and in two schools (MOB and HES) the participants did not have the experience of travelling abroad. More details about the different stages of the research and the participants in each stage are provided in Chapters 3, 4, and 5.

1.7. Structure of the Thesis

This thesis comprises eight chapters in total: introduction, literature review, research methodology, findings of the questionnaire, findings of the group interviews, findings of the follow-up session, discussion, implications and conclusion. The present chapter

provided the background information of my study. It introduced the focus of the research and presented the research motivation and aims. Chapter 2, (Literature Review) covers four main areas underpinning the research: cross-cultural adaptation and intercultural competence frameworks, empirical studies on children as cultural travellers, adaptation challenges and my philosophy of research with children. Chapter 3 (Methodology), illustrates the research procedures for collecting and analysing the data. Chapter 4 (Findings: Questionnaire) describes the construction of the questionnaires, and presents the findings and discussion of the questions. Chapter 5 (Findings: Group interviews) focuses on the thematic analysis of the group interviews and presents the interview findings. Chapter 6 (Findings: Follow-up Sessions) explains the motivation for revisiting the child-participants and sharing the initial research findings with them. In this chapter, the findings from the discussion with children about the research procedure and the final presentation of the data are provided. Chapter 7 (Discussion) brings together the findings from the questionnaires and the interviews, and discusses the main emerging themes from the data in the light of the literature, and, finally, Chapter 8 (Implications and Conclusion) provides a brief summary of the research, its contributions, implications, limitations, and suggestions for future research directions.

Chapter 2

Review of Literature

2.1. Introduction

This chapter provides the conceptual background of the study. As was mentioned in the previous chapter, this study focuses on Iranian children's perceptions of intercultural encounter and cross-cultural adjustment with particular attention on innovative and participatory research methodologies in research with children. In this study, children with and without the experience of visiting other countries, are invited to think about imagined scenarios of intercultural encounters and express their feelings and thoughts about these imagined experiences. To my knowledge there is very little known about children's understanding of intercultural issues, and in fact, no literature is directly related to the focus of the current study on Iranian children and their understandings of the cross-cultural adjustment and intercultural interaction. Still, I provide a selective review of literature on four main areas underpinning this research: cross-cultural adaptation and intercultural competence frameworks, empirical studies on children as cultural travellers, adaptation challenges, and my philosophy of research with children.

I needed to examine different models of adaptation and intercultural competence in order to select a relevant framework for this study; therefore, here, I present a selective overview of the related models with particular focus on Anderson's 'obstacle' model of cross-cultural adaptation, the framework I have chosen in this study. Next, I continue with reviewing a selection of the empirical literature on children as cultural travellers, bearing in mind that although these studies neither focus on the context of

Iran nor children's imagined cross-cultural adaptation and intercultural interactions, they are still indirectly related to my study. Then, I provide an overview of the literature on adaptation challenges. Finally, since children are the participants of this research and one of the research questions addresses the boundaries of innovative and participatory methodologies in research with children, I explain my philosophy of research with children and discuss the literature in this regard. I end the chapter by revisiting the aims of this study and pointing out the links as well as the gaps in relation to my study.

2.2. Frameworks of Cross-cultural Adaptation/ Intercultural Competence

The transmission of cultural forms across time and space is not exclusively the phenomenon of the new millennium. Culturally diverse individuals have been constantly in contact with one another throughout history, and some of these contacts created interpersonal and socio-political difficulties, as 'contact per se does not improve intergroup relations, and in many cases it leads to the mutual sharpening of negative stereotypes' (Ward et al. 2001:20). Moreover, the distinction between the social role of the host and the social role of the visitors directly influences these interactions. When culturally disparate groups come into contact with one another, they tend to have an impact on each other's social structures, institutional arrangements, political processes, and value systems. The nature and extent of these changes depend on the condition under which they interact. Moreover, the relative power of the interacting groups can take a great variety of forms. In addition to the social impact of contacts between societies, the individuals caught up in the contact also have an impact on each other (Ward et al. 2001).

The main difference of the intercultural contacts in the twenty-first century is the enormous increase in the movement of populations across cultures due to the ease of

travelling and globalization of industry (Ward et al. 2001). The frequent movement of people within international and national spheres has resulted in the creation of multicultural societies in postmodern times (Hajisoteriou et al. 2011). The growth of tourism, expansion of educational exchange and business travel, the increase in the number of migrants and refugees all result in more intercultural contacts in the present world (Ward et al. 2001). Children are part of this globalized world and accompany their families in these movements. Children who attend schools particularly need to interact with the new sociocultural context as part of their daily routine. Hence, exploration of their experiences and understandings of intercultural encounters is of great importance; yet, very little research to my knowledge has focussed on conceptualizing children's intercultural competence or cross-cultural adjustment experiences and expectations.

Due to the rapid growth of the intercultural interaction, the 'conceptualizations of intercultural communication competence are highly diverse' (Spitzberg and Changnon 2009:5). Similarly there is considerable variation in the models which are developed to conceptualize intercultural competence. Here, I provide a selective overview of some of these models and examine how far they are appropriate to children, bearing in mind that none of these exclusively conceptualize children's intercultural competence, nor focus on how individuals imagine or think about such experiences. At the end of this section, I introduce Anderson's Model of Cross-cultural Adaptation and explain why this model was selected as the framework of this study.

2.2.1. Compositional Models

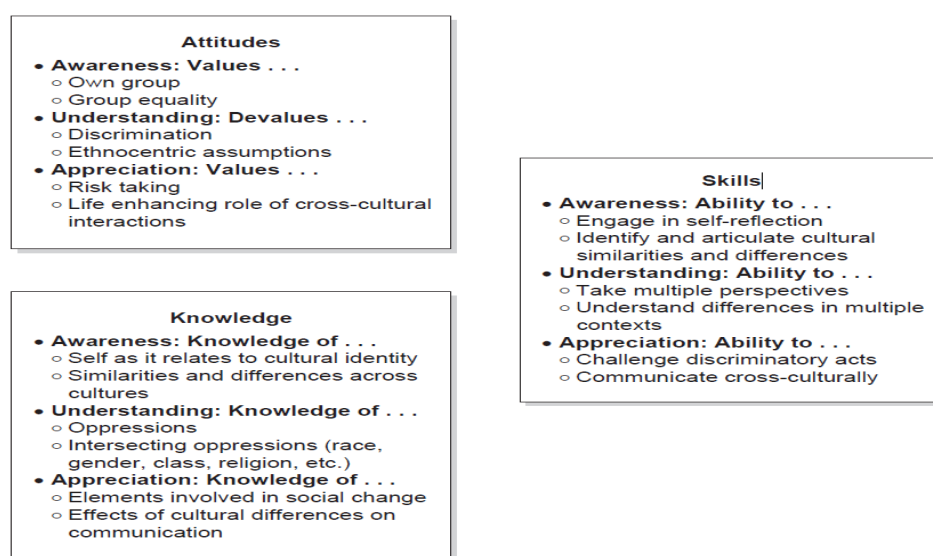
Spitzberg and Changnon (2009:10) explain that 'compositional models identify the hypothesized components of competence without specifying the relations among those components. Such models represent "lists" of relevant or probable traits,

characteristics, and skills supposed to be productive or constitutive of competent interaction’. The characteristics and skills listed in the compositional models could be useful for data-driven analysis of the findings. However, many of these characteristics are either too broad or irrelevant to children, and this is because these frameworks are adult oriented. The Intercultural Competence Component Model and the Pyramid Model of Intercultural Competence are two examples of compositional models which are represented in this chapter.

2.2.1.1. Intercultural Competence Components Model

The Intercultural Competence Component Model was offered by Howard Hamilton, Richardson, and Shuford in 1998. As Figure 1 portrays, ‘attitudes’, ‘knowledge’, and ‘skills’ are the three main components in this model. Each component includes ‘awareness’, ‘understanding’, and ‘appreciation’ competencies.

Figure 1. Intercultural Competence Components Model¹



Spitzberg and Changnon (2009:11) state that ‘such compositional models and the measures intended to operationalize them often haphazardly represent multiple levels

¹ Source: Spitzberg and Changnon (2009:11)

of abstraction'. Such abstraction makes this model less suitable for exploring children's viewpoint with respect to different aspects of intercultural interaction.

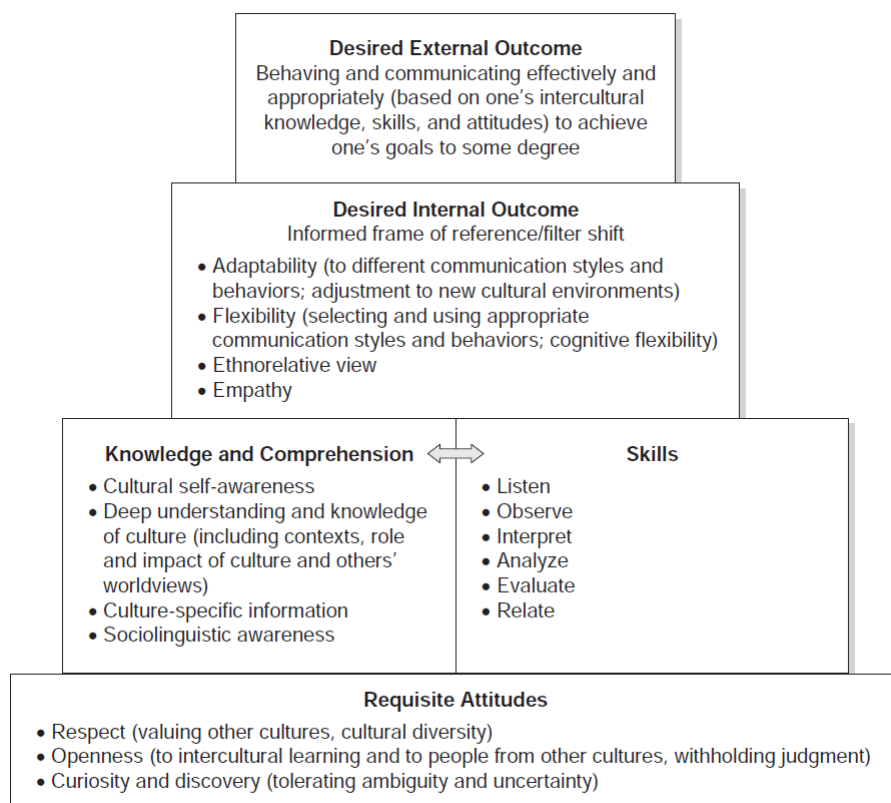
Although the compositional models usually present a disjointed list of attributes (Deardorff 2004), there is evidence of overlap between constituents in these models. For instance in this model, 'engaging in "self-reflection" and "taking multiple perspectives"' are arguably internal information-processing activities and do not have obvious referents in the behavioral realm' (Spitzberg and Changnon 2009:11), despite the fact that they are part of the skill component which is proposed as a behavioural factor. This seems to be a common issue with many models, because cognitive, affective, and behavioural elements can overlap, and it's difficult to draw clear lines between them.

2.2.1.2. The Pyramid Model of Intercultural Competence

Another example of the compositional models is Deardorff's Pyramid Model of Intercultural Competence (2006) which is presented in Figure 2. This pyramid model is an effort to identify a set of research-based components of intercultural competence (Spitzberg and Changnon 2009). Deardorff (2006:253) explains that

[one] of the key motivations for initiating this research was the assumption that specific components of intercultural competence needed to be delineated for institutions to assess students' intercultural competence. The findings actually run contrary to this initial assumption. Because both administrators and intercultural scholars preferred more general conceptions of intercultural competence.

Figure 2. Deardorff Pyramid Model of Intercultural Competence²



In this model, the lower levels are viewed as elements which empower the higher levels (Spitzberg and Changnon 2009). This makes this model process oriented, in a way that the learning that takes place at each level and the skills that are acquired lead into the acquisition of intercultural competence (Deardorff 2006). This characteristic of the model makes it suitable for exploring an adult's level of intercultural competence; however, its hierarchical structure makes it adult oriented and less applicable to children. Considering the absence of intercultural education in Iran and the developmental stage of the children, it appears to me that the participants of this study would not be able to go beyond the lowest level(s) of the model.

² Source: Spitzberg and Changnon (2009:13)

Similar to the previous model, attitudes, knowledge and skills are the components of this model, while context is also incorporated into these components (Spitzberg and Changnon 2009). As illustrated in the model, attitude is a fundamental starting point (Deardorff 2006). ‘This model of intercultural competence moves from the individual level of attitudes and personal attributes to the interactive cultural level in regard to the outcomes’ (Deardorff 2006:255), which is relevant to the focus of this study on intercultural interaction; however, this only appears in the very last level. The emphasis on the internal in addition to the external outcomes of intercultural competence is a unique characteristic of this model (Deardorff 2006).

In general, although ‘[compositional] models have been very useful in defining the basic scope and contents that a theory of intercultural communication competence needs to incorporate’ (Spitzberg and Changnon 2009:15), they do not clearly specify conditional relations among the components. Moreover, these models fail to show what constitutes competence, and what would be determinative of competence (Spitzberg and Changnon 2009), which again adds to the abstraction of the models, which is a particular drawback in research with children.

2.2.2. Co-orientational Models

Spitzberg and Changnon (2009:10) explain that co-orientational models

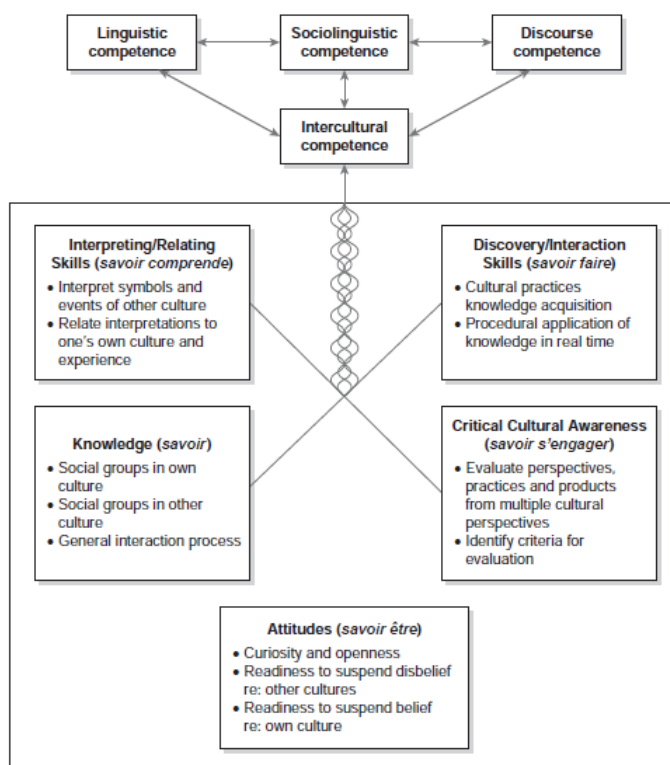
primarily devoted to conceptualizing the interactional achievement of intercultural understanding or any of its variants (e.g., perceptual accuracy, empathy, perspective taking, clarity, overlap of meaning systems). Such models may share many of the features of other models but are focussed on a particular criterion of communicative mutuality and shared meanings.

In the following section, I describe Byram's (1997) Intercultural Competence Model, an example of the so-called co-orientational models. Although this model does not specifically focus on young learner's intercultural communication competence, it targets the pedagogical dimensions of intercultural competence, which makes it to some extent relevant to the focus of this study.

2.2.2.1. Byram's Model of Intercultural Communication Competence

Co-orientational models emphasise reaching some minimal level of common reference through interaction. Spitzberg and Changnon (2009) propose that Byram's (1997) Intercultural Competence Model which is presented in Figure 3 has several commonalities with co-orientational models. One of the distinctive features of this model is that it emphasises the educational dimension of intercultural competence, with specific focus on foreign languages (Byram 1997).

Figure 3. Intercultural Communication Competence Model (Byram 1997)³



³ Source: Spitzberg and Changnon (2009:17)

Similar to the previous models, knowledge, attitude, and skills are the fundamental factors. However, in this model, skills are divided into two broad and related categories: 1) skills of interpretation and establishing relationships between aspects of the two cultures; 2) skills of discovery and interaction which in some circumstances can operate independently, and in others in combination with each other (Byram 1997). Byram (1997) believes that these four aspects of intercultural communication competence (i.e. attitudes, knowledge, skills of interpretation, and skills of discovery and interaction) can be acquired outside educational institutions through experience and reflection. However, education is necessary for developing critical cultural awareness, which is the fifth factor in this model. Byram (1997:33) recommends ‘development of learners’ critical cultural awareness, with respect to their own country and others’. This is a legitimate claim and pertinent to the educational and political context of Iran, where intercultural education is presumably seen by the authorities as a threat to the Iranian/ Islamic culture of the country.

In this model, the skill of discovery is ‘the skill of building up specific knowledge as well as an understanding of the beliefs, meaning and behaviours which are inherent in particular phenomena’ (Byram 1997:38). The relationship between attitudes and the other components (i.e. knowledge and skill) is not straightforward. For instance, increased knowledge does not necessarily lead to positive attitudes (Byram 1997). In this model, there is also a connection between linguistic, sociolinguistic, and discourse competences and skills and knowledge. Although the connection between these elements is a distinctive characteristic of this model, it also adds complications to the model. Moreover, since this model, like the other models, was not developed with specific attention to children, the types of concepts it included seem less relevant to the developmental stage of children (e.g. discourse competence).

Spitzberg and Changnon (2009) argue that this model is more concerned with negotiating identity in the ‘space’ within and across cultures than other co-orientational models. Byram’s models argues that ‘a competent intercultural mediator is more of a mediator between cultures, able to negotiate in both, but possessing individual identity that is flexible in its ability to combine aspects of multiple cultures in performance’ (Spitzberg and Changnon 2009:18).

Spitzberg and Changnon (2009:18) argue that ‘co-orientation models take for granted the value of mutual understanding’, while our everyday interactions, to a large extent, are dependent on ambiguity, uncertainty, and misunderstanding. That is why some scholars view ‘co-orientation as a criterion subordinate to other more macro-level objectives of interaction’ (Spitzberg and Changnon 2009:20). Neither compositional nor co-orientational models consider the important role of time in an ongoing interaction among representatives of different cultures. Intercultural interaction competence needs to be understood from the perspective of an ongoing relationship, and in this way ‘time’ is a key element in the development of intercultural communication competence. The element of time has been considered in the developmental models which are the focus of the next section.

2.2.3. Developmental Models

The developmental models put the core emphasis on the time while also share components of other models. These models study the process of progression in intercultural interaction over time (Spitzberg and Changnon 2009). According to Bennett (1986:181), developmental models ‘should both illustrate “improvement” in the ability to comprehend and experience difference, and [they] should imply the strategies that will impede such experience’. In the following sections, I present two examples of these models. Although none of these models conceptualizes children’s

experiences exclusively, the developmental characteristic of the models is indirectly related to focus of this study. In the following sections I highlight this relevance in each model.

2.2.3.1. King and Baxter Magolda's Model of Intercultural Maturity

King and Baxter Magolda's Developmental Model of Intercultural Maturity (2005) is a typical representation of the levels of progressive competence. This is a multidimensional framework with a holistic approach which describes the development of intercultural maturity (King and Baxter Magolda 2005). In this model, intercultural maturity is described as the capacity of 'understanding and acting in ways that are interculturally aware and appropriate' (King and Baxter Magolda 2005:573). As Figure 4 illustrates, this model is 'in the form of a 3×3 matrix, linking the three domains of development (cognitive, intrapersonal, and interpersonal) with three levels of development (initial, intermediate, and mature)' (King and Baxter Magolda 2005:575).

Figure 4. Intercultural Maturity Model (King and Baxter Magolda 2005)⁴

Initial Development Level	Intermediate Development Level	Mature Development Level
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cognitive <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Categorical knowledge ◦ Naïve about cultural practices ◦ Resists knowledge challenges • Intrapersonal <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Lacks awareness of social role intersections (race, class, etc.) ◦ Lacks awareness of cultures ◦ Externally defined beliefs ◦ Differences viewed as threats • Interpersonal <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Identity dependent on similar others ◦ Different views are considered wrong ◦ Lacks awareness of social systems and norms ◦ Views social problems egocentrically 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cognitive <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Evolving awareness and acceptance of perspectives ◦ Shift from authority to autonomous knowledge • Intrapersonal <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Evolving identity distinct from external perceptions ◦ Tension between internal and external prompts ◦ Recognizes legitimacy of other cultures • Interpersonal <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Willingness to interact with divergent others ◦ Explores how social systems affect group norms and relations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cognitive <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Able to consciously shift perspectives ◦ Use multiple cultural frames • Intrapersonal <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Able to create internal self ◦ Challenges own views of social identities (class, race) ◦ Integrates self identity • Interpersonal <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Able to engage in diverse interdependent relationships ◦ Ground relations in appreciation of differences ◦ Understands intersection of social systems and practices ◦ Willing to work for others' rights

⁴ Source: Spitzberg and Changnon (2009:22)

‘This model attempts to identify the levels of awareness of, sensitivity to, and ability to adapt to distinctions across cultures’ (Spitzberg and Changnon 2009:21), and builds on Kegan’s (1994) argument that competent citizens need to achieve intercultural maturity in all three dimensions. Hence, it integrates cognitive, intrapersonal, and interpersonal domains of the development (King and Baxter Magolda 2005). The cognitive dimension mediates ‘the way people think about and understand diversity issues’, the intrapersonal dimension focuses on ‘how people view themselves; this is variously referred to as identity development’, and the interpersonal dimension involves ‘the ability to interact effectively and interdependently with diverse others’ (King and Baxter Magolda 2005:275-279). This model acknowledges that intercultural maturity unfolds through time and experience (King and Baxter Magolda 2005), and argues that only through ongoing study, observation, and interaction with representatives of another culture, one can achieve the mature levels of competence (Spitzberg and Changnon 2009). Studies also reported the existence of interrelationship across the three domains of development (King and Baxter Magolda 2005); however, this is not explicit in the model. The distinct developmental levels and dimensions of intercultural competence in this model provide clear and comprehensive categories for investigating an individual’s intercultural competence. However, similar to other adult specific models, many of the components of the model are not compatible with children’s developmental stages, particularly in the cognitive dimension. Moreover, this model does not directly relate the cross-cultural adjustment processes.

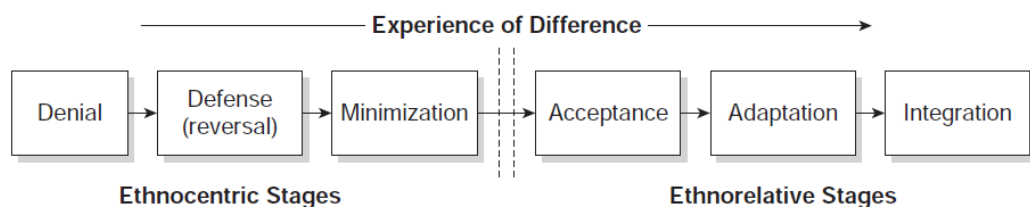
According to Spitzberg and Changnon (2009:21), a presumption of this model is that ‘over time, interactants progress from relatively ethnocentric understandings of other cultures to a more ethnorelative comprehension and appreciation. This dimension of

development is emphasized by Bennett's (1986) stage model of intercultural sensitivity', which is elaborated in the next section.

2.2.3.2. Bennett's Model of Intercultural Sensitivity

Bennett's Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity 'suggests a continuum of stages of personal growth that allows trainers to diagnose the level of sensitivity of individuals and groups and to sequence material according to a developmental plan' (Bennett 1986:179). Figure 5 illustrates this model.

Figure 5. Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity (Bennett 1986)⁵



This model is based on the principle of psychological dissonance, and visualizes the progression in cognitive sensitivity (Anderson 1994), illustrating 'how interactants progress from a monocultural worldview to more differentiated, complex, and sophisticated multicultural worldviews' (Spitzberg and Changnon 2009:21). There are six stages in this model, which represent the 'evolving ways in which sojourners respond to cultural differences' (Anderson 1994:295). 'As interactants cross over to more ethnorelative perspectives, they are better able to view their own culture from the perspective of another culture or cultures' (Spitzberg and Changnon 2009:22). In other words, with the increase in the sensitivity, individuals move towards more 'relative' treatments of difference, and the midpoint of the continuum delineates a division between 'ethnocentrism' and 'ethnorelativism' (Bennett 1986:181). This

⁵ Source: Spitzberg and Changnon (2009:23)

model was used in an exploratory study to examine the intercultural sensitivity of students (between 13 to 19 years of age) attending an international school (Straffon 2003). Since this model was the conceptual framework of research with adolescence, it is more related to the focus of the current study, but Straffon's (2003) project was conducted in a very different context and with a considerable older age group. Moreover, Straffon (2003) used The Intercultural Development Inventory, a 60 item self-assessment tool (Hammer & Bennett 1998 cited in Straffon 2003) as the research instrument. The model on its own is not detailed enough, and The Intercultural Development Inventory, which is a proprietary instrument, is not designed for children. These were the main reasons why this model is not chosen for the current study.

Nevertheless, this model provides valuable insights into the cognitive-perceptual processes underlying cultural adjustments. The *denial* stage represents the ultimate ethnocentrism (Bennett 1986), when individuals fail to see any other culture(s) as 'real' or 'legitimate' as their own culture (Spitzberg and Changnon 2009). The *defense* stage represents the development in intercultural sensitivity (Bennett 1986), but still in this stage, sojourners perceive cultures through the filter of 'us' versus 'them' perspective (Spitzberg and Changnon 2009). At the *minimization* stage 'the cultural difference is overtly acknowledged and is not negatively evaluated (Bennett 1986:183). At this stage, individuals adopt a 'universalistic' approach to cultural differences (Spitzberg and Changnon 2009), in a way that 'while differences are seen to exist, they are experienced as relatively unimportant compared to the far more powerful dictates of cultural similarity' (Bennett 1986:184). At the *acceptance* stage, with acknowledging and respecting cultural differences individuals move from ethnocentrism to ethnorelativism. At this stage, 'cultural difference is perceived as

fundamental, necessary, and preferable in human affairs' (Bennett 1986:184). The acceptance of cultural difference facilitates the adaptation of different behaviours and worldviews 'to accord with the standards of appropriateness in the other culture' (Spitzberg and Changnon 2009:185). This occurs at the *adaptation* stage. According to Bennett (1986:186), 'adaptation to difference as a stage of development of intercultural sensitivity is the ability to act ethnorelatively'. At the *integration* stage, the individual is in constant 'process of becoming *part of* and *apart from* a given cultural context' (Adler's 1977:26 cited in Bennett 1986:186).

One of the criticisms of this model is that it is purely descriptive and reveals little about the forms or dynamics of the adaptation process in all its multiple dimensions (Anderson 1994). This is another reason it does not fully meet the needs of this study which specifically focuses on the perceptions of the adjustment process.

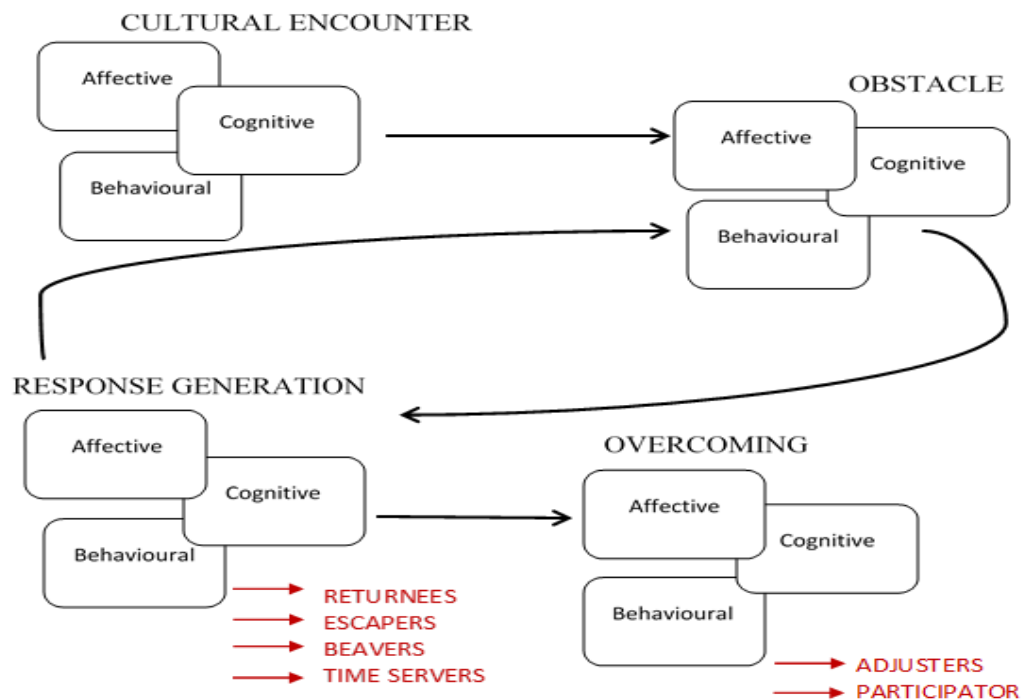
The above mentioned models are all in one way or another relevant to the current study, but none of them fully covers the focus of it. This is partly because no framework to my knowledge has conceptualized intercultural competence and/ or cross-cultural adjustment with respect to children. Moreover, part of the focus of this study is on children's perceptions and/or imaginations of cross-cultural encounters which is another unexplored area. Considering the need for a comprehensive and at the same time comprehensible framework, in a way that it can be adapted to the children's needs and their developmental stage, Anderson's model of Cross-cultural Adaptation (1994) was selected as the framework of this study. In the following section I describe this model in detail.

2.2.4. Anderson's Obstacle Model of Cross-cultural Adaptation

Anderson's Model of Cross-cultural Adaptation is the conceptual model of this study. One reason for this selection is that Anderson (1994) finds some similarities between the processes of cross-cultural adaptation and how people react and adjust to massive changes and radical differences in their life. Anderson (1994:300) argues that 'to understand the facts and phenomenology of adapting to unfamiliar environments, we have to go beyond the confines of cross-cultural studies'. Although Anderson (1994) agrees that intercultural adaptation is not conceptually identical to its intracultural version, she argues that both involve response to the stresses elicited by events or changes in circumstances. This approach to cross-cultural adaptation matches well with one aspect of this study which is to explore how children, who have not experienced cross-cultural encounters before, make sense of concepts such as intercultural interaction and cross-cultural adjustments.

Anderson's Obstacle Model of Cross-cultural Adaptation perceives adjustment in responding to the demands of the environment (Anderson 1994). 'Such demands can be construed as obstacles that present themselves in our paths' (Anderson 1994:301). Hence, with a purposeful and goal-directed movement and obstacle-related coping behaviour, sojourners can move towards adjustment. Framing the potential challenges and problems in the adjustment process into 'obstacles', also provides visual aid which facilitates the conceptualization of this process. In this model, the successive stages of adaptation are displayed in the different nodes of the diagram, 'Cultural Encounter', 'Obstacle', 'Response Generation', and 'Overcoming'. The three cells in each node represent the different dimensions of adaptation (see Figure 6).

Figure 6. Cross-Cultural Adaptation Model⁶



Similar to Intercultural Maturity, Pyramid Intercultural Competence and Intercultural Competence Components models, this model also embraces the affective/emotional, cognitive/perceptual, and behavioural dimensions of adjustment. This model is more appropriate for this study because it treats the affective, cognitive and behavioural responses to ‘obstacles’ in a more integrated way, believing that ‘they interpenetrate and influence each other’ (Anderson 1994:308). In general, making clear distinctions between these dimensions is very difficult, and in particular this would be a more challenging task when working with children who are still cognitively developing.

In this model, the term ‘obstacle’ is used generically. It should be noted that individuals’ backgrounds, personalities, and abilities determine what an obstacle is, and how it needs to be adjusted. Hence, individuals can face different obstacles and

⁶ Adapted from Anderson (1994)

adopt different strategies to tackle them. Even in different cycles, an individual can adopt different strategies to overcome the same problem (Anderson 1994).

The *cultural encounter* node in this model refers to the first moment of the adaptation process, which is linear and time- dependant, and ‘last[s] only as long as the sojourner perceives nothing requiring his or her adjustment’ (Anderson 1994: 308). With the emergence of an obstacle blocking the sojourner’s progress, the sojourner enters the *obstacle* stage. At this point, ‘the cycles of repetitive coping begin. Obstacles are encountered that lead to the generation of responses, one of which leads to further progress that continues unbroken until the next obstacle intervenes’ (Anderson 1994:309). In the *response generation* stage, the sojourner adopts a series of coping strategies, which in the early stages of adjustment is usually a process of trial and error (Anderson 1994). As Figure 6 displays, ‘there is no single outcome of the cultural adaptation process’ (Anderson 1994:315), but rather this depends on the individuals and the situation they are in.

In a dynamic environment like the world we live in, there is no particular endpoint in adaptation, instead cultural adaptation is a continuum. ‘That is why the last moment of the adaptation process is called “Overcoming,” with the emphasis placed on the progressive nature of the action’ (Anderson 1994:314). Individuals enter this stage when they start feeling less tension in the ongoing person-environment interaction (Anderson 1994). Anderson (1994) adapted the Sargent model cited in the CIDA Briefing Centre (1986) and suggested six categories of individuals emerging from the adjustment cycle. These six categories are demonstrated in colour red in Figure 6, and are briefly defined in Table 3. As Figure 6 illustrates, only the Adjusters and the Participators enter the overcoming stage (Anderson 1994).

Table 3. Categories of individuals emerging from the adjustment cycle⁷

The Returnees	Withdraw at an early stage Unable/unwilling to face or tackle the obstacles Coping strategies (if any were used) were not effective Never learn to cope, consequently never overcome
The Escapers	Remain, but are motivated by the urge to get away Their coping strategies have failed Cope by hiding from the unpleasant reality Wait and hope that the obstacles go away.
The Time Servers	Cope but avoid the major obstacles Mildly but chronically discontented Endure rather than fight Exhibit poor productivity in work and social life
The Beavers	Counterparts of the Escapers Cope by keeping busy Not successful in interpersonal relationship outside work
The Adjusters	Still (actively) coping Mix with host culture members Relatively satisfied Adjustments have not yet become effortless
The Participators	Full-fledged participants in the new society Have stood up and faced the obstacles Eager to learn about the new situation, and admit a new cultural perspective

This Cross-Cultural Adaptation Model proposes six principles, which are briefly explained below:

1) Cross-cultural adaptation involves adjustments: Adapting to another culture requires more than learning the new culture. It demands coming to terms with ‘feelings of loss, bereavement, faltering identity, or of values and beliefs besieged’ (Anderson 1994:304). Cultural clashes, the loss of the familiar and/or loved objects and values, and the social incompetency are the three major categories of the obstacles that may crop up during the sojourn, and demand sojourners’ adjustment (Anderson 1994).

⁷ Adopted from Anderson (1994:316- 317)

2) Cross-cultural adaptation implies learning: Adjusting to any new situation requires learning; hence, 'learning and adjustment are interdependent and far-reaching' (Anderson 1994:304).

3) Cross-cultural adaptation implies a stranger-host relationship: What makes cross-cultural adjustment different from everyday life adjustment is that cross-cultural adaptation requires interaction with the members of the host environmental (Anderson 1994). 'The stranger-host relationship is often an insider *versus* outsider relationship, with strong pressures being brought to bear on the outsider to conform (Cohen-Emerique 1984 cited in Anderson 1994:306).

4) Cross-cultural adaptation is cyclical, continuous, and interactive: Anderson (1994:307) argues that

countless times in the course of our lives, the person-environment interplay throws up something that impedes our progress. This obstacle by definition must be adjusted to, the 'problem' which it represents, 'solved.' Possible solutions must be tried out; ineffective responses abandoned; and effective ones adopted, fine-tuned, and retried while new solutions are continuously being tested.

In addition to recursive and cyclical processes of problem solving, the adaptation process involves ups and downs with success and failure. Hence, it is cyclical in dual sense: repetitive with ups and downs sequences (Anderson 1994).

5) Cross-cultural adaptation is relative: The six categories of sojourn outcome described in Table 3 demonstrate that adaptation has different degrees and patterns, and sojourners can exit from the adjustment cycle at different points (Anderson 1994). Anderson (1994:317) argues that 'there are probably as many degrees, kinds, and

levels of adaptation as there are situations and individuals adapting. Adaptation may take place at the behavioral, cognitive, or affective level or at any combination thereof.

6) Cross-cultural adaptation implies personal development: ‘The string of adjustments accomplished can produce marked changes in the sojourner, which can lead to a significant outcome. The cultural sojourn is a voyage that can end in the resocialization of the sojourner’ (Anderson 1994:320).

Although this model conceptualizes the cross-cultural adaptation in adults, it appears to fulfil the aims of this study in many ways. In addition to the above mentioned characteristics of this model, the samples presented in each stage of the adaptation (although not all relevant to children) provide comprehensive and concrete examples for each stage. Moreover, the clear distinction between the stages of adaptation made it possible to disregard the last stage which was only relevant to the real-life adaptation experiences.

So far, I have reviewed a selection of related frameworks of intercultural competence, and introduced the framework of this study. In the next section, I provide a selective overview of the empirical studies on children and their experiences of intercultural encounters.

2.3. Empirical Research on Children and Intercultural Encounters

The empirical research about the experiences, challenges and well-being of sojourners is abundant. This is due to the increase in the opportunities for international travel in 1950s, and consequently, the increase in the frequency of intercultural interactions (Brein and David 1971). However, most of the growing psychological literature focusing on sojourners, migrants, tourists, and refugees has been targeted at adults (e.g.

Leong and Ward 2000; Ward and Searle 1991), others focussed on adolescents (e.g. Berry et al. 2006; Kuo and Roysircar 2005), and to my knowledge, very few relevant studies focussed on child sojourner's experiences of adaptation (although see Pinter 2010) or local children's perceptions of adaptation (although see Aronson and Brown 2013; Zandian 2011b).

When the decision to relocate is taken in the family, children usually have little say. The unknown and unfamiliar can cause stress and anxiety to anyone including children (Dixon and Hayden 2008). A wide range of studies have been conducted on international adult sojourners, particularly international students. Due to the rapid expansion of educational exchange, a significant portion of the contemporary literature has focussed on the problems of international students, and the ways the educational export industry can be supported (Ayano 2006; Bochner et al. 1977; Cortazzi and Jin 2007; Leong and Ward 2000; Pearson-Evan 2006; Searle and Ward 1990; Spencer-Oatey and Xiong 2006; Ward and Kennedy 1999; Ward & Kennedy 1993; Ward and Searle 1991; Ying 2002). Compared to the number of studies done with adult populations, far fewer studies have been focussed particularly on children, and even those studies were not with the exploratory methodology of this study.

For instance, some quantitative studies in this field targeted young people and adolescents. Ward and Kennedy (1993) explored the distinction between psychological and socio-cultural adjustment during cross-cultural transitions amongst New Zealand American Field Service and home-based secondary students, and Gougeon (1993) focussed on secondary students, parents, and school characteristics with respect to intercultural communication. Although the initial period of anxiety that adults experience during the process of adaptation is equally applicable to children (Almqvist and Brandell-Forsberg 1997; Pinter 2010) most of these studies are about

adult sojourners and very few targeted young sojourners (Ward et al. 2001). The initial period of anxiety can negatively influence children's academic performance or cause anxiety related physical symptoms. Moreover, the initial negative experience can cause additional psychological burden for the parents who are themselves going through the process of adaptation (Almqvist and Hwang 1999; Pinter 2010). That is why the neglect in research about children's understandings and experiences of the adaptation process needs to be remedied.

The child sojourner literature is practically non-existent but some useful findings can be drawn out of the immigrant literature that looked at children and families. Due to the importance of this social phenomenon in the new millennium and the large number of immigrant population in the schools, relatively more research has been done into the social and emotional adjustment of these children. However, little research has specifically listened to, and involved young children from ethnic minority groups (Nigbur et al. 2008; Tangen 2008). In order to indicate how this study will contribute to this field of inquiry, this section provides an overview of empirical literature which has focussed on child immigrants and international schools.

2.3.1. Selective Overview of Studies on Child Immigrants

In general, 'migrants include those individuals who voluntarily relocate for long term resettlement' (Ward et al. 2001:23). In the world today, many immigrants remain engaged with their community of origin and shuttle back and forth between the home and the host country. In most cases, people migrate with the hope of higher lifestyle standards (Suarez-Orozco, M. 2005). Migrants are usually 'pulled' toward a new country for social, economic and political reasons. The economic factors are usually the main motivation for the majority of the immigrants. That is why migration mostly happens from poorer regions to the richer ones. It is important to note that the

movement of individuals is conceptualised not only internationally, but it can be even the movement between the diversity of cultures within the same national context (Grimshaw and Sears 2008). Two major types of large-scale migration are ‘internal migration’ (within the confines of a nation-state) and ‘international migration’ (across international borders). These two types of migrants share many characteristics with each other (Suarez-Orozco, M. 2005).

In 1960s, studies amongst adults constantly reported a strong association between migrant status and psychological disorder, influenced by the current state of thinking at that time, the research about immigrant children mainly tried to document the presumed higher frequency of disorder among these children. However, according to Aronowitz (1984) no research evidence supported this claim that social and emotional disorders were necessarily more prevalent among the populations of immigrant children. A more recent longitudinal study about immigrant students, with particular focus on schooling contexts, followed 425 immigrant children’s adaptation process over the course of five years (Suarez-Orozco, C. 2005). This study hypothesized that ‘contexts, opportunities, networks, and social mirroring act as powerful gravitational fields that shape the adaptation of immigrant children’ (Suarez-Orozco, C. 2005:151). The findings revealed that for children, one of the key factors in the transition process is the quality of their schools. These children also reported the experience of racism and discrimination as the hardest part of their life as immigrants. Although local language proficiency can obviously be helpful in adaptation process (Suarez-Orozco, C. 2005), studies revealed that possessing the language skills of the new country is not a major determinant of the social and emotional adjustment of immigrant children (Aronowitz 1984). In another study on child immigrant, Nigbur et al. (2008) validated a measure of children’s acculturation attitudes based on Berry’s framework (Berry et

al. 1989). To this end, Nigbur and his colleagues conducted structured interviews with 398 white British and British Asian primary-school children between 5 to 11 years of age. This study also explored the relationships between acculturative attitudes and measures of well-being. The findings revealed ‘no evidence for an association between the “integration” strategy and the best psychological outcomes (...) [and] conclude that support for a direct relationship between acculturation attitudes and well-being remains limited’ (Nigbur et al. 2008:502).

While the divergence between the dominant and minor languages and cultures is an opportunity for attaining cultural competence, there is also a possibility that a child in such contexts does not acquire either languages adequately and this can result in the sense of estrangement (Harrington 2008). Reeves (2006) also points out that children who grow up in an internationally mobile environment may face challenges which can lead to a sense of rootlessness.

Since the context of the current study is Iran, in the next section I provide examples from the very limited studies on Iranian diasporic children. These studies are only indirectly related to this focus of the current research as the participants of my study are children who are living and are being educated in Iran.

2.3.2. Studies on Iranian Child diaspora

Studies on the cross-cultural experiences of Iranian children are very limited. In this section, I review some of the studies which address different aspects of cross-cultural experiences of Iranian diasporic children.

A study by Almqvist and Brandell-Forsberg (1995) had a particular focus on Iranian child refugees. Although refugees share many of the issues and concerns of other cultural travellers, their situation is distinctly different from sojourners and immigrants

(Ward et al. 2001). '[Refugees]' relocation is involuntary as they are unwillingly displaced from their home countries and 'pushed' into alien environments' (Ward et al. 2001:25). This process differs greatly with what sojourners and migrants' experience, as migrants voluntarily relocate either temporarily or permanently. In contrast to migrants who are 'pulled' toward the country of resettlement by various sources, refugees are 'pushed' from their home country by forces such as war and political issues which in the majority of cases result in some traumatic pre-migration stressors (Ward et al. 2001). In comparison with immigrants and sojourners, refugees possess more limited resources for cross-cultural transition and adaptation. Financial issues as well as limited education and language proficiency are the main drawbacks for refugees which make adaptation process more difficult for them (Ward et al. 2001).

Many Iranians went into exile as a result of both persecution following the Islamic revolution and the war between Iran and Iraq (1980-1988). Almqvist and Brandell-Forsberg (1995) investigated the effect of organized violence and forced migration on Iranian refugee children in Sweden. In their study, Almqvist and Brandell-Forsberg demonstrated techniques of obtaining information directly from pre-schoolers to support parental reports. They used modes of non-verbal expression (e.g. plays such as Erica-method in which children build something using 360 miniature toys) in accessing the complete traumatic events that affected children. Participants communicated in their mother tongue and the sessions were conducted via an interpreter. Regarding the children's awareness of the escape from their home country, many parents chose not to inform their children of the coming escape to save them from worrying; instead these children were told that the family was going on vacation. This study was unable to cover the expectations of these children about this change. Learning about children's prior expectations of life in a new sociocultural environment

can provide valuable data for educational purposes. Comparison between the children's expectations/ understandings of this phenomenon and the real-life experiences can also help facilitating this process for the child cultural travellers. That is why in my research I intend to explore the expectations and understandings of living in a new sociocultural context as child sojourners. Almqvist and Brandell-Forsberg (1995) interviewed/ assessed children individually. Individual interviews with children can increase the existing power imbalance between the adult researcher and the child-participant, and consequently influence the research process and outcome. Particularly, with the presence of the interpreter during the sessions, the adults were in the majority and this might have increased the asymmetrical relations. Having considered this issue, in my research project, the data is obtained via group interviews in order to minimize the existing power imbalance.

In a follow-up study which took place three years and half after the first study about the Iranian refugee children, Almqvist and Hwang (1999) investigated the coping strategies in both children and their parents. At the time of the follow-up study, the child-participants were aged between 7 to 10 years. Parents were interviewed and children were individually assessed through behaviour and play observation, different structured tasks (e.g. 'Draw a man' game to investigate the child's acculturative coping mode), and some questions. Children mostly described emotion-focussed coping (e.g. positive thinking and day dreaming); whereas, their parents mainly described problem-focussed coping (e.g. moving to better living areas). In this follow-up research, the relative importance of various risk and protective factors for mental health and adjustment in these young refugee children were also investigated. The results underlined that 'for many refugee children, current life circumstances in receiving host countries, such as peer relationship and exposure to bullying, are of equal or greater

importance than previous exposure to organized violence' (Almqvist and Broberg 1999:723). Children's spontaneous narratives were used as the base for information about coping strategies. They were also asked to describe some kind of play activity they usually took part in (Almqvist and Hwang 1999). Participatory activities provide opportunities for children to express their feelings and ideas. Having this in mind, in the present study I invited children to talk about their preferred coping strategies while doing various participatory activities.

In another study about the Iranian children outside Iran, Shirazi (2014) explores the views and experiences of diasporic Iranian parents, students, and teachers who participate in a community-organized Persian-language school about their Iranian identity and community. In this study, 'identity is not "being"; rather, it is a contingent effect of doing, and how others interpret that doing' (Shirazi 2014:112). Shirazi (2014) observed classrooms and participated in school activities, and also conducted three semi-structured focus groups with students, teachers, and parents separately. Students of this complementary school were aged between 5 to 11 years. The findings of this study revealed

profound entanglement of culture with politics, and how negative representations of Iran are deeply embedded in [children's] social and educational experiences (...) Their experiences also underscore that very young children are not exempt from processes of racialization and the politics of inclusion/exclusion, and point to the necessity of educational spaces that support them (Shirazi 2014:122).

This study touches on the concept of identity, which is of particular importance when people change their cultural settings. An individual's identity is constantly developing

and changing, and this is particularly true of children. When people change their cultural setting, usually they face some challenges regarding their individual, interpersonal and community identities. In other words, they may feel incompetent or unsure about which group they belong to. In such situations, the sense of coherent identity cannot be achieved unless individuals accept the fact that they can belong to more than one group (Spencer-Oatey and Franklin 2009). Language has a key role in managing identities and in stressing the values of religion, cultural and community affiliation (Mills 2001). It plays an important role in the social construction of identity (Grimshaw and Sears 2008). Hence, learning a new language in childhood is also closely related to the concept of identity, how we feel about ourselves and how we establish social relations. Children who are growing in culturally and linguistically different contexts can develop bilingual and bicultural identities by using both their languages actively (Pinter 2011:67). On the other hand, Mills (2001:389) states that

[a] further issue of concern in the consideration of growing up bilingually and identity formation is the extent to which bilingual people also become bicultural. Biculturalism, in the sense of two distinct cultures co-existing or combining, in some way, in one individual, is related to that individual's sense of identity.

So far, I have provided an overview of studies on child immigrants and Iranian diasporic child, and emphasized the importance of identity and language in globally mobile children. In the next section, I provide an overview of the studies in the International Schools, where child sojourners usually receive education.

2.3.3. International Schools

In many countries, child sojourners require schooling other than that available in the new local context. With respect to the so-called International Schools where these

children are educated, a growing, if still small, but nevertheless informative body of research on transition has developed in recent years (Dixon and Hayden 2008). These studies are closer to the current research, but even these are not the same. The focus of the studies is on children's reflection on 'real experiences'; whereas, the current study focuses on imaginary situations which makes it unique and different.

Grimshaw and Sears (2008) surveyed the relevant literature in order to develop a conceptual framework for an empirical study to explore how globally mobile young people negotiate and maintain their sense of identity. In this study, identity is conceived as 'an ongoing negotiation between the individual and the social context or environment' (Hawkins 2005:61). Mentioning the existing lack of research about the role of language in the negotiation and maintenance of identity, Grimshaw and Sears (2008) gave priority to the role of language in shaping international students' identities. Velliaris (2010) reviewed research on 'Third Culture Kids' or 'Cross Cultural Kids', children who grow up in more than one cultural context. This qualitative study investigated the international parents living in Tokyo in relation to their family's cultural background and their choice of schooling for their children. Mills (2001:390) explains that 'a third culture is created by the contact between two cultures, where individuals have taken on aspects from both'. Harrington (2008) also studied identity negotiation for immigrant children in international schools, and draws attention on the literature on 'Third Culture Kids' in an international school setting. Harrington (2008:12) defines 'Third Culture Kids' as 'people who identify with two or more cultures and so this covers children living overseas, immigrants and families with parents from two different countries or cultures'. A transition support programme was also suggested in another study to create an environment in the international schools to encourage supporting new and leaving students. In this programme ongoing

support was offered to both students and parents, whether they were arriving, leaving or being left behind (Reeves 2006). Using a child-friendly computer-based questionnaire based on Pollock's transition model, Dixon and Hayden (2008) investigated the viewpoints of upper primary-age children in an international school in Thailand in relation to the various dimensions of the transition process. Using the same questionnaire as well as follow-up interviews, smaller-scale research was undertaken at the Inter-Community School Zürich with a group of upper primary children to explore their experiences of the transition process (Hill and Hayden 2008). This study also observed whether the support programme offered by the school fulfilled the need of the children in the transition process. With a different approach to the International Schools, Sermeno (2011) argues that students' needs in International Schools go beyond the development of cultural awareness. Sermeno (2011) recommends formation of emotionally positive connections amongst culturally different individuals in order to benefit from the existing opportunities in the international settings to learn *from* others rather than *about* different cultures. According to Sermeno (2001:11) cultural sensitivity, 'the capacity to respond to culturally different material in a tactful, respectful, and genuine way only develops when individuals are emotionally attached to others'. Studies show that peer group acceptance is an influential factor in children's well-being (Kostenius and Ohrling 2006); this is also a crucial determinant of children's acculturation into the new environment (Almqvist and Brandell-Forsberg 1995; Almqvist and Hwang 1999; Pinter 2010).

Believing that in intercultural encounters, both immigrants and members of the host society have to resolve questions around cultural maintenance, Aronson and Brown (2013) used data from a sample of 372 U.S. national children (aged 6–9 years) to

examine the relationship between acculturation attitudes and attitudes towards Somali immigrants in the USA. In this study, acculturation attitudes are conceptualized as desire for cultural maintenance and desire for intergroup contact between immigrants and nationals. The data was collected via questionnaires, and quantitative analysis of the findings indicated that ‘the most favourable intergroup attitudes and intended behaviours were evident among children who simultaneously endorsed cultural maintenance and cultural contact attitudes, which is characteristic of an acculturative emphasis on integration’ (Aronson and Brown 2013:20). Usually studies focus on how immigrants tend to adapt to the change, but Aronson and Brown (2013) focussed on a less investigated aspect of acculturative questions. Having considered the importance of host environment on sojourner’s adaptation process, as part of my research project, I also intend to explore the feelings and understandings of children about issues such as intercultural interaction from the viewpoint of the members of the host society who may be receiving newcomers one day. Aronson and Brown (2013) adopted a quantitative approach and focussed on a specific nationality or race. I would argue that a qualitative approach would provide more in-depth knowledge about children’s view. Moreover, the focus on particular race or nationality would narrow down the scope of the study.

In this section, I provided a selective overview of the empirical research about children and their experiences of intercultural encounters. The review of the studies in the International Schools underlines the importance of intercultural awareness in life of globally mobile children and those who interact with them. In the next section, I provide an overview of the literature on the adaptation challenges.

2.4. Adaptation Challenges

In 1980s, a more social and experimental psychological view to the sojourn emerged. In this new approach, the learning experience was found as the most appropriate model for cross-cultural exposure. Preparation, orientation, and acquisition of culturally relevant social skills were recommended as the appropriate intervention rather than therapy (Furnham and Bochner 1982 cited in Ward et al. 2001). Moreover, in this view, the sojourn was considered as an ongoing, dynamic experience, not only for the sojourners, but also for the members of the host culture (Ward et al. 2001).

In 1990s, based on some empirical research, Ward and her colleagues argued that cross-cultural adaptation can be divided into two main domains: psychological (emotional/affective) and sociocultural (behavioural) (Ward and Kennedy 1999). Psychological adjustment refers to sojourner's psychological well-being and/or satisfaction, while sociocultural adaptation is related to the ability to fit in the host context and acquire culturally appropriate skills for the host environment (Ward and Kennedy 1999).

The culture learning approach mainly deals with the behavioural aspect of cultural contact (Ward et al. 2001). Ward and Kennedy (1999) argue that sociocultural adaptation is defined in terms of behavioural competence, and 'is more strongly influenced by factors underpinning culture learning and social skills acquisition. These include length of residence in the new culture, cultural knowledge, amount of interaction and identification with host nationals, cultural distance, language fluency and acculturation strategies' (Ward and Kennedy 1999:661). With respect to cultural learning and social skills acquisition, research shows that in the first few months of cross-cultural adjustment, sojourners go through a predictable learning curve with rapid improvement which gradually approaches a steady rate of acquiring new skills

(Ward and Kennedy 1999). Longitudinal studies also confirmed that like psychological adaptation, 'sociocultural adaptation problems are greatest during the early stages of transition and that they decrease significantly over time' (Ward and Kennedy 1999:669).

According to Ward and Kennedy (1999: 660-661), 'Psychological adjustment, defined in terms of psychological and emotional well-being, is broadly affected by personality, life changes, coping styles and social support'. Cross-cultural literature suggests that adjustment occurs over time (Black and Stephens 1989). Studies show that in the early stages of the cross-cultural transition, sojourners show greater difficulties with respect to their psychological adjustment; however, this is variable over time (Ward and Kennedy 1999). Black and Stephens (1989:530) view adjustment as 'another measure of affective responses', and believe that attitudinal factors such as willingness to communicate, ethnocentricity and tolerance of ambiguity in addition to the previous international experiences and individual differences are the critical factors of adjustment. In line with this, Ward et al. (2001:65) argue that 'the most fundamental difficulties experienced by cross-cultural travellers occur in social situations, episodes and transactions'.

Being aware of the importance of adaptation challenges, a number of studies have attempted to identify the problems experienced by student and business sojourners, but none specifically focussed on child sojourner. Here, I review some of these studies.

2.4.1. Furnham and Bochner's Study of Social Difficulty in a Foreign Culture

In a study of international students in the United Kingdom, Furnham and Bochner (1982) adopted the culture learning approach, and examined the amount of difficulty sojourners experienced in a variety of routine social encounters. This research involved the development of the Social Situations Questionnaire. This questionnaire comprised

40 items, and the participants were divided into three groups based on home-host cultural distance. This included near group (Northern Europe countries), intermediate group (Southern European and South American countries), and far group (Middle Eastern and Asian countries). 'The results of the study clearly indicated that social difficulty was a function of cultural distance' (Ward et al. 2001:66). Table 4 illustrates the Social Situations Questionnaire which was used in the study.

Table 4. The Social Situations Questionnaire⁸

1. Making friends your own age.
2. Shopping in a large supermarket.
3. Going on public transport.
4. Going to discotheques or dances.
5. Making British friends of your own age.
6. Making close friends from other countries of your own age.
7. Going to a small private party with English people.
8. Going out with someone whom you are sexually attracted to.
9. Being with a group of people your age, but of the opposite sex.
10. Going into restaurants or cafes.
11. Going into a room full of people.
12. Being with older English people.
13. Meeting strangers and being introduced to new people.
14. Being with people that you don't know very well.
15. Approaching others – making the first move in starting up a new friendship.
16. Making ordinary decisions (plans) affecting others (what to do in the evenings).
17. Getting to know people in depth (well, intimately).
18. Taking the initiative in keeping the conversation going.
19. People standing or sitting very close to you.
20. Talking about yourself and your feelings in a conversation.
21. Dealing with people staring at you.
22. Attending a formal dinner.
23. Complaining in public – dealing with unsatisfactory service at a shop where you think you have been cheated or misled.
24. Seeing a doctor.
25. Appearing in front of an audience (acting, giving a speech).
26. Being interviewed for something.
27. Being the leader of a small group.
28. Dealing with people of higher status than you.
29. Reprimanding a subordinate – telling off someone below you for something that they have done wrong.
30. Going to a social occasion where there are people of another national or cultural group to yourself.
31. Apologising to a superior if you have done wrong.
32. Understanding jokes, humour and sarcasm.
33. Dealing with someone who is cross and aggressive (abusive).
34. Buying special goods (medicines, books, electrical goods, etc.).
35. Using public and private toilet facilities.
36. Waiting in a queue.
37. Getting very intimate with a person of the opposite sex.
38. Going into pubs.
39. Going to worship (church, temple, mosque).
40. Talking about serious matters (politics, religion) to people of your own age.

⁸ Source: Ward et al. (2001:67)

Although the items in this questionnaire were designed for adult international students in the UK, some of them are also relevant to children. *Making friends of your own age, approaching others-making the first move in starting up a new friendship, being with people that you don't know very well, going to social occasion where there are people of another national or cultural group to yourself, taking the initiative and keeping the conversation going* are some of these items.

2.4.2. Ward and Kennedy's Measurement of Sociocultural Adaptation

'Ward and colleagues have been strongly influenced by Furnham and Bochner's (1982) work on social difficulty and have similarly recognized the contributions that cultural learning theory can make to the understanding of cross cultural transition and adaptation' (Ward et al. 2001:66). In a study of cross-cultural transition and adaptation of Malaysian and Singaporean students in New Zealand, Searle and Ward (1990) used the Sociocultural Adaptation Scale (SCAS) to measure the intercultural competence of the sojourners. SCAS initially emphasized the exploration of the behavioural domains of individual's intercultural competence; however, later in 1999 the scale was expanded to include the cognitive domains as well (Ward and Kennedy 1999). Table 5 illustrates the items in this scale. A five-point scale (no difficulty/slight difficulty/moderate difficulty/great difficulty/extreme difficulty), was used so that the respondents could indicate the amount of difficulty they experience in each situation (Ward and Kennedy 1999).

Table 5. The Sociocultural Adaptation Scale⁹

1. Making friends
2. Using the transport system
3. Making yourself understood
4. Getting used to the pace of life
5. Going shopping
6. Going to social events/gatherings/functions
7. Worshipping in your usual way
8. Talking about yourself with others
9. Understanding jokes and humor
10. Dealing with someone who is unpleasant/cross/aggressive
11. Getting used to the local food/finding food you enjoy
12. Following rules and regulations
13. Dealing with people in authority
14. Dealing with the bureaucracy
15. Making yourself understood
16. Adapting to local accommodation
17. Communicating with people of a different ethnic group
18. Relating to members of the opposite sex
19. Dealing with unsatisfactory service
20. Finding your way around
21. Dealing with the climate
22. Dealing with people staring at you
23. Going to coffee shops/ food stalls/restaurants/fast food outlets
24. Understanding the local accent/language
25. Living away from family members overseas/independently from your parents
26. Adapting to local etiquette
27. Getting used to the population density
28. Relating to older people
29. Dealing with people of higher status
30. Understanding what is required of you at university
31. Coping with academic work
32. Dealing with foreign staff at the university
33. Expressing your ideas in class
34. Living with your host family
35. Accepting / understanding the local political system
36. Understanding the locals' world view
37. Taking a local perspective on the culture
38. Understanding the local value system
39. Seeing things from the locals' point of view
40. Understanding cultural differences
41. Being able to see two sides of an intercultural issue

Similar to the Social Situation Questionnaire (Furnham and Bochner 1982), SCAS has arisen from a culture learning approach to sojourner adjustment, hence ‘emphasizes the acquisition of culture-specific skills, behavioral dimensions of adaptation to change, and the significance of intercultural interactions’ (Ward and Kennedy 1999:673). Ward and Kennedy (1999:662) also argue that most of the items in this scale are applicable ‘across a diverse range of sojourning groups’. *Making friends, making yourself understood, going to social events, worshipping in usual way, getting*

⁹ Source: Ward and Kennedy (1999:663)

used to the local food, following rules and regulations, and understanding the local accent/language are some of these examples.

2.4.3. Black and Stephens' study of spouse and expatriates adjustment

In an empirical study, Black and Stephens (1989) attempted to explore a relationship between the spouse's adjustment and the adjustment of the expatriate manager. Black and Stephens (1989) indicate that there are three distinct facets to sociocultural adjustment: general, interaction, and work adjustment. Issues related to managing daily life, like food, living conditions, and healthcare facilities are related to the general environment adjustment; whereas, issues related to the interaction with host country nationals belong to the interaction domain. And issues specifically related to the host working environment belong to the work adjustment domain.

With the aim of measuring these three facets of adjustment, a questionnaire was administered to American expatriates and their spouses in Japan, Korea, Taiwan, and Hong Kong. The adjustment section of the questionnaire was designed to measure these three facets of adjustment. However, the work related items were not included in the spouse measure of adjustment (Black and Stephens 1989). The findings of this study revealed that the adjustment of the spouse was highly correlated to the adjustment of the expatriate manager. The findings also indicated that 'a favourable opinion about the overseas assignment by the spouse is positively related to the spouse's adjustment and the novelty of the foreign culture has a negative relationship with the spouse's adjustment' (Black and Stephen 1989: 529). Table 6 illustrates the items used in the adjustment section of the questionnaire.

Table 6. Adjustment related items in Black and Stephens' (1989) questionnaire¹⁰

Expatriate Adjustment

Expatriates were asked to indicate on a 7 point Likert scale how unadjusted or adjusted they were to the following:

1. Living conditions in general
2. Housing conditions
3. Food
4. Shopping
5. Cost of living
6. Entertainment/recreation facilities and opportunities
7. Health care facilities
8. Socializing with host nationals
9. Interacting with host nationals on a day-to-day basis
10. Interacting with host nationals outside of work
11. Speaking with host nationals
12. Specific job responsibilities
13. Performance standards and expectations
14. Supervisory responsibilities

Spouse Adjustment

Spouses were asked to indicate on a 7 point Likert scale how unadjusted or adjusted they were to the following:

1. Living conditions in general
2. Housing conditions
3. Food
4. Shopping
5. Cost of living
6. Entertainment/recreation facilities and opportunities
7. Health care facilities
8. Socializing with host nationals
9. Interacting with host nationals on a day-to-day basis

Culture Novelty

Expatriates were asked to indicate on 5 point Likert scale how similar or different the following were compared to America. (Items were taken from Torbiorn, 1982.)

1. Everyday customs that must be followed.
2. General living conditions
3. Using health care facilities
4. Transportations systems used in the country
5. General living costs
6. Available quality and types of foods
7. Climate
8. General housing conditions

Although Black and Stephens' (1989) research focussed on a relationship between the spouse's adjustment and the adjustment of the business sojourner, some of the items in the adjustment section of their questionnaire could be extended to other types of sojourners. *Living conditions in general, housing conditions, food, shopping, entertainment, socializing with host national, and speaking with host nationals, performance standards and expectation* are some of these items. However, items related to the work adjustment are irrelevant to children.

¹⁰ Source: Black and Stephens (1989:542)

2.4.4. Spencer-Oatey and Xiong's study of Chinese Students' Psychological and Sociocultural Adjustments to Britain

In an empirical study, Spencer-Oatey and Xiong (2006) investigated the psychological and sociocultural adjustment of two cohorts of Chinese students taking a foundation course in English language at a British university. Similar to Ward and Kennedy (1999), this study also sees adaptation outcome in two domains of psychological and sociocultural adjustment. It also modifies the three facets introduced by Black and Stephens (1989), and applies them to an academic context.

Zung's (1965) Self-Rating Depression Scale was used for exploring the psychological aspect of the adaptation. This scale consists of 20 items describing different symptoms of depression, and respondents have to rate them on a four-point scale to show how frequently they are experiencing them (Spencer-Oatey and Xiong 2006). A modification of SCAS was used for exploring the sociocultural aspect of the overseas students' adjustment experiences. A 36-item scale was designed to probe the three domains of academic life, contact with people, and daily life. These were rated on two five-point scales, one to show the level of difficulty sojourners were experiencing with the items, and the other to show the importance of the items for the sojourners.

Unlike the other quantitative studies, this study adopted both quantitative and qualitative approaches. The interview data was the qualitative part of this study and was used to provide a richer picture of the participants' experiences. The interviews probed the issues covered in the questionnaire and explored the factors that could affect student's anticipatory adjustment.

According to the findings of this study, 'the majority of the respondents reported little difficulty in sociocultural adjustment, especially in their daily lives. Adjustment in

social interaction emerged as the most problematic’ (Spencer-Oatey and Xiong 2006:50).

In this section, I have explained the domains of psychological and sociocultural adjustment and provided a review of empirical research on adaptation challenges. Since children are the participants of this research and one of the research questions addresses the boundaries of innovative and participatory methodologies in research with children, in the last section of this chapter, I explain my philosophy of research with children and discuss the literature in this regard.

2.5. My Philosophy of Research with Children

In the early 1990s a ‘paradigm shift’ in the social study of childhood happened which sought to reposition children as competent social actors in their own right (Gallacher and Gallacher 2008). The ‘new social studies of childhood’ encouraged participatory methods in research with children (see Prout and James 1990). Since then, the number of the studies having children as the subjects of research has increased, but how children are treated as the participants of the studies varies. Holland, Renold, Ross and Hillman (2010) categorize ‘participation in research’ into four main forms.

1. The research which invites children to be simply the participants of the research, and the adult researcher has control over all the other aspects of the research (e.g. traditional semi-structured interviews, questionnaires).
2. The research which aims to enable children to express their views through ‘child-centred’ forms of communication (e.g. play, art, drama, games and photography, etc.).
3. The studies in which children are encouraged to have some impact on research which is about their own lives.

4. The child-led research which is carried out by children who are trained to conduct research about the topics which interest them.

There is often some overlaps in the aims and means between the last three approaches. With respect to the last form of participation in research, Kellett (2010a) emphasizes that only child-led research can provide access to the children's lived experiences because of their unique 'insider' perspective, which is different from the adult understanding of children's world. However, the challenge for the researchers is to facilitate this process in a way that is both effective and ethical. Although many researchers support the idea of involving children in the decision making process, and supporting them to conduct their own research, in very few projects children have been actually in key research roles, and still in most cases adults manage the research rather than support it (Brownlie et al. 2006; Kellet 2010a). In spite of children's knowledge and better understanding of childhood, their lack of research knowledge and skills is the main drawback in child-led research (Kellet 2010a). In order to overcome this problem, adults need to support children to provide resources, such as funding or skill transfer, to enable them to take a leadership role in carrying out research (Mason and Hood 2010); however, the absence of these resources for enabling children to take leadership role in research, results in the lack of feasibility of this type of research in most contexts. Moreover, one of the main criticisms made to the child-centred approaches is that although children actively participate in the research as co-researchers, still the adult researcher interprets their emerging voices in various contexts (Komulainen 2007; Pinter 2013). In this regard, Komulainen (2007:23) states that '[w]hatever part children's communication competencies play in encounters with researchers, they are ultimately constructed and interpreted by adults'.

Benefiting from researchers' critical reflection on their chosen methodologies and experiences of what has and has not worked in the area of researching with children, I tried to work on a child-centred and inclusive method within my specific restrictions. Having considered the research context, the available resources, and the element of time, for this particular study, I choose the third form of the participation, viewing children as social actors who are able to influence some aspects of the research. In spite of the advantages of a child-led approach to research with children, I decided to avoid adopting this approach in this study due to some impediments in preparing children for child-led research. Lack of research culture in Iran, difficulties in obtaining access to and consent of children, and limitations in funding, space, and children's free time, were the genuine barriers for running a comprehensive programme to train children for a child-led research. Instead, every attempt had been made to create a research environment where children were able to express themselves freely. This aspect of research is elaborated with more details in Chapter 3.

In the next section, I discuss children's different style of communication and review the related literature on research with children.

2.5.1. Children in Research

Christensen and Prout (2002) state that watching, listening to, reflecting on and engaging in conversation with child-participants are the key elements for success in research with children. Pinter and Zandian (2014:64) state that 'children's views are different from those of adults, and since children are "experts" of their own lives, it is worthwhile for adults to explore innovative ways in which their unique experiences and perspectives can be uncovered'. Children's style of communication may differ to a degree from that of adults. Children often communicate in a highly emotional and less structured style compared to adults, but they are capable of providing 'authentic'

information about their lived experiences. It is recommended that childhood researchers appreciate this difference and give their participants the freedom to communicate in their own way, and in a medium with which they feel most comfortable (Grover 2004). O’Kane (2008) points out the importance of group discussion for the purpose of accessing children’s viewpoints about issues that may concern them. Cameron (2001) also states that children are capable of formal and logical thought if the appropriate language, objects and tasks are used when working with them. In relation to this, Nieuwenhuys (1996:55) cited in O’Kane (2008:132) states that ‘[participatory techniques] must be used in the context and in continuous dialogue with the children concerned’. Westcott and Littleton (2005) also indicate that we can empower children by making the research context more ‘child-centred’ so that they can freely express their opinions within the context of interview.

It is important to take into consideration whether the existing research methodologies designed for adult participants are suitable for children as the participants or not (O’Kane 2008). To facilitate children’s participation, Kellet and Ding (2004) suggest a child-friendly adaptation to adult methodologies. Because the existence of a huge gap between children’s level of understanding and the task can prevent them from finishing a task (Cameron 2001), we need to use communication strategies which are suitable for children’s abilities (O’ Kane 2008), such as contextualization which can result in richer responses (Pinter 2006). It is also important to insert fun activities amongst the more ‘serious’ discussions to attract children’s attention and enhance enjoyment (Moore et al 2008).

Although child-centred research practices are recommended and can be adopted in various research contexts, the current study is, in particular, unique to the context of

research in Iran; as such research practices to my knowledge have not been undertaken in this country.

2.5.2. Innovative and Participatory Research Methodologies

The second research question in this study aimed to explore the boundaries of the child-centred research methodologies. Hence, in this study careful consideration has been given to the research construct and procedures to examine limitations and advantages of innovative and participatory research methodologies. Here, I look into the possible ways of mediating communication with children in research.

Focus group research is very common in applied linguistics for generating ideas to inform the development of questionnaire (Dörnyei 2007). Although it has some disadvantages such as a complicated transcribing process (Dörnyei 2007) and the possibility that the participant's answer be affected by the other members' opinion (Pinter 2006), it is highly recommended in research with children. One of the advantages of group interviews with children is that child-participants feel more comfortable expressing their opinions and sharing their experiences in a group than individually (Lewis 1992). In this regard, Cruddas (2007:481) states that, 'Binary distinctions always assume a power relation in which one term is privileged—in the case of adult and child, it is the adult'. The participatory tools can transform the power relation between the adult and the young participants (O'Kane 2008). In a research context like my study, where children are not used to be part of research activities, participatory tools can be specifically helpful in breaking down the power imbalance between the adults and children and create 'a space to enable children to speak up and be heard' (O'Kane 2008:125).

Group interviews are also less intimidating, because they minimize the power imbalance between the adult interviewer and the child (Kellett and Ding 2004); and accordingly, they facilitate children's involvement (Hennesy and Heary 2005). Similarly, the use of the participatory techniques in the context of group discussion creates a more flexible environment so that young participants can have more control over the process of the research (O'Kane 2008). In this type of interview, the interviewer functions as the group leader, prevents any dominating group opinion (Dörnyei 2007) and facilitates the discussion (Kellett and Ding 2004). Consequently, the focus is more on the interactions between the interviewees (Houssart and Hilary 2011).

Although one of the disadvantages of the group interviews is the possible domination by individuals (Breakwell 1990 cited in Houssart and Hilary 2011), in this study the main aim is to gain insight into children's opinions and understandings as a group, and not to obtain individual's personal details, as the information collected in group discussion may differ from the data obtained in the individual meetings. These differences do not imply dishonesty or falsehood of the information, but illustrate the different types of discourse in public and private contexts (O'Kane 2008). Similarly, Lewis (1992) notes that group interviews with children can be useful for exploring consensus views and may generate richer responses as the participants can challenge one another's views. The findings of my Master's research also showed that participants may change their opinions after discussion with other participants (Zandian 2011a).

The transference of the power relation between adults and children in participatory techniques promotes children's confidence and also enables the participants to reveal their own reality, and empowers them to define their own situation and viewpoints.

Moreover, a survey of middle-age children revealed that fun is an important element in doing research with children (O’Kane 2008). In this regard, Kefyalew (1996) indicates that participatory techniques are suitable for research with children, as they are fun and also enable children to take an active role in the research. Thus, they allow the researchers to learn more about children’s perceptions and experiences of the world (James et al. 1998). Perceiving communication as a ‘medium’, Kumulainen (2007) states that communication aids such as material objects can replace words with the intention of enabling children to express their need or choice. These techniques can lead to the establishment of shared understandings between the researcher and children. Similarly, O’Kane (2008) indicates that participatory activities encourage children to focus on real life through activities apart from just talking. Westcott and Littleton (2005) draw attention to the advantages of the usage of tools and artifacts in interviews with children as a facilitator of joint meaning-making. Children articulate their views and opinions in various ways; therefore, it would be helpful to use different and creative techniques to enable them to share their knowledge (Mason and Hood 2010; Pinter and Zandian 2014). Because in participatory research the emphasis is more on the power of visual impression and active representation of ideas instead of reading or writing skills (O’Kane 2008), participatory techniques are also very useful in research with children where the participants’ linguistic competence is limited. The participatory techniques are also very practical as they are structured in time and space (O’Kane 2008). These practical characteristics of the participatory techniques are very useful in this study since the research was conducted in a strict time and space limit. Another advantage of the participatory techniques is that they encourage participants to set the agenda. In these types of activities, the researcher is an active listener and is

identified as the facilitator of the activities; hence, both the researcher and researched are active participants in the production of the data (O’Kane 2008).

So far, I have discussed my philosophy of research with children, reviewed the literature on innovative research practices with children and highlighted their relevance to this study. Since the participants of this research are in ‘middle childhood’, in the next section I briefly review the characteristic of children in this age group.

2.5.3. Middle Childhood: Characteristics of Children

When children are participants of research, methodologies should be adapted to their abilities and competencies of different ages (Kellett and Ding 2004). Participants of this study are children aged 10-12 years. The term, ‘middle childhood’ is defined as the period between ‘the early years’ and ‘youth’, which in general is associated with primary school years. As explained by Piagetian theory, many important changes happen in the middle childhood (Kellett and Ding 2004). In the primary years, children’s self-concepts develop and they gain control of their emotions. Their self-esteem approaches a more realistic level as they frequently compare themselves with other peers (Pinter 2011; Santrock 2007). In these years, friendship becomes more complicated and trust becomes an important aspect of friendship. There is also a difference in children’s understanding and expectation of friendship in early years of primary school and the later years (Pinter 2011). In the latter, children appreciate the importance of understanding and shared interest amongst friends (Bigelow and La Gaipa 1980 cited in Pinter 2011). In the middle and late childhood, peer interaction is increasingly characterized by reciprocity and children spend more time in peer interaction (Santrock 2007:491). That is why friendship is one of the criteria for grouping the participants of the group interviews in this study. The fact that age is a

‘social’ variable rather than a ‘natural’ one is another issue which needs consideration when children are the participants of the research (James et al. 1998) as other factors apart from the chronological age can also affect children’s competence. In this regard, Hart and Tyler (2006) cited in (O’Kane 2008:132) state that

[i]n facilitating and supporting children’s participation in research activities, researchers need to consider the appropriateness of different methods not only in relation to chronological age but also in relation to the lived experience and consequent competencies of individual children.

Studies show that children in the middle childhood prefer research methods which require active communication rather than a passive one which is relying on verbal or written input alone. Moreover, it is important that children do not label the research activities as ‘childish’; therefore, it is suggested that in working with children in all age groups, researchers approach children with the sense of respect and belief in their abilities. As children grow older, they need more independence during the research (O’ Kane 2008), that is why participatory activities in which the researcher acts as the moderator were chosen for researching children in this age group.

In this section, I have briefly described how children are conceptualized in the new sociology of childhood and explained my own standpoint in this regard. I also looked into the possible ways of mediating communication with children in research and described the general characteristics of children in middle childhood.

2.6. Summary and Point of Departure

This chapter have provided a selective overview of the four main areas underpinning this research: cultural adjustment and intercultural competence frameworks, empirical

studies on children as cultural travellers, adaptation challenges, and my philosophy of research with children.

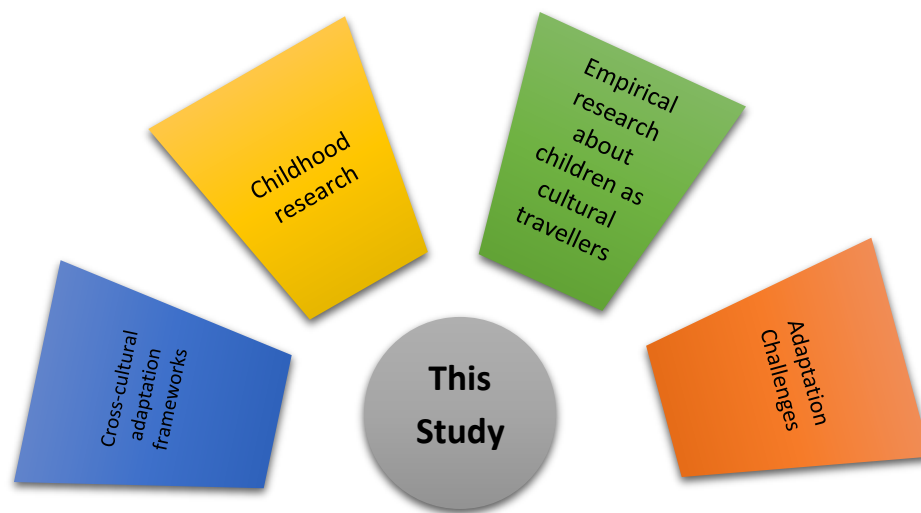
First, I presented a selective overview of models of the adaptation process and intercultural competence, and presented the conceptual model of this study, Anderson 'obstacle' Model of Cross-cultural Adaptation. I summarized the empirical research about the experiences, challenges and well-being of sojourners, and pointed out the lack of research about cross-cultural adjustment in children, particularly the perspective of children as the members of the host society who receive newcomers. Then, I provided an overview of research on adaptation challenges. Finally, I explored the possible ways of mediating communication with children in research, described the general characteristics of 'middle childhood', and highlighted the importance of innovative research methodology, particularly in childhood research.

Research in a country like Iran can contribute to our broader understanding of the nature of learning about other cultures and the impact of this on children. The findings of this research can develop understanding about child sojourners in other parts of the world, help schools hosting Iranian child sojourners, and redress the stereotypical views. Very little research targeted Iranian children and their understandings of adaptation process, and those very few studies mainly focussed on Iranian refugees (See Almqvist and Hwang 1999; Almqvist and Broberg 1999; Almqvist and Brandell-Forsberg 1995). In the present study, I aim to narrow this existing gap by targeting children being educated in Iran and exploring their understandings and experiences of issues such as cross-cultural adjustment and intercultural interaction. To this end, I use innovative and participatory methodologies which are particularly unique in the context of Iran. Moreover, through understanding children's current levels of

awareness, I aim to investigate the potentials for creating opportunities for intercultural learning.

As mentioned earlier in this chapter, due to the unique focus of this study on children studying in Iran at primary level and their understandings of intercultural interaction and cross-cultural adjustment, the four areas covered in this chapter are only indirectly related to the particular focus of this study. Figure 7 portrays this relationship.

Figure 7. Visual representation of the relation between the literature and this study



Chapter 3

Research Methodology

3.1. Introduction

In this chapter, I describe the approach to this research and the structure and organization of the research with the children. Then, I explain and justify the methodological choices I made and the design of the research project, and describe the data generation and analysis processes. This chapter ends with explaining the matters of validity and reliability of the data collection instruments, as well as the ethical issues regarding research with children.

3.2. Research Approach

In order to be able to adopt a particular research approach, first it is necessary to revisit the research questions. This study intends to provide answer to the following research questions.

1. How do Iranian children make sense of /understand cross-cultural interactions and adjustment processes?
2. What are the advantages and limitations of using innovative participatory research methodologies with children in the given context?

The first question is a conceptual question, exploring the participants' knowledge and understanding of cross-cultural interaction and adjustment processes, while the second question is a 'meta question' which emerged during the data collection process. This question addresses the methodological challenges and advantages of using innovative participatory tools.

3.2.1. Paradigmatic Position

Ontology asks about the nature of reality (Guba and Lincoln 1989; Richards 2003). It is '[t]he nature of the world and what we can know about it' (Snape and Spencer 2003:16). Believing that there are various realities which are socially constructed and 'created by different individuals and groups at different times in different circumstances' (Richards 2003:34), my ontological position is relativism.

Epistemology is the science or study of knowledge. My epistemological stance is constrained by the answer I have already given to the ontological question (Guba and Lincoln 1994; Guba and Lincoln 1989). Epistemology 'is concerned with the ways of knowing and learning about the social world' (Snape and Spencer 2003:13). Believing that knowledge is constructed via 'interaction between the world and the individuals' (Richards 2003:35), I adopt a subjectivist epistemological stance. With respect to the qualitative part of the research, I believe that the findings of this study are constructed through the interaction of the participants with each other, with the research instruments, and with me as the researcher. According to Guba and Lincoln (1994:111) in research with subjectivist position, '[t]he investigator and the object of investigation are assumed to be interactively linked so that the "findings" are literally created as the investigation proceeds'. In other words, it is the interaction between the researcher and the participants that creates the data which emerges through the inquiry process (Guba and Lincoln 1989). Tangen (2008:161) also argues that 'constructing meanings grounded in individual and social actions and activities is not an individual process that occurs in isolation; meanings are constructed through and by dialogue and inter-subjective communication'.

A paradigm is 'a basic set of beliefs, a set of assumptions we are willing to make, which serves as touchstones in guiding our activities' (Guba and Lincoln 1989:80).

Based on my epistemological and ontological positions, constructivism is the qualitative paradigm of this study. The fundamental principle of this position is that

...reality is socially constructed, so the focus of research should be on an understanding of this construction and the multiple perspectives it implies. Actors are individuals with biographies, acting in particular circumstances at particular times and constructing meanings from events and interactions (Richards 2003:38).

3.2.2. Methodological Approach

The research methods in this study were a ‘child-friendly’ questionnaire and a set of group interviews with participatory activities. Hence, the study is considered mixed method. With respect to the mixed method approach, Dörnyei (2007: 164) states that ‘combining and increasing the number of the research strategies used within a particular project would broaden the scope of the investigation and enrich the scholars’ ability to draw conclusions about the problem under study’.

In this study the data collection began by the distribution of a child-friendly questionnaire amongst pupils, attempting to reach relatively large numbers of children. The questionnaire was used to gain insights into the broad characteristics of a large number of children. Although this questionnaire was not just a survey in its standard sense, as it was carefully designed to engage children and encourage them to express their feelings and opinions through activities like drawing, it was still very difficult to gain comprehensive data about the participants’ perspectives via questionnaire alone, therefore, semi-structured group interviews were also carried out in order to obtain more in-depth data from the child-participants.

It should be noted that, given the open nature of some of the questions in this ‘child-friendly’ questionnaire, this study does not attempt to use any form of correlational analysis or inferential statistics. Rather, descriptive statistics (e.g. percentage) are provided and a simple analysis of the quantitative data is supported by reference to the qualitative data from the responses to the open-end questions and the follow-up interview comments. Therefore, this study is considered mixed-method with more weight on the qualitative method.

The group interview created the environment where the participants were given voice within the research process to express their subjective experiences and perspectives, and to comment on some of the responses from the questionnaire that needed clarification. ‘Listening to children’s voices in research usually means studying children’s experiences and views of their lives’ (Tangen 2008:159). In this study, listening to children’s voices is viewed as ‘an active process of communication that involves hearing and/or reading, interpreting and constructing meanings, and the understanding of the child that results from listening to its voice therefore is contextual and interactional’ (Tangen 2008:159).

3.3. Research Design

When children are the participants of research, many issues such as ethics, consent, power relations, and methodology should be considered more carefully. Grover (2004) argues that children can contribute to different aspects of research and be the integral part of the research process. In order to avoid possible adult interpretation, Grover (2004) advises negotiation with children about the research topic and the methods of discussion. Having this in mind, this study tries to engage children in all stages of the project. Hence, this study consists of three main phases.



Phase 1 (Aug. 2012): To include children as part of the construction of the research tools, the content, structure and format of the research tools (questionnaire and participatory activities) were discussed with three children (10 to 12 years of age) through a variety of activities in three individual interviews. In this way children's views were gained and their input was considered and incorporated into the study.

Phase 2 (Oct.-Nov. 2012): The data for this research were collected via both questionnaire and group interviews. The data collection began by the distribution of a questionnaire amongst 310 students (aged 10-12) in five private primary schools in Tehran; 294 completed questionnaires were returned. To obtain more in-depth data, five semi-structured group interviews with participatory activities were carried out with 27 students who were also the respondents of the questionnaire (4-6 students in each interview).

Phase 3 (Mar. 2013): Four months after the completion of Phase 2, the follow-up session was organized to share the initial findings with the interview participants about the project they had been involved in a few months earlier. The participants in this phase were the same as the interview participants in Phase 2 (with exception of the participants at KHER who did not take part in this phase of the research due to the school's restricted schedule).

Table 7 shows a summary of the different phases in this study, all the methods used, when each instrument was employed, who were involved (apart from the researcher), and how long each method took.

Table 7. Summary of methods used in this study

PHASE	METHOD	PARTICIPANTS	WHEN	DURATION
Phase 1	3 individual interviews	3 (10-12 yrs.)	Aug. 2012	1-1.5 hrs. each interview
				
Phase 2	294 questionnaire in 5 private school	294 Grades 4-6 (10-12 yrs.)	Oct.-Nov. 2012	30-45 mins.
	5 group interviews in 5 private schools	27 (4-6 in each interview)	Nov. 2012	1-1.5 hrs. each interview
				
Phase 3	4 group interviews (The same participants in Phase 2)	19 (4-6 in each interview)	Mar. 2013	1 hr. each interview

In the following section each of these phases is described in detail.

3.4. Phase 1: Preparation Sessions

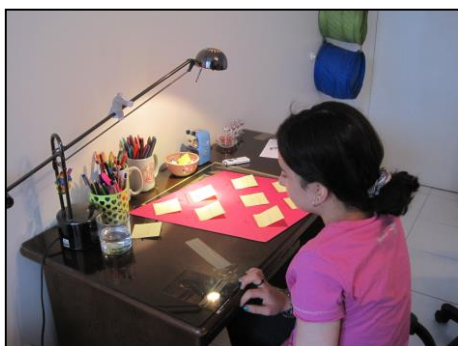
The preparation phase was not strictly speaking piloting, but it nevertheless was helpful at the design stage. In this phase, three children (10 to 12 years of age) were invited to comment about the local children's needs, interests and preferred ways of engaging in research. It should be noted that the children in this initial negotiation phase of the study were not participating in the main research. One of the main reasons for selecting these particular participants for this stage of the research was that I used to teach English to these children privately for a duration of five years, which resulted in the establishment of a strong trusting relationship between us. My acquaintance with their parents also facilitated obtaining consent for this part of the research. Since these three children had not met each other previously, and their unfamiliarity with each other could prevent them from expressing themselves freely, the research preparation session was carried out separately with each of them. The sessions were at my house where these participants used to come and have their private lessons. They seemed

excited about revisiting the place after two years. They walked around the room examining different classroom materials and commented about them. This turned out to be an excellent warm up for the session.

In these separate sessions, which lasted for one hour and half, the participants commented about the content and format of the research instruments. Two of the sessions were carried out in the participants' mother tongue, Persian, to avoid the misconception of being evaluated by their language proficiency. The other session was in English due to the participant's preference; this participant was competent enough to easily express herself in English. None of the participants had the experience of being part of research before and the whole concept of helping an adult researcher designing research instruments was something very new and exciting to them.

The permission was obtained from the participants and their parents. The issues of confidentiality and anonymity were explained in the beginning of the sessions and children were invited to choose pseudonyms for themselves. At the end of each session the participant was given a small gift to take home. Pictures below illustrate the setting of the session.

Picture 1. Camellia doing Activity 1



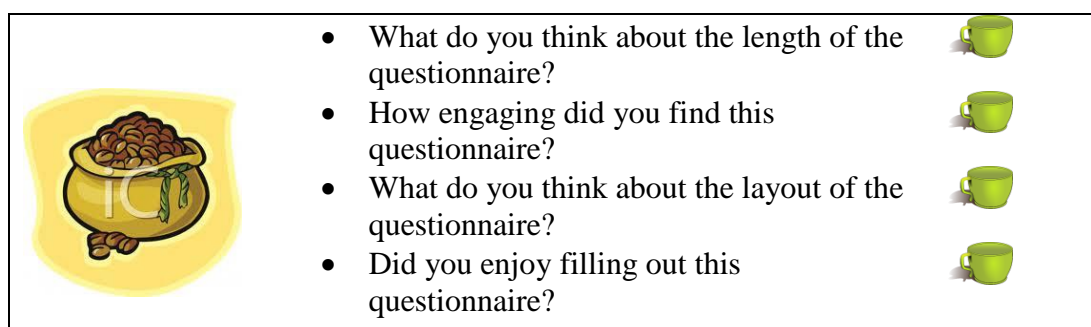
Picture 2. Reza doing Activity 2



3.4.1. Procedure

After the purpose of session was explained and the emphasis was made that there was no right or wrong answer, each participant was invited to fill out the questionnaire. After all the questions were answered, a bag of beans and 4 cups (one for each of the four questions below) were given to the participant to evaluate the questionnaire by scoring each of the following questions separately on a scale ranging from 0 to 3 (see Figure 8). The participant answered each question by putting 0 to 3 beans in each cup. They were encouraged to provide an explanation for their answers by giving examples from the questionnaire. In this way, each participant was engaged in a fun and meaningful activity, commenting on the quality of the research instrument. In addition, by inviting these children to score the quality of the questionnaire rather than to just answer the questions about the questionnaire, I tried to create a situation where the power relations between us were less asymmetrical

Figure 8. Bag of Beans Activity: the overall format of the instrument



Next, each participant was invited to point out the sections which were ambiguous or difficult to understand while browsing through the questionnaire. The last question was ‘what changes would you suggest to make this questionnaire more child-friendly?’

In the second part of the session, the participatory activities were evaluated. The children were encouraged to do the actual tasks. The initial plan was that in the activities which were designed for pair work, I would act as the ‘co-player’ (Mandell

1988). However, during the process of the first interview, I noticed some features of the ‘overlapping framing’ (Goffman 1974 cited in Garton and Copland 2010) due to the prior relationship with the participant. Garton and Copland (2010:537) explain that ‘in acquaintance interviews participants simultaneously engage in different activities within the overarching frame of the interview’. For example, when in response to my question about the design of the questionnaire (see Extract 0), Melody asked, ‘em where did you find them? (*Laughter*)’ instead of just providing the answer to the question. This is where the roles of interviewer and interviewee become ‘laminated’ (Roberts and Sarangi 1999 cited in Garton and Copland 2010).
Extract 0.



Line	Speaker	Original
1	Researcher	And what do you think about the layout of the questionnaire? The colour... the...
2	Melody	The pictures are so funny, look this one I was like haha... (<i>laughter</i>) They were good yeah... I think they were pretty much like really good..em where did you find them? (<i>laughter</i>)

Considering the nature of acquaintance interviews, I invited the participants to do the tasks individually with the understanding that activities are originally designed for pair work. At the end of each activity, the participant’s ideas about the whole process and length of each activity were canvassed. Finally, we discussed the ethical issues about research with children. I encouraged each participant to express his or her preference about the location and the setting of the group interviews.

3.4.2. Children’s Suggestions

In general, the participants found the questionnaire slightly long. The time they spent filling it out was more than what I had estimated, and some of the questions were marked as repetitive. Therefore, a couple of the questions were eliminated, and the length of the questions and the multiple choice items were shortened. Children

recommended more space for the ‘other’ sections. Some of the pictures were marked as ‘childish’. These images were also changed. Some parts of the Persian version of the questionnaire were marked as unnatural translations, so these phrases were edited.

One of the smilies was identified as ambiguous; therefore, this drawing  was replaced by  to demonstrate ‘disappointment’ in a better way.

Finally, we negotiated the location and setting of the interviews. Children reminded me that friendship between the pairs could be an important factor in creating a more comfortable environment.

3.5. Phase 2: Data Collection

The second phase of this study is the data collection, which consists of the administration of a ‘child-friendly’ questionnaire followed by group interviews and participatory activities in five primary schools in Tehran. The following sections describe the content and construct, the sampling and the data collection procedure of these two research instruments.

3.5.1. Questionnaire

Questionnaires are popular research instruments in social science, mainly because of their capability of collecting a huge amount of information in a short period of time (Alerby and Kostenius 2011; Dörnyei 2007). Brown (2001:6) explains that questionnaires are ‘any written instruments that present respondents with a series of questions or statements to which they are to react either by writing out their answers or selecting from among existing answers’. In this study, questionnaires were used as an exploratory tool to investigate the complicated concepts of intercultural awareness and cultural adaptation in a child-friendly format. The questions in this questionnaire were attitudinal questions, aiming to find out about the participants’ opinion, attitudes,

interests and values about intercultural interaction, and transitional processes. Alerby and Kostenius (2011:126) suggest the following ethical guidelines when using the questionnaire as the research method in research with children: inviting children to participate in questionnaire construction, building relationships before distributing questionnaires and providing feedback to the participating children, as well as analysing the silent messages in the collected questionnaires. These guidelines have been taken into consideration in an attempt to push the limitations of the questionnaire as a research tool, and engage children with this method of research.

3.5.1.1. Content and Construction

One of the basic differences between the written tests and questionnaires is that in questionnaires the information about the respondents is elicited in a non-evaluative manner. In other words, questionnaire items do not have correct or incorrect answers (Dörnyei 2007). However, child respondents may provide responses to please adults when they do not fully understand the activity (Pinter 2006). I tried to avoid loaded questions which readily reveal expected answers. To this end, contextualisation was used as the main tool to gain insight into the children's perceptions of intercultural encounters. Methods which require visual representation are more suitable for younger children, and methods which need analysis, particularly those which involve 'why?' questions, are more relevant to older children (O' Kane 2008). Hence, in this questionnaire, I used the combination of both as children of 10 to 12 years age are old enough to go beyond simple visual representation, but not cognitively skilled enough to be involved with a great deal of analysis, particularly in relation to ideas of causation. Therefore, the questions which required reasoning were contextualized and also presented in the form of multiple choice questions.

Considering the short concentration spans of those in the middle age group (Kellett and Ding 2004; Santrock 2007) the questionnaire, which contained 17 questions, was designed to be completed within a single lesson and in a way that embraced a variety of activities. The children's level of language and cognitive development were taken into account in designing this research instrument. The questionnaire was in the respondents' mother tongue, except at INTL where it was in English, as the participants were bilingual and not all of them were fluent in Persian. The analysis of the data has been also done in Persian (except for the data from INTL), and English translations of the responses are only used for the purpose of representation in this thesis.

The basic structure of the questionnaire was adopted but considerably re-worked from the questionnaire I had designed and administered during my Master's research (Zandian 2011a). Considering that children in Iran do not share similar intercultural experiences with the participants in my Master's research, the questions were changed to cope with the Iranian children's reality. Educational regulations and the participants' cultural background were the other factors which were considered in designing the questions. Moreover, the comments received from the participants of my Master's research as well as the children's suggestions in the preparation stage were also taken into account.

The questionnaire was divided into two sections, the first part (questions 1-13) studied children's perceptions of cross-cultural transitions and adjustment, and the second part (questions 14-17) investigated their understandings of intercultural interaction from the viewpoint of members of the host society. Although the two sections overlapped in some points, this would not be any problem for the analysis of the data. In Appendix

4 the objective for each question is explained. Chapter 4 also explains the objectives of questions one by one.

3.5.1.2. Format and Layout

The questionnaire was designed in the format of a 4-page booklet to avoid similarities with the exam papers (see Appendices 2 & 3). On the cover page, I emphasized that the questionnaire was confidential and respondents did not need to write their names on the paper. The students were also informed that their participation was voluntary and they were not obliged to fill out the questionnaires. It is tempting and indeed normal for children to look at other people's responses. In order to encourage them to rely on their own ideas, on the cover page, the emphasis was made that this was not a test and there was no right or wrong answers. In this section, I also aimed to obtain some biographical information about the participants and whether they had any previous cross-cultural experience as research has shown that this might affect the adjustment process (Ward et al. 2001). An illustration of a 'boy' was used in the same page for a follow-up question which was repeated in other similar type of questions throughout the whole questionnaire in order to help the children to easily recognize what was required of them and to encourage them to complete the questionnaire more quickly.

In terms of the format of the questions in the questionnaire, smilies displaying different expressions were used to investigate the participants' attitude about intercultural experiences. In selecting images of children with different nationalities consideration was made to avoid stereotyping (see Appendices 2 & 3, Question 12). Also some of images in the questionnaire administered to the boys were different from the images administered to the girls. For instance, in the questionnaire administered to the boys,

images in question 12 were all pictures of boys (see Appendices 2 & 3). As in Iran schools are single sex and students only have classmates from the same sex. Due to children's limited ability to express themselves, the dominant type of the questions were close-ended items. However, this type of questions provides a narrow range of possible answers which may either result in unanswered questions or limit the chance of receiving unexpected responses which can be found in open-responses questions (Park 2002). Having an exhaustive list of categories in MC items and including an 'other' category to the MC items are possible ways to reduce this limitation of the close-ended items (Dörnyei 2003). With respect to the role of unanswered questions in a questionnaire, Alerby and Kostenius (2011:121) explain that

[a] person, for example, a child filling out a questionnaire, can elect to be silent, but in some situations silence is imposed, as one cannot find words to respond. This line of reasoning can lead one to an interpretation and conclusion that silence becomes a language when the ordinary vocabulary is not sufficient, or when one favours silence above the spoken words.

Having this in mind, the 'other' category in the MC items with enough space for free writing was added to the majority of the closed-ended questions to provide more freedom of expression. Kellett and Ding (2004) also recommend sentence completion as one way of asking questions from children. That was why some of the questions were rephrased in the form of sentence completion. In the last question children also had the opportunity to express their ideas through drawing, in case they found it difficult to express themselves in words. Previous research revealed the fact that children can express their thoughts and interpretations of the world more freely through drawing (O' Kane 2008). In this regard, Veale (2005) states that drawing is one of the methods through which children can express their own meaning in a fun

and familiar activity. Moreover, drawing facilitates the transference of thought for those participants who have limited verbal skills and vocabulary (Sewell 2011).

3.5.1.3. Sampling

310 questionnaires were distributed amongst the students and 294 completed questionnaires were collected in five primary schools in Tehran (see Table 8).

Table 8. Summary of the questionnaire respondents in 5 schools

Schools	Gender	Grades	No.	Total	Experience of being abroad	
					Travelled	Not travelled
MAH	Girls	4	23	65	68	4
		5	17			
		6	25			
KHER	Girls	4	24	98	95	3
		5	47			
		6	27			
INTL	Girls	4	12	31	39	0
		5	8			
		6	11			
MOB	Girls	4	17	63	50	13
		5	22			
		6	24			
HES	Boys	4	13	37	30	7
		5	10			
		6	14			
Total Number of respondents				294	267	27

I was present during the administration of all the questionnaires, and in a couple of the sessions the teachers were also present. First, I explained who I was and why I was inviting the students to fill out the questionnaire. Then, I explained the issues of confidentiality and anonymity. I emphasised that this task was voluntary and respondents could quit anytime during the session. Those who filled out the questionnaire received a rubber pencil as a gift.

Respondents asked some questions at the beginning of the session. They were curious to know how answering this questionnaire would help them and/ or me. There were questions about the questionnaire as well; such as should they fill it out with a pen or pencil; can they choose two answers; would it be ok if they did not want to answer via

drawing (referring to Question 17); what if they did not know the answer to some of the questions; what if they wanted to write their names, and some other questions. The majority of their questions were already answered on the cover page or the instruction section of the questionnaire, but I believe they were so curious about these issues that they started asking even before looking at the questionnaires. Respondents also wanted to learn more about my identity, how long I had been living in the UK, and whether I could speak English or not.

3.5.2. Group Interviews

Although the questionnaire in this study was not just a standard survey, and it was carefully designed to engage children and encourage them to express their feelings and opinions through activities like drawing, it was still difficult to gain comprehensive data about the participants' perspectives via the questionnaire alone. Therefore, to obtain more in-depth data, semi-structured group interviews with participatory activities were the other methods of data collection in this study.

Group interviews can be less intimidating than individual interviews for children (Cohen et al. 2000). Harwood (2010:7) also argues that '[g]aining an insider's perspective on aspects of the child's world is possible, through dynamic processes that foster dialogue, listening, voice, and collaboration with child informants'. In general, there are two types of task-based interviews: those in which the task is used as a tool to expand the information available to the interviewer; and those in which the task plays a central role in the process of the interview and the observation of proposed solutions is the central aim (Houssart and Hilary 2011). In this study the former type was used as the aim was to obtain more data from the discussion which arose from the participatory tasks.

3.5.2.1. Participatory Activities

Creswell (2007:21) explains that in a research project with the constructivist approach,

[t]he questions become broad and general so that the participants can construct the meaning of a situation, a meaning typically forged in discussion or interactions with other persons. The more open-ended the questioning, the better, as the researcher listens carefully to what people say or do in their life setting.

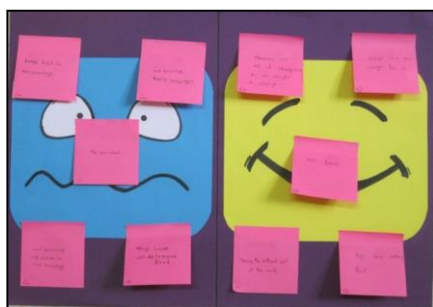
Having this in mind, the majority of the activities and questions in the interview sessions were open-ended, encouraging discussion and interaction amongst the participants.

In terms of the content of the questions in the interviews, in order to prevent stock responses, Richards (2003) suggests avoiding over-reliance on straightforward questions, and recommends considering the use of oblique but specific questions. That is why the questions in this study are mainly in the format of the tasks, which address a set of specific questions, but in a less straightforward manner. As the literature on participatory activities suggests, in doing research with children, it is easier to communicate through media other than verbal explanation or written forms (James et al. 1998). Similarly, Houssart and Hilary (2011) mention that the discussion around a task can form part of the data in the interview with children and the task can be used as an aid helping children to express their views. For these reasons, Hopes-&-Worries and Diamond-Ranking were the two participatory activities which were used in the interview sessions. These activities are described below:

1) *Hopes-&-Worries*: The first activity aimed to explore children's worries and excitement about the transition to a new context. In this activity pairs were encouraged

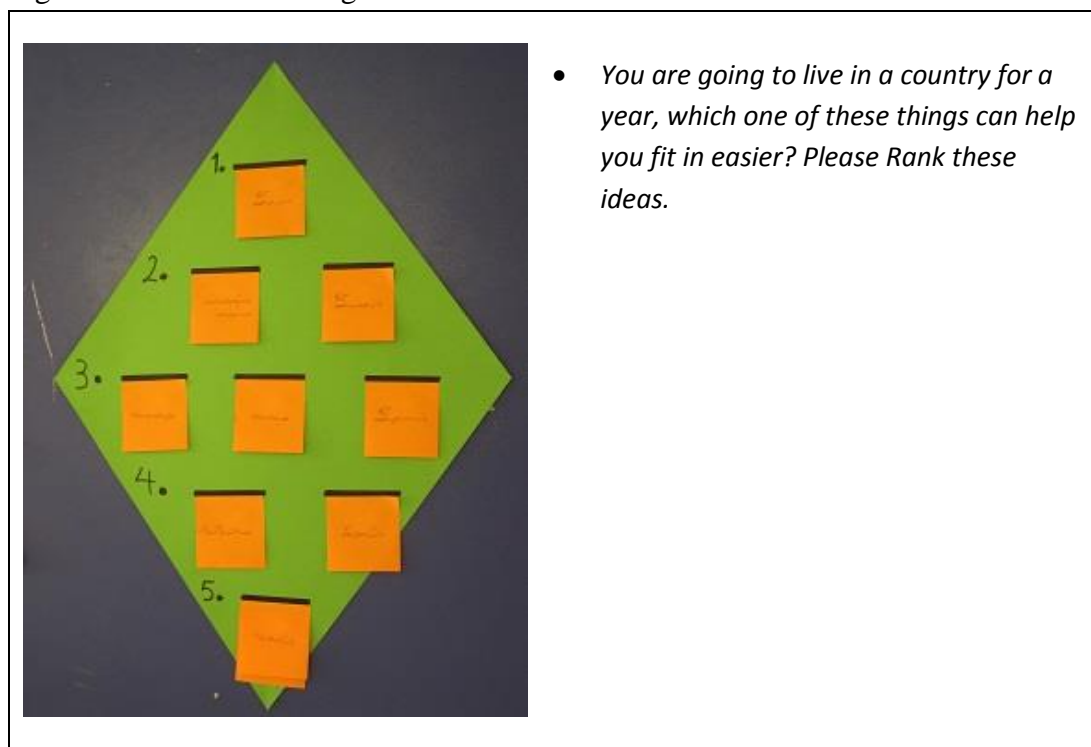
to name three to five of their main concerns about moving to another country. They were also invited to name three to five of the most exciting things about moving to another country. Each pair was given a cardboard, which was divided into two sections: 'hopes' and 'worries' (see Picture 3). Pairs negotiated their answers and wrote their statements on post-its and placed them on the allocated sections. Then groups observed each other's work and commented about it. In order to clarify the instructions, examples of the most stressful and the most exciting situations were provided to the children.

Picture 3. Hopes-&-Worries activity: the overall format of the instrument



2) *Diamond-Ranking*: Considering the literature about research with children, the 'diamond ranking exercise' (O'Kane 2008) was modified for the purpose of this research. Due to the satisfactory result of this exercise in the similar research with British host-national child-participants, this exercise was inserted into the participatory activities. This activity aimed to explore children's views about the most helpful factors in managing the transition to a new sociocultural environment. One diamond shaped cardboard and 10 sentences written on separate post-its were given to each pair. Nine boxes were allocated on each diamond to place the post-its, with 'the most helpful' at the top, the 'least helpful' at the bottom, and one extra post-it for the item which was assumed unnecessary (see Figure 9).

Figure 9. Diamond ranking: the overall format of the instrument



Pairs worked together and decided where to put the 10 statements based on how helpful they could be. The statements were *Knowing the language*, *Having friendly neighbours and classmate*, *Knowing someone there*, *Being friendly and having a big smile*, *Having a pet*, *Being a good student*, *Being in contact with your friends in your home town*, *Knowing about the new place*, *Being good at games*, *Being with your family*. These 10 statements were from the findings of the questionnaires, and the coping strategies which were mentioned in the related literature (Black and Stephens 1989; Furnham and Bochner 1982; Spencer-Oatey and Xiong 2005; Ward and Kennedy 1999). Once the participants reached consensus on the placement of the post-its, the two groups were asked to compare their work and explain their decisions.

3.5.2.2. Sampling

The interviews and participatory activities were designed in a group setting to include 30 children who had formerly been the respondents of the questionnaire; however, a total number of 27 children participated in this phase. In each session, 4-6 students

participated in pairs. Although it was mentioned that the questionnaire was anonymous, some of the participants preferred to write their names on it. Since they were comfortable that I recognize them when studying the questionnaire, I assumed that this was a sign of trust. Therefore, I first tried to select the interview participants from the ones which had their names on the questionnaires. In this way, I could identify whether they had the experience of travelling abroad or not. From the way they filled out the questionnaire I also learnt if they were interested in the topic or not (e.g. if they provided explanations when it was required and/ or provided complete answers). In this regard, Dörnyei (2007:172) states that ‘an initial questionnaire in the study can help to select the participants for the subsequent qualitative phase systematically’. However, it should be noted that this was not the initial objective of the administration of the questionnaire, and the questionnaire was designed to be anonymous. Thus, it was not possible to identify all the survey participants. In total, the selection of 18 out of 27 interview participants was partly based on the questionnaire responses, and the rest were nominated based on the recommendation of staff members (teacher, principal or head of English group). They recommended the ones who were expressive, responsible, and active. Table 9 illustrates the participants in the group interviews. It should be noted that pseudonyms are used for the schools and participants.

Table 9. Participants of the group interviews

School	Background	Grade	Pseudonym	Had their name on the Questionnaire
MAH	Travelled abroad	4	Noura	✓
			Baran	✓
		5	Lavagirl	✓
			Boloo	✓
		6	Julia	✓
			Emelie	✓
		4	Linda	×
			Khandan	×

KHER	Travelled abroad	5	Must	✓
			Baghali	×
			Shambalil	×
		6	Alma	×
			Lili	×
INTL	Lived abroad	4	DonDon	✓
			Lilia	×
		5	Lili	×
			Sabrina	×
		6	Lucy	✓
			Patra	✓
MOB	Not travelled abroad	4	Bloom	×
			Isabel	×
		5	Nilou	✓
			Sarah	✓
HES	Not travelled abroad	4	Abi	✓
			Lion	✓
		5	Max	✓
			Mr.Lee	✓
		6	Ahmad	✓
			Miad	✓

With respect to the selection of the pairs, in social science interviews, the use of friendship groups is suggested as it can promote confidence and discussion amongst the children (Watson 1999 cited in Houssart and Hilary 2011; Lewis 1992). With this intention, children's friendship was the other criterion for grouping participants in each grade. I also talked with the nominated participants and made sure they were happy to be part of the group interview and those in the same grade were happy to be partners during the session. In general, the participants seemed relaxed during the interviews and expressed positive feelings about the session.

3.5.2.3. Procedure

Interviews were carried out a week after the questionnaires had been administered. The duration of the session was approximately one hour and half. Due to the school policy, the participatory research was located at the schools. Barker and Weller (2003) describe schools as spaces over which children have little or no control, despite the

fact that they spend a great deal of time in these places. Being aware of the fact that schools as the location for research with children can have negative effects on the process of the research and prevent students from revealing their ideas because of the intrinsic power imbalance in the educational environments, I avoided classrooms as the venue for the group interview session, and the sessions were carried out in the library, the computer suite, and a spare room. Table 10 illustrates the outline of the interview sessions:

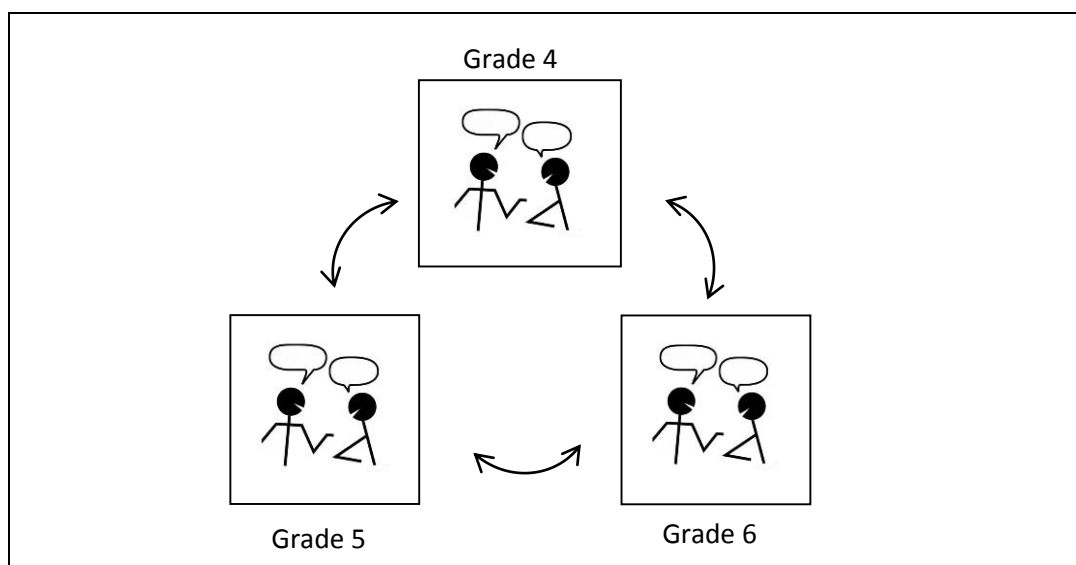
Table 10. Outline programme of group interviews

▪Arrival and setting up: snacks	
▪Explanations:	<p>Introduction and clarification of the purpose of the session.</p> <p>Explanation of the confidentiality and anonymity of the research. Participants selected pseudonyms for themselves.</p> <p>Encouraging spontaneous comments, questions, discussions and other child initiated comment. Emphasising that there is no right and wrong answers, and any comment is appreciated.</p> <p>Clarifying that children's participation is voluntary and they can withdraw without negative consequences.</p>
▪Positive ground rules: The importance of children's active participation.	
▪Obtaining recording permission from children	
▪Activity 1:	<p>Hopes-&-Worries: You are going to live in another country for a year, what are the things that concern you the most? What are the things you are looking forward to? Name 5 of each and place them on the allocated sections.</p> <p>Split into pairs with 10 post-its in each group.</p>
▪Activity 2:	<p>Diamond-Ranking: What would be the most helpful, if you had to live in a new country for a year?</p> <p>Split into pairs with 10 post-its in each group.</p>
▪Questions:	(All six participants together)
Q1:	Do you like to go to another country and live there for a year? Why?
Q2:	Do you like to have students from other countries in your class? Why?
Q3:	If yes, from which country? Why?
Q4:	Questions about the ambiguous sections of the questionnaire (e.g.Q11, Q17)
▪Feedback:	Participants were invited to give their feedback bout the process of the research.
▪Ending:	Thanking participants for their time and participation, reciprocating with offering them rubber pencils.

The participatory nature of the activities facilitated the explanation of the complex concept of transition to the children and also helped them to express their opinions in

a more relaxed and friendly way. It also created a natural opportunity to discuss issues further while child-participants had some activities in front of them to look at and manipulate. Figure 10 demonstrate the interaction between the participants in each interview.

Figure 10. Visual presentation of the interaction during the participatory activities



As Figure 10 illustrates, six participants from three different grades took part in the interviews. First, the two participants from each grade were asked to do two participatory activities in pairs. After completing each task, the three pairs were invited to share their results with one another. The variety of the responses triggered discussion, and the audio recorded data from the discussion was used for the analysis. The arrows illustrate the interaction amongst the six participants.

These types of activities minimized the existing power imbalance and encouraged the participants to comment on each other's work and describe their own work to each other instead of explaining it to the adult researcher (see Pictures 4 and 5; these pictures were taken during the interview sessions).

Picture 4. Interview at HES



Picture 5. Interview at MOB



Although it is impossible to entirely avoid ‘adult-centred interpretations and covert relations of power’ (Barron 2000 cited in Grover 2004) in the context of research with children, it is important that social researchers acknowledge the existence of such issues and value child-participants as ‘experts on their own subjective experience’ (Grover 2004:91). While respecting the power imbalance between adult researcher and children, every attempt was made to reduce this existing inequality by giving power to the children; for instance, I was sitting during the sessions so that children did not need to physically look up to me. The group interviews also generated lively interpersonal dynamics, where participants had opportunities for interaction and discussion (Houssart and Hilary 2011). Moreover, in group interviews children being in majority can reduce the existing power imbalance. In another attempt to minimize the power difference, I acted as the facilitator, encouraging the participants to engage with the activities and discussions, also checking on their understanding of the instructions and satisfaction to continue participating in the research.

3.6. Phase 3: Follow-up Sessions

Believing that it is the children’s right to be informed about the results of the research (Grover 2004; Matthews and Tucker 2000; Pinter and Zandian 2015) and aiming to promote children’s understanding of research process, I carried out four follow-up sessions approximately four months after the data collection had been completed. In

these sessions, the children and I reflected on the process of the main study, focussing on their experiences as the research participants in this study. Some parts of the transcribed/ analysed data were also shared with the children. Table 11 illustrates the outline of the session.

Table 11. The outline of the Follow-up session

▪Arrival and setting up : snacks	
▪Explanations:	Introducing myself and clarifying the purpose of the session. Ensuring that participants remember the research carried out 5 months ago. Explanation of the confidentiality and anonymity of the session. Encouraging spontaneous comments, questions, discussions and other child initiated comment. Emphasising that there is no right and wrong answers, and any comment is appreciated. Clarification that children's participation is voluntary and they can withdraw without negative consequences.
▪Positive ground rules:	The importance of children's active participation.
▪Obtaining recording permission from children	
▪Part 1:	Drama: Participants were encouraged to demonstrated Phase 2 (interview) of the research via role playing (Picture 5).
▪Part 2:	Participants commented about the research instruments, looking at the poster of the research (Picture 6) and playing 'Bag & Beans' (Figure 9).
▪Part 3:	My original MA dissertation was shown to the children and they learnt how their participation in the research would be represented in a book.
▪Part 4:	Children learnt about the methods of representing research data, looking at a poster displaying their interview transcriptions (Picture 7)
▪Feedback:	Participants were invited to give their feedback about the process of the research.
▪Ending:	Thanking participants for their time and participation, reciprocating with offering them erasers and stickers.

In total, 4 follow-up sessions at 4 schools (MAH, MOB, INTL, and HES) were carried out before the spring holiday began in Iran. In MAH and INTL one participant in each group was absent on the day of the interview, consequently, she did not take part in the follow-up session. The findings of this part contribute to answering some parts of the 'meta research question', intending to explore the advantages and limitations of using innovative participatory research methodologies with children.

First, the participants used drama to re-create the setting of the participatory interviews. One of the participants acted as the researcher while the rest were playing

their own roles as the participants. The aim of this task was to explore the aspects that the participants could recall from their first experience of being part of a research project. This activity was also used as an ice-breaker to give the floor to the children and encourage them to express themselves. Another reason for doing this activity was to induce richer responses through contextualization (Pinter 2006). Picture 6 illustrates this activity

Picture 6. Drama at MOB



In the second part, I displayed a poster in which the different phases of the research were illustrated (see Picture 7), and encouraged the participants to comment about the data collection phase (questionnaire and the participatory interview) and evaluate each activity.

Picture 7. Poster of the research process



In the third part, I showed my MA dissertation to the participants, so that they could see how the final presentation of a research project would look like. At the same time, anticipating that the adult product may not be interesting for them, I made a large poster, which illustrated how I matched the children's data extracts to ideas in the wider literature about cross-cultural adaptation (see Picture 8).

Picture 8. Poster showing the transcriptions



In general, children welcomed me back, asking for more questionnaires and interviews. However, despite my attempt to separate the research activities from classroom routines; some participants did not approach them differently. This might be due to the lack of research culture and practice in Iranian education system, in addition to the fact that the classroom routines are the natural and dominant practices at schools. Most of the participants did not have the experience of actively taking part in research and this was a new concept for them.

3.7. Validity and Reliability of Instruments

Validity and reliability are the two fundamental factors in evaluating research (Richards 2003). The relativist ontological position of the qualitative part of this research conveys that there is no objective universal truth. Hence, validity is more a matter of degree which can be maximized by certain considerations in research (Cohen et al. 2000; Richards 2003). The honesty, depth, richness and scope of the data,

selection of the participants, triangulation and objectivity of the researcher are some of the factors which can improve the validity of the research (Winter 2000 cited in Cohen et al. 2000). In terms of triangulation, the data for this research was collected via both questionnaire and group interviews to establish the trustworthiness of the data, and this consequently adds to the validity of the study. The questionnaire provided wide scope of information, while the group interviews added to the depth and richness of the data. Richards (2003) recommends member validation, constant comparison, and negative evidence as the three key validity checks. The follow-up session in this study provided the members validation to improve the validity of the study. In the analysis of the data, the codes and categories were constantly compared with other codes through cycles of codification (see 3.9.1), and the negative cases were identified and their relevance to the interpretation of the data was studied.

Reliability or generalizability means the capability to be extended to other settings (Richards 2003). Although the participants are typical of the students in private school in Iran, they are not representative of all Iranian children. Hence, I do not intend to generalize the findings of this study to all Iranian primary school children. However, as suggested by Richards (2003), the description of the findings is sufficiently detailed and rich so that the readers can respond to it in terms of their own experience.

3.8. Ethical Issues, Dilemmas and Considerations

Although many ethical issues are important in research with participants of any age, in carrying out research with child-participants, some additional issues arise, and this is because of children's different way of experiencing the world and communicating (Thomas and O'Kane 1998). Accessing the child-participants is also strictly controlled within academia and requires the doctoral students to obtain consent from a 'hierarchy of gatekeepers' (Harwood 2010). The consents for participation in the preparation

sessions were obtained from the parents and children on the phone. In the case of the questionnaire, first the consents were obtained from the principals of the schools, and later permission letters were distributed to the students' parents and guardians, explaining that the data would be collected via anonymous questionnaires and would be kept confidential. However, the principals of MAH, KHER, and INTL approved the content of the questionnaire and stated that the permission from parents was usually required for medical research only, and obtaining the permission for educational research such as mine was something very uncommon in Iran. In another school (HES), I was invited to attend the parents' evenings, so that I could introduce myself, explain my research to the parents, and answer their questions regarding my research. At the end of this session, I distributed the consent forms and obtained their permission. I believe obtaining permission from the parents in this way was very practical as the parents could express their concerns and ask any question regarding the research process. Most of the parents who were present in the meeting gave their consent. However, the students whose parents were not present at the parents' evening lost the chance to participate in the research. Moreover, this requires arrangement with the school for attending the parents' evening, which is not always possible.

Finally, children's consents were obtained on the day of the administration of the research by mentioning that they were not obliged to answer the questions and they had the right not to take part in the research. Children were also informed about the confidentiality and anonymity of the data collection process. The issues of willingness to participate and confidentiality were also regularly revisited.

According to Morrow and Richards (1996:98), 'the biggest ethical challenge for researchers working with children is the disparities in power and status between adults and children'. In order to redress the power imbalance and establish a good relationship

with children, I visited the schools several times (approximately seven visits in each school) before administering the questionnaires to communicate with the children during the breaks and introduce myself. None of the students approached me at the first time I was in their school; however, I could feel the curious looks on me and hear the whispering amongst some of the students. In order not to resemble the staff, I sat on the ground or a bench and had my own snacks during the breaks. On the second or third break, a couple of students approached me and asked: 'Miss, which grade's teacher are you?' I used this opportunity to explain that I was not a teacher and I was only a student who needed their help for my study. In the preparation session, Melody recommended that I introduce myself as a university student rather than a teacher so that students would trust me more readily. After learning that I was not a staff member, some of the students offered me some snacks (which I believe was a good sign of friendship), some asked my name and gradually I could gain their trust, and after a week many of the students greeted me with a smile and sometimes gave me a hug; some even called me 'Miss university student'. In one of the schools, I managed to attend the lunch break and talk with the students while they were having their lunch. This really helped me improve my relationship with the students, as eating at the same table has an important cultural value in the Iranian culture.

With respect to the children's understanding of the process of the research, at several points during the research process, I took some time to explicitly discuss participants' understanding of what was happening in the session. I also encouraged spontaneous comments, questions, discussions and other child initiated comments. In terms of obtaining consent for the second stage of the research with children, after selecting the groups with the help of the teachers based on children's friendship network as well as

their experience of travelling to another country, the consent for recording the interviews was obtained from those who agreed to be part of the research.

Pseudonyms have been used for the schools and the participants. DonDon[T-4INTL-1] and Nilou[N-5MOB-2] are the two examples of the codes given to the participants. T/N after the pseudonym means whether the participants had the experience of travelling abroad or not. The number after the hyphen is the participant's year of study, the next word is the pseudonym for the school they study in, and the number at the end of the code shows whether the data is from the first or the follow-up interview. For instance, DonDon[T-4INTL-1] had the experience of travelling abroad and was in year 4 at INTL.

3.9. Nature of Data Analysis

Kvale and Brinkmann (2009:191) state that, 'theoretical conceptions of what is investigated should provide the basis for making decisions of how- the method to be used for analysing the content'. It is important that the theoretical framework and methods of analysis match the research questions and the aims of the research (Braun and Clarke 2006). With respect to the analysis of the questionnaire, considering the qualitative nature of the questions, only descriptive statistics (e.g. percentage) were provided (see Chapter 4). The analysis of the quantitative data is further supported by reference to qualitative data from the group interview comments. With respect to the qualitative data analysis, which is the main focus of this research, a hybrid process of inductive and deductive thematic analysis (Fereday and Muir-Cochrane 2006) was adopted. Anderson's obstacle model of cross-cultural adjustment was used as the template for the deductive part of the analysis. According to Braun and Clarke (2006:81), thematic analysis 'can be a constructionist method, which examines the ways in which events, realities, meanings, experiences and so on are the effects of a

range of discourses operating within society'. Richards (2003:271) sees the qualitative data analysis process as 'an open process of breaking down the data set and exploring different ways of arranging it in order to promote a better understanding of what it represents'.

In this section, first I describe the process of the hybrid thematic analysis. Then, I explain the issues relating to the transcription and translation of the data.

3.9.1. Data Coding and Identification of Themes

'Thematic analysis is a method for identifying, analysing and reporting patterns (themes) within data.' (Braun and Clarke 2006:79). Fereday and Muir-Cochrane (2006:82) describe thematic analysis as 'a form of pattern recognition within the data, where emerging themes become the categories for analysis'. When dealing with qualitative data, the key requirement is to become more and more familiar with the data and develop analytical insights into the underlying meaning (Dörnyei 2007). According to Creswell (2007:148), qualitative data analysis 'consists of preparing and organizing the data for analysis, then reducing the data into themes through a process of coding and condensing the codes, and finally representing the data in figures, tables, or a discussion'. Believing that thematic analysis 'offers an accessible and theoretically flexible approach to analysing qualitative data' (Braun and Clarke 2006:77), this analytical method is chosen for the analysis of the qualitative data in this research. The very basic and procedural key actions related to this analytic method are getting familiar with the data set, generating initial codes, searching for themes, reviewing and refining themes (Rapley 2011:274). It is important to note that this is more of a cyclical process rather than a linear procedure, involved with a constant moving back and forward between the entire data set, and the coded extracts of data (Braun and Clarke 2006).

The initial engagement with the data is a vital part of the data-coding process which enables the researcher to explore the potential of different elements in the data set (Rapley 2011). During the first phase of the thematic analysis, the researcher has already familiarized him/herself with the data, and has generated an initial list of ideas about what is in the data and what is interesting about them (Braun and Clarke 2006). In order to familiarize myself with the qualitative data, I listened to the interview recordings several times before transcribing them. During this ‘pre-coding’ stage I identified a number of repetitive patterns and noted them down. These notes became helpful ideas for coding. Throughout all stages of the analysis, I continued listening to the interview recordings as part of my daily routine (e.g. while commuting to the university, doing choirs, etc.) to familiarize myself with the data as much as possible. These continuous listening practices during the analysis helped me to see the data both as a whole and as separate data sets (each interview).

Through transcribing the data, I also got to know the data thoroughly. The next phase involved the production of initial codes from the data (Braun and Clarke 2006). ‘Coding involves attaching one or more keywords to a text segment in order to permit later identification of a statement’ (Kvale and Brinkmann 2009:201-2). Richards (2003:274) suggests coding freely as the starting point. ‘The advantage of such an approach is immediate engagement with the data, though it is also an excellent prescription for avoiding premature commitment to particular categories’. I initially worked with paper and pencil, starting a line-by-line coding trying to understand what each line was about (see Figure 11).

Figure 11. Sample of the initial codes

<p>Highly in Iran & building market & street sellers</p> <p>scared of the child with one leg</p> <p>ambivalence: open to cross-cultural encounters but racist to particular groups</p> <p>change of topic toward anti-racism</p>	<p>199 1:08:51.7 - 1:09:02.4</p> <p>200 1:09:02.4 - 1:09:07.3</p> <p>201 1:09:07.3 - 1:09:33.8</p> <p>202 1:09:33.8 - 1:09:53.5</p> <p>203 1:09:53.5 - 1:10:21.4</p> <p>204 1:10:21.4 - 1:10:47.0</p> <p>205 1:10:46.9 - 1:11:09.8</p> <p>206 1:11:09.7 - 1:11:20.8</p>	<p>Afghanistan and who are really rich and stuff like that, these people they are working in building and they are sellers and stuff like that, so it's true that they smell and their feet are out out (sign of disgust due to bad smell) (laughter), but it doesn't mean that they are bad people.</p> <p>Even I saw... em the lady and the kid was just... she has one leg, the other leg was gone, she was sitting in the ...'foroodgah' (=airport)</p> <p>Yeah they are victim of the war, it's not their fault.</p> <p>they um had ... a war in Afghanistan a very bad war and a lot of people died in Ghazni... so it's not very nice to say that ... they are like Yucky or like stuff, it's not good</p> <p>um because the people there are actually really dirty like Holly said... because, masalan (=for example) when they wanna get dress like over here... exactly like Lucy said, their feet smell, and like sweating and abhh (=Yuck!) like on one want to be like them</p> <p>Actually I have for those two, because... they think they are Yucky of there are bad, actually Afghanistan is a country as well and they are like us as well, but maybe some of them, because the war that they have as Patra said, it's... it's not good to say they are they are so bad, they don't have a- they have a bad country, they are not good.</p> <p>I had a ... Af- Afghan friend, actually she was really nice... like she was like...mmm, she didn't study much, she got 9 out of 20 in test and stuff like that, she didn't talk much but she was really nice.</p> <p>I grew up with an Afghani in my cottage (referring to country house), so right now he moved, but... when he wanted to leave he was sOoOo nice to me, he was like... I said can I have this, he was like OK, He was like really nice to me, so when he wanted to leave, I was like cried for him.</p> <p>So of Adeleh from Afghanistan comes to you class, would you choose to sit next to her?</p> <p>Students: Yeah</p>
		<p>Afghans in Iran & dirty</p> <p>stereotype all, they're not necessarily bad.</p> <p>Student laughing at racist statement</p> <p>Lili #5</p> <p>back of awareness to respect disability</p> <p>R</p> <p>against racism, explain the reason for the current situation in Afghanistan.</p> <p>Patra #6</p> <p>Racist statement</p> <p>Don Don #4</p> <p>Afghans R dirty & small</p> <p>Sabrina #4</p> <p>They R likus' against racism.</p> <p>Reason for current situation in Afghanistan</p> <p>against racism</p> <p>Lucy #6</p> <p>example of good Afghans</p> <p>Don Don #4</p> <p>The same person has racist claims (line 202)</p> <p>R</p> <p>opinion can change through explanation need for anti-racist education.</p> <p>Sabrina</p>

This initial tight focus minimized the importation of priori presuppositions about what should be in the coding (Rapely 2011). In this stage, I also went through the process of refining and relabeling the provisional codes. According to Boyatzis (1998:63), codes are ‘the most basic segment, or element, of the raw data or information that can be assessed in a meaningful way regarding the phenomenon’. Then, I started working with QSR NVivo data management programme. This entailed several cycles of breaking down the data and recombining it, looking for connections, relationships and themes in order to build a picture that responds to the aims of my research. Through constant comparison and reflective thinking, theme elicitation was done on the group interviews. With respect to coding group interviews, Lewis (199:420) explains that

[a]nalyse based on a distinction between solicited and unsolicited issues may be useful in showing the issues which are of concern to the specific group(s). Strength of support for a view could be analysed by noting the range of relevant

comments made by group members alongside an indication of how many children, within and across groups, were making the point.

In the next step, I needed to focus the analysis at the broader level of themes, rather than codes, trying to group the different codes into potential themes. This stage required thinking beyond a single line or paragraph and identifying the link between different parts of the data set. Rapley (2011:283-84) explains that this process

is an ongoing activity over the life of all research projects (...). Over the life of a project you are often moving through rounds of splitting the data into separate labels, reviewing those fragments (and note about them) collected under specific labels, trying to see how and in what ways the ideas underlying each label combine, relate or diverge.

In addition to the inductive analysis of the data, I also used the deductive approach. While inductive analysis is ‘a process of coding the data without trying to fit it into a pre-existing coding frame’ (Braun and Clarke 2006:83), in other words it is data-driven, ‘a theoretical thematic analysis would tend to be driven by the researcher’s theoretical or analytic interest in the area, and is thus more explicitly analyst-driven’ (Braun and Clarke 2006:84).

In this study I perceived these two approaches complementary to each other rather than contradictory. First, I adopted an inductive approach when I started analysing the qualitative data, trying to explore children’s understating of intercultural interaction and adjustment. To some extent, the themes of the discussion were guided by the content of the participatory activities, but many new themes also emerged from the data. The emerging codes and categories turned out to fit well with the first three stages of cross-cultural adjustment (*cultural encounter*, *obstacle*, and *response generation*)

in Anderson's model of cross-cultural adaptation (1994). Hence, these three broad categories formed the theory-driven themes. At this stage, the analysis of the data was guided, but not confined, by these preliminary codes. Anderson's framework provided the main themes of adjustment process under which deductively as well as inductively sub-themes were developed.

The interview extracts were coded according to the message(s) they conveyed, rather than the activities or the topic of the discussion. For instance, in the same activity when the participants were talking about going to school in a new context, one participant referred to the new school as a source of concern due to his limited linguistic proficiency (see Extract 64), while another participant was eager to explore the facilities in the new school (see Extract 43). Each of these extracts was coded according to the message they conveyed. In another example, some children anticipated that making new friends in the new context would be a challenge for them due to their limited linguistic abilities (see Extract 62), and this was categorized under the general category 'obstacle'; whereas, some others referred to friendship with the members of the host society as a way to improve their skills and knowledge of the local language (see Extract 91), and this was categorized under the general category, 'Response generation'.

3.9.2. Transcribing

Interview transcription structures the interview in a form amenable to closer analysis. Moreover, the transcribing in itself is an initial analytic process (Kvale and Brinkmann 2009). By transcribing recording materials, we aim 'to describe the talk as fully but as simply as possible' (Richards 2003:182). In this study the focus is more on the content rather than the form of the verbal data. Accordingly, the features such as speaker's tone, and normal pause (less than 3 seconds) were not mentioned in the transcription.

However, as warned by (Dörnyei 2007:247), ‘any content selection or editing was avoided’.

3.9.3. Translating

Since the medium of communication was Persian (except at INTL), the research process involves the act of translation. Temple and Young (2004) criticize studies in which the issue of translation is not discussed. They argue that lack of one-to-one relationship between languages can influence the representation of the data in English, which needs to be acknowledged. The decisions around when, how and who to translate the findings have consequences for how the research is produced and received, as there is no one way to engage with people who speak languages other than English.

Being confident in communicating in both Persian and English, and also having academic and professional training and experience in translating between these two languages, I act as the researcher/ translator in this study, mainly translating from my mother tongue, Persian, into English. The early translation of research data into written English may cut the ties between the language and identity/culture of the participants. Consequently, the baseline becomes mainstream English in very early stages of the analysis and can influence the analytical understanding of the data (Temple and Young 2004). Having this in mind, in this study, the translation of the data was postponed until the latest stages of the research. Data was transcribed and analysed in Persian and only for the representation purposes it was translated into English.

Chapter 4

Findings: Questionnaire

4.1. Introduction

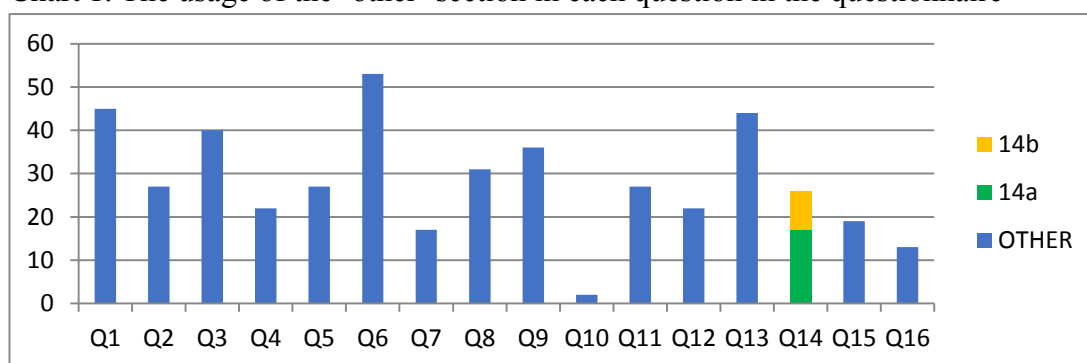
Many scholars believe that a questionnaire is not a suitable way to voice children's experiences as 'the strict boundaries of a questionnaire allow no room for expression, leaving some things untold' (Alerby and Kostenius 2011:124). By designing a 'child-friendly' questionnaire, I tried to push these boundaries and intended to explore children's reaction to an innovative and child-friendly questionnaire. The questionnaire was designed to engage children with the topic and gain in-depth understanding of their views and experiences. Although basic quantification was possible, the questionnaire was not designed mainly for the purpose of quantification. Hence, I do not intend to claim that the findings are suitable for statistical analysis. In this chapter, I revisit the construction of the questionnaire, and present the findings and discussion of the questions one by one.

4.2. Questionnaire Findings

The findings of the questionnaire revealed that the participants did not treat the questionnaire as a quantitative research instrument; instead they provided very detailed responses, using the allocated spaces for their comments in the MC items. One of the interesting aspects of the data obtained from the questionnaire was the high number of the open-ended comments. In total, the 'other' section was used 452 times. This significant number shows that children wanted to respond to the questions and considered their answers carefully, even though they could have easily left them blank. Although in the instruction section, the participants were asked to choose only one

item, in many cases, they combined more than one answer and stated them in the ‘other’ section (e.g. all the above; items 1 and 3); this indicates that it was hard for the child-participants to give just one answer to each question, and this goes back to the limitations of a questionnaire of this kind. Chart 1 shows the number of the statements in the ‘other’ section for each question.

Chart 1. The usage of the ‘other’ section in each question in the questionnaire

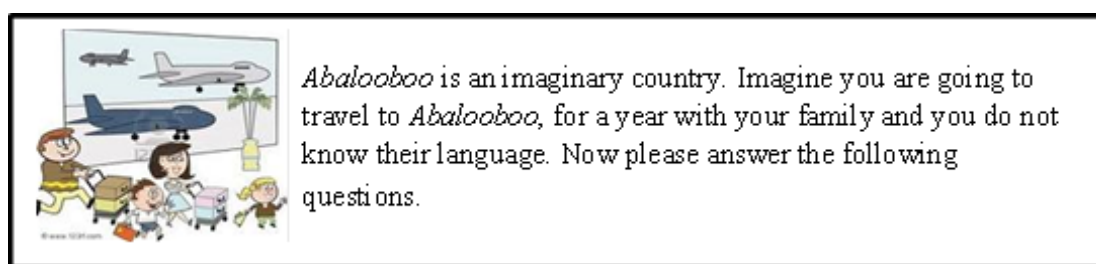


The questionnaire is divided into two main parts. The first part (questions 1-13) explores children’s perceptions of transition from one context to another, and the second part (questions 14-17) investigated their attitudes toward intercultural interaction from the viewpoint of the members of a host society. As stated earlier, in some cases more than one answer was provided (e.g. more than one MC item was selected or the comment in the other section covered more than one category), in such cases all selected options and/or comments were included in the calculation of the percentages and analysis of the comments. In the following sections, the findings and discussion of the questions are provided one by one.

4.2.1. Part 1: Transition

The first part of the questionnaire was aimed to explore children’s viewpoints about their responses to imagined (or in some cases real) transition. The complicated concepts of transition and adaptation were conveyed via contextualization (see Figure 12) and then followed by a series of questions in this regard.

Figure 12. Using contextualization in the questionnaire: Section 1



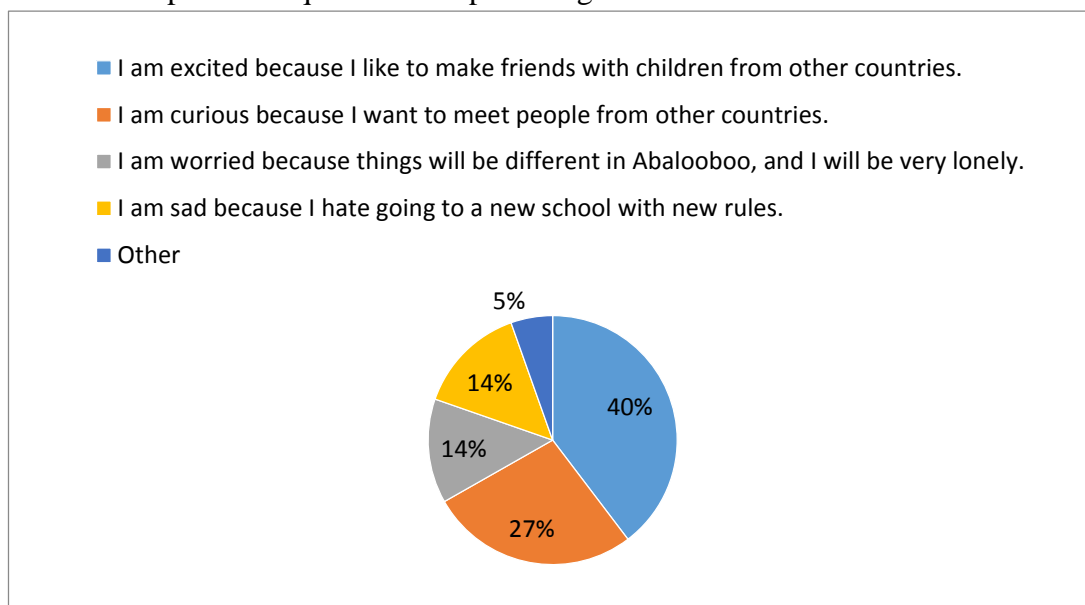
Here, the findings from the first 13 questions, which focussed on the concepts of transition and adjustment, are presented.

4.2.1.1. Question 1 (Number of respondents [n]293)

How do you feel about this change in your life?

Question 1 aimed to explore children's feelings about the concept of transition. 45 statements were written in the 'other' section; 29 of these comments could be classified into one of the MC items and the 16 remaining statements were coded as 'mixed' and 'undefined' feelings (see Appendix 5). As Chart 2 illustrates, 40 per cent of the respondents expressed excitement as their dominant feeling about a possible transition.

Chart 2. Responses to question 1 in percentage



While most of the participants expressed their feelings at one point of time, similar to the format of the MC items, some explained their feelings in duration of time. In some cases, the participants explained different possible situations and expressed their feelings in each situation (see Table 12).

Table 12. Examples of the comments in the ‘other’ section in question 1

Responses to Question 1: Comment in the ‘other’ section
I am both worried and sad, because everything will be different. I also don't like to go to the new school, unless my friends come with me and the school will be a better one. [T-6KHER]
If it will be an Islamic country I will immediately return, but if not, I will be very excited. [T-6KHER]

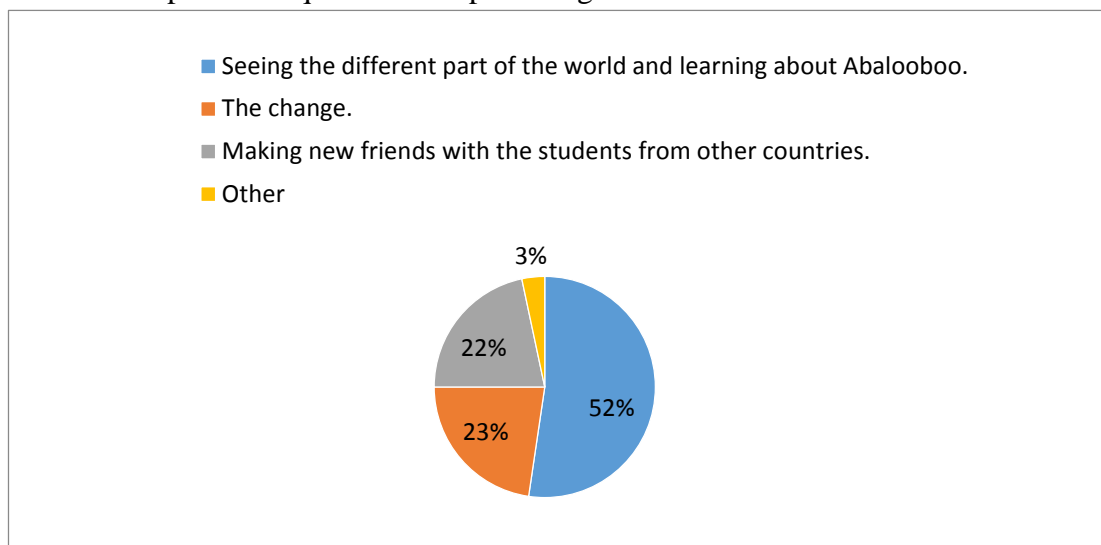
Statements of this kind reveal that children stepped beyond the limitation of the questionnaire and used it as an instrument to express themselves, even when they could not find their own opinion amongst the given options.

4.2.1.2. Question 2 (n 300)

What do you think you will like the most?

Question 2 aimed to explore children’s viewpoints about the most exciting aspect of transition. 50 per cent of the respondents chose the first MC item which refers to the ‘exploration’ (see Chart 3). Exploration, which is one of the behavioural aspects of cross-cultural encounter in Anderson’s model (1994), was also an emerging theme in the interviews (see 5.4.2.)

Chart 3. Responses to question 2 in percentage



24 statements were written in the ‘other’ section and 14 of them could be categorized into the MC items and the rest were coded thematically according to the message(s) they conveyed. In nine of these comments, the respondents expressed more than one option. Three of the respondents stated that nothing would make them happy in the new place, and on the contrary, two respondents stated that everything would be exciting for them. Some of these responses indicate respondents’ extreme feelings, and to some extent exaggerated emotions about the idea of transition.

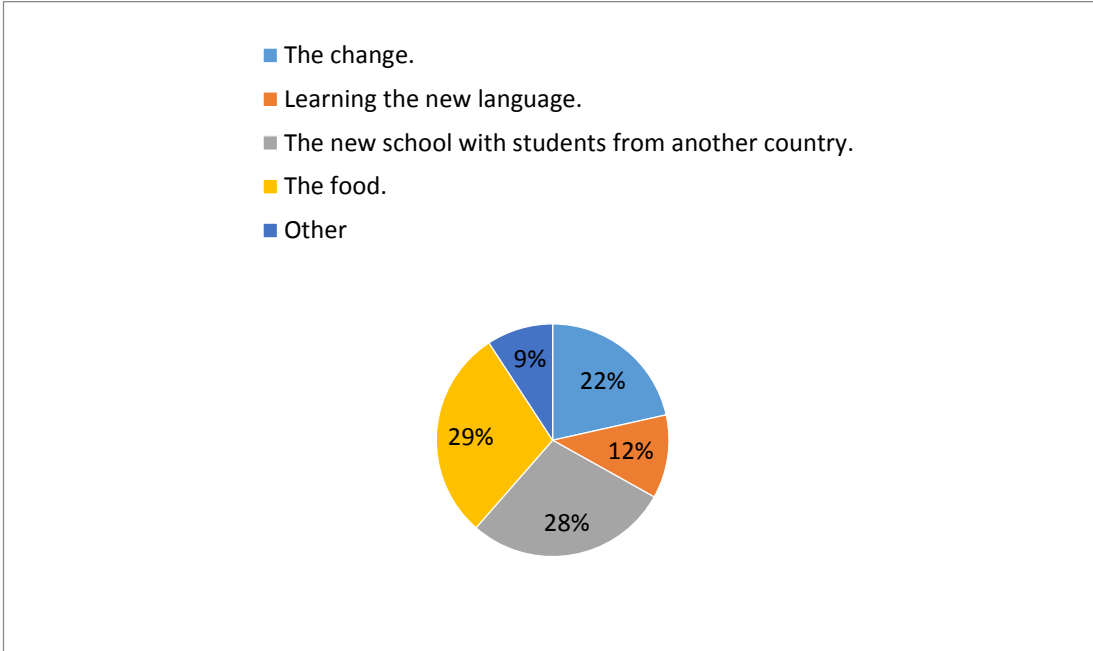
4.2.1.3. Question 3 (n 293)

What do you think you will like the least?

Question 3 aimed to explore children’s feelings about the most stress-provoking situation which may problematize their adjument process. The findings indicate that the school and food in the new context were percieved as the most stressful elements during the imagined adjustments. Both of these factors were also mentioned during the interviews. Insterestingly, only 11 per cent of the responses referred to the new language as the most stressful issue during the imagined experience, while in Questions 13 and 14b many acknowledged that not knowing the local language can

create difficulties in intercultural interaction, and also in the interviews children emphasized the importance of linguistic competencies.

Chart 4. Responses to question 3 in percentage



With respect to the new school as one of the most challenging aspect of the transition, two respondents used conditional clauses and explained their choices in different possible situations (see Table 13). Such statements show that some of the participants stepped out of the boundaries of the questionnaire and used the ‘other’ section to provide a clear description of their feeling.

Table 13. Examples of the comments in the ‘other’ section in question 3

Responses to Question 3: Comment in the ‘other’ section
Item 3 was selected with a note next to it: if I go with my best friend, this won’t be a problem! In that case I would choose the last item(food)
The new school unless, it would be better than this school.

40 comments were stated in the ‘other’ section. 11 of these comments were categorised in one of the MC item, and eight referred to the separation from friends and family members. Not being able to make friends and loneliness was also one of the issues of concern for four students. Friendship was a dominant theme in the interviews; hence, this is elaborated more in the next chapter. Four respondents stated that nothing would

bother them in the new sociocultural environment and one claimed the opposite. As it was mentioned earlier, strong negative or positive feelings about the transitional experience may create problematic situations during the adjustment, as it prevents the sojourners from having realistic perspectives about the experience (Anderson 1994) and may result in disappointment and/ or adaptation of passive coping style.

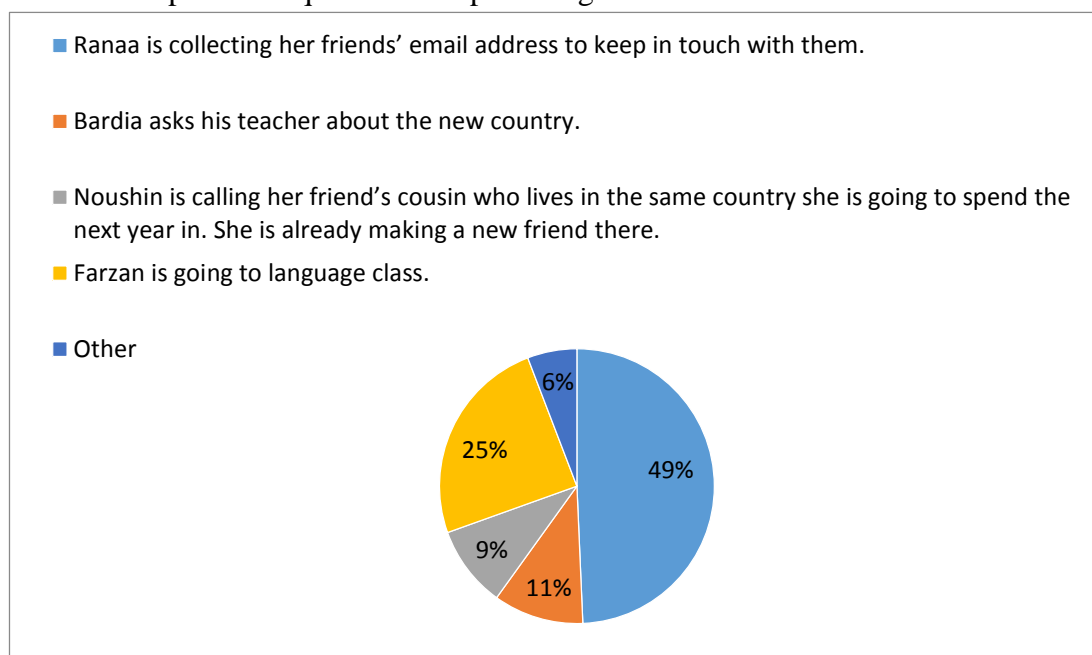
The fact that returning to the home country after a year or so can be difficult for some culture travellers has been mentioned in the related literature many times (Gullahon and Gullahon 1963; Spencer-Oatey and Franklin 2009; Ward et al 2001). One of the respondents at HES who had the experience of travelling abroad pointed out this particular issue (because if Abalooboo is a beautiful country it would be difficult for me to say goodbye to it after a year).

4.2.1.4. Question 4 (n 292)

Ranaa, Bardia, and Noushin, and Farzan are also moving to another country with their family. They are preparing themselves for the new life. Which one of them is more like you?

Question 4 aimed to explore children's preferred coping strategies. As Chart 5 illustrates, 49 per cent of the responses belonged to the first item, which represents seeking social support from the home resources, while only 9 per cent belonged to item 3, which implies seeking social support from the host context. The findings from this question are used for some of the statements in the Diamond-Ranking activity in the group interviews (see 3.5.2.1.), to explore the reasons for children's preferences of coping strategies.

Chart 5. Responses to question 4 in percentage



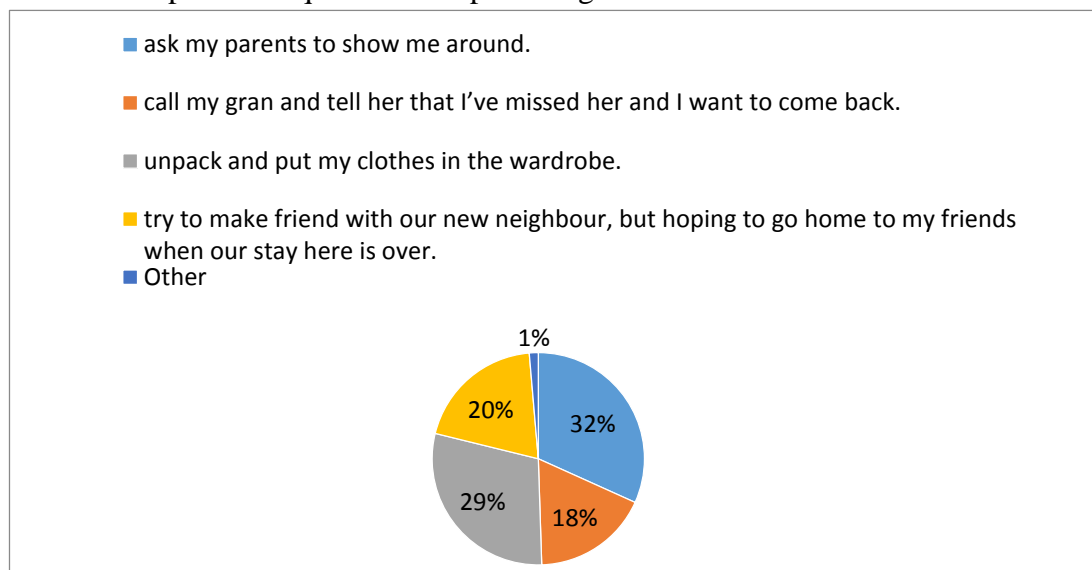
The majority of the comments in the 'other' section (16 out of the 24) in one way or another referred to an active coping strategy, and only 5 comments addressed passive strategies such as venting emotions or denial (e.g. I'll be crying every day).

4.2.1.5. Question 5 (n 293)

When I arrive in Abalooboo, I will first...

Question 5 aimed to explore children's feelings in the imaginary intercultural context. The findings show that 32 per cent of the respondents expressed curiosity about their physical surroundings. With a very small difference, 29 per cent of the students selected the item which indicated their preference in establishing sentimental attachment to their new environment. Amongst the 26 comments in the 'other' section, 22 could be categorized in one the MC items.

Chart 6. Responses to question 5 in percentage

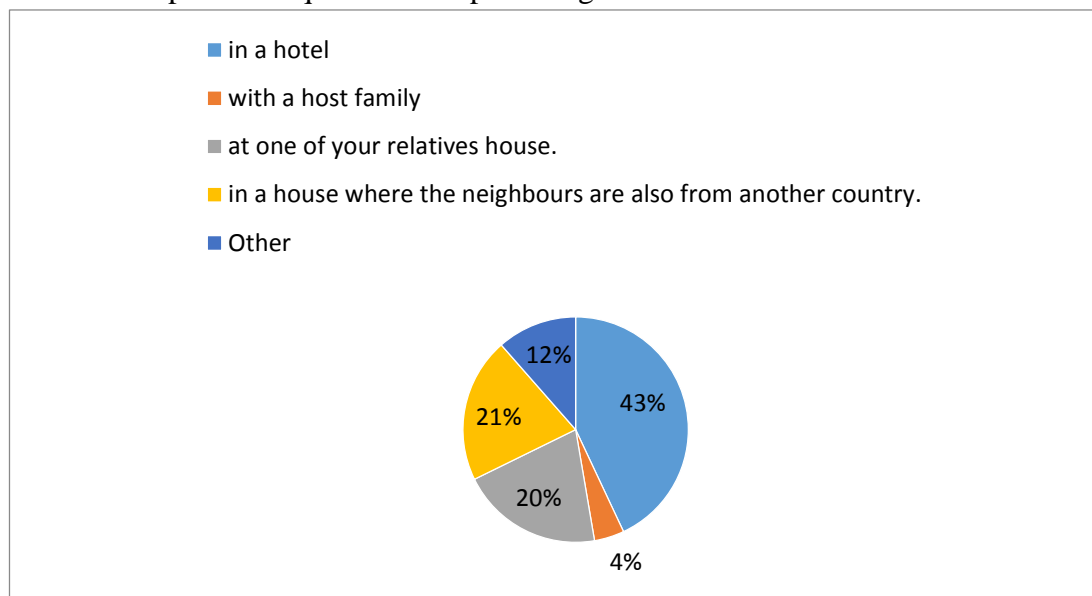


4.2.1.6. Question 6 (n 279)

In Abalooboo, I prefer to stay...

Question 6 aimed to explore children's interest in having interaction with the larger society during the imagined sojourn.

Chart 7. Responses to question 6 in percentage



Question 6a was designed to investigate the reasoning behind the responses to Question 6. 266 students provided explanations for their choices. Table 14 shows the four main categories emerged from these statements. As the chart above illustrates, 43

per cent of the students preferred hotels as their accommodation during the imagined sojourn experience. Hotels are designed to accommodate cultural travellers and are usually less representative of the host context. For instance, staff are trained to interact with people who do not necessarily speak the language of the host society and provide service to the guests who are not familiar with the surroundings. In this question, the MC item ‘hotel’ was representative of a more international environment which does not show the heart of the host context; however, the main emerging category from the responses in Question 6a was ‘convenience’, and only 13 responses specifically referred to the international aspect of the hotels (see Table 14). Hence, it seems that for many children hotels are associated with holidays and are therefore ‘exciting’.

Table 14. Main emerging categories from responses to question 6a

Categories		No.
Hotel	Convenience	53
	International Environment	13
	Fancy luxury	9
	Fun	6
Host family	Explore the local context	5
	Social interaction with the members of the host society	3
	Convenience	2
	Eliminate other MC item	1
Relatives	Emotional support (safe, trust, less home sick)	16
	Home context resources	15
	Instrumental support	9
	Convenience	8
Ghetto	Social interaction with comparable others	21
	Social interaction with new people	10
	Social interaction with co-nationals	9
	Exploring (the new)	9

With 51 comments in the ‘other’ section, this question allocated the highest number of the comments in the ‘other’ section. 19 of these 51 statements could fit into one of categories already mentioned in the MC items. 30 of the responses in this section fit in the new category of ‘house’ in which children described the location and the

characteristics of the accommodation they wanted to live in. In 16 out of the 30 comments in this new category, children explicitly stressed their desire to live in their own property. It is noteworthy that Iranian culture highly values the family space, and living in an owned property is customary. Due to the unstable financial situation in Iran, buying properties is one of the safest ways of investing, particularly amongst the upper middle class of the society.

Considering that the objective of this question was to explore children's attitude toward interaction with the larger society, it was interesting that even though there was a clear interest and curiosity about moving to a new sociocultural environment (see findings from Question 1), some of the comments in the 'other' section and responses to Question 6a showed that children wanted the comfort of their own co-nationals around them (e.g. Because they are relatives and help me not to feel homesick).

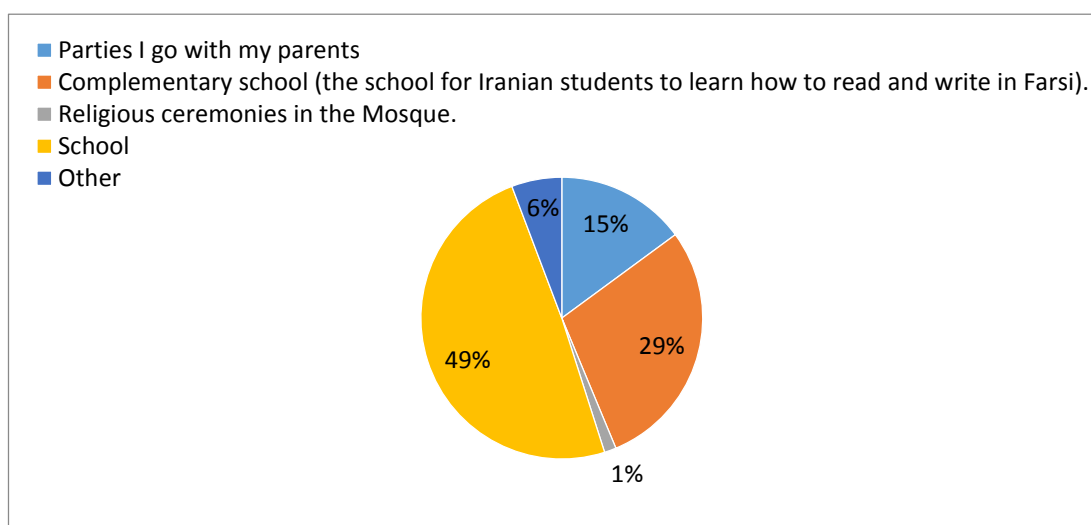
4.2.1.7. Question 7 (n 295)

Where in Abalooboo do you think you can find more friends?

Question 7 aimed to explore children's preference about possible opportunities for interpersonal interaction. 17 comments were mentioned in the 'other' section, which were grouped into new categories, such as playground, international context (hotel), after school classes, neighbours and isolation.

As Chart 8 illustrates, 49 per cent of the students selected 'school' as the main source for making friends, while only 1 per cent (4 students) selected the mosque.

Chart 8. Responses to question 7 in percentage

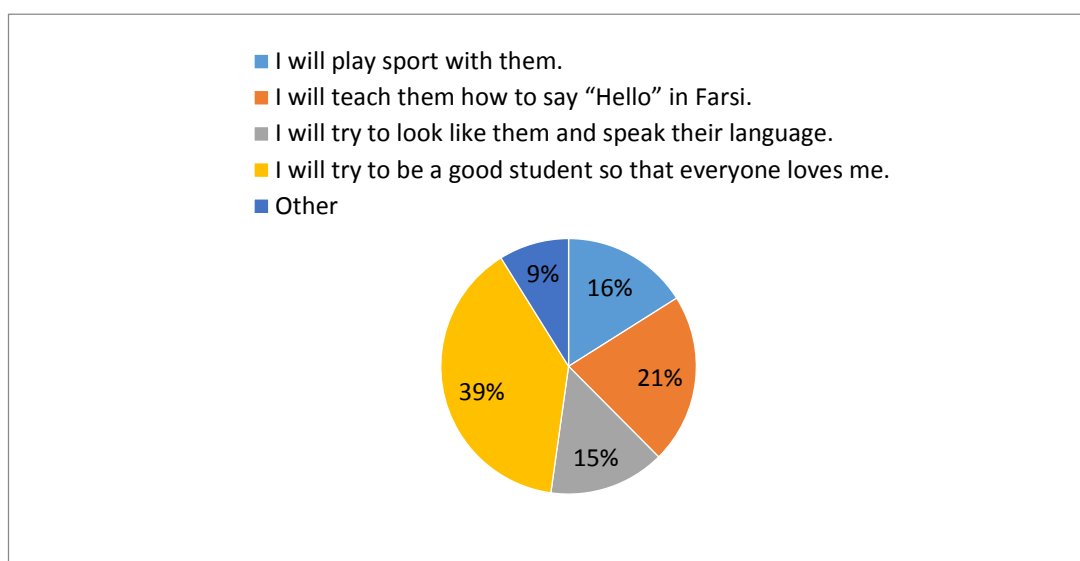


4.2.1.8. Question 8 (n 289)

How will you make friends at the new school?

Question 8 aimed to explore children's preferred strategies for initiating communication and establishing friendship relations in a new educational context. 33 students commented in the 'other' section. As seen in Chart 9, 39 per cent of the respondents believed that educational success can facilitate their interpersonal interaction. In this regard, Pinter (2011) explains that children's educational success can make them more popular at school, and consequently in a better relationship with others. In order to achieve a more in-depth understanding, the educational success was added to the statements in the Diamond-Ranking activity in the interviews and children commented about the importance of this issue.

Chart 9. Responses to question 8 in percentage



9 out of 33 students who commented in the ‘other’ section, suggested that having good attitudes can be helpful in establishing interpersonal relationship. 5 of the comments in this section referred to playing games as a strategy to develop interpersonal relationship (e.g. I’ll play with everyone and will be best friends with the best ones in the class; I’ll gradually [step by step] play with her, and we gradually get to know each other). Comments such as these were inspirations for some of the statements in the Diamond-Ranking activity in the interviews (e.g. being nice, being good at playing games/sport).

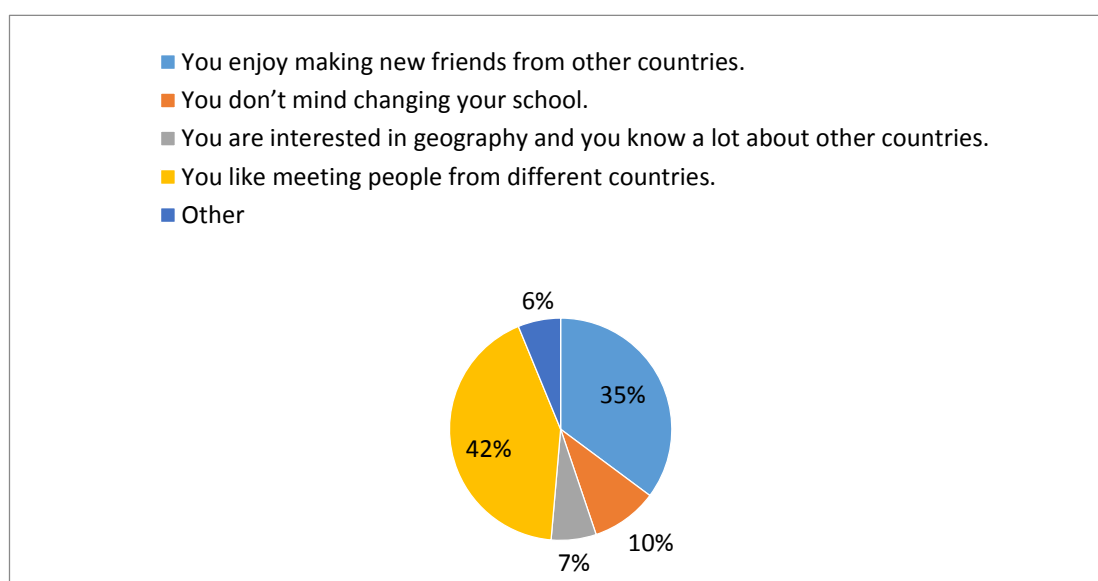
4.2.1.9. Question 9 (n 290)

You are enjoying your stay in Abalooboo. This is because:

The aim of Question 9 was to explore the effect of children’s personality on the adjustment process. Chart 10 illustrates that 42 per cent of the students chose ‘having interest in meeting people from different countries’ as the reason for their possible satisfaction during the imagined sojourn experience. This shows their positive attitudes towards intercultural interaction. 35 per cent of respondents believed that their interest in making new friends with people from different countries could lead to their

satisfaction during their imagined sojourn. This shows children's openness towards establishing interpersonal relationship with people from different cultural background. 10 per cent the students chose the second MC item, which aimed to demonstrate an 'individual's flexibility to change'. Interview participants also mentioned this issue and some also referred to the possible challenges of attending a new school (see 5.4.4.1 and 5.5.1). Only 7 per cent of the responses referred to enthusiasm for exploration (item 3); however, exploration was a dominant theme during the interviews (see 5.4.2). There is a possibility that item 3 in this question did not clearly demonstrate the meaning it intended to convey.

Chart 10. Responses to question 9 in percentage



37 comments were stated in the 'other' section, five of which fit into the same category as MC item 1, the 'relationship interest'; nine referred to the similar category as item 2, 'flexibility'; and 13 fit into the same category as MC item 3 which aimed to demonstrate individual's interest in exploring the new context. In six of the comments in this section, children explicitly stated that they would not feel happy in the new context. In three of the comments children referred to having the chance of having more freedom outside Iran; the interview participants also mentioned this issue. In two

of the comments, children stated that simply living outside Iran is the reason for their satisfaction.

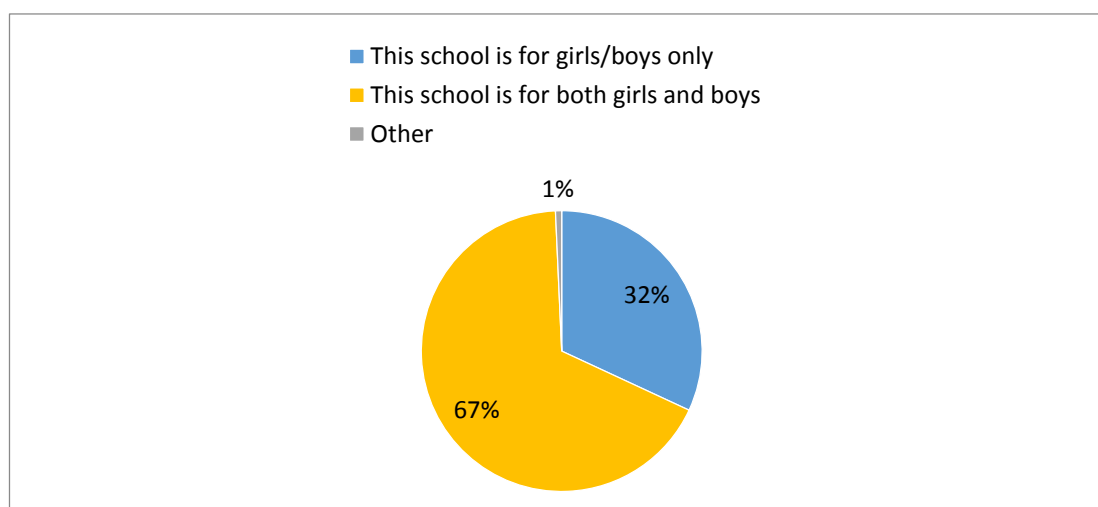
4.2.1.10. Question 10 (n 288)

There are two schools in Abalooboo, which one would you choose to go?

This question aimed to explore children's preference of educational environment. In Iran, the primary, secondary, and some tertiary sectors are separated based on the students' gender. In this question, I was interested to learn about children's viewpoint in this regard. Some of the students appeared to be reluctant to answer this question. Several chose the mixed school and scribbled it out. I assume that some respondents did this because they did not want to disclose their feelings in this regard to their teachers and parents. Sensing that the students were hesitant to answer this question, I revisited the confidentiality issue with the children and reassured them that the data collected from the questionnaires would be anonymous and confidential.

Regardless of all their concerns, 288 students answered this question, and the majority (67%) of them preferred to study in a co-educational environment.

Chart 11. Responses to question 10 in percentage



Children's discomfort might be one reason for fewer additional comments in response to this question. Only two of the respondents added another section to the MC items and stated that they would not have any particular preference. According to my observations and notes during the administration of the questionnaires, many of the respondents felt they should not prefer the co-educational environment, but at the same time they were keen to express their preference. For instance, a respondent in grade 5 at KHER after spending few minutes on this question (choosing the co-educational school and erasing it) finally chose the co-educational school and added this phrase to her choice: 'It doesn't make any difference to me. I would do whatever my parents tell me to do'. In the same class, another student had a very different approach toward this question; she stated that, 'what would be the benefit of answering this question, as you (the researcher) won't be able to change the rules of this country? So, expressing our preference would be useless!'.

Question 10a asked about the reasons for children's choices in Question 10. 263 students responded to this question. The emerging categories from these comments are presented in Table 15.

Table 15. Main emerging categories from response to question 10a

	Categories	No.
a	Interaction with the same gender was preferred	33
	Negative attitudes towards the opposite sex	26
	Separation of genders support by religious beliefs	3
	Less strict Islamic regulations (head-scarf) for girls	2
b	Curiosity	44
	Friendship	38
	Interpersonal interaction	26
	Need to learn how to interact with the opposite sex	16
	Fun	15
	Being in the same school with sibling/relatives	8
	Change	7
	No different between boys and girls	4

As Table 15 illustrates, preferring to interact with the same sex and negative attitudes towards the opposite sex were the main reasons for choosing the single sex schools. Studies show that until about the age of 12 children's preference for same-sex groups increases (Santrock 2007). The large number of preferences in attending mixed schools indicate that children's deprivation of interaction with the opposite sex tend to increase their interest in and curiosity about interacting with the opposite sex. Although only two students referred to the less strict Islamic regulation in single-sex schools, it should be added that girls need to wear a head-scarf as part of their school uniforms from the age 7 when they start the primary level; however, they are usually allowed to take off their head-scarves inside the school territory as the schools are single sexed. Curiosity and friendship with the opposite sex were the main reasons for those who preferred to attend co-educational schools.

24 of the comments only rephrased the MC items, rather than explaining why the item was selected (e.g. 'Because they are all boys' [T_4HES]), and 8 of the responses revealed that the selection of the MC items in Question 10 was mainly based on the picture of the schools printed next to the MC items rather than the descriptions.

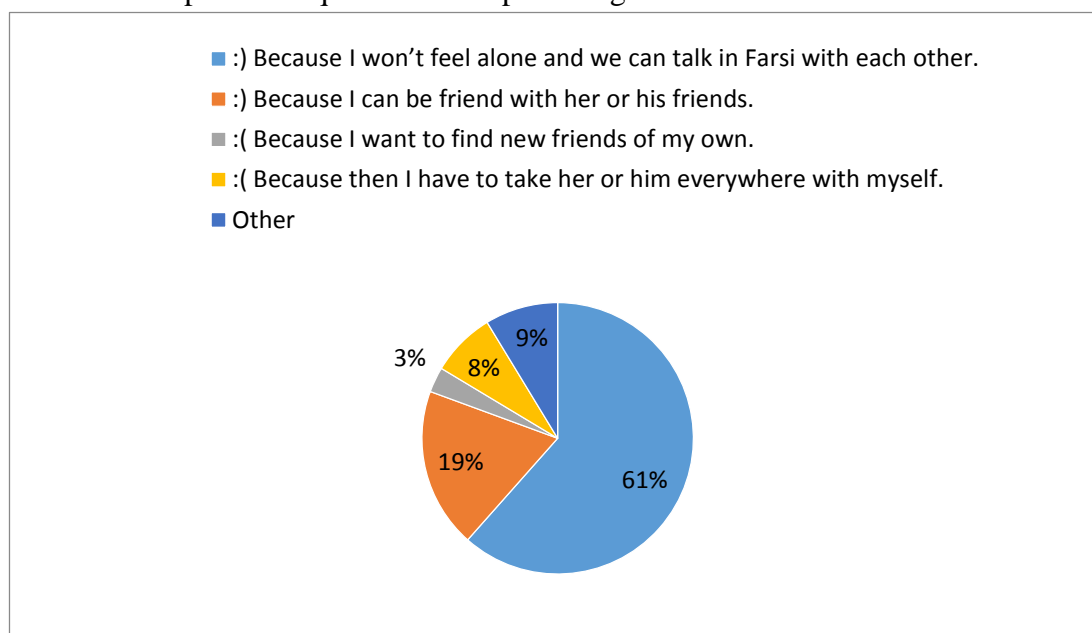
4.2.1.11. Question 11 (n 295)

Imagine you have a brother or sister. How do you feel if he or she studies in the same school you are going to in Abalooboo? Why?

Question 11 aimed to explore children's feelings about their family members (e.g. siblings) as sources of social support in the new sociocultural context. 25 respondents commented in the 'other' section. In general, majority of the respondents [80% + 2.5% (positive comments in other section) = 82.5%] shared positive attitudes toward being accompanied by their siblings. As Chart 12 shows, for majority of the students (61%) emotional support (not being alone) and linguistic similarities, which were stated in

the MC item 1, were the main reasons for choosing to be accompanied with their siblings. In this regard, Holland et al. (2007:103-104) state that siblings can provide practical help, emotional support, insider information about schools and bridges to new friendships. 19 per cent of the responses as well as a number of the comments in the other section also referred to the role of siblings in bridging to the new friendships.

Chart 12. Responses to question 11 in percentage



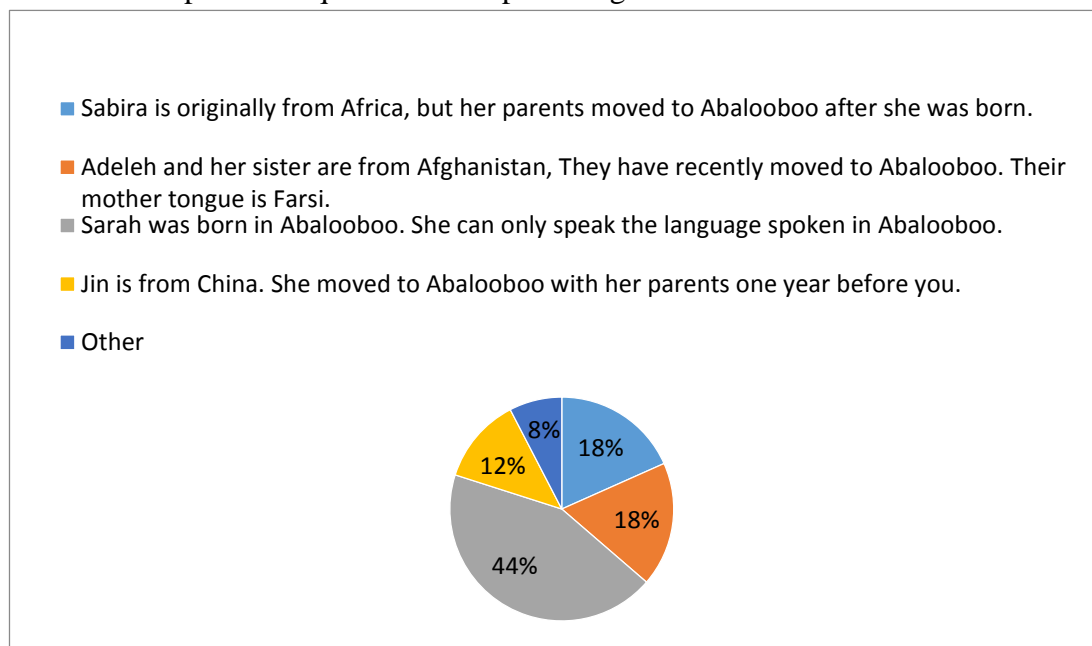
In total, 37 of the respondents expressed their unwillingness to be accompanied with their siblings. The range of responses actually shows that having a sibling around can be both good and bad. Children's reactions to their siblings are often naturally negative, and this has been portrayed in some of the responses to this question.

4.2.1.12. Question 12 (n 291)

Jin, Sabrina, Adeleh, and Sarah are your classmates. Next to which of them do you like to sit?

Question 12 aimed to explore children's views about friendship as a source of environmental support in the new context. The MC items in this question referred to shared migration experiences, cultural and linguistic similarities, members of host-national and comparable others.

Chart 13. Responses to question 12 in percentage



As seen in Chart 13, 44 per cent of the respondents selected friendship with a host-national, ‘Sarah/ Michael who was born in Abalooboo and could speak the language of Abalooboo’. In Question 12a, children justified their choices. The possible instrumental supports, particularly in learning the local language was the main reason for children’s preference in having friendship with a member of the host-society. Table 16 illustrates the emerging categories in each MC item.

Table 16. Main emerging categories from response to question 12a

a.Sabrina/ Harry	Categories	No.
	Interest in a particular nation/ country	19
	Curiosity	8
	Influenced by image in the MC item	4
	Instrumental support: gathering local information	3
b.Adeleh / Amir	Linguistic similarities	37
	Emotional support	2
	Friendship	2
	Larger friendship group	1
c.Sarah/ Michael	Instrumental support: learning the local language	42
	Instrumental support: gathering local information	28
	Influenced by image in the MC item	21
	Social interaction with the members of the host society	17

d.jin/ Jean	Interest in a particular nation/ country	10
	Comparable others	8
	Instrumental support: learning new language(s)	8
	Curiosity	2

Jin/Jean who represented the ‘comparable other’ was selected by only 12 per cent of the respondents. However, 14 out of the 22 comments in the ‘other’ section referred to the ‘comparable other’ in one way or another. In these comments familiarity with English or Persian as the medium of communication was emphasised. Children acknowledged the positive role of linguistic ability in social interactions, but at the same time expressed their reluctance to interact with certain nationalities, particularly Afghans. For instance, a participant in grade 5 at MOB who preferred friendship with an Iranian girl, explained her choice this way: ‘Because she knows my language, well I can be friend with the Afghans but I don't like Afghans’. This issue was discussed in more depth in the interviews.

22 of the students commented on the other section, and two of the comments fit into one of the MC items. Initially, the ‘other’ section was not included in this question, but in the first class the questionnaire was administered, some of the students used the margins to describe their preferred friendship bound (see Picture 9).

Picture 9. Question 12: Example of comment on the margin

12. جین، سابرینا، عادلہ و سارا ہمکلاسی های تو هستند. دوست داری کنار کدامیک از آنها بنشینی؟

سابرینا در آفریقا به دنیا آمده است، اما خانواده اش پس از تولد او به آنگلو بوریو مهاجرت کرده اند.

عادلہ و خواهرش افغانی هستند. آنها به تازگی به آنگلو بوریو آمده اند. زبان مادری آنها فارسی است.

سارا در آنگلو بوریو به دنیا آمده است. او تنها می تواند به زبانی که در آنگلو بوریو صحبت می شود حرف بزند.

جین چینی است. او و خانواده اش یک سال است که به آنگلو بوریو آمده اند.

د.الف. لطفاً علت انتخاب خود را توضیح بده. من با ناتالیا دوست می شوم زیرا زبان اداری ما می توانم با او ارتباط برقرار کنم.

I will make friend with Natalia who is American, because I know her language and I can talk with her.

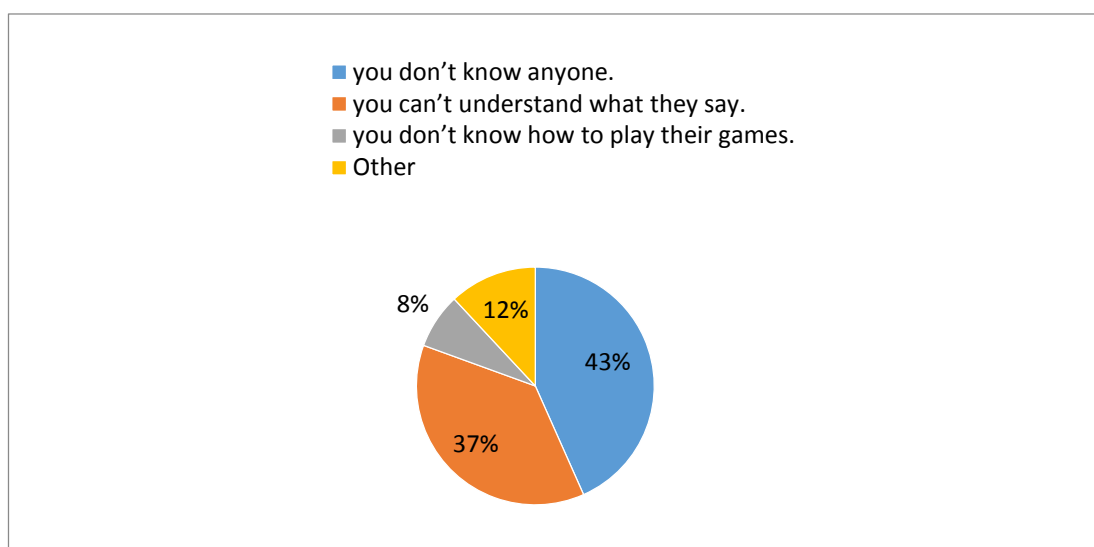
After this observation, the ‘other’ section was added to this question. Children specifically stated their preference to have American and British friends, respectively in 6 and 4 of the comments in the ‘other’ section. As it was mentioned earlier, the Iranian education system does not have a very positive approach towards certain western countries, particularly the UK and USA. Thus, it was interesting to see such comments. The findings of the Question 12a show that the main reason for children’s preference in having American and/or British friends was their confidence in using English as the medium of communication (see Picture 9 as an example). It should be noted that English is taught as the first foreign language in Iran.

4.2.1.13. Question 13 (n 293)

If you are invited to a birthday party in Abalooboo, and you don’t feel like going, that’s because...

Question 13 aimed to explore the children’s views about the lack of instruments/ skills which may cause difficult experiences in social encounters. 39 of the responses were comments in the ‘other’ section. As Chart 14 illustrates, 43 per cent of the responses was allocated to the first MC item, which demonstrated the lack of familiar social resources. According to the findings, 37 per cent of the respondents believed that linguistic barriers could cause difficult experiences in social encounters such as in birthday parties in the new context.

Chart 14. Responses to question 13 in percentage



17 participants expressed their willingness to go to a party. These positive responses are significant because the original question was negatively worded. It seems that children thought carefully about this question and stated a positive point rather than just ticking something from the MC items. In other words, their feelings were so positive that they did not get 'tricked' into choosing a negative answer. These positive responses also link with the general positive predisposition, willingness to face uncertainty.

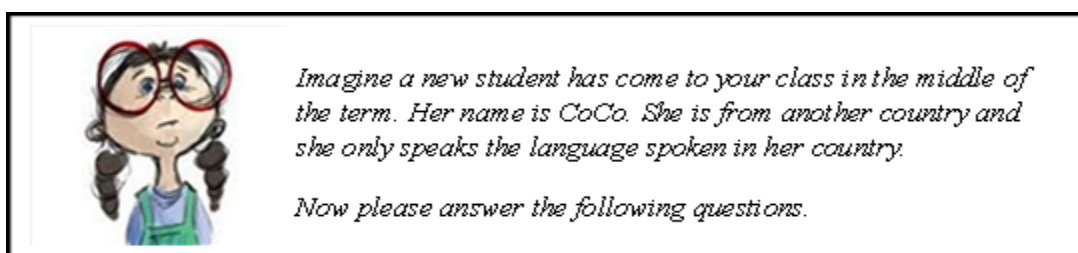
Nine participants commented that the possible negative reaction of the host society would be the main reason for their reluctance to attend the imaginary social event. Research has found that a greater amount of interaction with the members of the host society facilitates the general adaptation to the life overseas. But the interaction is a two-way process, which requires both parties to be interested in interaction (Spencer-Oatey and Franklin 2009). As the responses revealed, one of the concerns of the respondent was the unwillingness of the host-nationals to interact with them. Comments such as 'I am afraid they don't like my behaviour.' [N-5MOB], can be interpreted as the evidence of lack of self-esteem for interaction with

the members of the host society. Six of the comments in the ‘other’ section fit into this category. This issue was studied in more depth in the interviews.

4.2.2. Part 2: Intercultural interaction as a host-national

The second part was designed to explore children’s views and attitudes about intercultural interaction, particularly from the perspective of the host-nationals when receiving a foreigner in one’s own environment. Hence, an imaginary situation was contextualized in which a newcomer (i.e. CoCo) arrives to the classroom (see Figure 13); then, a series of questions was asked as an attempt to explore children’s feelings about this situation.

Figure 13. Using contextualization in the questionnaire: Section 2

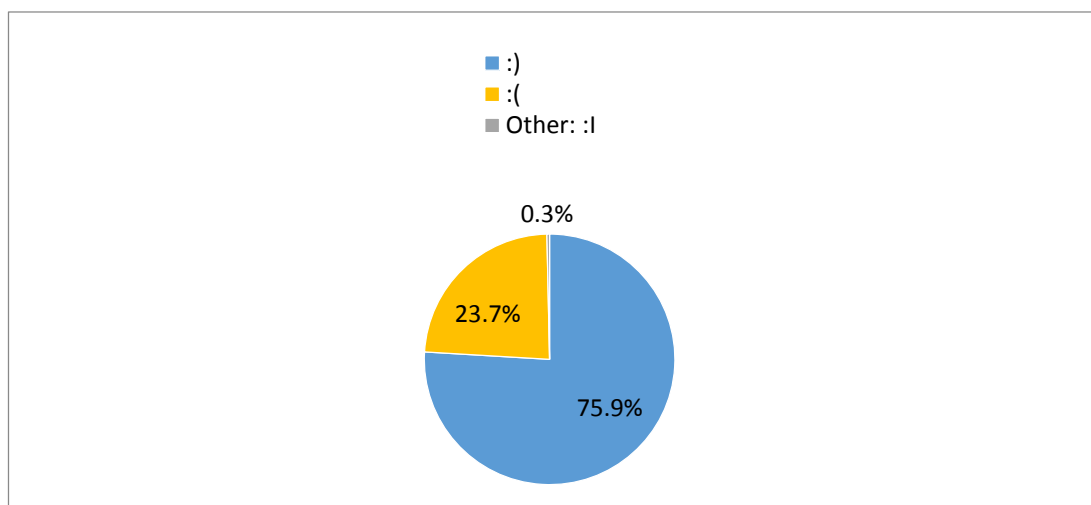


4.2.2.1. Question 14 (n 291)

How do you feel if CoCo sits next to you in the classroom?

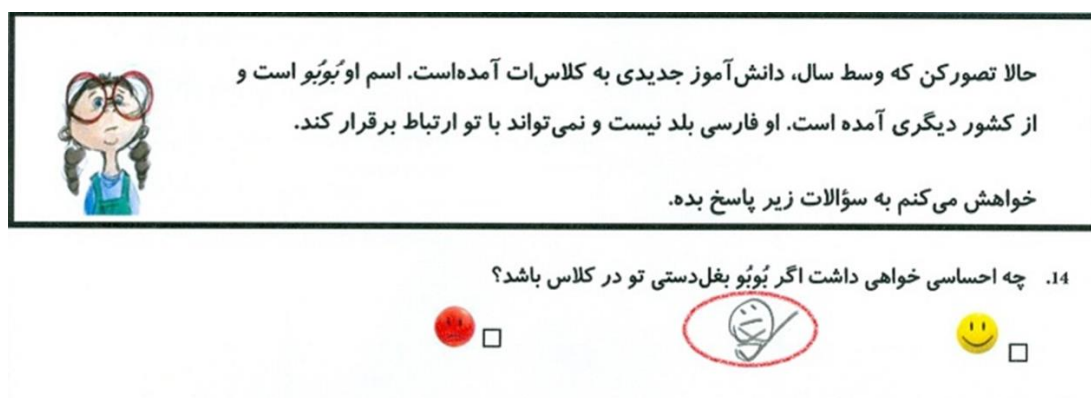
This question aimed to explore children’s attitudes about possible intercultural interaction from the perspective of a member of the host society. 75.9% responded positively while 23.7% expressed their unwillingness to interact with the newcomer in their educational context (see Chart 15).

Chart 15. Responses to question 14 in percentage



One student also showed her indifference to the contextualized situation by adding another item to the MC item (see Picture 10).

Picture 10. Note on the margin of question 10



As Chart 15 illustrates, the responses to this questions show children's positive attitudes towards possible intercultural interaction. In Questions 14a and 14b the reasons for children's choice were investigated.

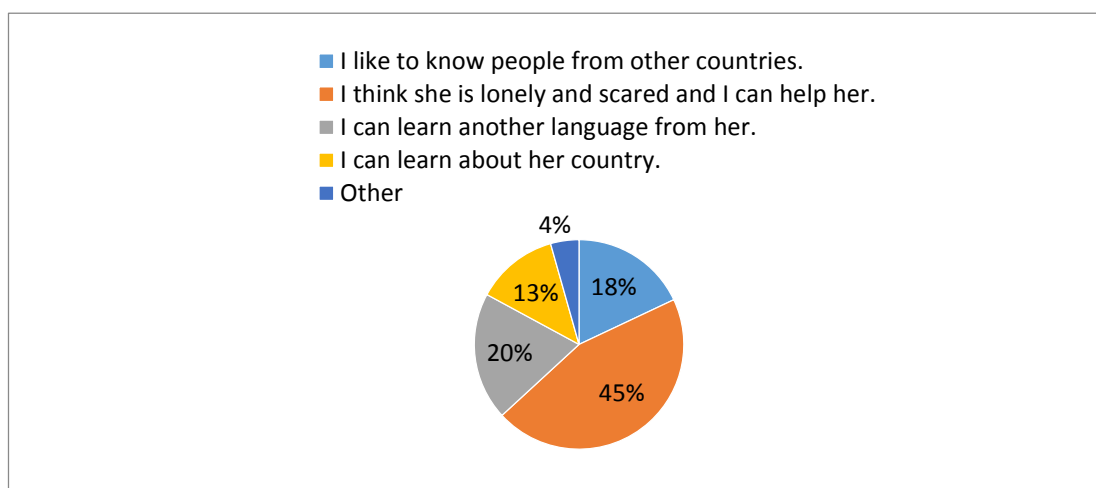
4.2.2.2. Question 14a (n 228)

Please complete the following sentence if you chose '😊'.

14a. I like it if she sits next to me, because...

This question was a follow-up on Question 14. The students who positively responded to the previous question were invited to answer this question.

Chart 16. Responses to question 14a in percentage



45 per cent of the students selected the second MC item, which represented ‘empathy and support’ one of the elements of intercultural competence (Byram 1997). This showed children’s appreciation of the possible challenges during the early stages of sojourn, as well as their readiness to support the newcomers. Only 13 per cent chose learning about the new place (the last MC item), which represented individuals ‘global mindset’. In 4 out of 15 comments in the ‘other’ section, children expressed their interest in establishing friendship with the newcomer, which shows their interest in intercultural interaction and interpersonal relationship.

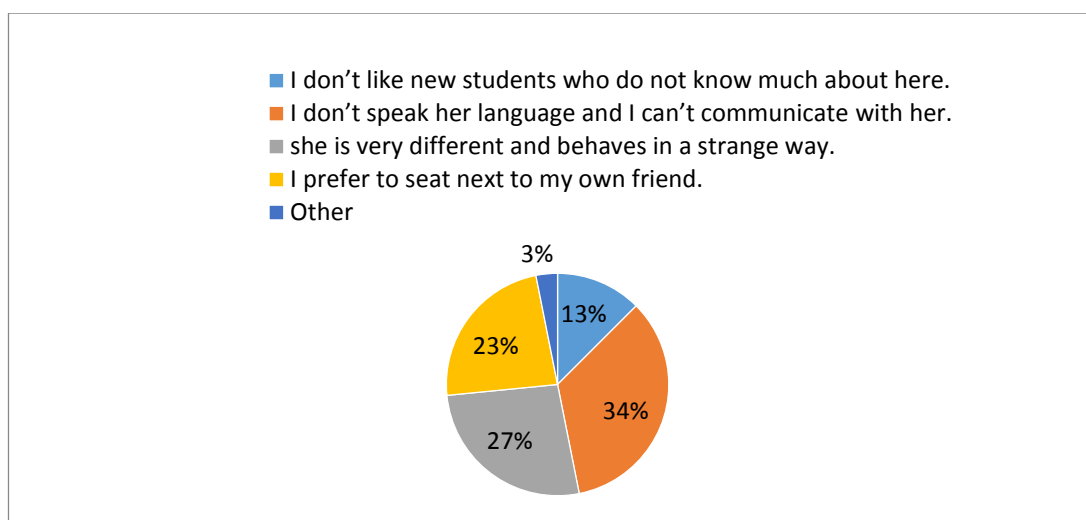
4.2.2.3. Question 14b (n 64)

Please complete the following sentence if you chose ‘🙄’.
14b. I DONT like it if she sits next to me, because...

Question 14b aimed to explore the possible reasons for the negative responses in Question 14. 34% of the students who responded to this question referred to the

possible language barrier as the reason for their reluctance in interacting with the imaginary newcomer in their classroom.

Chart 17. Responses to question 14b in percentage



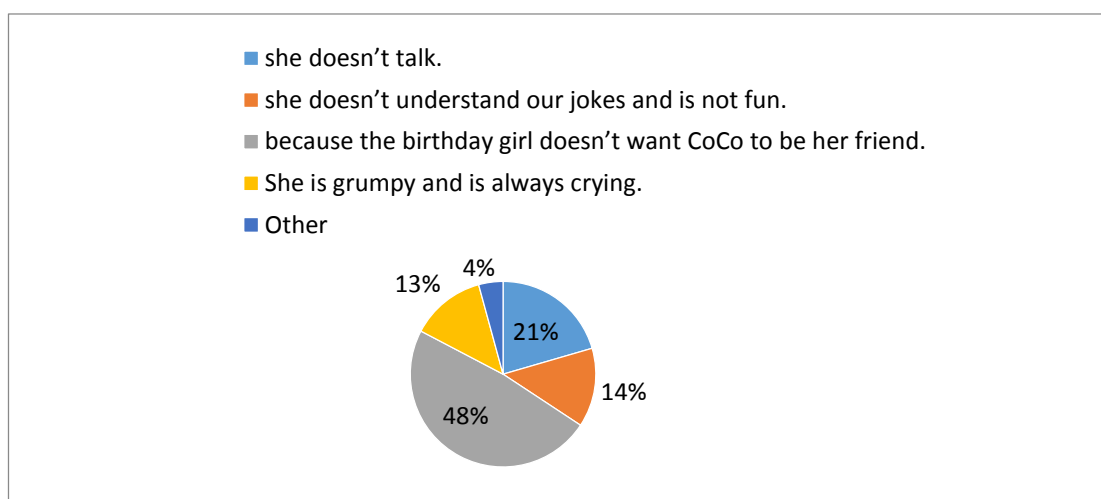
As Chart 17 illustrates, 27 per cent of the responses referred to the inflexibility and lack of tolerance for differences and 13 per cent referred to the lack of tolerance for ambiguity as possible reasons for the students' unwillingness to interact with the imaginary newcomer.

4.2.2.4. Question 15 (n 283)

Someone in your class has a birthday party but CoCo is not invited, what is the reason?

Question 15 aimed to explore children's views about the reasons for possible difficulties in the intercultural encounters, particularly from a viewpoint a member of the host society. To this end, in Question 15, an imaginary situation was described in which CoCo was not invited to a birthday party; then, the possible reasons for this incident were investigated.

Chart 18. Responses to question 15 in percentage



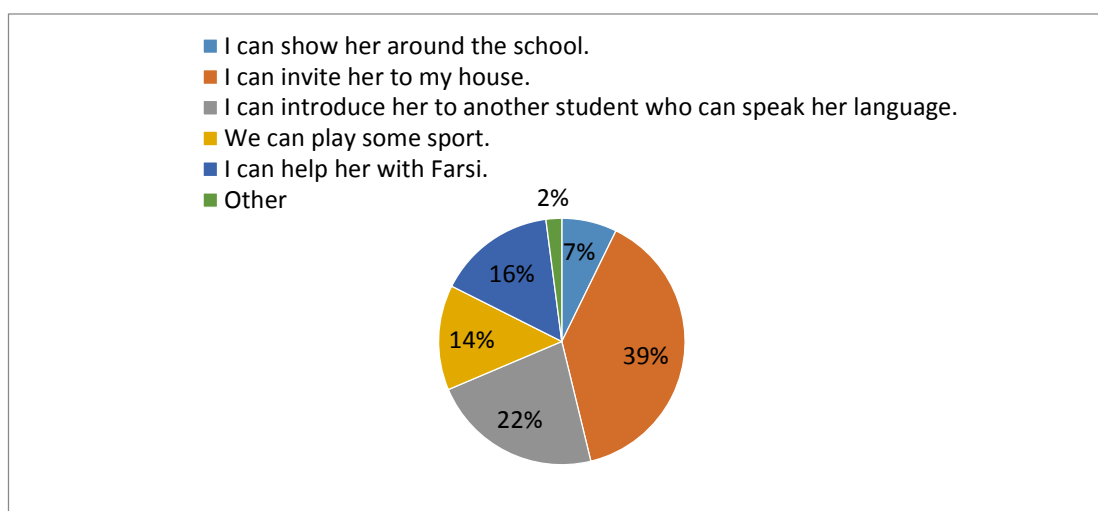
48 per cent of the respondents believed that the reluctance of the host-national to interact with the newcomer could be the reason for this incident. 19 students commented on the 'other' section. Seven of these comments fit into one of the MC items. The remaining comments fit into the emerging categories such as 'being a stranger' and 'unpleasant attitudes'.

4.2.2.5. Question 16 (n 290)

How can you help CoCo not to feel homesick?

This question aimed to explore children's thoughts about the possible ways of facilitating the adjustment process for a newcomer. The five MC items respectively referred to 'sharing knowledge about the new context', 'social support from the host society', 'social support from co-nationals', 'non-verbal communication', and 'pass on local linguistic skills'.

Chart 19. Responses to question 16 in percentage



As Chart 19 illustrates, 39% suggested offering support from the members of the host society. 13 students commented on the ‘other section’. Seven of these comments fit into the category of ‘social support from the host society’, and four of them illustrated children’s reluctance to offer help to the newcomer.

4.2.2.6. Question 17 (n 269)

CoCo does not know much Farsi or English. What kind of games can you play with her? Name the games and describe one game briefly. You can also draw the picture of the game.

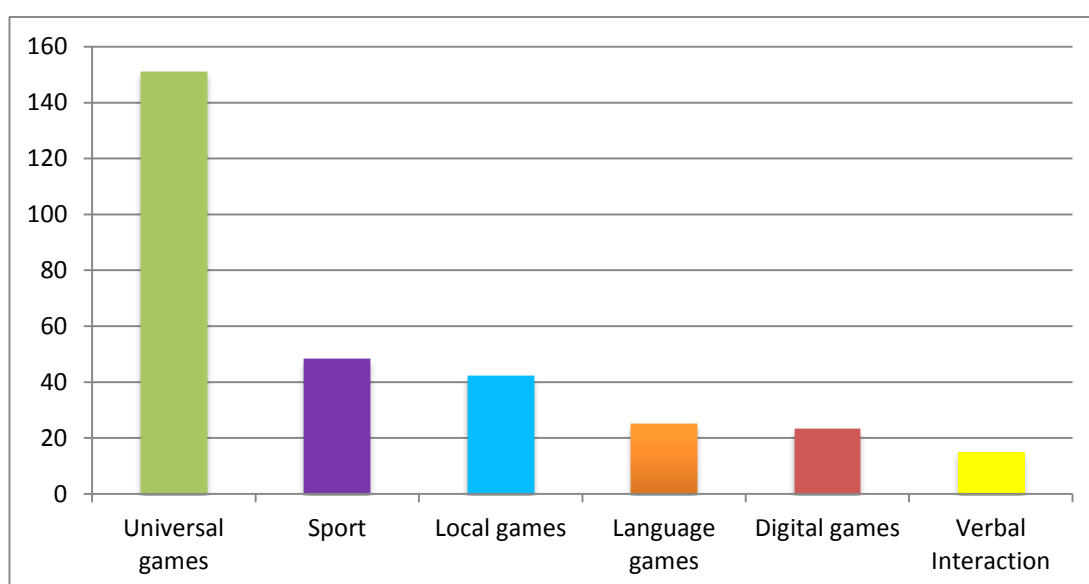
Question 17 aimed to explore children’s suggestions for the possible ways of interaction with someone who has limited linguistic proficiency. To facilitate the transference of thoughts, children were invited to respond to this question via drawing (see Picture 11 for some examples).

Picture 11. Examples of drawings in response to question 17



Drawing was optional and some of the participants, mostly older ones, preferred to express themselves in writing. Except the two respondents who wrote their unwillingness to interact with the imaginary newcomer, the rest of the respondents suggested one or a list of activities. The responses are categorised into sport, universal, local, and language games. While most of the suggested games required limited linguistic proficiency, and some even specifically considered this issue in their comments (e.g. 'Games which don't need talking, like clapping games, and music and chair' [T_6MOB]; 'I will play games there is not a lot talking in it' [T-6INTL]), 15 students suggested games with more focus on the verbal/written interactions (e.g. 20Qs game, name games, etc.) or even simply chatting. Verbal interaction was mainly suggested by the girls. Studies show that one of the preferred methods of social interaction in girls is simply sitting and talking with each other (Santrock 2007); this can be challenging in the absence of a mutual language. Chart 20 illustrates the main emerging categories from the responses to this question.

Chart 20. Main categories of responses to question 17



150 of respondents named at least one internationally popular game, (e.g. hide and seek, hopscotch, and noughts and crosses); amongst which board games (e.g. Chess, Bingo, Ludo, Snakes, etc.) and card games were mentioned 25 times. Playing different sports (e.g. football, basketball, volleyball, running, etc.) was also suggested by 48 students. 42 respondents suggested local games, which were mostly easy folk games with little need for local linguistic proficiency. Few of the children specifically stated that they desired to introduce Iranian art work, music and films to the newcomer. (e.g. 'showing Iranian film, book, and music to her' [T-6KHER]; 'play Daff, because I have been practicing Daff for seven years. Daff is an Iranian traditional musical instrument' [T-6KHER]).

25 students suggested the language games (e.g. Hangman) which could help the newcomer learn English or the local language. 23 students named digital games (e.g. computer games, Xbox, games on iPad and iPhone, etc.), and more than half of these responses (16 out of 23) were produced by the boy participants at HES.

4.3. Role of Gender, Age, and Children Travelling Experience

Although gender and age differences were not the agenda of this study, I looked at the links between the questionnaire responses and the participants' age and gender. The findings are not statistically calculated. However, interesting relationships emerged which are respectively presented in Appendices 7 and 8. I also looked at the existing relationships in the responses between children who had the experience of travelling abroad and those who did not have this experience, which is presented in Appendix 9.

According to the findings, the respondents without the experience of travelling abroad tended to be less curious and more worried/sad about experiencing an (imaginary) sojourn. This was the opposite for their peers who had the experience of travelling/living in another country (see Appendix 9, Question 1). It seems that those who previously had the similar experiences in real life were less concerned and more curious about the unfamiliar environment. Findings also indicate that children without the experience of travelling abroad tended to be more concerned about the schooling in the new context (see Appendix 9, Question 2). This could be also due to the fear of the unknown. The new school was one of the dominant themes in the interviews as well, where children shared their feeling about this issue in more depth.

The comparison of the responses to Question 4 shows that the students in grade 4 tended to see learning the new language as a more useful coping strategy, while the older students tended to prefer social/emotional support from their home context (see Appendix 8, Question 4). This might be due to the fact that as children grew older they spent more time interacting with friends (Santrock 2007), and trust became an important element of their friendship patterns (Pinter 2011). Both friendship support and language learning were the issues which were also discussed in the interviews.

The findings revealed that children without the experience of travelling abroad tended to prefer making friends in complementary schools where there is more chance for meeting people from their own nationality, while those with the experience of travelling abroad preferred to make new friends at school (see Appendix 9, Question 7). The comparison between the genders also indicates that boys tended to prefer to make friends in the complementary schools while girls seemed to prefer schools (see Appendix 7, Question 7).

Girls tend to have less interest in making friends via playing sport and/or games (see Appendix 7, Question 8 and 16). In this regard, Santrock (2007) explains that boys usually play in groups and their games have winners and losers, while girls are more likely to simply chat with each other.

Girls tend to prefer attending mixed-gender schools more than boys (Appendix 7, Question 10). The findings also show an interesting link between the age of the respondents and their preference in going to the mixed-gender schools. It seems that as children get older their interest in attending mixed-gender schools increases (see Appendix 8, Question 10). The comparison between those with and without the experience of traveling abroad also indicates that children without the experience of travelling abroad tend to have less interest in attending mixed-gender school than their peers who had the experience of travelling abroad (see Appendix 9, Question 10).

Girls tend to prefer to be with their siblings during the imaginary sojourn, so that they can talk in their mother tongue and avoid loneliness; However, boys tend to prefer being with their siblings so that they can expand their social network though bridging to new friendships with the friends of their siblings (see Appendix 7, Question 11). Children without the experience of travelling abroad tend to be more interested in

being with their siblings so that they can talk with them in their mother tongue and avoid loneliness (see Appendix 9, Question 11).

The findings in Question 14a indicate that girls tend to have more empathy with the newcomers in their society, while boys tend to be more curious and eager to learn about the newcomers and their background (see Appendix 7, Question 14a).

4.4. Summary of Findings and Conclusion

Although this questionnaire drew on imaginary scenarios of transition and intercultural encounter, it still revealed some interesting aspects of children's perceptions of such experiences. The way the questionnaire was completed indicates the active engagement of children with the research instrument and illustrates their attempts to move beyond the limitations of the research instruments of this kind.

The quantitative presentation and qualitative analysis of the findings revealed that the respondents were relatively positive about experiencing cross-cultural encounters. However, the responses also showed certain degrees of ambivalent feelings. The majority of the children preferred active coping strategies such as seeking support, studying hard, making friends and interacting with members of the host society. The findings also emphasized the importance of social/emotional support in children's life. Children also pointed out the importance of non-verbal activities in cross-cultural interaction particularly in the absence of mutual language. The findings of the questionnaire fed into the design of the interview participatory activities which are discussed in the next chapter.

Chapter 5

Findings: Group Interviews and Participatory Activities

5.1. Introduction

One of the advantages of group interviews is that there is the potential for discussion, thus generating a wide range of responses (Cohen et al. 2000). Lewis (1992) also explains that in group interviews children can challenge each other's ideas and provide a wide range of responses. Children's voice is not always expressed in words (Kellet 2010b); when children are the research participants, 'voice' can be conceptualized as 'a space for meaningful engagement where children are encouraged to express their views through a variety of mediums (talking, writing, drawing, or other modes)' (Lundy 2007 cited in Harwood 201:6). In order to allow children's voices to be heard, Christensen and James (2000:7) recommend that researchers adapt their methods of research to children's 'cultures of communication' by paying attention to children's use of language, their conceptual meanings and understandings of social interactions. In this phase of the research, a couple of participatory activities were included in the group interviews in order to facilitate access to children's experiences and understandings of intercultural interactions.

This chapter is considerably large. In this chapter, the findings from 7 hours and 27 minutes of audio data from the five group interviews with participatory activities are presented. The data from the participants with and without the experience of travelling abroad are analysed and represented together. The interviews extracts at MAH, KHER, MOB and HES schools are translated into English as the original data was in Persian. However, the data from INTL were originally in English, as the participants at this

school were bilingual and preferred English as the medium of communication. In order to analyse the data collected via participatory activities, the results around the activities in each group were collected, compared and categorized (see Appendices 10 and 11). Research has shown that sometimes the dialogues around each participatory activity can provide even richer source of interpretation and meaning than the activity itself (O’Kane 2008). With this in view, the entire interviews were transcribed (Appendix 12), and coded in NVivo, based on the messages they conveyed. After cycles of revisiting and revising the codes, the interview extracts were translated into English for the presentation in the thesis.

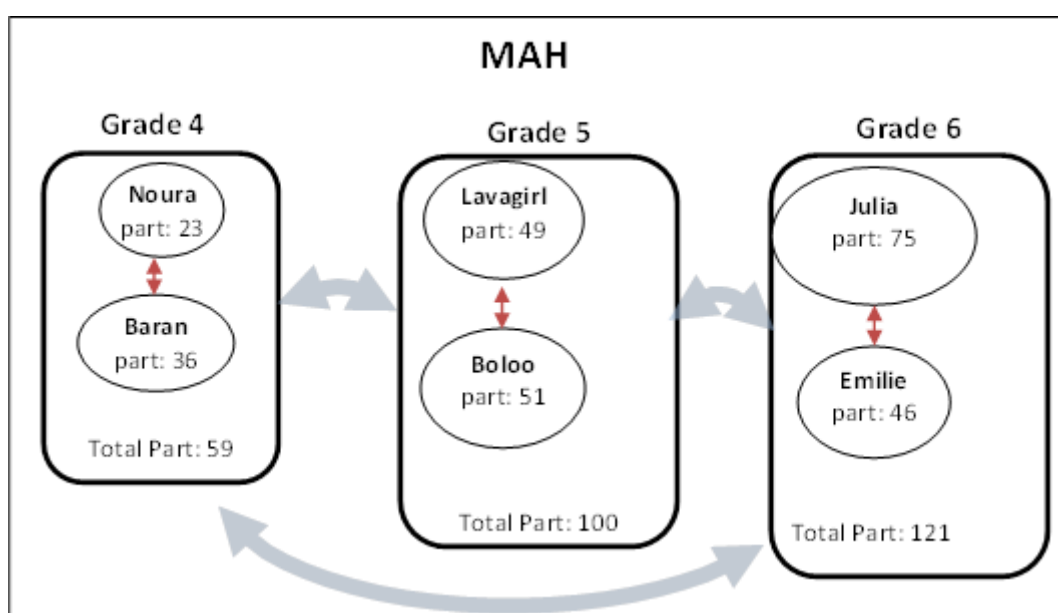
5.2. Background

In this section, I briefly describe the essential information about the participants, the setting and content of each interview session and the participatory activities.

5.2.1. MAH

Participants at MAH were girls and had the experience of travelling abroad. In Figure 14, the six bubbles represent the six participants, and the size of the bubbles roughly portrays the number of the times each participant took turn to talk. The exact number of the turns is also printed in the bubbles. As Figure 14 shows, Julia[N-6MAH-1] talked the most (75 times). The pairs in grade 6 were also the dominant pairs with 121 turns of talking. However, the distribution of turns was relatively more equal between the pairs in grade 4 and 5.

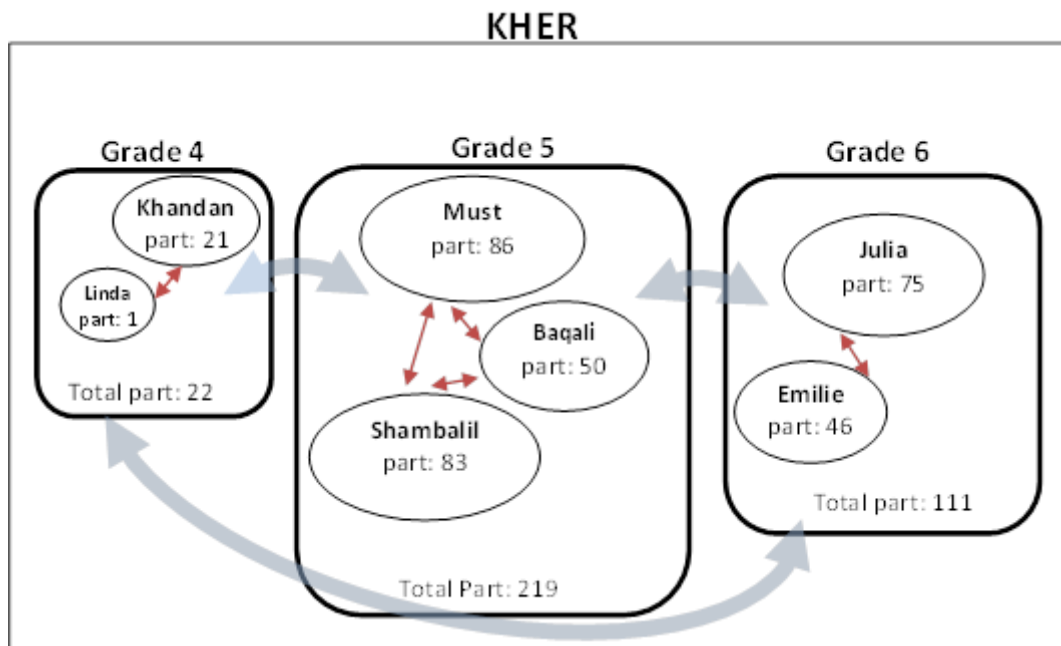
Figure 14. Interview pattern and distribution of the parts at MAH



5.2.2. KHER

The participants at KHER were also girls and had the experience of traveling abroad. The two participants in grade 4 left the interview very early. In spite of my emphasis on having privacy during the interview, the members of the staff came to the library a couple of times. This might be due to the different understandings of the concept of confidentiality in different cultures. I noticed that the staff members assumed that the content of the research would be confidential only for those outside the institution and not the insiders. The visits of the staff could be also for safeguarding the children. As Figure 15 shows, in grade 5, three participants were working in a group.

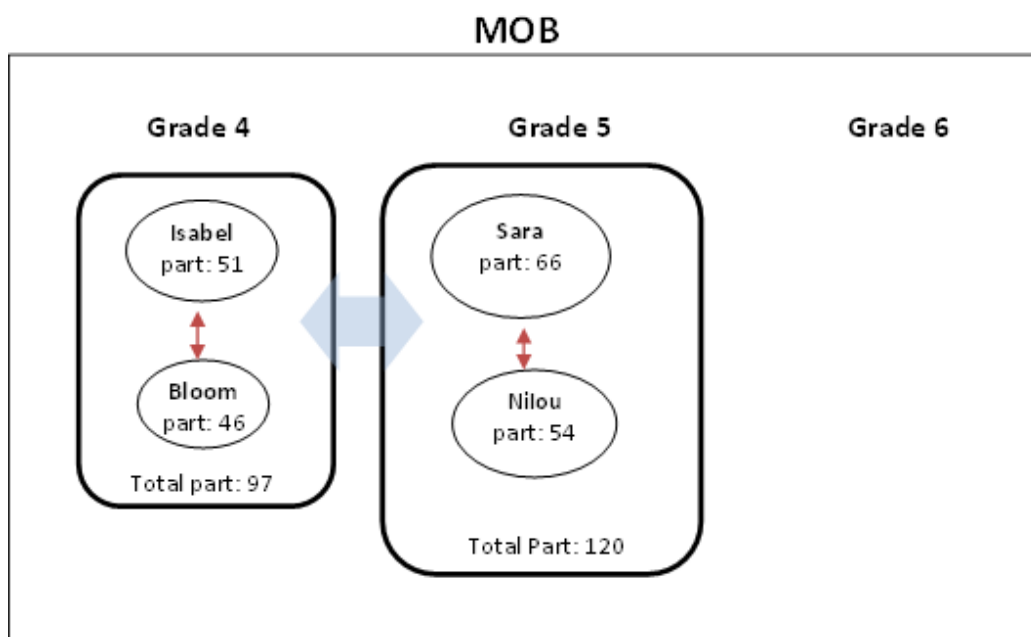
Figure 15. Interview pattern and distribution of the parts at KHER



5.2.3. MOB

The participants at MOB were girls and did not have the experience of travelling abroad, except Isabel[T-4MOB] who had visited Makah once for pilgrimage. As Figure 16 illustrates, only four students participated in this interview.

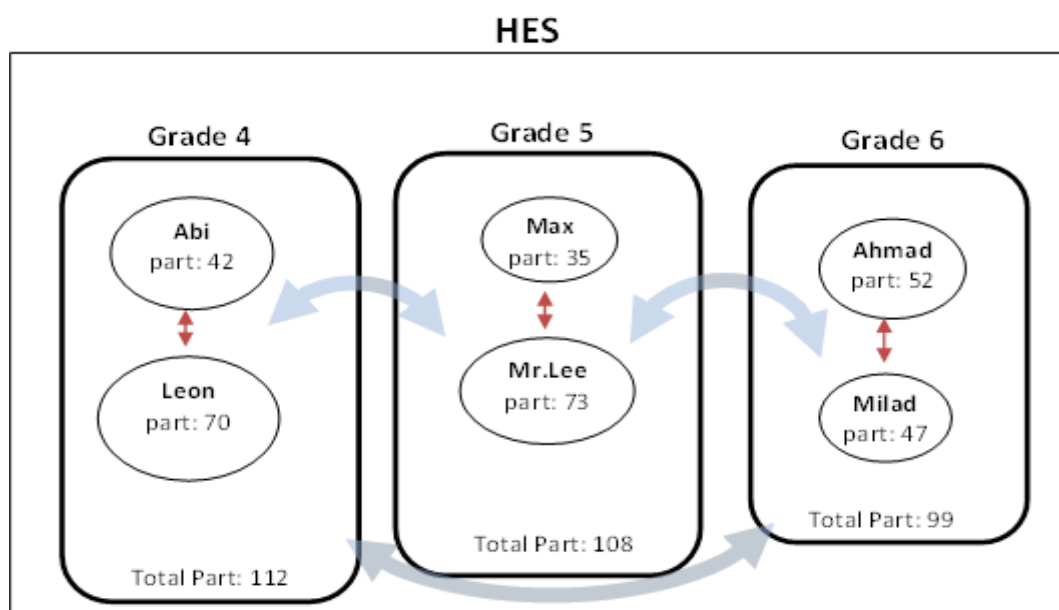
Figure 16. Interview pattern and distribution of the parts at MOB



5.2.4. HES

HES and MOB were the two branches of the same school. The participants at HES were boys and did not have the experience of traveling abroad.

Figure 17. Interview pattern and distribution of the parts at HES



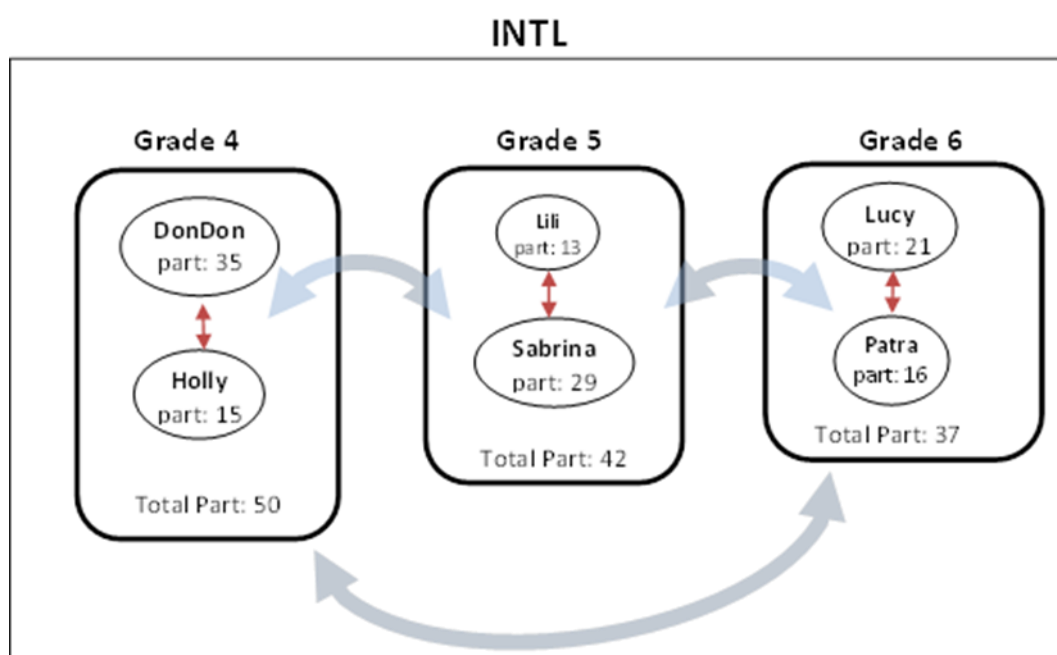
5.2.5. INTL

INTL was the international section of the MAH primary school. English was the medium of education and the second language for majority of the students; however, not all the students were fluent in English. The participants in this school were girls.

In general, there were two main types of multicultural students: 1) child sojourners who were originally from East Asia, Africa and Europe, 2) bilingual Iranian children who used to be sojourners at some point in their lives. The participants in the group interview were mainly Iranians who had lived in another country for a period of time, except for Patra[T-6INTL-1] who was African and had been living in Iran for four years. The session was carried out in English. The head teacher entered the room a couple of times, as it also happened in other schools. As Figure 18 shows, DonDon[T-

5INTL-1] was the most active participant . The length of this interview was almost similar to the rest of the interviews. The smaller number of turns in this interview is due to the participants' longer turns.

Figure 18. Interview pattern and distribution of the parts at INTL



5.3. The Conceptual Model of Study

Life in general is a process of adapting to our ongoing changeable environment, and the only thing that makes the cross-cultural situation different is that during this process the environment is usually unfamiliar from the start (Anderson 1994). In other words, cultural adaptation is a subcategory of 'transition experience', which is defined as 'responses to the significant changes in life circumstances that generates the tensions and anxieties we face whenever change threatens the stability of lives' (Bennett 1977:45 cited in Anderson 1994:299).

Anderson's cross-cultural adaption model represents adjustment as a dynamic and interactive process of 'involving the encountering and overcoming of obstacles' (Anderson 1994:307). This model is the conceptual framework of this study (see

2.3.4.). As it was mentioned in section 3.9.1, I first adopted an inductive approach to the analysis of the interview data, and then employed the deductive thematic analysis, in a way that the Anderson's (1994) three broad categories of *cultural encounter*, *obstacle*, and *response generation* formed the theory-driven themes.

This project mainly focuses on children's understandings of the cross-cultural adjustment processes rather than their real-life experiences, because in some cases the participants did not encounter any cross-cultural encounters in real life. Considering this, the 'overcoming' phase of this model is not covered in this study. In this chapter, the participants' perceptions of each of the three phases of cultural encounter, obstacle, and response generation are studied.

Anderson's model studies the affective, behavioural, and cognitive aspects of the adaptation separately. Hence, in this model, each phase of adaptation is consisted of three cells in which the possible emotional, behavioural, and cognitive components of that phase are studied (see section 2.3.4., Figure 6). However, in this study these three dimensions are not distinguished. First, this study tries to explore how children make sense of/ understand adaptation rather than what they have experienced. Therefore, although the participants explained how they think they would behave in certain situations, the data does not exactly reflect the behavioural dimension of each stage. Second, it is very difficult to draw a clear line between these three dimensions as they can overlap.

Now I am going through all my themes and linking them to the framework. In the first part, I look into the findings and their correspondence with the first stage of cross-cultural adaptation, the cultural encounter stage.

5.4. Cultural Encounter

Cultural encounter is the first phase of the adaptation process which is linear and time dependant. It lasts as long as ‘the sojourner perceives nothing requiring his or her adjustment’ (Anderson 1994:308). Through the inductive analysis of the interview data, nine categories were identified. These categories fit under the theme, ‘cultural encounter stage’ which was theory-driven. Some of these emerging categories were not stated in Anderson’s model. For the ease of understanding, in Table 17 the categories which were in Anderson’s model are in colour black. Anderson’s model only named the components in each cell; however, in this study some of the emerging categories contain subcategories. The colour blue represents the data driven categories and subcategories.

Table 17. Themes in Culture encounter stage

Cultural Encounter	
➤	Anxiety
➤	Excitement
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Better life <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Educational environment ▪ Entertainment • USA • Freedom • Different cultural practices • Negative reaction of host-nationals • Food • No return • Unrealistic concerns
➤	Ambivalent feelings (swings in impressions)
➤	Curiosity
➤	Exploration (See, hear, taste, smell the new)
➤	Learning (Information gathering)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learning different cultural practices • Learning new games • Learning new language
➤	Stereotyping/ Generalizing
➤	Home culture appreciation
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seeking similar context to home (Craving for home)
➤	Expectations unrealistic

5.4.1. Anxiety

Children expressed their concerns about the negative reactions of the host-nationals, the unfamiliarity with the local food and not being able to return to their home country. They also voiced their concerns about facing the unknown. In this regard, Gallagher (2013:58) explains that

individuals seek out information to enhance their ability to predict and explain the actions of others. From the sojourner's perspective, anxiety and uncertainty arise from not knowing how the host national will interpret an interaction, from not knowing how the host national is likely to behave and react, and from not knowing why a host national behaved as he/she did.

Anxiety was also a component of Anderson's model. The sections below portray some of these stress-provoking situations/ changes the participants anticipated to experience in their future sojourn.

5.4.1.1. Negative Reaction of Host Society

One of the main concerns of the participants was the negative reaction of the host society. In fact, studies focusing on this issue show that the host-nationals can influence the adjustment process in various ways (Leong and Ward 2000; Ward et al 2001; Zandian 2011b). Children anticipated that the differences in their nationality, religion and cultural practices would bring challenges to their future sojourn experiences. The extracts below, which are part of the discussion in the Hopes-&-Worries activity, illustrate children's general concerns about the unwelcoming reactions of the host society.

Extract 1.

Line	Speaker	Translation
1/127	Bloom[N-4MOB-1]	What if they are like unfriendly..

		what if
1/128	Nilou[N-5MOB-1]	They hit us!
		(...)
1/130	Sara[N-5MOB-1]	For example, if we swear at them, they may come and knock us down! (laughter)

In Extract 1, the participants are expressing their fear of being bullied in an imagined new place. It is worth noting that the laughter at the end of line 1/130 may indicate that Sara[N-5MOB-1] exaggerated the possible situation to impress the other members of the group. Still a serious point is made about children's concerns about the unfriendly reaction of the members of the host society. Extract 2, which is part of the discussion in Diamond-Ranking activity, illustrates another example of the participants' concerns in this regard.

Extract 2.

Line	Speaker	Translation
133	Shambalil[N-5KHER-1]	Or for example they may be so mean.. and say nasty things about us.. and all the neighbours do something that our landlord kicks us out of the house.

In Extract 3, Nilou[N-5MOB-1] and Sara[N-5MOB-1] describe an imagined situation in which they could be humiliated because of their religious beliefs.

Extract 3.

Line	Speaker	Translation
1/96	Nilou[N-5MOB-1]	For example, we are saying our prayers. And they come and make fun of us, saying 'Oh! They are saying prayers.. um like the may not know what we are doing. So they may make fun of us.
1/97	Researcher	Do you have the same opinion?
1/98	Sara[N-5MOB-1]	Um, for example, um.. we usually go to the mosque during the Ghadr nights [religious event]..,like if we talk with someone who knows English ask him/her where the nearest mosque is. S/he would say 'what is a mosque?!Who are you?! I don't get it?!'

The fear of not being accepted due to their nationality was another concern of many of the participants. In Extract 4, which is part of the Diamond-Ranking activity, Must[T-

5KHER-1] expresses her concerns about being treated unequally in the new context due to her nationality.

Extract 4.

Line	Speaker	Translation
296	Must[T-5INTR-1]	What if they discriminate us ..or differentiate between the foreigner and the home students. For example.. give more food to the home student .
		(...)
299	Researcher	Does anyone else worry about this?
300	Lili[T-6INTL-1]	No, because we can prove that we are.. good people. For example, if an Afghan is a good person...we can't say/do anything against him/her.

In the interviews, friendship is referred to as both a concern and excitement. In Extract 5, some of the participants express their concerns about not being able to make new friends.

Extract 5.

Line	Speaker	Translation
49	Khandan[T-4KHER-1]	What if they won't become your friend?...some of them
50	Baqali[T-5KHER-1]	Exactly!
51	Must[T-5KHER-1]	It's possible that some won't make friend with us, but eventually someone will. It's impossible that the entire school hate us.

This extract also shows that one may find a given situation (in this context lack of familiar support) stressful, while another person who is perhaps more secure in his/her sense of self may see it as a challenge.

5.4.1.2. Food

Different food in the new place was another item which led to discussion, as the participants held various opinions regarding this issue. Extract 6 is an example in which Lavagirl[T-5MAH-1] and Emilie[T-6MAH-1] share their anxiety about the food in the new country.

Extract 6.

Line	Speaker	Translation
2/14	Lavagirl[T-5MAH-1]	Oh! One things is that we don't like the new foods there.. cause we are worried if the food is a cockroach, or what if it isn't Halal?
2/15	Baran[T-4MAH-1]	We won't eat those [i.e. food like cockroach], we eat the good ones.. like fast food <i>[with excitement]</i> (...)
2/17	Emilie[T-6MAH-1]	We:...[are worried about] gaining weight because of eating a lot of fast food... because we've heard Americans are obese ...
2/19	Noura[T-4MAH-1]	When we-we were there, it was.. like, all were cockroaches.. Yuck!
2/20	Lavagirl[T-5MAH-1]	[when we are abroad] my mom always get squid.. Now that I am creating Abalooboo, I want people to eat squid there.

In Extract 6, Lavagirl's[T-5MAH-1] statement in line 2/20, highlights the important role of the adults, particularly parents in children's approach to transition. Research has shown that child sojourners whose parents managed to adapt smoothly, also experience less challenging adaptation process (Ward et al. 2001). Moreover, in line 2/17, Emilie's[T-6MAH-1] statement, 'Americans are obese' demonstrates an example of stereotyping.

A number of the participants mentioned their concerns about finding halal food in the new context; however, some of the participants also explicitly expressed that this would not be their concern. Extract 7 portrays these two different viewpoints.

Extract 7.

Line	Speaker	Translation
1/66	Sara[N-5MOB-1]	It's my concern. Because we don't know if their food is delicious or not. Is it edible at all? <i>(all laughing)</i> . Is it fine according to Islamic rules? (...)
1/68	Bloom[N-4MOB-1]	We thought (xxx), whether they had these sweet, tasty candies, or the milk chocolate ones? <i>(all laughing)</i>
1/69	Researcher	Ok, you said something about food and Islamic rules. Is this one of your concerns? Can you explain?

1/70	Sara[N-5MOB-1]	For example, people eat squid/octopus in Japan but in Iran it's not halal for Muslims.
1/71	Researcher	Do you also have the same worries? Or it's not that important for you?
1/72	Bloom[N-4MOB-1]	I just don't like it. (...)
1/106	Bloom[N-4MOB-1]	[Islamic practices] is not my concern, because when I go abroad I don't think about Tehran anymore <i>(laughter)</i> .

Although children were sharing their concerns about the imagined sojourn experience, the discussion in the excerpt above was full of laughter. This shows that children were having fun.

5.4.1.3. No Return

Another emerging category, which may be unique to this data set, was the fear of not being able to return to the home country. Julia[T-6MAH-1] specifically referred to the hostile political relationship between Iran and the USA which could problematize their visit to Iran after travelling to the USA. Until recently, Iranians could only obtain a single entrance US visa. This meant that the Iranian US visa holders were permitted to enter this country only once, and if they wanted to travel outside the borders of the USA, they had to apply for a new visa to return to this country. Of course, rarely would any Iranian sojourner risk travelling outside the USA during their sojourn in this country. The absence of a US embassy in Iran and the very difficult and time consuming visa application process were the main reasons which prevented many Iranian sojourners in the USA from visiting their home country. Some of the participants in this study referred to this issue and shared their anxiety in this regard (see Extract 8). This shows that how the adult world affects children's perceptions, and adds to their anxieties.

Extract 8.

Line	Speaker	Translation
45	Julia[T-6MAH-1]	Another thing which we were really

		worried about was that because of the conflict between Iran and the US.. We are worried that we can't... return to Iran anymore
46	Emilie[T-6MAH-1]	To see our family.
		...
49	Researcher	Why are you worried?
50	Lavagirl[T-5MAH-1]	Because we can't [return]
51	Boloo[T-5MAH-1]	We can't return, and even if we turn, then we can't go back again.

5.4.1.4. Unrealistic Concerns

Optimism about the future is one of the unique characteristics of immigrant families which can help them during the transition (Suarez-Orozco, M. 2005). The replacement of the optimism about the future with the unrealistic concerns can problematize the adjustment process. 'Having unrealistic concerns' was another emerging category. Getting lost forever, becoming the victims of scamming, and failing to survive were some of the participants' unrealistic worries. These kinds of stress-provoking thoughts might have been due to the participants' lack of experience in transition and intercultural interaction.

In Extract 9, Shambalil[N-5KHER-1] shares her belief about friendship, and her concerns about being betrayed by her friend(s) in the new place during the imagined sojourn. What she describes could occur in any context, but interestingly, she assumes it would only happen in the new country.

Extract 9.

Line	Speaker	Translation
306	Shambalil[N-5KHER-1]	I wanted to say people there might be untrue. Like you make friend with someone there, share all your secrets with her/him, and then suddenly you notice, everyone knows your secrets. Your friend has told everyone about your secrets.
		(...)
309	Lili[T-6KHER-1]	You shouldn't trust a friend that fast. Only after a year or so... you can become trust them.
310	Shambalil[N-5KHER-1]	Well, what s/he keep asking, and like makes you say, telling you I'm your good friend, and you'll believe

		her/him and tell him all your wish, um secrets.
311	Baqali[T-5KHER-1]	Well, if you are wise, you won't.

Lili's[T-6KHER-1] and Baqali's[T-5KHER-1] comments in the extract above shows that they have a more realistic point of view about friendship, and perceive relationships detached from home or host contexts.

In Extract 10, Lavagirl[T-5MAH-1] talks about the fear of war and death in the new place. Although the fear of failing to survive in the new environment sounds very dark and unrealistic; the threat of a war breaking out between the 'West' and Iran was all over the news at the time of the interviews. During the first and second phases of this research, sanctions were imposed on Iran, and just before that a military attack on Iran was one of the suggested options to impede Iran's nuclear activities. Moreover, during the past decade the Middle East has been constantly involved in wars. The context in which the interview was carried out might explain why some of the participants had such concerns.

Extract 10.

Line	Speaker	Translation
24	Lavagirl[T-5MAH-1]	Miss won't survive there [Abalooboo]
25	Researcher	Why won't you survive there?
26	Lavagirl[T-5MAH-1]	..well a war may start there
27	Boloo[T-5MAH-1]	Oh!Oh!

Participants also expressed their concerns about the consequences of the communication breakdown in the new sociolinguistic context. Inadequacies such as ignorance of the new language can become an obstacle which needs to be overcome and is discussed later in this chapter, but some of the concerns in this regard were unrealistic. Extract 11 is an example in which Shambalil[N-5KHER-1] conceptualizes a very uncommon situation where her lack of language proficiency results in communication breakdown.

Extract 11.

Line	Speaker	Translation
85	Shambalil[N-5KHER-1]	well..like if I want to... um.. like ..if my mom is out...and everyone else is out too, then I am on my own, my mom- nobody answers their mobiles... for example we are living in a hotel, if I go downstairs (to the lobby) to ask why there is no water in the room.. well how can I make them understand me? With drawing?

Of course, not knowing the local language can become a major obstacle during the sojourn which needs to be resolved; but being highly anxious about the rare unfortunate incidents and disregarding the fact that there is very little chance of being in such situations can create an internal tension which may paralyze the new sojourner; another obstacle to be overcome before the sojourner can do anything at all. In the same extract, Shambalil[N-5KHER-1] suggested drawing for communication as an alternative in the absence of the mutual language. Although this is not the focus of this section, her comment points out the importance of non-verbal communication as a strategy to overcome the language barrier.

Getting lost ‘forever’ was another fear for some of the participants. In Extract 12, Khandan[T-4KHER-1] explains that as a newcomer who is not familiar with the new environment and does not speak the language she could get lost forever. What she mentions about the importance of learning the language of the host environment and getting familiar with the new surrounding are to the point, and the fear of getting lost is a natural concern of children, but fear of getting lost *forever* is unrealistic and can dampen down children’s enthusiasm for the new experience.

Extract 12.

Line	Speaker	Translation
91	Khandan[T-4KHER-1]	Um.. Something Miss... knowing.. ummm “not knowing the new place” .. like Miss, if we go somewhere and get lost... it can get really serious... like we don’t have any phone with us, we don’t

	know the language to ask the address, the police... I mean we don't know how to talk to the police.. and we are lost... then we'll be lost forever ..
--	---

The participants also expressed their fear about going to the boarding schools in the new country. The data show that for many children studying and living abroad were to some extent related to going to the boarding schools. Extract 13 is part of the discussion in the Diamond-Ranking activity. Here, Baran[T-5MAH-1] and Boloo[T-4MAH-1] are expressing their disgust about going to the boarding schools.

Extract 13.

Line	Speaker	Translation
174	Baran[T-5MAH-1]	(...)only if it[the new school] is not a boarding school.
175	Researcher	Why? What concerns you about boarding school?
176	Baran[T-5MAH-1]	Well.. I am very much attached to my family. At least I want to be with them...and I don't like boarding schools at all. (...)
178	Boloo[T-5MAH-1]	I don't like boarding schools at all.. because.. it's horrible.. it's not like home, you can't do whatever you want.

Anderson's model refers to the high anxiety as one possible reaction of the sojourners during the cultural encounter stage; however, concerns such as fear of getting lost forever and going to the boarding schools and being bullied are unique to the this group of children.

When thinking of transition, sometimes children mix elements from worst nightmares and fictions together. In fact, in Extract 14, Alma[T-5KHER-1], who had the experience of attending summer schools in the UK and Switzerland, presents a very different picture of such schools. According to her, she was enjoying such a huge variety of experiences that she did not find any time to feel homesick. What Alma[T-6KHER-1] described was very different from other participants' assumptions about the boarding schools.

Extract 14.

Line	Speaker	Translation
245	Alma [T-6KHER-1]	No Miss, I won't feel homesick, I have been in summer schools before.
246	Researcher	Have you? Then, tell me. How did you feel there? Did you feel homesick?
247	Alma [T-6KHER-1]	Well.. y-you get so busy and.. you'll have so much school work and stuff that (xxx) you won't have time to think about your family back home.

Although some of the stated concerns indicated children's fears of the unknown, it should be acknowledged that they might have exaggerated these strong points to foreground their concerns, impress the rest of the group or cause laughter.

5.4.2. Excitement

The participants expressed their excitement about the various aspects of the sojourn experience. In Anderson's model (1994), excitement is one of the possible affective changes during the cultural encounter. In this section, some of the main categories emerged from the data regarding the participants' excitements about the transition are discussed. These emerging categories are excitement about having a better life, the USA, freedom and different cultural practices.

5.4.2.1. Better Life/ New Life Standards

The excitement about the new lifestyle standards emerged from the data in various ways, In Extract 15, Lucy [T-6INTL-1] mentions the main pushing force for immigration, dissatisfaction with the current life in the home country.

Extract 15.

Line	Speaker	Original text
173	Lucy [T-6INTL-1]	...also with the 'vasiat of Iran' (<i>lower voice</i>) [=in current situation in Iran] it's better to go out of the country. (<i>laughter</i>)

In many cases people migrate to actualize new lifestyle standards (Suarez-Orozco et al. 2005). With respect to the new lifestyle standards, the participants referred to better

schools and entertainments (3D cinemas, water parks, bigger shopping malls, etc.). In Extract 16 which is part of the Hope-&-Worries activity, DonDon[T-4INTL-1] who had the experience of studying in Canada mentions some of these factors.

Extract 16.

Line	Speaker	Original text
175	DonDon[T-4INTL-1]	emm ..I think you could enjoy most of your time there, maybe there is a water park there, and better school, better rules like they have,.. like better shopping malls

Extract 17 is another example of many that shows the excitement about having new facilities.

Extract 17.

Line	Speaker	Translation
78	Leon[N-4HES-1]	There are a lot of new things there. Things which are not available in Iran at all.

It should be noted that the excitement for having a better life was not specifically mentioned in Anderson's Model.

5.4.2.1.1. School

The findings indicate that for children the quality of the educational environment was a key element for a better life, as the school is an indispensable part of their daily life. Although the educational context can be also part of the experience of the adult sojourners, the participants of this study were specifically referring to the primary and secondary schools. Extract 18 which is part of the Diamond-Ranking activity is one of these examples.

Extract 18.

Line	Speaker	Translation
3/166	Researcher	If you could add one more thing to this list, what would it be?
		(...)
3/170	All	The good school
		(...)

3/172	Lavagirl[T-5MAH-1]	Well, usually there are not good children in the.. weak schools..
3/173	Boloo[T-5MAH-1]	My point is that we are moving to change our life, and we want to see whether we can change ourselves, too. Then, our school should improve, as everything else should. (...)
3/180	Julia[T-6MAH-1]	Um and the school should be also the best. Like MAH is the best school, here, and our school there should be the best as well, so that we can be better in our studies.

In Extract 18, line 3/173, Boloo[T-5MAH-1] refers to brining change to life as one of the aims of her imaginary transition, and then she scales this down into the change of the school. With respect to the quality of the schools, in Extract 19, Lili[T-6KHER-1] points out the possibility of having advanced technologies in the new school. Whether these expectations reflect the reality or not is another issue.

Extract 19.

Line	Speaker	Translation
45	Lili[T-6KHER-1]	New things.. What do we have here?!.. they've recently added LCDs [in our classes], the [students in foreign schools] already had these, now they have laptops on their desks.

Although the new school was referred as an exciting aspect of the sojourn experience by many of the participants, some also expressed their concerns about the possible challenges they may face in the new school. This aspect of the children's feelings about the new school was discussed in the previous section.

5.4.2.1.2. Fun

With respect to the possibility of having better entertainments, in Extract 20 Bloom[N-4MOB-1] points out going to the 3D cinemas, another new entertaining activity which she believes is not available in her home country.

Extract 20.

Line	Speaker	Translation
1/74	Bloom[N-4MOB-1]	Because, in Iran the technology is not

as advanced as in other countries. I haven't found any 3D cinemas in Iran, yet.

Extract 21 is one of the many examples in which children expressed their excitement about shopping in the new place.

Extract 21.

Line	Speaker	Translation
2/55	Lavagirl[T-5MAH-1]	The value of dollar goes up or down we don't care
2/56	Julia[T-6MAH-1]	Shopping brands in different malls.. because American products are of great quality

Line 56 in the extract above, demonstrates the dominant belief amongst many Iranians about the high quality of the American products. Lavagirl's[T-5MAH-1] statement in line 55 also shows children's awareness about the financial challenges Iranian may have in other countries, which is due to the instability of the Iran's currency. This issue is discussed in the obstacle section.

5.4.2.2. The USA

During the discussion about children's excitement, some of the participants showed great affection for the USA which became a unique emerging category in this data set. For instance, Julia[T-6MAH-1], who had the experience of visiting other countries but never visited the USA, suddenly stated that 'I love the USA (...)We are comfortably free there'. As it was mentioned in the first chapter, the teaching materials provided by the Iranian Ministry of Education do not show positive attitude toward certain western countries, particularly the USA (Groiss and Toobian 2006). However, the findings of this study show that children had a positive attitude toward western countries, in particular the USA. This was also evident in the responses to questionnaire (see 4.2.1.12.). It should be noted that this study did not intend to explore children's viewpoint about certain geographical locations, but children decided to

express their affection for the USA, which was unexpected. It is important to acknowledge that children might have been influenced by the parental context. Their image of other countries might have been also affected by the social media or other second-hand sources of information such as things other children may say about their visits to these places. Or maybe, curiosity is the reason for their eagerness to visit the USA. Of course, these always need to be borne in mind.

In Extract 22, Leon[N-4HES-1] is responding to my question regarding the possible reasons for the children's interest in visiting the USA or UK. In response to my question, Leon[N-4HES-1] also mentioned freedom. The following section focuses on this emerging category.

Extract 22.

Line	Speaker	Translation
432	Researcher	Many named USA or.. UK. Why? (...)
435	Leon[N-4HES-1]	Because I think they [USA & UK] are the countries with the most freedom in the world, Miss. (...)
437	Max[N-5HES-1]	It might be.. a very bad country.. because of all those nice things about them on the TV and internet and other stuff... everyone thinks it's very nice there...is it really nice?.. No one knows!

In line 437, Max[N-5HES-1] mentions the influence of second-hand information and soft power on people's perception of the other countries.

Extract 23 is part of the discussion about children's attitudes towards foreigners in their own country. In this extract, children are sharing their feelings about having a newcomer from an unknown country in their class. As the extract shows, the participants expressed their excitement about meeting Americans. I believe laughter in line 3/238 indicates excitement.

Extract 23.

Line	Speaker	Translation
3/237	Researcher	If someone was visiting [your school], where did you prefer her to be from?
3/238	Julia[T-6MAH-1]	From the country that I like, USA. (...)
3/240	Emilie[T-6MAH-1]	Me too (<i>laughter</i>)
3/241	Researcher	What about you?
3/242	Baran[T-4MAH-1]	USA ... because I know their language, and ... well.. Americans seem to be very kind. (...)
3/244	Noura[T-4MAH-1]	I don't like her to be American. Because Baran says they are kind, I say they are not. She [the American newcomer] will steal my friend [referring to Baran].

Baran's [T-4MAH-1] comment in Line 3/242 shows that the linguistic competence to communicate in English is one reason for children's willingness to interact with the Americans; this was also evident in the responses to the questionnaire (see 4.2.1.12.). Noura's [T-4MAH-1] comment in line 3/244, 'She will steal my friend', shows that she sees the newcomer as a possible threat to her friendship with Baran[T-4MAH-1], and that is the only reason for her negative attitudes towards Americans. With respect to children's passion to meet Americans, Julia[T-6MAH-1] also states that 'I prefer American neighbours'. This statement was part of the discussion in the Diamond-Ranking activity.

Although many of the participants had positive perceptions of the life in USA, Extract 24 shows that some of the participants also had a less elevated image of this country based on the information they gained via the social media.

Extract 24.

Line	Speaker	Translation
342	Shambalil[N-5KHER-1]	But in America some handicapped people with no legs sit somewhere and beg with a bowl in front to them.. I've seen this in the movies.

5.4.2.3. Freedom

The findings show that freedom is another important reason for the participants' excitement about transition. This category may be unique to the participants of this study, possibly because of the particular context they live in. In Extract 25, Leon[N-4HES-1] explains that having an opportunity to live in a country with more freedom is the most exciting aspect of the transition for him.

Extract 25.

Line	Speaker	Translation
134	Researcher	What was the most exciting thing for you?
135	Leon[N-4HES-1]	Miss, for us.. for us the fact that we can live in a country which has more freedom comparing to Iran.

Similarly, in Extract 26, Julia[T-6MAH-1] highlights the importance of having freedom, when I asked her what could be added to the list of 'hopes' in the Hope-&-Worries activity.

Extract 26.

Line	Speaker	Translation
2/83	Researcher	What would you add [to the list]?
2/84	Julia[T-6MAH-1]	Nothing, only freedom.

Some participants pointed out the absence of Islamic obligations to clarify what they meant when they talked about having freedom in other countries (see Extract 27). What is particularly noteworthy about such statements is that despite the fact that talking about such sensitive issues is unacceptable in the Iranian education system and in the larger scale in this socio-political context, children very carefully pointed out this issue.

Extract 27.

Line	Speaker	Translation
2/69	Lavagirl[-T5MAH-1]	Islam is not mandatory. (...)
2/72	Boloo[T-5KHER-1]	Like in Dubai and Turkey
2/73	Lavagirl[T-5MAH-1]	It's not mandatory there [USA]
2/74	Julia[T-6MAH-1]	We are comfortably free there [USA]

2/75	Boloo[T-5MAH-1]	It's complete freedom
2/76	Lavagirl[T-5MAH-1]	In most places in the world, either you have to be Muslim or you are not allowed to be, but in Turkey and Dubai, either would be fine.

Lavagirl's[T-5MAH-1] comment in line 2/76 shows that sometime children may make cultural assumptions based on their limited exposure to certain cultures, and this might not necessarily reflect the reality. Based on her observation during her visits to other countries, Lavagrill[T-5MAH-1] made the generalization that in some parts of the world people are only allowed to be Muslim, in other parts they are not allowed to be Muslim, and only in Dubai and Turkey do people have the freedom to choose their own religions. This shows the possibility of stereotyping during the initial stage of cultural encounter which according to Anderson's model is one of the cognitive aspects of any cultural encounter.

5.4.2.4. Different Cultural Practices

Many of the participants shared their excitement about experiencing different cultural practices. This was also mentioned in Anderson's model. Regarding the excitement about different cultural practices, in Extract 28 Baqali[T-5KHER-1] expresses her satisfaction about the new culture and her eagerness to assimilate. This extract is part of the discussion when I asked the participants whether they wanted to experience living and studying in another country, and if so, where they would prefer to live.

Extract 28.

Line	Speaker	Translation
351	Researcher	Where would you go?
352	Baqali[T-5KHER-1]	Umm... I don't know.. anywhere... (...)
355	Researcher	OK. Then wh-why would you go?
356	Baqali[T-5KHER-1]	Because like emm.. there are better facilities there, you are more comfortable there [in another country]... Here[in Iran] whatever you do people make fun of you .. they say why do you behave like them [people with more open cultures from other countries]... things like this

Although Baqali[T-5KHER-1] was positive about experiencing a sojourn life, she did not have any preference about where to sojourn (See line 352 in Extract 28), and this was the same for some other participants. Students fantasizing about ‘a better world abroad’ regardless of where exactly (Brein and David 1971:221) also indicate that the participants had this kind of euphoria image in their minds about the sojourn. This become more obvious in line 356 when Baqali[T-5KHER-1] states that ‘you are more comfortable there’, and by ‘there’ she refers anywhere except Iran.

In Extract 29, Alma[T-6KHER-1] and Baqali[T-5KHER-1] specifically express their positive feelings about the openness of some other cultures toward interaction between boys and girls, and the possibility of attending co-educational schools in other countries. The questionnaire findings also revealed children’s interest and curiosity about interacting with the opposite sex in the co-educational environments (see 4.2.1.10 and 4.4).

Extract 29.

Line	Speaker	Translation
304	Alma [T-6KHER-1]	Like here, if you approach a boy, everyone starts gossiping about you as if you have done something really bad. But it’s normal there, you get to learn how to communicate with a boy.
		(...)
313	Baqali [T-5KHER-1]	Just wanted to say about the mixed-sex schools...I don’t have any problem with that...here, if you go near a em... boy.. they say like w-what does she want to do?! But there, you can approach boys.. you act as you like.. it’s not an issue.. <i>(laughter)</i>

The laughter at the end of line 313 was the indication of shyness, because even talking about this issue with an adult was an uncommon practice for children.

In Extract 30, Alma[T-6KHER-1] expresses her satisfaction about the life style and social values in other countries. She illustrates a very elevated picture of abroad without referencing to any particular country.

Extract 30.

Line	Speaker	Translation
341	Alma [T-6KHER-1]	Yeah! And they have more entertainments,.. not just that, like in Iran there are loads of beggars in the streets, while some people are like playing guitars there [other countries], or are artists... When I was there, I felt everyone there has a right to be what they want.

Extract 31 is another example of this kind, in which Nilou[N-5MOB-1] who has not travelled abroad talks about her interest in Japan.

Extract 31.

Line	Speaker	Translation
2/162	Nilou [N-5MOB-1]	(...)Because Japan is a country which um.. I found it better than the other countries I know... it's well organized, and also.. people respect each other.. For example in Iran a superior person doesn't have any respect for the inferior one even in his mind, let alone respecting him in his presence. But I've seen this even in movies- (xxx) they[Japanese] use the words 'lady' and 'your majesty' even while they are thinking about each other...but there are nations whom such words doesn't even cross their minds.
2/163	Researcher	What is the movie you are talking about? Is it a TV series?
2/164	Nilou [N-5MOB-1]	It's a TV series, 'Dongy' in channel 3
2/165	Researcher	'Dongy'! Is it Japanese?
2/166	Nilou [N-5MOB-1]	No, actually- it's Korean. But because my dad travels to Japan for his work.. he tells me about it and stuff

Interestingly, Nilou's[N-5MOB-1] judgment is based on a very popular Korean TV series which was broadcasting at the time of the interviews on the Iranian national TV. This kind of second-hand information may provide stereotyping and/or unrealistic

perceptions of the other cultures. Moreover, Nilou's[N-5MOB-1] statement in line 2/166, 'my dad travels to Japan for his work.. he tells me about it', clearly shows the major role adults, particularly parents have in shaping children's beliefs.

5.4.3. Ambivalent Feelings (swings in impressions)

The results from the questionnaire showed that some of the participants expressed a combination of positive and negative feelings about the imagined transition. Similarly, during the interviews when the participants were asked to imagine that they could move to another country, some expressed a combination of different attitudes to the transition.

According to Braun and Clarke (2006:82) 'The "keyness" of a theme is not necessarily dependent on quantifiable measures- but rather on whether it captures something important in relation to the overall research question'. 'Ambivalent feelings' was one of the themes identified in the data set that captured an important aspect of the participants' feelings toward adaptation and intercultural interaction. Anderson (1994) also mentioned the possibility of experiencing a mixture of opposing feelings upon the arrival in an unfamiliar context. This was referred to as 'swings in impressions' in Anderson's model. In extract 32, Abi[N-4HES-1] who did not have the experience of travelling abroad is talking about his ambivalent feelings in this regard.

Extract 32.

Line	Speaker	Translation
383	Researcher	OK guys, who wanted to experience living abroad? Raise your hand.
384	Abi[N-4HES-1]	Miss we want to and don't want to at the same time.

Sabrina[T-5INTL-1] who had the experience of living and studying in Canada also expressed her opposing attitudes with respect to her transition experience. In response

to the same question, Sabrina[T-5INTL-1] states that going to another country would be fun, but at the same time she does not want to lose her connection with the home country (see Extract 33).

Extract 33.

Line	Speaker	Original text
176	Sabrina[T-5INTL--1]	em I think if for example I go to another country or another place, I also want to know what is going on in Iran, but maybe it would be more funner, and I would learn about another country as well

In Extract 34, Bloom[N-4MOB-1] refers to the change of the feelings upon their arrival to the new context, and later when they return to their home context. This extract is an example of the concept of reverse culture shock. Gullahon and Gullahon (1963) described ‘the intercultural processes as originating with cross-cultural acculturation and terminating with reacculturation’ (Huff 2001:246).

Extract 34.

Line	Speaker	Translation
2/210	Bloom[N-4MOB-1]	Um, if we go we’ll get homesick. And then.. for example, when we first go there, we’ll complain about the new place, and when we return home again we’ll complain about our hometown. If we live there[new place]for long, we won’t be able to like our own city again.

Extract 35 is taken from the discussion during the Hopes-&-Worries activity where the participants named their concerns and excitements about experiencing the (imaginary) transition. Here, Milad[N-6HES-1] is expressing his mixture of opposing emotions about this experience.

Extract 35.

Line	Speaker	Translation
46	Milad[N-6HES-1]	New living context, Miss. It’s good that it’s different as it’s sort of a change, but on the other hand, we are sad that.. we can’t be in our own country anymore.

Similarly, many of the participants who expressed their excitement about the imaginary sojourn experience also voiced their concerns about the different aspects of this experience. In the previous sections, I elaborated on each of these aspects. It should be noted that the participants' ambivalent feelings were not limited to the sojourn experience; they also expressed combination of feelings about having intercultural encounters. This is discussed later in this chapter.

5.4.4. Curiosity

Curiosity was another emerging theme from the data which was also in Anderson's model. According to Deardorff (2006), curiosity and discovery are fundamental to intercultural competence. Children were curious about the new experience and meeting people from different places with different cultures and religions. They showed interest in and curiosity about different races and nationalities. In Extract 36, children are having a discussion about one of the questions in the questionnaire (question 12), and Emilie[T-6MAH-1] is expressing her curiosity about Africans. Considering that very few Africans live in Iran, this kind of curiosity might be due to the fact that meeting an African is an exotic experience in this context.

Extract 36.

Line	Speaker	Translation
3/289	Emilie[T-6MAH-1]	Shall I say why I chose Sabrina [the girl from Africa]? Because I really want to make friends with Africans.. because they have dark skin.

Nilou's[N-4MOB-1] comment , 'we read and learn how they think' in Extract 37 illustrates the important role of literature in transferring the information about other cultures and people in the world. This extract is part of the Hopes-&-Worries activity. This excerpt also highlights the importance of language in transference of cultural knowledge between nations.

Extract 37.

Line	Speaker	Translation
1/86	Nilou[N-4MOB-1]	We become like happy because, em.. we read books, or maybe-maybe we know their language ..we read and learn how they think. Um like we read biographies

Some of the participants, particularly those who did not have the experience of travelling abroad or travelling to non-Islamic countries, were curious to see the reaction of non-Muslims about Islam. The education system in Iran does not celebrate the diversity of religions, and I believe this has aroused curiosity about other religions and more importantly about the people who believe in other religions. In Extract 38, Isabel[T-4-MOB-1] expresses her curiosity about other people's reaction toward Islam. For some of the participants this sense of curiosity was mixed with anxiety. The examples which portray children's concerns about this issue are displayed in the section which addresses anxiety, another emotional aspect of the cultural encounter stage.

Extract 38.

Line	Speaker	Translation
2/177	Isabel[T-4MOB-1]	I'm curious to see um how people in Abalooboo react to our religion,.. Do they get excited, how they feel about it(...)

In Extract 39, Isabel[T-4MOB-1] and Bloom[N-4MOB-1] talk about making friends with people from other nationalities.

Extract 39.

Line	Speaker	Translation
1/57	Bloom[N-4MOB-1]	Friends.. like being away from our class-classmates. Like.. we'd better make new friends.. then we won't be lonely (...)
1/59	Isabel[T-4MOB-1]	Um, it's very exciting for me.. like instead of Parisa or Prima who have been always sitting next to me in the class, someone with.. like with foreign name sits next to me. For example with our own (pseudonyms), Isabel, Bloom, etc. it's something

For Isabel[T-4MOB-1], having friends who have foreign names was something interesting. This indicates her curiosity. In this study, the participants chose their own pseudonyms and many of them selected foreign names such as Isabel, Julia, Emilie, Max, Mr.Lee, Leon, Lavagirl, etc.

Although this is not the focus of this section, in line 1/57, Bloom[N-4MOB-1] referred to friendship as a coping strategy to avoid loneliness in the absence the emotional bonds.

5.4.5. Exploration (See, hear, taste, smell the new/ fascination with new)

Exploration was one of the dominant emerging themes which occurred in the different activities. Participants with and without the experience of living/ travelling abroad expressed their eagerness to explore the new context. ‘Seeing, hearing, tasting, and smelling the new’ were also some of the behaviour aspects of the cultural encounter stage in Anderson’s model. The extracts below are part of the participants’ discussion in Hopes-&-Worries activity. In these extracts, participants who had the experience of visiting other countries express their excitement about the opportunity to explore other parts of the world.

Extract 40.

Line	Speaker	Translation
2/66	Emilie[T-6MAH-1]	For us seeing... other parts of the world, I am really happy (...)
2/80	Noura[T-4MAH-1]	Miss, because we can also see a whole new world.

In Extract 41, DonDon[T-4INTL-1] and Lili[T-5INTL-1] who had the experience of living abroad, shared their experiences of visiting some places they had only seen on the TV before (see Extract 41).

Extract 41.

Line	Speaker	Original text
28	DonDon[T-4INTL-1]	I went to a lot of places that I could see different places that.. I could see like different places on TV but I could see actually on life, like in New York I saw Time Square, I saw like Macy's, it was like 11-floor Macy's, it was really cool for me (...)
35	Lili[T-5INTL-1]	When I went to New York, there was a big television we can see all of us there, I was like... Oh my God!

Extract 42 also shows Boloo's[T-5MAH-1] enthusiasm about meeting people from different cultural backgrounds. In this extract Boloo[T-5MAH-1] is talking about her preferable neighbourhood in the new place.

Extract 42.

Line	Speaker	Translation
3/191	Boloo[T-5MAH-1]	I like to have neighbours from all kinds. Because I really want to make friends with all types of people.

The participants with no experience of overseas visits also expressed their enthusiasm about seeing and experiencing the new.

The fascination with the new and exotic was one of the possible affective aspects of cultural encounter in Anderson's model. Since this study does not distinguish between the affective, behavioural and cognitive aspects, here the term 'exploration' is used as a general theme. In Extract 43, Must[T-5KHER-1] refers to the transition as an opportunity to explore the schools in other parts of the world.

Extract 43.

Line	Speaker	Translation
72	Must[T-5KHER-1]	Well, the new school. I mean in my whole life I have been only in a few nurseries (...) since my induction, I was only at KHER. I am happy here, but I want to experience going to the schools in other parts of the world as well. Even if they are bad, it's interesting to see how they are.

5.4.6. Learning

Although gaining information and learning are not only limited to the cultural encounter stage, and can be also adopted as strategies to overcome an obstacle, many of the participants referred to the possibility of learning new things through intercultural interaction. The term used in Anderson's Model is 'information-gathering'. In Extract 44, Patra[T-6INTL-1] who was a sojourner from Zimbabwe, talks about her personal experience and things one can learn during the sojourn.

Extract 44.

Line	Speaker	Original text
177	Patra[T-6INTL-1]	Well .. um.. I think going to another country is... like .. better, because you might learn about the .. new cultures, learn about the new places, learn about the language

5.4.6.1. Learning about Different Cultural Practices

Extract 45 is an example in which children mention that by visiting different countries they can learn about their customs and cultures. DonDon's[T-4INTL-1] statement in line 220, 'I would have more fun because here some rules.. are like you are supposed to and you aren't supposed to do that' also touches upon the possibility of having more freedom during the sojourn.

Extract 45.

Line	Speaker	Original text
173	Lucy[T-6INTL31]	It will be a new experience, you will learn about different cultures (...)
220	DonDon[T-4INTL-1]	I -I would have more fun because here some rules.. are like you are supposed to and you aren't supposed to do that. for example in Dubai there are Halloween lots of Halloween parties and clubs and those stuff. I could learn about.. when I go to a country learn more about them

Sara[N-4MOB-1] and Nilou[N-4MOB-1] also talk about sojourn experience as an opportunity to learn about other people and their social behaviours (see Extract 46)..

Extract 46.

Line	Speaker	Translation
1/61	Sara[N-4MOB-1]	(...)there we can learn about their[people in other countries] attitudes and behaviours.. or like learn how they are with each other.
1/62	Nilou[N-4MOB-1]	We get to know each other better, and learn more about other's life.

Nilou's [N-4MOB-1] comment in line 1/62, 'We get to know each other better', shows that children were aware of the fact that the transference of the cultural knowledge is two-sided rather than only from the host environment to the sojourner.

Extract 47 is an example which highlights that alongside learning and gathering information, the sojourner may be constantly comparing the different aspects of home and host environments (Anderson 1994).

Extract 47.

Line	Speaker	Translation
1/82	Nilou[N-4MOB-1]	For example we can watch their animations and see how they differ from the ones we have here. To see if they are different or not.

5.4.6.2. Learning New Games

Some of the participants mentioned the possibility of learning new things through observation. Extract 48, which is part of the Diamond-Ranking activity, is an example in which Lili[T-6KHER-1] explains how they can learn new games by observing others while they are playing.

Extract 48.

Line	Speaker	Translation
230	Lili[T-6KHER-1]	Because.. well.. like playing.. like we.. we may learn how to play by watching the others playing.

Extract 49 is an example in which children expressed their excitement about learning new games.

Extract 49.

Line	Speaker	Translation
2/90	Isabel[N-4MOB-1]	(...) I want to ... go with the friend I made in Abalooboo and try their games
2/91	Sara[N-5MOB-1]	Um, we can play our games anytime we like, the ones we have played a lot in Tehran. They [host-nationals] might know more interesting and newer games. We can play their games.

5.4.6.3. Learning a New Language

The new language was a reoccurring theme in this data set, and it was referred to in various ways. In this section, an example which shows children's enthusiasm about learning a new language is provided. According to Anderson's model, attending language classes is one of the behaviour elements of the cultural encounter stage. In Extract 50, Nilou[N-5MAH-1] and Sara[N-5MAH-1] talk about their passion for learning a modern language.

Extract 50.

Line	Speaker	Translation
1/43	Nilou[N-5MOB-1]	We get to learn another modern language in the world.
1/44	Researcher	What about you..em Sara?
1/45	Sara[N-5MOB-1]	Umm.. I think, then we can communicate
1/46	Researcher	You mean if you learn [the language]?
1/47	Sara[N-5MOB-1]	Yes

According to their English teachers, the participants at MOB were relatively low achievers in their English lessons and less motivated than the other classmates. The teachers' comments contradicted the participants' statements above. Moreover, Sara's [N-5MOB-1] comment in line 1/45 shows that children were aware of the importance of linguistic ability in communication with people in the new sociolinguistic context.

5.4.7. Stereotyping/ Generalizing

Stereotyping and generalization were repetitive codes in the interviews. Stereotyping is one of the cognitive aspects of cultural encounter stage in Anderson's model. Byram

(1997:34) defines stereotype and prejudice as ‘attitudes towards people who are perceived as different in respect of the cultural meanings, beliefs and behaviours they exhibit, which are implicit in their interaction with interlocutors from their own social group or others’. Bennett (1986:183) refers to ‘negative stereotyping’ as a stage of development in intercultural sensitivity, a defence strategy ‘wherein undesirable characteristics are attributed to every member of a culturally distinct group. The denigration may be attached to race, religion, age, gender, or any other assumed indicator of difference’.

Short-term experiences of cross-cultural encounters, superficial intercultural education and learning via second-hand information can result in stereotyping. Prejudice and stereotyping can cause unsuccessful interaction (Byram 1997). Many of the participants of this study generalized their experiences or understandings of a particular culture or nationality. Extract 51 is an example from the participants who had the experience of visiting India as tourists. Short-term visits to the new environments as tourists may fail to provide deep understandings of that culture and in some cases may result in stereotyping.

Extract 51.

Line	Speaker	Translation
3/326	Boloo[T-5MAH-1]	Indians are very dirty and low class. Cows are walking in the middle of the road
3/327	Julia[T-6MAH-1]	What? In which country?
3/328	Emilie[T-6MAH-1]	They collect food from the garbage.
3/329	Boloo[T-5MAH-1]	They are either having a bath in the middle of the street or cows are passing by.

Some other types of stereotyping comments emerged while children expressed their feelings about the Afghan refugees in Iran. Munniksma et al. (2012:577) explain that ‘research on social dominance and ethnic hierarchies shows that people want to maintain unequal social distances to different ethnic groups’.

Friends are referred to as sources of support; either informational or emotional support. Some sojourners prefer alliances with the host-nationals, others with the comparable others. Question 12 in the questionnaire (see 4.2.1.12) aimed to explore children's preferences in this regard. One of the choices in the MC items was an Afghan girl/boy. Given that Afghanistan shares a border with Iran, and people in both countries share the same language, religion and some cultural practices, I expected that many respondents select this item. However, only 41 respondents out of 250 who answered this question (16.4%) selected this item. In the interviews, I invited the participants to elaborate further on their choices. During the discussion about this issue, a negatively biased theme developed against Afghans. Extract 52 is one of the many examples.

Extract 52.

Line	Speaker	Translation
3/265	Lavagirl[T-5MAH-1]	From the beginning I said if only Adeleh was not an Afghan
3/266	Researcher	Why?
3/267	Lavagirl[T-5MAH-1]	Um, because Afghans are.. like first because they are very religious (...) and they don't have an outstanding country (...)
3/282	Baran[T-4MAH-1]	In my opinion, Afghans are not good people. We had an Afghan caretaker who was crazy! He was always chewing a gum. He was skinny, and he always had a knife in his hand, I never understood what he was doing. I was scared of him. Our new caretaker is also Afghan, but he seems to be a good man. (...)
3/284	Julia[T-6MAH-1]	Miss in general, everyone is somehow scared of Afghans (...)
3/287	Noura[T-4MAH-1]	I don't like Afghans. Most of them are thieves. We had a maid who was a very bad thief [with hatred], he stole all the jewellery of our neighbours.

Statements such as, 'In my opinion, Afghans are not good people.' In line 3/282, and 'I don't like Afghans. Most of them are thieves' in line 3/287 show how anecdotes and stories children experience or hear from others can

shape their understanding and feelings about certain nationalities and lead to negatively biased generalization. In this regard, Munniksmä et al. (2012) point out the influence of perceived parental attitudes toward outgroup contacts on adolescents' friendships behaviour. Although, in line 3/282, Baran[T-4MAH-1] eventually acknowledges the fact that not all Afghans share the same negative characteristics, when saying 'Our new caretaker is also Afghan, but he seems to be a good man', the discussion is still strongly biased against this minority group in Iran.

Bennett (1986:185) states that 'by far the most common form of adaptation is attitudinal-simply empathy', and this is evidence in Patra's[T-6INTL-1] statement in the extract below.

Extract 53.

Line	Speaker	Original text
203	Patra[T-6INTL-1]	They um had ...a war in Afghanistan a very bad war and a lot of people died in Ghaghara.. so it's not very nice to say that ... they are like Yucky or like stuff, it's not good
		(...)
206	Lucy[T-6INTL-1]	I had a .. Af-Afghan friend, actually she was really nice.. like she was like..mmm. she didn't study much, she got 9/20 in test and stuff like that, she didn't talk much but she was really nice.
207	DonDon[T-4INTL-1]	I grew up with an Afghani in my cottage [referring to holiday home], so right now he moved, but.. when he wanted to leave he was so: nice to me, he was like... I said can I have this, he was like OK. He was like really nice to me, so when he wanted to leave, I was like cried for him.

Those participants who had the experience of interaction with Afghans usually expressed very different opinions (see Extract 53, lines 206-207).

Different factors such as TV, adult conversations and children's imaginations based on what they have heard might have influenced their images about Afghans. It seems that the participants' contacts with Afghans were superficial and limited. Hence, lack of close contact and fear of encounter with the Afghan refugees might be one possible reason for the participants' negative attitudes.

The negative attitude toward certain nationalities was not limited to Afghans only. Statements such as 'It's impossible to tolerate Arabs, Lili[T-6KHER-1]' are illustrative of this. Such anti-Arab sentiments might be due to some nationalist feelings. In the seventeenth century, Iran was invaded by Arab armies and the Muslim conquest of Persia resulted in the decline of the Zoroastrian religion in Iran. Many Iranians refer to the pre-Islamic period as the glorious era in the history of Iran. Children might have been influenced by such nationalist feelings. This shows that extreme nationalist sentiments can result in strong bias feelings towards certain nationalities. Byram (1997:35) argues that '[i]n countries with formal education systems, the knowledge acquired is often dominated by the notion of "national" culture and identity, and individuals acquire in varying degrees a national identity through socialisation in formal education'. Ward et al. (2001:112-113) also explain that usually people are likely 'to generate behavioural explanation that favour members of their in-groups'. This is evident in statements such as 'we are more civilized, Must's[T-5KHER-1]'.

Extract 54 is part of the discussion about an imaginary situation when a newcomer from another country arrives at the participants' school. This imaginary situation aimed to explore children's reaction as host-nationals.

Extract 54.

Line	Speaker	Translation
398	Alma [T-6KHER-1]	I would become friend with her [African girl]. Because I think the skin colour is not important. They are humans with skin and blood, eyes and everything.. Just like us. They probably think why we are white.
399	Researcher	Ok. And ..if she was Afghan would you be friend with her?
400	Alma [T-6KHER-1]	No
401	Researcher	Why?
402	Alma [T-6KHER-1]	I don't like them. They are dirty (with the sign of disgust)

This extract demonstrates Alma's[T-6KHER-1] combination of contrasting feelings about certain nationalities. She refers to human's equality and claims that the colour of skin and race should not lead to prejudice. At the same time, she explicitly expresses her dislike to Afghans. In this regard, Santrock (2007:467) explains that 'by the mid to late elementary school years, children (...) believe that equity means special treatment for those who deserve it.'

5.4.8. Home Culture Appreciation (craving for home)

Unlike those participants who showed excitement and enthusiasm about the sojourn experience, or those who expressed their excitement about assimilating in the host culture and identity, some appreciated their home culture more. Appreciation of home culture was not mentioned in Anderson's model; instead, categories such as 'craving for home', 'home-culture more vivid' and 'cultural ambassadorship' were components of this this model. Although these three categories are very closely linked to the 'home culture appreciation' or might even be the result of such appreciation for home culture, the data in this section did not neatly fit in any of these categories. Therefore, the 'home culture appreciation' was used as a more comprehensive category.

Ahmad[N-6HES-1] was one of the students who appreciated his home culture in several occasions. His statement 'Miss because, Iran is something else

[unique]’, is one of these examples. Of course, showing respect and passion for the home country is valuable, but sometime the great fondness or prejudice for the home country prevents the sojourner from accepting the host country, and this can become an obstacle during the adjustment. This kind of perception about the home and host culture was noticeable in Ahmad’s [N-6HES-1] comments throughout the interview. In extract 55, he mentions that he does not wish to experience the sojourn as he does not expect to find happiness in the experience.

Extract 55

Line	Speaker	Translation
510	Ahmad[N-6HES-1]	Nothing. I won’t have an ideal day in that country.
511	Researcher	Why?
512	Ahmad[N-6HES-1]	I just don’t have any..it doesn’t make sense.

Similar to Ahmad[N-6HES-1], Must[T-5KHER-1] whose older sister was studying in the USA and had the experience of living in that country for a short period of time, was reluctant to take on a sojourn experience. In Extract 56, Must[T-5KHER-1] shows great appreciation of her home culture compared to other places in the world.

Extract 56.

Line	Speaker	Translation
332	Must[T-5KHER-1]	I don’t like to go, because I have the experience of living there for a few months, and I hate it. (laughter)
333	Researcher	OK. Why?
334	Must[T-5KHER-1]	Because, I lived there.. I feel that Iranian culture is unique.. and you can’t find any culture like the Iranian culture...well this of course obvious, but... umm.. anyway I have the experience of being away from home and I don’t like it.

In this regard, Bennett (1986:183) explains that

[a]nother defence strategy is the assumption of cultural superiority. Rather than denigrating other cultures, one simply assumes that one’s own culture is the

acme of some evolutionary scheme. Such a manoeuvre automatically assigns a lower status to cultural difference while allowing the defender to be “tolerant” of those cultures’ attempts to develop. The superiority strategy allows more experience of difference than does denigration, but ethnocentrism is still supported.

5.4.8.1. Seeking similar context to home

‘Craving for home’ was one of the possible emotional reactions in Anderson’s model. The participants of this study did not explicitly express craving for home, instead they mentioned missing relatives and friends. The data in both interviews and the questionnaire showed that some of the participants were hoping for a similar context to home. Therefore, in this study the code ‘Seeking similar context to home’, which emerged is used. This feeling was mostly manifested in the responses the participants provided in the questionnaire about their accommodation preferences in the new environment (see 4.21.6). In response to this question, some of the participants mentioned an Iranian neighbourhood. As Extract 57 illustrates, seeking home during the sojourn can be part of the cultural encounter stage, but if it develops into a condition of paralyzing homesickness, it turns into a problem or an internal obstacle which then needs to be tackled.

Extract 57.

Line	Speaker	Translation
2/157	Researcher	And which country do you like Abalooboo to be?
2/158	Sara[N-5MOB-1]	Iran (...)
2/168	Researcher	I see, why did you want it to be in Iran?
2/169	Sara[N-5MOB-1]	Ummm. Because like the rules- Not exactly Iran, but somehow like Iran.. like close to Iran.. so that they were familiar with the rules in Iran.

Extract 58, which was part of the discussion in Diamond-Ranking activity, shows that although for some children the idea of transition is exciting, they still seek familiar co-national surroundings in the host environment. In this extract the participants are naming the factors which they believe are important for having a smooth adjustment.

Extract 58.

Line	Speaker	Translation
3/189	Lavagirl[T-5MAH-1]	Miss, I liked to have at least two Iranian neighbours. We can at least get to know them, so that like.. we know someone in our neighbourhood.

In the same activity, Isabel[T-4MOB-1] and Nilou[N-5MOB-1] also mentioned that living in an environment similar to Iran would facilitate their adjustment (see Extract 59).

Extract 59.

Line	Speaker	Translation
2/84	Isabel[T-4MOB-1]	Um, I think if the new city is similar to Tehran, then it's not that important to have information about it.
		(...)
2/102	Nilou[N-5MOB-1]	If I could add one more item, I would say living in a fancy hotel.. um which is like Iranian houses.
2/103	Researcher	Why?
2/104	Nilou[N-5MOB-1]	Because it's more comfortable. We can even imagine we are in Tehran. This reduces our concerns.

During the open discussion at the end of the interviews some of the participants expressed their preference for having interactions with people who are culturally and linguistically similar to themselves. Extract 60 is one of these examples. In this extract, Ahmad[N-6HES-1] is responding to this questions: 'if a newcomer was coming to your class, where did you prefer he was from?'

Extract 60.

Line	Speaker	Translation
409	Ahmad[N-6HES-1]	Turkey.. he can give us some information
410	Researcher	What kind of information?

411	Ahmad[N-6HES-1]	About that country.. it's a really good country, We are also originally Turk.
412	Leon[N-4HES-1]	But the toys made in Turkey are not good.
413	Researcher	Oh! Do you speak Turkish at home?
414	Ahmad[N-6HES-1]	No, I'm not that fluent, but my parents are.

Ahmad[N-6HES-1] was originally from an Azeri ethnic group in Iran (an ethnicity in north-west of Iran, neighbouring with Turkey), and he preferred to interact with people of Turkey. The similarities between the languages and ethnicities were the reasons for his preference.

5.4.9. Expectations Unrealistic

The ‘unrealistic images and expectations’ of the new environment was an emerging category. According to Anderson’s model, during the initial stage of adaptation, people may have unrealistic expectations of the sojourn experience. Most of the participants with the unrealistic expectations did not have the experience of travelling to other countries.

Many children in the middle-age group may have the desire of being independent from their parents and family. The dialogue below is extracted from the discussion in the Diamond-Ranking activity. In this activity, children were ranking the 10 elements which could facilitate their adjustment according to their perceived importance. ‘Being with the family’ was one of these elements and was ranked the least important by Mr.Lee[N-5HES-1] and Max[N-5HES-1]. In Extract 61, Milad[N-5HES] is challenging Mr.Lee’s[N-HES-1] decision, and Mr.Lee[N-5HES-1] is explaining how he would overcome the possible occurring problems without the family support.

Extract 61.

Line	Speaker	Translation
234	Mr.Lee[N-5HES-1]	No miss, We are saying that when we [Mr.Lee and Max] are leaving, each will get some money from our families.

		and then we go there[abroad] and buy a house together.
235	Milad[N-6HES-1]	(xxx) what if something happens?
236	Mr.Lee[N-5HES-1]	We'll call them when we arrive there.
237	Milad[N-6HES-1]	No, when you say.. What if you don't have money? What if you couldn't find any place to buy? You are saying that your parents will send you some money ... what if something happens between the banks in Iran and UK and they failed transfer money. What do you want to do then?
238	Mr.Lee[N-5HES-1]	Then we have to work.

As was mentioned earlier in this chapter, during the time I was conducting the interviews in Iran (Oct-Nov 2012), a sanction had recently been imposed against Iran after Iran refused to suspend its uranium enrichment programme. This encompasses banking and insurance transactions. One of the consequences of the sanction was that Iranians were unable to transfer any money to other countries, and this became particularly problematic for the Iranian students who were studying abroad. In Extract 61, line 237, Milad[N-6HES-1] is illustrating the similar circumstances which he might have heard from adults, as this took its toll on many Iranians.

5.4.10. Summary

The findings show that some of the emerging themes were in accordance with the ones mentioned in the cultural encounter stage of Anderson's model. Table 18 illustrates these categories:

Table 18. The emerging themes which match the elements in cultural encounter stage in the Anderson Model

- Anxiety
- Excitement about different cultural practices
- Ambivalent feelings (swings in impressions)
- Exploration (see, hear, taste, smell the new)
- Learning (information gathering): learning the new language
- Stereotyping/ generalizing
- Seeking similar context to home
- Expectations unrealistic

The following elements were part of the cultural encounter stage in Anderson's model, but were not identified in the data set.

Table 19. Components of cultural encounter stage in the Anderson Model which did not emerge in this data set

<p>Affective:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Passive attitude, detached-minimum involvement - High energy, positive attitude-gung ho - Confidence, perseverance, sensitivity - Apprehension, alertness - Surprise - Resentment, uneasiness, discomfort - Boredom, tedium - Complacency 	<p>Behavioural:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Observe, busy activity, getting bearings - Start to meet survival needs - Cultural ambassadorship 	<p>Cognitive:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Cognitive freeze - Low self-awareness - Disorientation, perceptual chaos, cognitive dissonance
---	--	---

The followings are the codes and categories which emerged from the data and fit into the cross-cultural encounter stage but were not mentioned in Anderson's model.

- Excitement about having a better life (better schools and more fun), visiting the USA, and having freedom
- Concerns about the negative reactions of the host-nationals, food, not being able to return to Iran, and having some unrealistic concerns
- Learning the new games and the different cultural practices

Some of these categories such as excitement about visiting the USA and finding more freedom in the new context are unique to this data set, due to its specific micro context.

Categories such as language, social supports (host-nationals, friends and relatives) and school, which are coded as the subcategories in the cultural encounter stage, are reoccurring in the next section. This is because the participants also referred to the lack of linguistic ability and social support, and unfamiliarity with the new education system as possible obstacles during the imagined sojourn experience.

So far, I have looked into the first part of the framework, the cross-cultural encounter stage, and there are two more parts left. In the next section, the emerging categories which fit into the second stage of this model, the 'Obstacle' stage, are represented. The final section of this model is the 'Response generation' stage which is covered later in this chapter.

5.5. Obstacle

According to Anderson (1994:302), for the new and inexperienced sojourners everything in the new environment can be seen as an obstacle. Obstacles are not necessarily external. 'The sojourner's own internal state, a condition of paralyzing homesickness, for instance, could also constitute an obstacle to overcome'. Some obstacles appear early in the sojourn, others later, and some may appear all the way through the process. In a cross-cultural situation, the major obstacles which require adjustment can be categorized in three main groups (Anderson 1994:304):

- Sojourner's social incompetency, which is due to the lack of perceptual sensitivity and behavioural flexibility in the new setting.
- Loss of familiar and/or loved objects of the home culture which can result in the loss of one's own familiar identity.

- Differences in the values, attitudes, and beliefs between the home and host cultures. The clashes between the core values can put pressure on the sojourner's identity.

In Table 20, some of the cross-cultural situations which were referred to as problematic situations by the participants of this study are grouped under these three main categories. The emerging categories which are not in Anderson's model are in colour blue, and the themes and categories suggested by Anderson are marked in colour black. It should be noted that the three main categories of 'social incompetency', 'lack of environmental support' and 'different values, attitudes, and beliefs' were not specifically pinpointed in Anderson's model, but were mentioned in her paper as the potential key obstacles in cross-cultural adjustment (Anderson 1994).

Table 20. Themes in Obstacle stage

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Social incompetency <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Linguistic incompetency • Unfamiliarity with the context <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The new environment ▪ The new rules ➤ Lack of environmental support <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of emotional support <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Family ▪ Friends ▪ Host-nationals • Lack of instrumental support <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Informational support ▪ Financial support ➤ Different values, attitudes, and beliefs
--

In her paper, Anderson (1994) described these three main situations which she believed would require adjustment. While in her Model, she only provided a list possible obstacles. I used Anderson's model as the framework of this study, and based on the findings, added subcategories to each of the above mentioned major groups of obstacles.

5.5.1. Social Incompetency

Newcomers to a social group are usually socially incompetent, and this is mainly due to the absence of their perceptual sensitivity and behavioural inflexibility which prevent them from responding appropriately to the new context (Mischel 1973 cited in Anderson 1994). The findings suggest that the insufficient linguistic competence and unfamiliarity with the new sociocultural context were some of these possible obstacles mentioned by the participants.

5.5.1.1. Linguistic Incompetency

‘Thematic analysis involves the searching *across* a data set - be that a number of interviews or focus groups, or a range of texts - to find repeated patterns of meaning’ (Braun and Clarke 2006:86). Language proficiency was one of the elements which were mentioned repeatedly during the interviews. The responses to Hopes-&-Worries activity reveal that lack of language proficiency was a concern for 11 pairs out of 14. In addition to the responses to this activity, there were a number of instances of this theme across the data set.

The extracts below are part of the discussion in Hopes-&-Worries activity with the participants who did not have the experience of travelling abroad; hence in these excerpts they are talking about ‘fictional’ scenarios where they are sojourners in a new sociolinguist context. In Extract 62, the participants are explaining why their linguistic inability can problematize their process of adjustment.

Extract 62.

Line	Speaker	Translation
125	Researcher	Why are you worried about the language, then?
126	Leon[N-4HES-1]	Because if we.. we don’t know the language we won’t be able to make new friends, or even study.
127	Researcher	And what about you? Why were you worried about this?

128	Milad[N-6HES-1]	Speaking is difficult.. for example, for shopping.. well, it's difficult. How can we say, 'we want this. We want that'?=
129	Mr.Lee[N-5HES-1]	=but I personally enjoy learning English. It's good for me and my education.. it is also good ... for the friends I will make there.

In the extract above, line 126 and 129, Leon[N-4HES-1] and Mr.Lee[N-5HES-1] point out the key role of language in establishing new friendship relations. They also underline the importance of language in education and communication. In line 129, Mr.Lee[N-5HES-1] refers to proficiency in English as a response to this possible obstacle. The discussion in this extract was not limited to a particular language, but Mr.Lee[N-HES-1] expressed his eagerness to study in the UK during the interview and this might be one possible reason he referred to English in line 129. English is the major foreign language taught in Iran, and this might be another possible reason for Mr.Lee's[N-HES-1] statement. Similar to Mr.Lee's[N-5HES-1], Isabel[T-4MOB-1] also referred to English in the same activity when she states, 'They may not understand English, and we can only speak English'.

As one of their concerns in the Hopes-&-Worries activity, some of the participants referred to the literacy in the new language (see Extract 63). In fact, this is an important aspect of education in the new context for the sojourners, particularly if education is one of the main purposes of the sojourn. For child sojourners, literacy usually plays a radical role as they attend schools in the new context. I should again emphasize that the data is mainly about the imaginary scenarios and concerns.

Extract 63.

Line	Speaker	Translation
1/83	Researcher	Why reading books worries you?
1/84	Bloom[N-4MOB-1]	Because we don't know their way of reading and writing.

With respect to the role of the new language in education, some of the participants referred to the new school as a source of concern. In Extract 64, Max[N-5HES-1] is explaining the reasons for his concern about the new school, and refers to the unfamiliarity with the new language as the main reason.

Extract 64.

Line	Speaker	Translation
87	Researcher	Here someone has written going to the new school is one of his worries.. your group has also mentioned that. Why are you worried about this?
88	Max[N-5HES-1]	Because it might.. Miss, um, like we don't know the language, so it's very difficult to learn um.. like how to read and write.

The findings from the discussion in the Diamond-Ranking activity also highlighted children's view about the critical role of knowing the local language. In Extract 65, Leon[N-4HES-1] explains that not knowing the language of the host context may create a paralyzing situation for sojourners.

Extract 65.

Line	Speaker	Translation
180	Leon[N-4HES-1]	If we don't know the language we can't do .. anything (...)
212	Abi[N-4HES-1]	But Miss, if you don't know the language of Abalooboo, you can't gain information about there. (...)
298	Mr.Lee[N-5HES-1]	You can't even talk to them so that they help you. And you don't know the language either.

Similarly, in the line 212, Abi[N-4HES-1] states that not knowing the new language can prevent the imaginary sojourner from some other suggested coping acts such as gaining information about the new context. In other words, language proficiency was assumed as a prerequisite for some other coping strategies. In line 298, Mr.Lee's[N-5HES-1] comment, 'You can't even talk to them so that they help you'

also shows that the lack of language proficiency may lessen the possibility of benefitting from the available support in the new context.

In addition to the lack of language proficiency, which was assumed as a possible obstacle, children believed that not being familiar with the accent of the new social group could also become a problem. Extract 66 illustrates a real experience in which Lucy[T-6INTL-1] struggled to fit in her new school because she was unable to speak with the same accent as the native students in Venezuela.

Extract 66.

Line	Speaker	Original text
62	Lucy[T-5INTL-1]	Ok, like when I was in Venezuela, uh..some people.. bullied me for stupid things
63	Researcher	
64	Lucy[T-5INTL-1]	Like you know that obviously my Spanish was not as good as theirs and we have different accents. So, uh...like... we had problems like they said..yeah, don't talk cause your Spanish is terririze [terrible] something like that. Like it doesn't feel good. I lived on my own, feels like a stranger.' strangola' Ok I don't know how to say that.. Ok and like em. I was trying to learn a new language and then they made fun of me, that-that didn't feel good at all.

Extract 67 shows that not following the linguistic norms can also problematize the situation for the sojourners. This extract is part of the discussion in the Hopes-&-Worries activity when the participants are talking about their fear of becoming the victims of bullying in the new school. Here, Patra[N-6INTL-1] is talking about an incident at her school.

Extract 67.

Line	Speaker	Original text
86	Patra[T-6INTL-1]	One of the students [Maryam] Okay, she is British.. Okay there is a student in grade 6 class, she is British and people make fun of her accent and she cries
87	Lucy[T-6INTL-1]	No, we don't make fun of her. It's

		like the British accent is so nice like 'water' and 'waTe(r)' (<i>with British accent</i>), like we try to
88	Sabrina[T-5INTL-1]	learn it
89	Lucy[T-6INTL-1]	Yeah learn it, and she just start cry for no reasons. She knows that we want to learn

This extract also reflects the lack of self-confidence/esteem and growing sensitively and vulnerability in Maryam as a sojourner. These are all possible obstacles mentioned in Anderson's model.

5.5.1.2. Unfamiliarity with the Context

'Unfamiliarly' was one of themes which was categorised under the general theme, 'social incompetency'. One of the main aims of the cross-cultural adaptation is to adjust to the life in an unfamiliar context, and not surprisingly, unfamiliarity with 'the new environment' and 'the new rules' were the two categories which emerged from this general theme. In the section below, examples for each of these categories are provided.

5.5.1.2.1. The New Environment

The phenomenon of uprooting and sojourning in a strange land can be very stressful (Anderson 1994). When children were thinking of the imaginary scenario of becoming sojourners, some of them talked about the possible challenges they could face because of their unfamiliarity with the new context.

Extract 68 is part of the Hopes-&-Worries activity in which the participants shared their concerns about their unfamiliarity with the new environment. The fear of unknown and the differences between home and the imaginary destination were the difficulties they anticipated to have upon their arrival.

Extract 68.

Line	Speaker	Translation
89	Researcher	What else worries you?
90	Mr.Lee[N-5HES-1]	They, themselves who are different!
91	Researcher	What do you mean by different?
92	Mr.Lee[N-5HES-1]	Like, they look different. You don't know whether to make friend with them or not (...)
94	Milad[N-6HES-1]	For example, our schools are very different from theirs. Like, their education system might be very different from ours= =we have to adopt ourselves with them= And it takes time (...)
95	Ahmad[N-6HES-1]	
96	Milad[N-6HES-1]	
116	Researcher	Which one was your biggest worry?
117	Ahmad[N-6HES-1]	Being away from home.
118	Researcher	Why?
119	Milad[N-6HES-1]	Well um.. it's difficult. We have to adopt ourselves and it takes time... it's scary [lower voice] (...)
122	Mr.Lee[N-5HES-1]	There might be fewer facilities there, or even maybe more, but we don't know how to use them.

In lines 95 and 119, Ahmad[N-6HES-1] and Milad[N-6HES-1] mention that they need to come to terms with the feeling of loss, and adopt to the new surroundings which is challenging. The statement, 'it takes time' in lines 96 and 119 shows that they acknowledge the important role of time for adjustment.

Extract 69 is another example which portrays the possible challenges in an unfamiliar environment. This extract is part of the Hopes-&-Worries activity, and Isabel[T-4MOB-1] is continuing the discussion about the unfamiliarity of the host-nationals with their Islamic beliefs and practices.

Extract 69.

Line	Speaker	Translation
1/110	Isabel[T-4MOB-1]	Um, well, I have no clue how it would be... they may be um like us.. Wear veils, know how to say prayers. Have mosques... well, then..

The child sojourners often spend a large amount of their time at schools, and the findings show that not being familiar with the new educational environment might be

scary and /or create some challenges for the child sojourners. In fact, the responses to the Hope-&-Worries activity revealed that ‘going to a new school’ was assumed as a concern for 10 pairs out of 14. Extract 70, which is part of the same activity, illustrates some of the challenges that the participants anticipated to face.

Extract 70.

Line	Speaker	Original text
54	Holly[T-4INTL-1]	maybe in school the teachers might be meaners, the kids might be meaner, it might be different than the old school
55	DonDon[T-4INTL-1]	The first time I came to this school, when my parents like- when my dad was.. like turned to get to his car, i was like 'd-dady i-i-is this m-my sch-school?! or what is this one?' like 'it's your school honey', I was like' am I in the Persian or the International one? Please tell me I'm in the international'. He said 'you are in the International one, calm down' and then I started crying' I don't want to go

In line 55, DonDon[T-4INTL-1] who spent a few years in Canada before returning to Iran, narrates her first day of school at INTL. DonDon’s [T-4INTL-1] story shows that not being familiar with the new context can create critical situations. In the Response generation section, (Extract 111), DonDon[T-4INTL-1] explains how she tackled this obstacle.

5.5.1.2.2. The New Rules

The participants anticipated that their unfamiliarity with the new rules may create challenges to their sojourn. Schild (1962) cited in Anderson (1994:304) states that ‘upon arrival in a new culture, the first piece of information sojourners are often faced with is that the old rules for interpreting the environment and generating appropriate behavior no longer apply’. This can create problems during the adjustment and requires resolution. In Extract 71, which is part of the Hopes-&-Worries activity,

DonDon[T-4INTL-1] shares her experience of attending a new school in Canada and the difficulties she went through due to her unfamiliarity with the new rules.

Extract 71.

Line	Speaker	Original text
45	DonDon[T-4INTL-1]	the new school, it might be different from you own school, the rules and how the school was. When I came first to Canada, I started saying like stupid and stuff like that, I-I was allowed to say that in my old school.. but then like I kept on getting in trouble I was like 'why? it just a normal word!' they were like NO, you have to send the office, so it's probably maybe 'worried'

Not knowing about the rules and costumes in the new context may result in inappropriate behaviours. In Extract 72, which is part of the Diamond-Ranking activity, Lili[T-6KHER-1] refers to this issue.

Extract 72.

Line	Speaker	Translation
218	Lili[T-6KHER-1]	Um, well, their rules are very different. If we don't know their rules, we may behave in a wrong way, and they would make fun of us, or laugh at us, we may even get into trouble.

In Extract 73, the participants are explaining why very few students selected the 'host families' in response to Question 6 in the questionnaire (see 4.2.1.6). It should be noted that, in this study 'host family' is referred to an accommodation type which is part of the property of a member of the host society and children can stay there with their own families.

Extract 73.

Line	Speaker	Translation
414	Researcher	In question 6, I asked "where do you prefer to stay in Abalooboo?" Living in a host family was selected the least. Do you know why?
415	Lili[T-6KHER-1]	I feel uneasy
416	Baqali[T-5KHER-1]	I feel uneasy too, and I don't feel comfortable living in the same house

		with someone I don't know.
		(...)
419	Alma[T-6KHER-1]	Because we don't know the rules of that house.

In line 419, Alma[T-6KHER-1] refers to the unfamiliarity with the new rules in the host families as one of the possible reasons this item was not selected by many of the participants.

5.5.2. Lack of Environmental Support

Environmental support is assumed to be an effective element in the adjustment process. According to Anderson (1994:313), 'Lack of environmental support may be the chief curse of the intercultural sojourner', this can become an obstacle for some sojourners or hinder their response generation process. The data show that the environmental support can be subdivided into emotional and instrumental support. In the following sections these categories are elaborated.

5.5.2.1. Lack of Emotional Support

The participants either mentioned the lack of emotional support as an obstacle which could block their progress, or they referred to sources of emotional support as vital affective elements which could help them during the adjustment process. Family members, relatives, friends, neighbours and classmates were some of the sources of support, which were part of the participatory activities, and the participants commented about them. In the sections below each of these sources are studied.

5.5.2.1.1. Family

One of the main categories emerged in the interviews was 'family'. Many of the participants anticipated 'the absence of family support' as one of the main obstacles during the (imaginary) sojourn. Family plays a very important role in the Iranian culture. In the Persian language, two different concepts are used for 'family'. The

Persian word ‘فامیل[famil]’ refers to the very extended family, including distant relatives. The word ‘خانواده[khanevadeh]’ is used to refer to the closer family members, but even this usually involves a more extended family compared to the western nuclear family (Almqvist and Brandell-forsberg 1995). Grandparents, aunts and uncles are the members of ‘khanevadeh’ in many Iranian families. In this study, I used the word ‘family’ to refer to ‘khanevadeh’, and ‘relatives’ to refer to ‘famil’. Sojourners who leave their families and relatives behind suffer from the loss of social ties. This can be identified as an obstacle for some of the sojourners, because the environmental support provided to the individuals during the early days of the sojourn is very weak (Anderson 1994).

Children explained that the absence of family support can increase the risk of desolation and homesickness. Extract 74 is part of the Diamond-Ranking activity where children share their opinions about different effective elements during their imaginary adjustment. In this extract, by showing that the absence of family support can become an obstacle during the adjustment, Baqali[T-5KHER-1] and Must[T-KHER-1] are trying to explain why they believe being with their families is critical.

Extract 74.

Line	Speaker	Translation
256	Baqali[T-5KHER-1]	In my opinion, family.. when you are far away from them, you miss them, and also like .. how can I say it? When you go to the new school.. at the end of the day, at the bedtime, you have no one to chat or share thoughts with .
257	Must[T-5KHER-1]	To talk about things that bothers you
258	Alma[T-6KHER-1]	Yes, you have! your roommates
259	Must[T-5KHER-1]	You haven't made any friends, yet.
260	Baqali[T-5KHER-1]	Um... first, you can't make new friends immediately, a close friend. Second, it's way easier to talk to your parents than someone you've been friend with for only one day.

In Extract 74, line 260, Baqali's[T-5KHER-1] statement, 'you can't make new friends immediately, a close friend' highlights the fact that on arrival, the individual's reference group and sources of emotional support (e.g. friends, relatives) are mainly grounded in the home culture (Anderson 1994). Moreover, establishing interpersonal relationships is time consuming, and can be challenging for some people.

It should be noted that although normally children are accompanied by their families during the sojourn, some of the participants mentioned their concerns about being away from their family members, and in these cases they were referring to their close relatives (i.e. grandparents and uncles/aunts). This is again due to the extended concept of 'family' in the Iranian culture. In general, children might also be more attached to their parents and grandparents compared to adults. For many of the participants, family had connotation with security, protection and reassurance. This protective role becomes more crucial during the adjustment when other supporting sources are limited, if not unavailable. Extract 75 is part of the Hopes-&-Worries activity and the participants are referring to their families as sources of emotional support.

Extract 75.

Line	Speaker	Translation
3/15	Baran[T-4MAH-1]	Because in my opinion, the most important thing is to be with our families
3/16	Researcher	What about you?
3/17	Noura[T-4MAH-1]	Me too. It's really good to be with your family. You feel free and easy.
3/18	Baran[T-4MAH-1]	I always feel safe when I am with my family (<i>laughter</i>)

In this regard, Athey and Ahearn (1991:10) cited in Pinter (2008:3) suggest that 'the ability of the family to provide a strong sense of safety and support to the child serves as a buffer against external threats and plays a large role in how well the child functions and develops'. It should be considered that other members of an immigrant family

equally experience the sociocultural changes and in this situation their responses to migration can affect child's adjustment process.

Established immigrants can facilitate the transition of the new arrivals by sharing crucial economic, linguistic and cultural knowledge with them (Waldinger 1997 cited in Suarez-Orozco, C. 2005). In line with this, Alma[T-6KHER-1] who had the experience of attending summer schools, acknowledged that knowing someone in the new place would facilitate the adjustment, but at the same time, she expressed her preference to be independent by saying, 'the feeling of being in-independent is way better' (see Extract 76).

Extract 76.

Line	Speaker	Translation
265	Alma [T-6KHER-1]	Because, when you know someone there, for example you can, like- it's better (xxx) or they can help, or show you around so that you get familiar with the area, like giving some information about the new place, the new rules. You may know the general rules, but not the specific ones. Or when you need money, they can lend you some money.
266	Researcher	When you went to the summer schools, did you have any relatives in that place?
267	Alma [T-6KHER-1]	No.. Because, um.. the feeling of being in-independent is way better than relying on others' support

Some of the participants expressed their reluctance to be accompanied with their families, and the main reason for their preference to be alone was that they were seeking independence. In the Diamond-Ranking activity, Mr.Lee[N-5HES-1] clearly expresses his preference to have alternative sources of social support such as friends rather than his family (see Extract 77).

Extract 77.

Line	Speaker	Translation
192	Mr.Lee[N-5HES-1]	In fact, I wanted to put 'being with family' here [at the least important ranking']
193	Researcher	Why? (...)
195	Mr.Lee[N-5HES-1]	Because I don't want anyone to accompany me. I want to be on my own there. (...)
201	Researcher	How do you replace family, then?
202	Mr.Lee[N-5HES-1]	But education is very important for us
203	Max[N-5HES-1]	Miss we have to learn to be independent. (...)
219		We want to be comfortably alone
220		Well, together.
221	Researcher	Oh! . Wait a minute!... Do you want to go together or on your own?
222	Mr.Lee[N-5HES-1]	No, we want to live together in a same place.
223	Researcher	I see, you two are friends, then. Aren't you?
234	Mr.Lee[N-5HES-1] Max[N-5HES-1]	(nodding)

It is important to acknowledge that in this study, I aimed to explore children's perceptions rather than their real experiences. Mr.Lee[N-5HES-1] and Max[N-5HES-1] did not have the experience of travelling abroad, and their viewpoints might have been different if they had the experience of travelling to other countries. They may even behave very differently if they face the real situation. Furthermore, we should not ignore the possibility that children may want to be different/ stand out with their comments; hence, they may express very different opinions compared to the other participants to impress them.

Participants may feel the peer pressure for being independent, and this might be the reason they prefer not being accompanied by their parents during the imaginary sojourn. Lavagirl's[T-5MAH-1] statement, 'Because like.. if we are dependent to them [parents], others make fun of us.' in Extract 78 illustrates this kind of peer pressure.

Extract 78.

Line	Speaker	Translation
3/127	Lavagirl[T-5MAH-1]	Because like.. if we are dependent to them [parents], others make fun of us. Like they say she loves her parents. Her parents do all her work... besides, our own opinion is also important. Like what to wear when we want to go out; but all the time, they decide for us.

Some of the participants who put ‘being accompanied by the families’ in a lower ranking in the Diamond-Ranking activity and claimed that they did not find the role of family as important as other factors, stated that at their current age (10-12years old) they preferred to travel with their families (see Extract 79).

Extract 79.

Line	Speaker	Translation
129	Emilie[T-6MAH-1]	If we were travelling now, I wanted to... be accompanied by my family.
130	Julia[T-6MAH-1]	If I really wanted to travel now, I would go with my mom and dad. And I’m like more attached to my mom, OK? Like my dad might return after a few months, and come again later.. but if I’m traveling at this age, my mom should accompany me. (...)
133	Emilie[T-6MAH-1]	I don’t like travelling without my parents at this age, and they wouldn’t let me anyway.

Emilie’s[T-6MAH-1] statement in line 133, ‘they[parents] wouldn’t let me anyway’ shows that children were aware of the fact that in the real life they would not be able to travel without their parents, and their claims were based on the imaginary scenarios. Since children were talking about imaginary scenarios of experiencing transition, the data do not reflect the reality of their lives; however, it still shows how they perceived the issue of transition and their desire to be independent.

5.5.2.1.2. Friends

Friendship was another emerging theme. One of the inevitable outcomes of immigration is the loss of familiar and loved ones. Friendship is another source of

environmental support which might be lost as the result of immigration. In this section, the participants' opinion about the impact of this missing aspect of emotional support in the adjustment process is discussed. In the Hopes-&-Worries activity some of the participants expressed their discomfort about leaving their friends and classmates behind. In Extract 80, the participants at HES who did not have the experience of traveling abroad are discussing this issue.

Extract 80.

Line	Speaker	Translation
57	Researcher	Making new friends, are you excited about his? (...) Group Purple? (...)
60	Mr.Lee[N-HES-1]	No
61	Max[N-5HES-1]	We'll be apart from each other
62	Mr.Lee[N-5HES-1]	No, you have to come with me

In line 62, Mr.Lee's [N-5HES-1] statement, 'No, you have to come with me' illustrate the importance of friendship bounds amongst children. In the participatory activities, Mr.Lee[N-5HES-1] and Max[N-5HES-1] who were group members planned to travel to the imaginary place, Abalooboo, together; this shows the power of friendship relations in children's life. The absence of such strong emotional bonds can problematize the transition. In the same activity, Nilou[N-5MOB-1] also mentioned that 'Being apart from her classmates' is one of her concerns about immigration.

Likewise, in Extract 81, Lucy[T-6INTL-1] who had the experience of living and studying abroad talks about her first day at her current school. For Lucy[T-6INTL-1] 'not knowing anybody' was an obstacle which needed to be overcome. This extract is part of the same activity, and Lucy[T-6INTL-1] is sharing her concerns about the new school.

Extract 81.

Line	Speaker	Original text
47	Lucy[T-6INTL-1]	you won't know anybody there [new school], like when I came to this school like everybody was like. like sitting and .. not talking

Similarly, in the Diamond-Ranking activity, Must[T-5KHER-1] referred to the absence of friendship support as a major emotional challenge, when saying 'Without friends you won't survive'.

5.5.2.1.3. Host-nationals

In addition to the lack of familiar resources in the host country, some of the participants stated that the possible negative reactions of the host society may problematize their sojourn, in particular because sojourners need to develop new emotional resources in the host context. In this regard, Spencer-Oatey and Franklin (2009:169) claim that 'integration requires mutual involvement – newcomers and hosts both need to take responsibility for facilitating the process'. In Extract 82, the participants who had the experience of visiting other countries are talking about their concerns in the Hopes-&-Worries activity. In this extract, children provide some real life examples in which they received unfriendly reactions on the internet because of their nationality.

Extract 82.

Line	Speaker	Translation
2/35	Emilie[T-6KHER-1]	Making fun of us because of being Iranian. In some countries they are very nice with you, but when you say you are Iranian, they suddenly frown.
2/36	Julia[T-6KHER-1]	Yes Miss, it's also the same on the internet.
2/37	Researcher	Is it?
2/38	Julia[T-6KHER-1]	Some of my friends have faced this
2/39	Lavagirl[T-5KHER-1]	It's the same in one of my [computer]games, Miss. Whenever I say I am Iranian, it says you are not my friend anymore!

Similar to Emilie's[T-6KHER-1] experience in line 2/35, studies have shown that Iranian immigrants in the USA also regularly experiencing prejudice and

discrimination, and this has led to opting the strategy of ethnic and religious nondisclosure (Shirazi 2014). Although the internet does not fulfil all the characteristics of a new sociocultural context, Extract 82 illustrates how the participants generalize their previous experiences on the internet, and predict hostile reactions of the host-nationals in their future visits to other countries. This shows the powerful effect of the previous experiences on shaping children's image of intercultural encounters.

According to Anderson (1994:309), cross-cultural adaption is also a process of 'rising intercultural/ perceptual sensitivity', and the cognitive dimension of this model explains that 'cross cultural adaptation experience is also a process of striving to reaffirm identity and self-image in the face of absence or weak environmental support'. In the Diamond-Ranking activity, Ahmad[N-6HES-1] explained the importance of being in a friendly environment during the sojourn. Ahmad's[N-6HES-1] statement in Extract 83, line 264 shows that in some extreme cases the hostile surrounding can create a paralyzing situation for the sojourner.

Extract 83.

Line	Speaker	Translation
264	Ahmad [N-6HES-1]	Well, what if they.. like react very badly.. then we- we can't d-do anything... we'll panic.. in that country
265	Abi [N-4HES-1]	(...) if no one wants to be friend with us.. if they treat us badly, how can we be nice?!

Similarly, Khandan[T-4KHER-1] expressed her concerns about the challenges she may face as a stranger, in finding her way inside the new society. Extract 84 is part of the Hopes-&-Worries activity, where the participants are sharing their worries about the transition.

Extract 84.

Line	Speaker	Translation
81	Khandan[T-4KHER-1]	Grumpy people. It is...well it is important for us, too. It's important that how they treat us.. For example, what if they ignore us, or say "Oy! You... where are you going? Look at her!" <i>(laughter)</i>

The laughter at the end of Khandan's[T-4KHER-1] statement in the extract above may indicate some exaggeration and less seriousness in her voice.

The negative reaction of the host society can become an 'obstacle' in the adjustment process of a sojourner. 'The stranger-host relationship is often an insider *versus* outsider relationship, with strong pressures being brought to bear on the outsider to conform' (Cohen-Emerique 1984 cited in Anderson 1994:306). In Extract 85, Patra[T-6INTL] talks about her experience as a newcomer and incidences of bullying at school.

Extract 85.

Line	Speaker	Original text
73	Patra[T-6INT-1]	In our school[in Zimbabwe] there were no rules that much, ok? So all the time every day they were a million people in the detention because there was everyone was fighting. Ok? Everyone was fighting and they end up being in detention, OK? I was just new there, OK? and I was just walking around... then all of a sudden my classmates, they were boys, OK? the came just pushing me on the floor for no reason
74	Researcher	And do you have it in Iran as well? In this school?
75	Patra[T-6INT-1]	<i>(nodding)</i>
76	Researcher	Sometimes, and what kind of.. bullying is that?
77	Patra[T-6INT-1]	I don't want to say <i>(Whispering)</i>
78	Researcher	OK that's fine.

Studies show that bullying is at its peak during primary school, particularly in the intermediate phase (Greeff and Grobler 2008) and boys make greater use of direct physical means of bullying (Greeff and Grobler 2008; Smith and Shu 2000), which was the case for Patra[T-6INTL-1] in her previous school in Zimbabwe. A cross-

cultural study by Wolke, Woods, Stanford and Schultz (2001) with both German and English students showed that those who belonged to the ethnic minorities were more likely to become victims of bullying. This might have been the case for Patra[T-6NTL-1] in Iran, as only two African students were studying at INTL, and majority of the students were from white ethnic groups, but since she refused to talk about her experience of being bullied in Iran, it is impossible to conclude anything.

Participants who did not have the experience of studying in other countries did not use the term ‘bully’, but they expressed their concern about being ignored or insulted because of their nationality or religion. Insulting someone due to their nationality or race is considered bullying, but in Iran there is no policy for raising awareness about bullying; consequently, children might be victims of bullying or bully someone without being aware of the fact that their behaviour constitutes bullying.

Bullying is a problem in many countries, and it is not only a concern for child sojourners; however, studies report that immigrant and ethnic minority youth can be targets for discrimination, and since they go through so many difficulties coping with their new identity and adjusting to the new sociocultural context, this can increase the risk of negative psychological consequences (MacKennedy et al. 2006). Therefore, it is important to consider bullying as an issue which requires more attention in Iran both at school and at home.

5.5.2.2. Lack of Instrumental Support

Instrumental social support is also weakened during the early stages of sojourn. Informational and financial supports were the two main emerging subcategories under the general theme of instrumental support. This section elaborates more on these

subcategories by providing extracts from the participants about the possible challenges they may have due to the absence of any of these instrumental supports.

5.5.2.2.1. Informational Support

Upon the arrival to the new sociocultural context, many sojourners may feel the lack of essential information about their surroundings. As was mentioned earlier, linguistic ability in the new sociolinguistic context is a vital element for communication, and consequently unfamiliarity with the new language can become a problem, particularly in the sojourners' education. Usually language support services provide assistance to sojourners in order to develop their language and study skills. Interestingly, none of the participants mentioned the language institutes or educational support as sources of language support; instead they referred to the families, relatives and host-nationals. In many cases, family members are not familiar with the new language either, but participants of this study had the presumption that their family, particularly their parents, could help them in this regard. Extract 86 is part of the Diamond-Ranking activity, and DonDon[T-4INTL-1] is explaining why she thinks being accompanied with her family is an important element during the imaginary adjustment.

Extract 86.

Line	Speaker	Original text
120	DonDon[T-4INTL-1]	Because being with your family is better, y-your family maybe know knows that language and th-they can help you learn it. You don't need a teacher and stuff... maybe like your parent knows it.

Children usually have the fear of getting lost in unknown environments, and this fear can be amplified for a child sojourner who enters an environment which is unfamiliar in many aspects. Statements such as, 'but when your family there you won't

get lost' (Holly[T-5INTL-1]) represent families both as the emotional (sense of security) and instrumental (not getting lost) sources of support.

5.5.2.2.2. Financial Support

Struggling with the financial problems in the new place was another obstacle which the participants anticipated. Family was also referred to as a source of financial support. In general, many international students who attend summer schools or universities are being financially supported by their families who are not based in the host country. In Extract 87 which is part of the Hopes-&-Worries activity, Emilie[T-6MAH-1] shares her concerns about the possible financial problems Iranian sojourners may face due to the unstable financial situation in Iran, and Baran[T-4MAH-1] states that this is an issue which would be sorted out by their families.

Extract 87.

Line	Speaker	Translation
2/22	Emilie[T-6MAH-1]	... And also the current situation with dollar
2/23	Baran[T-4MAH-1]	Well, that's something for the parents to deal with.

As it was mentioned earlier, during the data collection, Iran's economy was going through severe instability, which was due to sanctions imposed on the country. Children might have heard about this issue from the social media and/or picked it up from the adult conversations.

5.5.3. Different Values, Attitudes, and Beliefs

The participants of this study referred to the differences between the religious beliefs and cultural behaviour as possible obstacles. Anderson (1994:304) also explains that 'there are differences in values, attitudes, and beliefs between the home and host culture, particularly in the core values, those powerful, emotion-laden images that guide everyday act'. Some of the participants at HES, stated their concerns about 'the

new customs'. In Extract 88, which is part of the Hope-&-Worries activity, Milad[6HES-1] states that the differences between the countries and their unfamiliarity with the new values and behaviours may create difficulty for them.

Extract 88.

Line	Speaker	Translation
36	Leon[N-4HES-1]	Some mentioned 'the custom', I don't get it. (...)
43	Milad[N-6HES-1]	Well, here is very different to the UK, and this difference is scary, isn't it? Like we don't know how they behave and what to expect.

Similarly, in the Diamond-Ranking activity, Baqali[T-5KHER-1] pointed out another example of such differences, 'Their clothing habits are.. are different. It's different from what we are used to'. It should be noted that, according to the Islamic rules in Iran, girls after their 9th birthday should cover their body and hair in public places. Many of the girl participants who had the experience of travelling abroad mentioned this difference.

The participants also mentioned that unfamiliarity of the members of the host society with their cultural and religious beliefs and practices may impede their attempts to fit in the new society (see Extract 34). In Extract 89, Must[T-5KHER-1] also give an example of a situation in which the differences between the attitudes and habits of the members of the host society and the sojourners may create difficulty. This extract is part of the general discussion when the participants were talking about the possible reasons for the unpopularity of the 'host families', one of the MC items in questions 6 in the questionnaire (see 4.2.1.6.)

Extract 89.

Line	Speaker	Translation
422	Must[T-5KHER-1]	Like cooking Ash [Type of Iranian soup].. ..like we make Ash.. in fact I don't like it myself.. but they[the

	host family] may not like the smell of it... Or when making Ghormesabzi [an Iranian dish with a very strong smell]...it smells a lot. Many...all Iranians, most of Iranians like this dish... What if the neighbours call you when you are cooking it, and ask what you are making with such a strong smell, saying "are you cooking clay?! What are you doing?!"
--	---

With respect to the differences in the values and beliefs between the home and host countries, ‘time’ plays a critical role in bringing the sojourners to terms with the existing differences in the two contexts (Anderson 1994; Berry et al. 2006). Extract 90 is an example in which the power of ‘time’ is acknowledged.

Extract 90.

Line	Speaker	Translation
220	Baqali[T-5KHER-1]	If talking about the culture and the customs, after some time of living there, we'll learn it.

5.5.4. Summary

The three major obstacles, ‘social incompetency’, ‘lack of environmental support’, and ‘different values, attitudes, and beliefs’ which were mentioned by Anderson (1994) were used as the main themes in this section. Most of the categories under each of these themes were data driven, and were not specifically mentioned in Anderson’s model. The affective cell in the Anderson model, suggested a number of possible ‘crises’ sojourner may go through, as well a series of emotional states the sojourner may experience. However, some of the emotional states, such as increasing professional satisfaction, self-confidence rising, excitement, high energy, and curiosity do not seem to be potential obstacles. Similarly in the behavioural cell, attitudes such as developing job role, tackling complexities, starting role relationships, continuing information gathering, and stepping up social interaction do not fit into the obstacle category. In fact, some of these behaviours might be the sojourners’ responses to a potential problem. Likewise, the term ‘cognitive unfreeze’ which was mentioned as a

possible cognitive obstacle, seems to be of a problem solving reaction rather than a problem itself.

So far I have covered the first two parts of the framework, in the next section I go through the themes and link them to the last stage of the model, the response generation stage. Categories such as language, social support, and education which appeared in the cultural encounter and obstacle stages reoccur in the next section. This is because the participants referred to learning the local language, intensifying interpersonal relations, and developing study skills as some of the possible coping strategies during the imagined sojourn experience.

5.6. Response Generation

Adjustment requires responding to the demands of the environment, and sometimes such demands can be interpreted as obstacles in the sojourners' path. 'Adaptation begins when the sojourner acknowledges the obstacle situation and decides on a consistent strategy of instrumental solution' (Anderson 1994:314). In general, sojourners react to the new situation in four ways: changing the environment, changing oneself, doing nothing at all, and walking away. Doing nothing at all or walking away from the obstacle usually result in the sojourner going back and forth between the obstacle and the negative decision until exhaustion overcomes them or the obstacle is removed (Anderson 1994). It should be noted that none of the participants mentioned 'walking away' as a possible reaction to the obstacles during adjustment, but this might be due to the fact that children were thinking about an imaginary scenario of transition, and in real life they might react differently. In Table 21, some the coping strategies suggested by the participants are displayed. The themes which were part of the Anderson Model are marked in black, and the emerging themes are in blue.

Table 21. Themes in Response generation stage

➤	Changing oneself
•	Increasing interpersonal relations (Making new friends)
•	Intensifying learning
▪	Learning the local language
▪	Learning about the new context (norms, customs, roles)
▪	Learning the local games
▪	Developing study skills (Being a good student)
➤	Changing the environment
•	Keeping alliance with home resources
▪	Bringing the home resources
▪	Internet
•	Replacing the missing environmental support
▪	Relatives
▪	Neighbours and classmates
➤	Walking away
•	Social Isolation/ Do nothing instrumental (having a pet)
•	Intense ingroup solidarity

5.6.1. Changing Oneself

In cross-cultural situations, when the sojourner is a stranger in the host context, changing the parameters for the coping situation usually means changing oneself (Anderson 1994). Although identity change might be one of the consequences of the sojourn experience; here, changing oneself refers to strategies such as increasing interpersonal relations and intensifying learning skill.

5.6.1.1. Increasing Interpersonal Relations

Friendship was one of the repetitive themes in the interviews. In various discussions the important role of friends in facilitating the adjustment process was highlighted. 10 out of 14 pairs in these five interviews (see Appendix 10) hoped to make new friends in the new sociocultural environment. According to Anderson (1994:313), ‘Securing or carving out a supportive environment by a steady concentration on expanding social interactions is the central task of outsider working their way in’. One possible strategy to replace the missing environmental support is to increase the interpersonal relations.

In Extract 91, DonDon[T-4INTL-1] shares her personal experience and describes how the lack of the environmental support during her arrival at the new school in Iran generated panic and confusion for her.

Extract 91.

Line	Speaker	Original text
55	DonDon[T-4INTL-1]	The first time I came to this school, when my parents like- when my dad was.. like turned to get to his car, I was like 'd-dady i-i-is this m-my sch-school?! or what is this one?' like 'it's your school honey', I was like 'am I in the Persian or the International one? Please tell me I'm in the international'. He said 'you are in the International one, calm down' and then I started crying' I don't want to go
56	Researcher	and now are you happy here?
57	DonDon[T-4INTL-1]	REALLY happy=
58	Holly[T-4INTL-1]	=Cause she found me!
59	DonDon[T-4INTL-1]	Yeah

At the time of the interview she had already overcome this particular obstacle (see her statement in line 57). Holly's[T-4INTL-1] statement in line 58, 'Cause she found me!' shows that establishing friendship relations was one of the reasons DonDon[T-4INTL-1] managed to overcome the initial crisis upon her arrival in the new educational context.

Extract 92 is part of the Hopes-&-Worries activity. In this extract, children mainly refer to the informational support friends can offer to the newcomers; supports such as helping in learning the new language, doing school work, and providing information about the new rules and culture.

Extract 92.

Line	Speaker	Original text
21	DonDon[T-4ITNL-1]	It's because.. so you can ask for help when you need... and to ..like- you know like how.. like if they have a lot of information they can share with you.. so you can discuss stuff together, do homework

22	Sabrina[T-5INTL-1]	Em. like maybe they could help us in their languages, or help us the way they learn, the way their ..culture is, the rules
23	Lucy[T-6INTL-1]	Like they said having a friends help you to learn more about the country, the language, studies that you have in your schools.. so really useful, like you need to help each other.

The statement, 'so you can discuss stuff together' in line 21 shows that interpersonal relations with the member of the new society can provide some sort of emotional support to the newcomers. Moreover, Lucy's[T-6INTL-1] statement in line 23, 'you need to help each other' shows that for her the host and home nationals relationship is not a one-way relation, where only the members of the host society can offer to the newcomers. On the contrary, this can be a two-way relation where both sides offer different types of support to each other.

Often members of the host society provide instrumental support to the newcomers, while the home-nationals are resources for emotional support (Ward et al. 2001). Extract 93 also refers to the instrumental support the participants are expecting to receive from the host-nationals. This extract is part of the discussion in the Diamond-Ranking activity.

Extract 93.

Line	Speaker	Translation
2/11	Lavagirl[T-5MAH-1]	Being nice.. and friendly (...) because in this way we can make new friends there. Then, we can learn the new language from our new friends
2/12	Boloo[T-5MAH-1]	We can laugh with them and then make friends. The more we talk with them, the better we learn their language. (...)
2/58	Noura[T-4MAH-1]	When we are with our [new] friends; well, they know the area, and they like help us, they tell us what is good, and where to go. (...)
2/82	Emilie[T-6MAH-1]	If we are not nice and friendly.. we won't be able to make new friends
2/83	Julia[T-6MAH-1]	Or we lose our friends

Extract 93 shows that for Lavagirl[T-5MAH-1] and Boloo[T-5MAH-1] friendship with host-nationals is a strategy to improve their linguistic skills. Similarly, Noura[T-4MAH-1], Emilie[T-6MAH-1], and Julia[T-6MAH-1] referred to host-national friends as sources of information. In line with these statements, the study of friendship patterns of sojourners identified the host-nationals as the source of help (Bochner et al. 1977).

In encounters with the members of the host society, some of the participants anticipated that the members of the host society might receive them reluctantly due to their Iranian nationality, and talked about concealing their identities as one possible way of staying in interaction with them. Emilie's[T-6MAH-1] statement *Miss, one of my friends also plays ... [an online] game.. when they say something Iranian, they suddenly go cold that they are Iranian,.. So they don't say they are Iranian anymore.. just only when the other player first says, then they say 'so you are also Iranian!'* shows that one of the strategies children may use to find their way inside a hostile context can be denying or concealing their own identities. This strategy is called *acting as if* and is employed under the pressure of being different (Wedeen 1999 cited in Shirazi 2014). Adapting this strategy may lead to identity conflict, and according to Ward et al. (2001) one of the negative outcomes of identity conflict is the increase in the stress level. This strategy was also identified amongst Iranian immigrant children in the USA (Shirazi 2014).

In the interview at MOB, Bloom's[N-4MOB-1] stated that *'I'll be excited if we could have Iranian classmates.. we could easily talk to them. We wouldn't feel homesick either'* refers to the support of members of the home society. In line with this statement, many studies claim that satisfaction with co-

national relations results in less acculturative stress (Ying and Liese 1991), and better psychological adjustment (Ward and Kennedy 1993).

In Extract 94, children name some of the possible instrumental and emotional supports friends in the home country can offer.

Extract 94.

Line	Speaker	Translation
2/13	Isabel[T-4MOB-1]	One of our friends may know the language of Abalooboo..um and she can help us learn it.
...		
2/15	Bloom[N-4MOB-1]	In case we fail to make friends there, or during the early days when we are alone. I know what's like being alone. I'm the only child, and it was never fun. Only my aunts played with me. I always wanted to have friends. Even seeing our friends via internet is fine. They can help us, for example they can help when we are in trouble, or give us hope, saying that it's ok if you are alone or we are apart, things like that.

In line 2/15, Bloom[N-4MOB-1] who did not have the experience of travelling abroad compares the solitude a newcomer may experience during the early days of sojourn with her loneliness as the only child in the family when saying 'I know what's like being alone. I'm the only child, and it was never fun'. This shows that how children find a way to relate a new and unexperienced concept such as the process of adjustment to their own life experiences so that they can comprehend it.

5.6.1.2. Intensify Learning

'Problem solving in any new situation means first learning the parameters of the situation then devising responses to problems presented' (Anderson 1994:305). In this study the participants referred to learning the local language and games, gaining information about the new context, and developing studying skills (school achievements) as the coping strategies related to learning.

5.6.1.2.1. Learning the Local Language

Learning the local language was emphasized by many of the participants. According to Anderson's model, learning the local language is one of the common coping strategies during the adaptation. Similarly, many of the participants referred to this as the most effective coping strategy in the new linguistic context. In Extract 95, which is part of the Diamond-Ranking activity, children explain that learning the local language can help them in establishing interpersonal relationships and in interacting with the members of the host society.

Extract 95.

Line	Speaker	Translation
178	Leon[N-4HES-1]	Um, I think the most important thing is to know the language. For example, when we know the language, we can make friends, or like=
179	Abi[N-4HES-1]	=talking with the staff in the shop

In Extract 96 children refer to English as the lingua franca. House (2003) argues that English as a Lingua Franca is more a 'language for communication', rather than a 'language for identification'.

Extract 96.

Line	Speaker	Translation
2/28	Noura[T-4MAH-1]	Wherever we go, everyone understands English to some extent. We can sort of establish a relationship in this way, and then learn their language .. from them.
2/29	Researcher	What if they don't know English?
2/30	Julia[T-6MAH-1]	In that case we'd better not to go there, or at least attend some language class beforehand.

In extract 96, the statement in line 2/28 'Wherever we go, everyone understands English to some extent.' shows that Noura's[T-4MAH-1] expected to use English as the lingua franca to establish interpersonal relationship with the host-nationals, and then learn the local language from them. Moreover, in line 2/30,

Julia[T-6MAH-1] refers to the language learning as a prerequisite for reducing the upcoming challenges during the sojourn.

Similarly, Baran[T-4MAH-1] referred to English as a lingua franca, when stating, 'Wherever we go, we speak English with them'.

5.6.1.2.2. Learning about the New Context (norms, customs, roles)

Some of the participants pointed out the importance of familiarity with the new context in reducing the possible challenges and improving the adjustment process. Lazarus (1976:47) claims that 'environments make demands but also can be used to satisfy individuals' needs'. Extract 97, which is part of the Diamond-Ranking activity, points out children's view about the importance of sojourners' awareness about the new surroundings.

Extract 97.

Line	Speaker	Translation
2/19	Nilou[N-5MOB-1]	We should first have some information about that place, so that we can build our expectations. Is it cold, hot?.. the hotels there.. we should know these things so that we can prepare ourselves.
2/20	Sara[N-5MOB-1]	For example, is it like Iran? What about the people there; whether they are good or bad? Are they kind? ..whether they know our language or not?

In the same activity, Leon's [T-4HES-1] statement, 'with the information [about Abalooboo] we know about the attractions and the good schools there' also refers to the same issue.

Not all of the participants believed that having information about the new place could facilitate their future sojourn experiences. Line 2/49 in Extract 98 is one of these examples when Baran[T-4MAHA-1] argues that one can easily have access to the essential information upon his/her arrival.

Extract 98.

Line	Speaker	Translation
2/47	Emilie[T-6MAH-1]	Because if we don't have [enough] information about the place, we'll be always sort confused. For example, the address.. we need to read a map and that takes a lot of time. We keep getting lost. (...)
2/49	Baran[T-4MAHA-1]	But you don't need to know much. You can get the information when you are there.
2/50	Julia[T-6MAH-1]	Well gathering the information together is important.

5.6.1.2.3. Learning Local Games

Playing is an indispensable part of children's life, and the participants of this study acknowledged this important element of their own world. They referred to playing games as a strategy to increase their interpersonal relationship. This particular strategy is unique to children, and was not specifically mentioned in Anderson's model. Extract 99 illustrates that the participants believed that playing games could help them in making new friends.

Extract 99.

Line	Speaker	Translation
2/70	Boloo[T-5MAH-1]	We can play with our friends. It doesn't matter that they are from Abalooboo. When we know the game, we can easily play with them (...)
2/72	Lavagirl[T-5MAH-1]	Umm, because this way we can make new friends
2/73	Researcher	I see! Interesting! Can you explain a bit more?
2/74	Boloo[T-5MAH-1]	Well, we can't sit all the time at school, we should play with them; in this way we initiate contact.

Must's[T-5KHER-1] statement that 'we can teach them our own games and learn their games' in the Diamond-Ranking activity illustrates that the intercultural contacts can result in the exchange of knowledge amongst the members of the two cultures. Ward et al. (2001) argue that when culturally different groups come into contact with each other, the influence they have on each other's social structure and

values is undeniable, and more importantly, the transference of cultural values and knowledge is not necessarily one sided. Extract 100 is another example in which children express their excitement about teaching and learning new games.

Extract 100.

Line	Speaker	Translation
2/91	Nilou[N-5MOB-1]	Well, we can teach them our won games, then we can play the games we like. (...)
2/94	Sara[N-5MOB-1]	I like it if they learn our games and we learn theirs.

Similar to playing games, playing sports was also pointed out as a strategy for initiating social interaction. Some of the boys, particularly younger ones, mentioned that sport can help them build up interpersonal relations with the members of the new society. Leon's[N-4HES-1] comment, 'if we are good in playing football, then, they want us to be in their team.. this way we can make more friends', explains that being good at sport can lead to popularity, accordingly facilitates the establishment of friendship relations. Similar to the findings of this research, studies have mentioned the prestige that accompanies participation in sports teams, especially when one has a leadership role such as being the captain of a football team (Eckert 1989 cited in Brown 2013). Studies show that joining sports teams might be a strategy to gain popularity or visibility among peers, as the continuous involvement in sports teams during the transition to a new school increases the number of nominations a student received as a close friend (Vest and Simpkins 2013). In this regard, Hardy et al. (2002) cited in Brown (2013) reported diminishing levels of loneliness in adolescents who were involved in sports both before and after the transition to secondary levels.

5.6.1.2.4. Developing Study Skills (being a good student)

Success in school is seen as a route for instrumental mobility for the immigrant children (Pinter 2011; Suarez-Orozco et al. 2005). Some of the participants in this study also shared the same view about the role of educational success in their interpersonal relations (See Extract 101).

Extract 101.

Line	Speaker	Original text
151	Researcher	Being a good student. How helpful that can be?
152	DonDon[T-4INTL-1]	Being a good student is first that ...you can get all the homework and stuff easily, and you can find a lot of friends (<i>laughter</i>) being smart. And you can help.. one of your friends or if one of your friends is weak or one of the students is weak you can ask them to come over to your house and then you guys can do your homework together. (...)
158	DonDon[T-4INTL-1]	I wanted to say being a good student doesn't mean you have to be mean to people (...) it means that you be a good student, you listen to the teacher, you be nice, you share stuff.
159	Holly[T-4INTL-1]	Yeah
160	Lucy[T-6INTL-1]	Being a good student really helps you because, like for example me... I respect people... I was.. good at everything.. almost... em so I have friends and stuff...like one day.. when it was ..like we have a test or stuff like that they call me and tell me 'yeah come and teach me do math together and stuff' so it helps you getting more friends and stuff like that.

Friendship was a reoccurring theme during the interview session. In Extract 101, the statement, 'they[other students] call me and tell me "yeah come and teach me do math together and stuff" so it[educational success] helps you getting more friends' in line 160, shows that offering educational support to the others was another strategy to make new friends. However, in line 158, DonDon[T-5INTL-1] explains that educational success alone cannot

guarantee better relationships with other students, and it is the good attitude in accompany of the educational success which facilitates the interpersonal relations at school.

Some participants stated that their teacher's opinion about them would have impact on their school life as sojourners (see Extract 102). Although many of the participants found a positive link between educational achievements and successful interpersonal relations, in Extract 102, line 201, Shambalil[N-5KHER-1] argues that there are many popular students who are not necessarily high achievers at school.

Extract 102.

Line	Speaker	Translation
121	Must[T-5KHER-1]	Being a good student is also important. Because if your teachers are not happy with you, ..you will be in trouble.
122	Baqali[T-5KHER-1]	Yeah, she is right! (...)
198	Alma[T-6KHER-1]	you should be a good student so that you can make good friends. If you behave nicely.. you will have a good impression on them... they will believe you are a good person (...)
201	Shambalil[N-5KHER-1]	But Miss, I know people who are bad in their schoolwork, but they have many friends at school

The findings indicate different views regarding the importance of 'being a good student'. In Diamond-Ranking activity, 'being a good student' was selected as the most hopeful element by the participants in grade 5 at HES, and as the least helpful factor according to the participants in grade 4 at MAH (see Appendix 11). Extract 103 illustrates children's discussion at MAH.

Extract 103.

Line	Speaker	Translation
150	Julia[T-5MAH-1]	Students will make friends with high achievers. Because they know that good students help their friends improve
151	Emilie[T-5MAH-1]	And they are independent.

152	Lavagirl[T-5MAH-1]	There are some students who prefer to be friend with naughty ones. Some prefer good student. I am one of those who like to be with naughty ones... because good student want to read books,. But I like to play.
-----	--------------------	--

Extract 104 portrays the discussion at HES about the link between educational success and friendship.

Extract 104.

Line	Speaker	Translation
302	Milad[N-6HES-1]	If our teacher praises our work,.. our friends will be jealous, and say, ' Oh! The teacher likes him more, we don't wanna be his friend, anymore'. (...)
304	Abi[N-4HES-1]	If we improve and get praised, while our friends stay behind, then ... then, they'll break up with us, saying that, 'he is too studious to be our friends' (...)
307	Max[N-5HES-1]	But Miss, by being a good student we can interact easier.. um for example, when someone doesn't know something.. about Iran.. or anything else.. we can help. (...)
309	Leon[N-4HES-1]	But miss like what our group members said[Referring to Abi in line 304], the same happened in or own class (...) He is a keen boy and has won the school quizzes a few times, but other students.. prefer not to make friend with him.
310	Abi[N-4HES-1]	Yeah, because if we'll be too nice to him, he'll become fond of himself

Contrary to those who see a positive link between the academic achievement and friendship, statements such as 'If our teacher praises our work,..our friends will be jealous' in line 302, show that in some cases success at school may lead into unpopularity and consequently isolation.

5.6.2. Changing the Environment

Anderson (1994) argues that one of the possible ways to react to the new situation is changing the environment. This section illustrates the participants' suggestion in this

regard. Bringing the home resources and replacing the missing environmental support were the two main categories in this section.

5.6.2.1. Keeping Alliance with Home Resources

Keeping the alliance with the familiar ties in the home country was one of the suggested strategies for dealing with the absence of the familiar resources during the early stages of sojourn. Extract 105, which is part of the discussion in Diamond-Ranking activity, portrays the participants' opinion in this regard.

Extract 105.

Line	Speaker	Translation
125	Must[T-5KHER-1]	Then.. we said um .. we have to be in touch with [our friends] in Iran. Because if we don't, we'll be really homesick
126	Shambalil[N-5KHER-1]	And we won't feel sociable from the beginning, So we need to be in touch with them [friends in Iran]

5.6.2.1.1. Bringing the Home Resources

One of the main sources of support children can have in the host environment is the family (Ward et al. 2001). The results show that for many of the Iranian children family is assumed as a vital element in facilitating the adjustment process. The loneliness was one of the participants' main concerns, and in the Diamond-Ranking activity 'being with family' was mentioned as a possible strategy to avoid solitude (see Extract 106).

Extract 106.

Line	Speaker	Translation
183	Milad[N-6HES-1]	Well Miss, we put 'being with family' first, so that we won't be alone. We can at least be sure that our mother or father is with us. Like we are not just on-on our own. (...)
196	Researcher	You've selected 'being with family' as the most important one; can you explain why?
197	Milad[N-6HES-1]	Because our family supports us financially...help us in school work, help us in our relations=

168	Ahmad[N-6HES-1]	= in fact families are the centre/base for everything.
-----	-----------------	--

In Extract 106, ‘family’ is appeared as both sources of emotional and instrumental support. In line 197, Milad[N-6HES-1] mentions that their family can support them financially which points out one aspect of the instrumental support.

At KHER, Must [T-5KHER-1] pointed out this issue, when she stated that ‘these [bus timetable] are things that you can easily learn there, or you can ask your parents’. Her statement shows that for her family is also perceived a source of information about the new environment; however, sometimes all the members of the family experience a similar level of unfamiliarity with the new environment, and this can put extra pressure on the other members of family and create problematic situations.

In addition to the family as the main source of environmental support, the findings show that friends also play a dominant role in the children’s life, particularly, when they were thinking of experiencing the new. Bloom’s[N-4MOB-1] comment, ‘I like to .. go to Italy.. but only if my friends be around me’ is one the many examples which illustrates the importance of friendship alliance in the adjustment.

5.6.2.1.2. Internet

Using the internet was mentioned as a strategy to keep the home resources available in the new context. Extract 107, which is part of the Diamond-Ranking activity, is one of these examples.

Extract 107.

Line	Speaker	Translation
319	Researcher	If you could add one more item to this activity, what would you add?
		(...)

333	Milad[N-6HES-1]	If we have high speed internet we can keep in touch with our friends [at home](...)when we are far away and making phone calls is difficult we can use internet,... and also some websites are blocked in Iran which won't be there.
-----	-----------------	--

Extract 107 illustrates the role of the internet in facilitating the communication with the home context resources. Lazarus and Folkman (1984) cited in Anderson (1994:313) use the term 'emotion-focussed' coping, and explain that this strategy leaves the obstacle objectively untouched and targets only its emotional and psychological effects.

Extract 108.

Line	Speaker	Original text
57	Shambalil[N-5KHER-1]	We'll see them in Oovoo [something like Skype], emails
58	Must[T-5KHER-1]	I haven't seen my sister for 3 YEARS, because she lives in America (...) we always use Oovoo,. Last year was the first time I visited her after three year.. well, it [Oovoo] is not the same, it's not the same at all.
59	Shambalil[N-5KHER-1]	It is, I- I see my uncle every week.

However, in line 58, Must[T-5KHER-1], whose sister was living in the USA at the time of the interview, states that although internet facilitates the contact with the home resources, it cannot replace the missing resources.

5.6.2.2. Replacing the Missing Environmental Support

As it was mentioned earlier, the absence of the environmental support can create serious challenges for sojourners, particularly child sojourners. In this section, children share and explain their preferences for replacing the missing resources. In general, 'experiencing togetherness' was what children were seeking. This is 'understood as having someone to whom they felt close' (Kostenius and Ohrling 2006:128). In this section children talk about the relatives who are based in the host context, neighbours and classmates as possible replacement for the missing environmental support. These

elements were part of the Diamond-Ranking Activity to initiate the discussion. How children address each of these groups is the main focus here.

5.6.2.2.1. Relatives

The findings show that relatives were referred to the both sources of emotional and instrumental support; helping the child sojourners to gain information about the new place and preventing them from being lonely. In Extract 109, which is part of the discussion in the Diamond-Ranking activity, Ahmad[N-6HES-1] explains that relatives can be the alternative emotional and instrumental support in the absence of the family members.

Extract 109.

Line	Speaker	Translation
215	Ahmad[N-6HES-1]	If they [relatives] already live there, they can share the information about there with us.. and they can help us a lot, and we won't feel lonely anymore

Similarly at MOB, Nilou[N-5MOB-1] refers to her uncle as a source language support:

'I want to go to Thailand with my uncle. My uncle knows the language. I mean, maybe their language is different from English, and he may kn-know it'.

Waldinger (1997) cited in Suarez-Orozco, M. (2005) that established immigrants facilitate the transition of the new arrivals by sharing the important economic, linguistics, and cultural knowledge, and consequently lowering the cost of subsequent immigration. Extract 110 illustrates that children perceived their relatives who were migrated before them to the host context as sources of support.

Extract 110.

Line	Speaker	Translation
232	Leon[N-4HES-1]	Miss, if we have relatives or friends there, we can go at their place (...) Miss, if we have many friends and

		relatives we can travel easier.
233	Abi[N-4HES-1]	Yeah! We can stay at their house, and meet their friends=
234	Leon[N-4HES-1]	=Or even if they are not home, we can stay at theirs.

Another interesting point in the extract above is that in line 232, Abi[N-4HES-1] mentions the possible opportunity to meet the friends of their relatives. At MAH, Noura[T-4MAH-1] also referred to the same point when she stated that 'we can like .. meet their [relatives'] friends and make friend with them' . It seems that children believed that their relatives in the host context can help them find new friends. This was also evident in the questionnaire findings (see 4.2.1.11).

5.6.2.2.2. Neighbours and Classmates

Some of the participants mentioned that neighbours and classmates can also provide environmental supports to the imagined sojourners. Julia's[T-6MAH-1] comment in the Diamond-Ranking activity, 'they[neighbours and classmates] can show us around,.. besides, [with them] we won't feel homesick anymore', shows that in children's view friendly neighbours and classmates can be sources of emotional and instrumental support in the new environment where such home resources are absent or limited. Brown (2013) also suggests that neighbourhood-based activities offer opportunities for relationship extension, due to the fact that the participants live in close proximity.

In the same activity, Sara[N-5MOB-1] talks about the advantages of having neighbours from her home country who are going through the similar experience (see Extract 111).

Extract 111.

Line	Speaker	Translation
2/76	Nilou[N-5MOB-1]	If our neighbour is f-friendly, then

		we count on her as friend. We can fill our loneliness with her present.
		...
2/78	Sara[N-5MOB-1]	.. um I can go to her[neighbour] for a chat. If I know her language, or she knows mine.. like if we are both coming from The-um Iran.. then we can talk together. For example, if she doesn't know the new language, I can sort of teach her. And she can teach me things I don't know.

Although Sara[N-5MOB-1] was excited about experiencing the transition, she still preferred to have neighbours from the home context (see Extract 111, line 2/78). This shows that, for her, recreation of the home context and establishment of interpersonal relationship with members of the home country could bring a sense of ease and comfort. Sara[N-5MOB-1] also mentions the supports she can give to and receive from a neighbour in the similar situation as her. Adelman (1988) used the term the 'comparable others', sojourners who are undergoing the similar experiences, consequently, can share information about coping with the new sociocultural environment and provide emotional support.

Huff (2001:246) argues that '[t]he readjustment to the primary culture is postulated to be more difficult than the culture shock experienced when going abroad'. In Extract 112, Lucy[T-6INTL-1] talks about her experience of moving back to Iran after her sojourn in Venezuela, and the support she received from her neighbour in Iran.

Extract 112.

Line	Speaker	Original text
149	Lucy[T-6INTL-1]	Okay, because like, for example .. our neighbour, like she was really kind and we play all the time and stuff like that, and she taught me lots of things.. so it's helpful some time.

In Extract 112, Lucy[T-6INTL-1] refers to her neighbour as an important element in facilitating her adjustment to the home context after her return from Venezuela. The

statement, ‘...and we play all the time’ in the same extract also highlights the crucial role of child’s play in children’s adjustment.

In Extract 113, Isabel[T-4MOB-1] also acknowledges the possible advantages of having friendly neighbours in establishing the interpersonal relationships. In this extract, Isabel[T-MOB-1] refers to the Birthday party invitations as a possible initial step for starting friendship relations.

Extract 113.

Line	Speaker	Translation
2/37	Isabel[T-4MOB-1]	Um if she [our neighbour] likes me and be nice with me, then I’ll be nice with her, too. And will make friends with her.. or maybe she invites me for her B-Birthday.. or she do me a favour ..

It seems that birthday parties can be suitable environments for the child sojourners to broaden their interpersonal relations and making new friends. The findings of my MA research also indicate that birthday party invitation or/and participation can be a strategy for child sojourners to initiate friendship relations (Zandian 2011b).

5.6.3. Walking away (avoidant or passive coping style)

One of the other ways of reacting to an obstacle is to walk away from the situation (Anderson 1994). This type of reaction can be explained as avoidant coping style (Ward and et al. 2001). Regarding to the possible outcome of the avoidant coping style, Ward and et al. (2001:640) explain that,

Avoidant responses may have some utility during primary appraisal by temporarily distancing the individual from an overwhelming stressor (see Carver et al., 1989). However, as immigrants and sojourners are unable to withdraw completely from the dominant culture, the sustained use of avoidant strategies is likely to be maladaptive.

With respect to the avoidant coping style, having a pet and isolation are the strategies which were named by the participants.

5.6.3.1. Social isolation/ Do nothing instrumental (Having a pet)

The findings indicate that having a pet, one of the elements in the Diamond-Ranking activity, was referred to as a replacement for the missing emotional resources; particularly, during the early days of sojourn when the sojourner has not established interpersonal relations in the host context and does not have sufficient linguistic ability to transfer emotional feelings in the local language. Having a pet as an emotional support was not mentioned in Anderson's models. Extract 114 is one of the examples in this regard.

Extract 114.

Line	Speaker	Original text
126	Patra[T-6INTL-1]	Because maybe: having a pet might keep you busy, if you don't know the language it might keep you busy (...)
129	Lucy[T-6INTL-1]	Dogs are so kind, they are like- they really like your true friends... they care about you. they ..well.
130	Sabrina[T-5INTL-1]	Because. when you have a pet, it's fun.., it plays with you, but when you have a... friendly neighbour and classmate, friends like that.... so it kind of help better
131	DonDon[T-4INTL-1]	Um, having a pet, is- is actually like your true friend and it's like your brother and sister, or like a second friend for you. but having a pet is OK, like you can play with it, have fun with it, but when you spend time with your family it's more important than just a dog or a cat.

As line 130 in the extract above illustrates, some of the participants acknowledged that having a pet to fill the absence of emotional resources might not be the best coping strategy in long-term.

In Extract 115, pets and dolls are referred to as substitutes for the friends whom were left behind. It seems that children were in search of someone/ something to whom they felt close. Kostenius and Ohrling (2006:128) use the term ‘experiencing togetherness’ in this regard. Must[T-5KHER-1] refers to friends as secret keepers, and explains that children can share their secrets with their pets instead of their friends upon their arrival to the new place.

Extract 115.

Line	Speaker	Original text
127	Must[T-5KHER-1]	(...) if we don't have any friends,.. well, we can't say everything to our moms, sometime we want to share our secrets with someone, and the best thing who can keep our secrets is a pet. Even if it won't understand, we feel like is does.
128	Shambalil[T-5KHER-1]	Just to talk to (...)
176	Lili[T-6KHER-1]	You can talk to your dolls
177	Alma[T-6KHER-1]	But it won't understand
178	Baqali[T-5KHER-1]	It won't understand but you feel better [when talking to it] (...)
180	Lili[T-6KHER-1]	Instead of having a dog... um ..pet, we chose to be in touch with our friends

In line 180, Lili[T-6KHER-1] explains that she prefers to stay in touch with old friends in order to fill the missing emotional resources. This coping strategy is elaborated in more detail in the following section.

5.6.3.2. Intense In-group Solidarity

Some of the participants expressed their preference in adopting a less active social life during the sojourn. For instance, Isabel[T-4MOB-1] and Bloom[T-4MOB-1] ranked ‘contact with old friend at home’ the highest in the Diamond-Ranking activity. In Extract 116, they explain that maintaining a supportive relationship with friends at the home context would help them the most during the imaginary sojourn. This portrays the strong in-group solidarity they sense with friends at home.

Extract 116.

Line	Speaker	Translation
2/3	Researcher	Let's start from your first priority. What is it?
2/4	Isabel[T-4MOB-1]	Being in contact with your friends in your home town
2/5	Bloom[N-4MOB-1]	Because it's hard to separate from each other, so it's good to keep in touch
...		
2/9	Nilou[N-5MOB-1]	Well, first we need to sort out things there, then we can get back to our friends
2/10	Sara[N-5MOB-1]	Or maybe they don't want to in contact with us.

In Extract 116, Nilou's[N-5MOB-1] comment in line 2/9, 'first we need to sort out things there', shows that she prefers an active coping style which involves planning and initiating change. The literature on cross-cultural adaptation also emphasizes the effectiveness of the approach coping style (Cross 1995; Ward and Kennedy 1999). Extract 117, which is also part of the Diamond-Ranking activity, is another example about intense in-group solidarity.

Extract 117.

Line	Speaker	Translation
2/37	Sara[N-5MOB-1]	Um, I don' care much weather our neighbours are good or not.. I don't like to socialize with them anyway.
2/38	Researcher	Why not?
2/39	Sara[N-5MOB-1]	Um, I prefer to play with my sister instead. Or hang out with our relatives there. I don't like to be in good terms with our neighbours.
...		
2/41	Nilou[N-5MOB-1]	I don't care much, miss. If they [neighbours] are nice, I socialize with them, otherwise, I'll treat them like random people, and won't socialize with them.

In Extract 117, Sara [N-5MOB-1] explicitly mentions that she does not intend to socialize with the neighbours as she prefers inside family relations. This attitude may cause problems during the adaptation, specifically in the absence of the family support. Moreover, the lack of interaction with the host context can result in marginalization or isolation. In the same extract, Nilou[N-5MOB-1] adopts a very different approach. Her

statement in line 41, 'I don't care much', shows that Nilou[N-5MOB-1] does not intend to let the attitudes of the neighbours become an influential element in her adaptation. This attitude might safeguard her to some extent against the possible negative reaction of the members of the host society, but at the same time would dampen her motivation to interact with the host society.

This is the end of the analysis of the group interviews, in which we covered the three main stages of cross-cultural adjustment in Anderson's framework. In the following section, I provide a brief summary of the findings which fit into the 'Response generation' stage.

5.6.4. Summary

In this study, the main three themes in the response generation section are 'changing oneself', 'changing the environment', and 'walking away'. According to Anderson (1994), these are the three of the four possible reactions of the sojourners to the new situation. 'Doing nothing at all' is the fourth possible reaction which was not identified in the data. Since children were thinking of an imaginary scenario, they mostly referred to the positive strategies rather than negative one. Hence, the negative reactions mentioned in Anderson's model (e.g. shame, guilt, depression, low productivity, rejection, etc.) were not evident in this data set. Moreover, elements such as 'alcoholism' and 'retreat into job', which were amongst the possible reactions of the sojourners in Anderson's model, are irrelevant to the context of this study, as the participants of this research are children. Instead, strategies such as having a pet and attending or inviting people to birthday parties were mentioned, which did not occur in Anderson's model and seem to be more common in children's life.

5.7. Conclusion

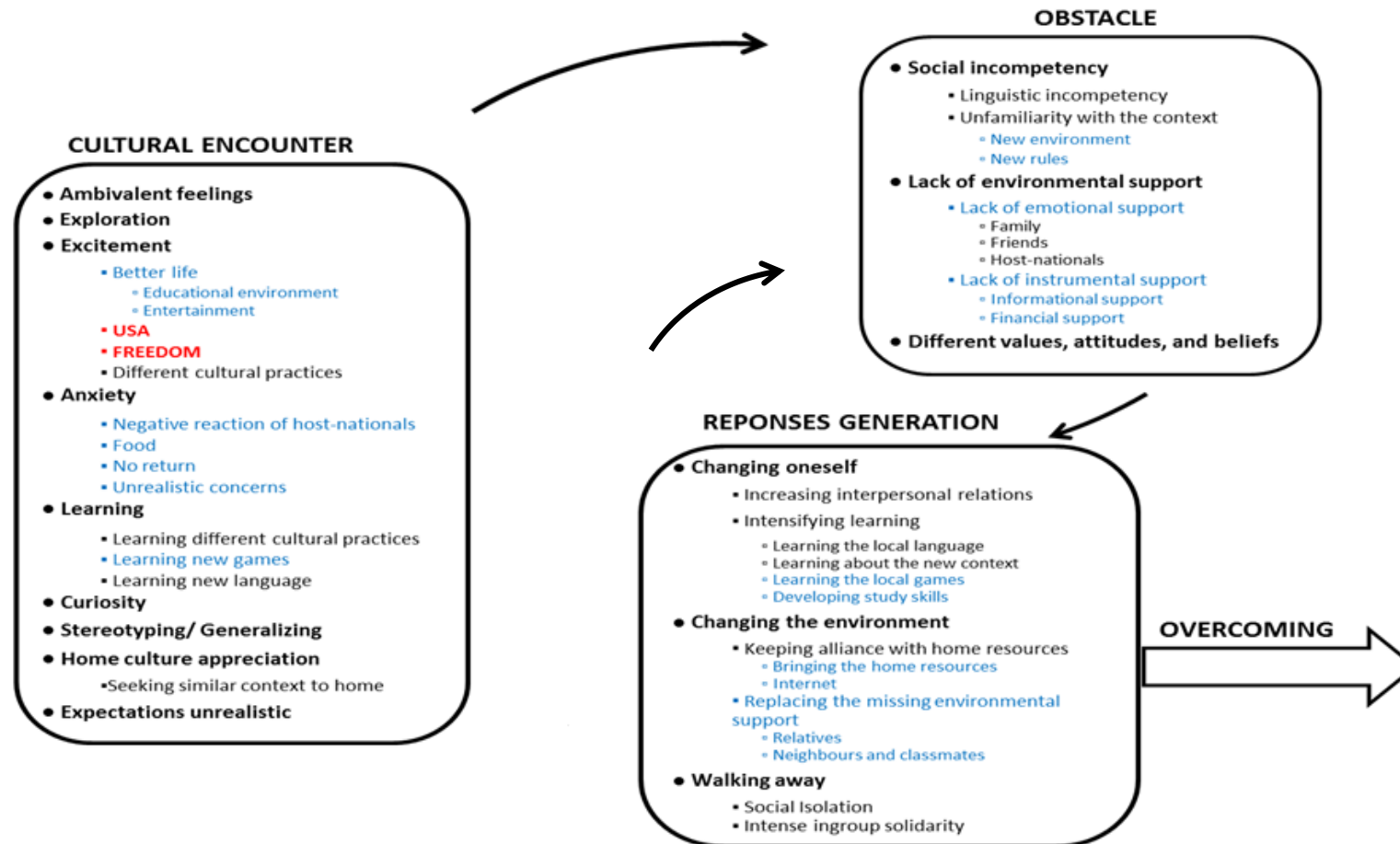
In response to the first research question which aimed to explore how Iranian children make sense of / understand intercultural interactions and transitional processes (both imaginary and only in some cases real), the findings of the group interviews indicated a mixture of feelings about the transition and interaction with other cultures. Children were simultaneously excited and worried about experiencing the new intercultural experiences in the future. Moreover, children showed ambivalent feelings about having intercultural interaction. They were enthusiastic to meet people from other cultural backgrounds, learn their social and cultural practices, and also transfer their own sociocultural and linguistic knowledge to them. At the same time, they showed strong bias attitudes toward certain ethnicities. I believe this is due to the lack of practical education against racism in Iranian society; however more research in this regard is required in order to be able to generalize the findings.

The findings also revealed that when children imagined experiencing future transitions, they perceived intercultural interactions as the dominant aspect of this concept. Interpersonal relation was a reoccurring theme throughout the interviews. Children shared concerns about abandoning their home-based emotional attachments. They also expressed excitement about meeting people from different cultural backgrounds and geographical places. At the same time they were worried about interaction with the people in the host context. The absence of friendship support was mentioned as one of the possible obstacles during the adjustment. Children also referred to establishing interpersonal relations as one possible coping strategy. Similarly, the findings indicate that language can play different roles during the cultural encounter, obstacle and response generation stages. The participants expressed excitement about learning a new language, and at the same time referred to the absence

of linguistic ability in the new context as a possible problem during the adjustment. They also referred to learning a new language as a coping strategy which could facilitate their interaction with the members of the host society and result in educational success.

The emerging themes and codes, such as ‘games’, ‘school’, ‘fun’, ‘less control’, and ‘pets’ were special to this data set because children were the participants. Codes such as ‘the USA’, ‘freedom’, and ‘fear of not being able to return to the home context’ were specific to this particular data set, which relate to the micro context of this study. It is worth noting that although codes such as ‘school’, ‘fun’, ‘pets’ and ‘games’ emerged from the child data, and are quite specific to the world of children, these codes with more general meanings, such as ‘educational context’, ‘entertainment’, and ‘non-verbal interaction’ can be referred to a broader group. Figure 19 displays the overall construct of the emerging themes and categories in this phase of the study.

Figure 19. Summary of the themes and categories



Chapter 6

Findings: Follow-up sessions

6.1. Introduction

Having been motivated by the ethical concern that children should also be informed about the results of the research and see how their contributions have been included in the research (Grover 2004; Matthews and Tucker 2000; Pinter and Zandian 2015), four months after completing the data collection, I revisited the schools and shared the initial findings with the participants of the participatory interviews. The findings of this phase of the study helped me explore how the children perceived research and their own contributions to research. These findings also helped me answer part of the second research question, which aimed to explore the advantages and limitations of using innovative participatory research methodologies with children.

In this chapter which is a much shorter chapter, I first revisit the outline of the session and the participants. Then, I share findings about children's initial understandings of the research. Next, I share findings from the discussions I had with the children about issues of representation, pseudonyms, transcribing, and children's role in the research and their presence in the thesis. I address the practical implications of these findings later in the thesis.

6.2. Outline of the Session

The follow-up session were conducted at MAH, HES, MOB, and INTL. I was unable to conduct the follow-up session at KHER due to the time limitations. As Table 11 in

Chapter 3 illustrates the follow-up sessions consisted of four parts. However, due to the word restriction mainly the last two parts are presented here. In these last two parts, I presented my completed MA dissertation to the children so that they could see what the final presentation of a research project would look like. At the same time, anticipating that the adult product may not be interesting for them, I showed them a large poster which illustrated how I matched their own data extracts to ideas in the wider literature about intercultural adaptation (See Picture 8, Chapter 3). When children saw my Master's dissertation and the poster with the extracts of the transcription of their own wording, they asked me a series of spontaneous questions regarding the different aspects of research, and this initiated a discussion between me as the researcher and the participants. Children's unsolicited comments about the research process are presented in the following sections.

6.3. What is a Questionnaire?

During the administration of the questionnaire in November 2012, I explained to the participants on several occasions that the questionnaire was anonymous and it was not designed for evaluative purposes. However, in the follow-up session it was revealed that some of the participants initially assumed that they were going to be assessed, and only when they read the questions they realized that it was not designed to evaluate them in any manner. Extract 118 is one of these examples.

Extract 118.

Line	Speaker	Original text
90	Lili[T-5INTL-2]	At first I thought it [questionnaire] was a test, then we- we do it I just found out.

Similarly, in Extract 119, Isabel[N-4MOB-2] states that first she assumed that the questionnaire was an English test. Although it was mentioned on the information sheets and consent forms, announced verbally on the administration day, and printed

on the front page of the questionnaire that in this study I did not intend to evaluate or assess the participants in any manner, Isabel[N-4MOB-2] was not entirely convinced until she went through the questions in the questionnaire. Her statement highlights an important issue about research with young people. Since students are used to be assessed in different ways at school, it is not always easy to convince them that they would not be evaluated by their input to the project.

Extract 119.

Line	Speaker	Translation
89	Isabel [N-4MOB-2]	I didn't really think [it was a questionnaire].. I thought it was an exam, an English test.. I told my mom, I'm not sure if I want to do it. I was not sure.. Um until I saw that it's like this.. then I found it very interesting.

In Extract 120, DonDon[T-4INTL-2] explains that how she recalls the questionnaire from the characters introduced in it. In line 41, Lucy[T-6INTL-2] who is the oldest participant in this interview also talks about her understanding of the underlying purpose of this questionnaire.

Extract 120.

Line	Speaker	Original text
39	Researcher	What do you think about the questionnaire? What was it about? And what is a questionnaire?
40	DonDon[T-4INTL-2]	I think it was about this girl, Co-? CoCo? Because she was a girl that went to another country, another school. and ...she wanted to learn , um like she wasn't able to talk in that language ..and she didn't understand us. um she wanted to know like .. we had to draw some pictures.. we need to answer questions right and we had to draw game, we had to write a game that we could play with her to make her understand what we are talk-talking and draw the pictures. and it was almost the similar thing. and what school we would like to go?
41	Lucy[T-6INTL-2]	We mostly had to say how we felt and what happend when we went to a school in another country. When people come to our school from another country how they would feel? How we would feel, something like that.

6.4. What is a Participatory Interview?

As part of the follow-up session, the participants were encouraged to reflect on the group interview they participated in four months earlier and describe anything they could recall from the session. In Extract 121, Bloom[N-4MOB-2], Sara[N-5MOB-2], and Nilou[N-5MOB-2] together describe what they remember from the participatory interview.

Extract 121.

Line	Speaker	Translation
107	Bloom[N-4MOB-2]	I think first you came to us and had a chat with us.. and we got excited, then we got into groups, and chose new names.
108	Researcher	Yeah, then you were divided into 2 groups, each group worked separately. Then, groups looked at each other's work. what happened next?
109	Bloom[N-4MOB-2]	Then, I commented about their [work]
110	Sara[N-5MOB-2]	Then you said, let's look at each other's work together. Then you asked us why we have chosen these answers. anddddd
111	Nilou[N-5MOB-2]	You asked our opinions, then about our reasons for them, um then we started another activity.

What they recalled was having fun, choosing pseudonyms, doing activities, being part of a group, sharing and explaining their opinions. Another interesting aspect about Extract 121 is that it also demonstrates how children can build on each other's statements.

Extract 122 portrays the understandings of the participants at MAH about the objectives of the participatory activities.

Extract 122.

Line	Speaker	Translation
101	Noura[T-4MAH-2]	I think the aim was that.. um we learn about our worries and excitements in another country. To learn about the differences between countries.. then to learn about the most.. the most and the least important things there.
102	Emilie[T-6MAH-2]	Um, the questions were really good, because others also learnt about our opinions. Now I think I am a complete girl

		who is ready for a journey.
103	Lavagirl[T-5MAH-2]	I think all these were to help us learn about our feelings. To compare our feelings with one another. For example or see that all the girls in this age prefer something rather another thing.
104	Researcher	What about you?
105	Julia[T-6MAH-2]	I think, it was for us to learn things in case we go to another country, get to know how it feels like. It helps us not to feel lost. To learn about this experience [going abroad] and see if we want to move abroad at all, or else.

Extract 122 shows that many of the participants assumed that these activities were mainly aimed at helping them to learn something. This kind of assumption might be due to the nature of schools which is inevitably linked with learning and teaching purposes. In fact, one of the aims of this study was to raise awareness and curiosity amongst the participants about intercultural interaction; however, the central focus of the questionnaire and the interviews was on obtaining children's viewpoints about intercultural issues.

6.5. Representation of Research Project

In the final part of the session, the participants flipped through my MA dissertation to get familiar with the representation of a research project. They also read some extracts from the transcription of their own participatory interview which were demonstrated in a poster to show the link between the related literature and their own comments (see Picture 8, Chapter 3). Extract 123 is part of the briefing in the beginning of the group interview four months earlier than the follow-up sessions. This extract shows how children anticipated their input would be presented.

Extract 123.

Line	Speaker	Translation
16	Researcher	As I've said before, your real names will not be revealed.
17	Linda[T-4KHER-1]	Is it a problem if it will be revealed?
18	Khandan[T-5KHER-1]	Miss, .. will you put it on the wall,..like on the school board?
19	Researcher	No, I won't put it on the school board, I

		will write it in my thesis, for my study. Some papers ..articles may be published in the journals.
20	Shambalil[T-5KHER-1]	PhD in psychology?
21	Researcher	PhD in English ..English language teaching.
22	Baqali[5KHER-1]	Doesn't make sense (<i>low voice</i>)
23	Researcher	To see what to include in English classes that children enjoy it more.
24	Baqali[5KHER-1]	I see.
25	Khandan[5KHER-1]	You mean <i>all of it</i> will be published in a newspaper (<i>with excitement</i>)
26	Shambalil[5KHER-1]	Will you give us the magazine?
27	Researcher	It may get published in some journals.. if so I will bring them to the school.

In Extract 124 which is part of the follow-up session, some of the participants at INTL are explaining their initial understandings of this research project. This discussion was happening before I had shared my MA dissertation and the transcription of their own utterance with them.

Extract 124.

Line	Speaker	Original text
142	Researcher	How did I use it[the data from phase 1 and 2]? What do you think it will become?
143	Holly[T-4INTL-2]	I think you used it like em.. to show your experience to your teacher, by like asking all the stuff, and em giving the reports, like giving the reports and em all the answers that we.. um put for all these stuff... to your teacher..
144		(...)
145	Lucy[T-6INTL-2]	Ok, you mostly wrote a report. em a report so that next time when.. maybe to improve how people feel in another countries. And since you are studying how to deal with children something like that... then you can improve like the way.. you work or other teacher work
		(...)
148	Holly[T-4INTL-2]	I think you wanted to know about .. you also wanted to show it to your teacher and you want to know what people here think, and then what people in England think
149	Researcher	Do you know what will happen to your recording? To what we recorded today? How will I show it to the others?
150	Sabrina[T-5INTL-2]	Maybe ..maybe in. when you go to your university, you show it to your teacher, and then
151	Lili[T-5INTL-2]	your friends

As Extract 124 illustrates, the participants cultivated different images of the possible objectives and implications of this project. Lucy's[T-6INTL-2] comment in line 145 in particular shows that she was able to capture some of the contribution of this study to the teachers and immigrant families.

After I explained that the participants' exact comments would be part of my thesis, and provided examples from the extracts in my MA dissertation, the participants started to read one of the extracts in the dissertation aloud, which I assume shows their interest in the other children's comments. This also portrays the participants' curiosity about other children's opinions, and their excitement about the fact that their own wordings would be part of the thesis.

Extracts 125 and 126 demonstrate the participants' comments after they have seen how their input would be represented at the final stage. In Extract 125, some of the participants explain how they initially expected their input to be used.

Extract 125.

Line	Speaker	Translation
150	Researcher	Did you think it would be like this at the end?
151	All	<i>Not at all!</i>
152	Researcher	When I said I am doing this for my research what did you expect it to be like?
153	Lavagirl[T-5MAH-2]	I thought, for example when you were designing a textbook you would insert our comments in that.
154	Julia[T-6MAH-2]	I thought you would put a summary of our comments, for example the outcome of it. (...)
156	Lavagirl[T-5MAH-2]	I thought you would put parts of it. For example you would cut the um ..um bits and only put the important parts.

In Extract 125, Julia's [T-6MAH-2] quote in line 154 and Lavagirl's[T-5MAH-2] comment in line 156 match well with the previous findings about children's perceptions of their contribution in research (Pinter and Zandian 2015). In Extract 126

children express their excitement and satisfaction after realizing how their contribution to the research would be presented in the thesis.

Extract 126.

Line	Speaker	Original text
263	Holly[T-4INTL-2]	I thought it's an asses- assessment, it's a small test you had. and you to do it with .. children.
264	Researcher	The test I had or you had?
265	Holly[T-4INTL-2]	You had (...)
267	Lili[T-5INTL-2]	haha. It[the questionnaire] was so easy, I wish that was our homework.
268	Lucy[T-6INTL-2]	Did you see how many pages that book [MA dissertation] was?
269	Lili[T-5INTL-2]	Not this one [the dissertation]. (...)
271	Sabrina[T-5INTL-2]	I think um ..I thought that maybe... it was a homework for you, as we have homework. it was a homework to do the questionnaire, ask some questions and make those games.. but I <i>NEVER</i> thought it's going to make a book out of it.

Extract 126 shows that children saw me as a student with similar concerns and homework to do rather than a teacher or a member of staff. Extract 127 illustrates the excitement of the participants at HES after they realized how their input would be represented in this research. Children's quotes in this extract illustrate their pride, ownership and a sense of accomplishment.

Extract 127.

Line	Speaker	Translation
2/38	Ahmad[N-6HES-2]	It's really cool!
2/39	Mr.Lee[N-5HES-2]	You mean really all I said will go in this [thesis]?
2/40	Researcher	The extracts here[in the MA dissertation] is the exact wordings of these children in the UK.
2/41	Leon[N-4HES-2]	Will you bring your thesis for us?
2/42	Researcher	Yes, I will bring one copy of it to the school.
2/43	Ahmad[N-6HES-2]	Then our Miss will make copies for us?
2/44	Mr.Lee[N-5HES-2]	Is it one of those black cover ones?
2/45	Researcher	Yeah.
2/46	Mr.Lee[N-5HES-2]	WOW!
2/47	Researcher	I may make a simplified version of it in Persian, and bring it to your school
2/48	Mr.Lee[N-5HES-2]	No, In English would be fine.
2/49	Milad[N-6HES-2]	As if you could understand it!

		(...)
2/52	Mr.Lee[N-5HES-2]	It' sooo good! Everyone will find out that it's us [in the thesis]
2/53	Researcher	No, not everyone.. I use your pseudonyms, so only you find out.
2/54	Mr.Lee[N-5HES-2]	It's Ok, Even this way is fine
2/55	Ahmad[N-6HES-2]	Miss, can we change our pseudonyms?

Mr.Lee's[N-5HES-2] statement in line 2/44, shows his familiarity with the common format of the thesis and his excitement about being part of one. Extract 128 illustrates a similar reaction from the participants at MAH.

Extract 128.

Line	Speaker	Translation
146	Julia[T-6MAH-2]	It's a great feeling.
147	Iavagirl[T-5MAH-2]	I feel like.. I have been part of a very important thing.

In Extract 129, children talk about their initial understandings of this project. Some of the participants assumed that the data collection phase and the activities done during the participatory activities were the only components of this research project (See lines 2/96 and 2/97).

Extract 129.

Line	Speaker	Translation
2/95	Mr.Lee[N-5HES-2]	I thought it would be just doing these activities, things like this [referring to one of the participatory activities].
2/96	Leon[N-4HES-2]	I thought you would just prepare a report for your thesis and leave
2/97	Milad[N-6HES-2]	That's it, very easy and simple
2/98	Ahmad[N-6HES-2]	Just asking for the children's opinions. Just that!
2/99	Max[N-5HES-2]	Miss, I thought you are one of the school staff who is doing research.
2/100	Researcher	In fact, I am here for doing research.
2/101	Max[N-5HES-2]	Oh!
2/102	Researcher	Well yes, I am here for my studies.
2/103	Milad[N-6HES-2]	But it's your own work
2/104	Researcher	and I am not a staff.

This extract highlights that since children are rarely involved in the other stages of a research project than the data collection, they usually assume that the entire project is the data collection phase, and this again shows the importance of sharing the findings

with children and explaining the stages of research in a children friendly format to them. Line 2/99 shows that in the educational environments like schools, students may eventually consider any adult as a staff member, and thus gaining children's trust as an adult researcher is an ongoing uphill battle which takes time and persistence. Of course, the more children take part in research, the more they become familiar with the nature of the research and the role of researchers.

6.6. Spontaneous Questions

I acknowledge that a child's utterance is only partially his or hers (Bakhtin 1986:94) because 'it relates to what preceded it and to what is anticipated to follow' (Pinter and Zandian 2015). This is particularly relevant here since children are asked to respond to pre-set questions in an educational environment. However, this section portrays how children moved away from the pre-set questions and turned the sessions into discussions full of sudden spontaneous comments, and wanted to learn more about the research project. The spontaneous questions provided the opportunity to explain different aspects of the research project to the participants.

In Extract 130, the children are looking at my Master's dissertation as an example of the final representation of a research project. Line 176 portrays the children's curiosity about and interest in learning how their input would be represented in future.

Extract 130.

Line	Speaker	Translation
174	Holly[T-4INTL-2]	what grade where they in? [Participants of my MA research project]
175	Researcher	Grade 6. No actually they were 11 years old, in England the grades are different
176	Sabrina[T-5INTL-2]	and what. this book.. when you finish it, when it gets three times bigger, and your xxx is completely finished. what happens to it? (...)
178	Researcher	um, it will be in the library and people will read it. and I may write in short.. like not that big.. like in 5 or 6 pages

		(...) So i will write in 5 or 10 page and publish it in journals so that people can read it.
		(...)
180	Lili[T-5INTL-2]	Why does this [references] so tu-ham-tu-ham[=cramped]
181	Researcher	(<i>smile</i>) em this is the books that I've read and I used. so I wrote it in a smaller font.
184	Sabrina[T-5INTL-2]	You <i>USED</i> all of this? How many books did you read?!

In Extract 130, line 174 illustrates Holly's[T-4INTL-2] curiosity about the participants in my Master's research. This also shows that children might be interested to learn about research which has been conducted with or by other children. In line 180, Lili[T-5INTL-2] asks for some clarifications about the format of the reference list in the dissertation. Sabrina's[T-5INTL-2] comment and fascination about the list of the books I have read based on the references in my MA dissertation is very similar to the findings of Pinter and Zandian (2015).

Similarly, the participants at MAH were also curious about the child-participants in my MA study. In Extract 131, the children are looking at the Master's dissertation and asking questions about the number of the participants, as well as the process of writing up a dissertation.

Extract 131.

Line	Speaker	Translation
138	Lavagirl[T-5MAH-2]	How many where they [participants in MA]?
139	Researcher	They were 4
140	Julia[T-6MAH-2]	Did you type all these yourself, Miss?
141	Noura[T-4MAH-2]	Isn't it hard?
142	Lavagirl[T-5MAH-2]	How long did it take?
143	Researcher	It took quite a long time.
144	Julia[T-6MAH-2]	I didn't think it would be like this at all!

In the follow-up session, Sara[N-5MOB-2] was flipping through my MA dissertation which is in English and asked whether their quotes would be translated into English for the final presentation of the data or not. Her statement, 'For example how do you

say 'ما' [in English]?' is further evidence that children do take interest in research on their own terms.

Extract 132 illustrates that children did not expect their input to be represented in the format of a thesis. These extracts portray their pride and satisfaction in this regard.

Extract 132.

Line	Speaker	Translation
196	Researcher	Did you ever think that I would present your comments in this way?
197	All	Not at all!
198	Researcher	So what do feel about this?
199	Bloom[N-4MOB-2]	Your work is really hard
200	Isabel[N-4MOB-2]	Well, nothing has changed for us, but Isabel is very happy <i>(laughter)</i>
		(...)
206	Isabel[N-4MOB-2]	I am more than happy, I can sing an jump in the air! <i>(laughter)</i>
207	Researcher	What about you?
208	Nilou[N-5MOB-2]	I am also very happy, because now, someone else can also look at our comments and learn about other views.

The participants at INTL also responded similarly when I asked them whether they expected that their input would be presented in a format of a dissertation.

Extract 133.

Line	Speaker	Original text
282	DonDon[T-4INTL-2]	like you would write it down in a big paper, and you also give the recorder to your teacher.(xxx)
283	Lucy[T-6INTL-2]	Ok I thought that you were gonna listen to ..our talks, and you were gonna make it into your essay, but not using our words. like using things you understood from our words.
284	Sabrina[T-5INTL-2]	thought like you are going to make it, like the things that we told you and the answers we gave to your games .. you just go out and you would make it a summary. it's sort of close to her answer, but you would just make it a summery about what we said, ..and you're going to just give it out just in a CD.

DonDon's[T-4INTL-2] statement, 'So after finishing your book, are you going to give us a copy?' highlights the ethical responsibilities to children,

which is to share the outcome of the research with the young participants and try to explore children's own interests and assumptions about research.

Holly's[T-4INTL-2] question 'In how many years [will you finish your work and bring it to us]?' touches upon the concept of time for children as the research participants; something which needs more consideration in research with children. The concept of time is different to children than adult. For instance, three or four years of completing a PhD project may seem much longer for the child-participants than me as the researcher.

6.7. Transcription

As was suggested in the literature (Matthews and Tucker 2000; Pinter and Zandian 2015), I showed children the example of the transcriptions of their quotes from the interviews. This was in a form of a poster which linked children's direct interview quotes with related literature (see Picture 12).

Picture 12. Poster of interview transcript and related literature



Questions like, 'who is this guy[referring to the drawing of a researcher on the poster]? Do you really know them?, and 'These people are all

researchers?’ are examples which illustrates children interest in knowing about the other researchers in the poster.

It was not easy for the participants to recognize the transcription of their own quotes. This could be because of the long gap between the follow-up session and participatory activities. Moreover, to illustrate how pseudonyms are used to preserve anonymity of the participants, I chose different pseudonyms than the ones that children selected which might have caused the confusion. In extract 134, Bloom[N-5MOB-2] mentions that she might be able to recognize some of the statements due to the individual’s idiosyncratic style of talking. This seems like a remarkably sophisticated description by a 10-year-old.

Extract 134.

Line	Speaker	Translation
136	Researcher	When you were reading these [transcriptions] did you realize that they were your own statements?
137	all	No
138	Bloom[N-4MOB-2]	To some extent. Like some say a lot of ‘em em’ in their talk, some are more fluent. Some talked more poetic.

Nilou’s[N-5MOB-2] statement ‘THAT’S MY OWN WORDS!’ illustrates her excitement and surprise when she recognized her own statement in the poster.

Similarly, Extract 135 portrays the fascination of the participants at HES when they identified their own or each other’s statements printed on the poster linking the findings with the related literature.

Extract 135.

Line	Speaker	Translation
2/05	Max[N-5HES-2]	“Someone who doesn’t know something.. um.. about Iran ..or any other thing.. we can help him to do his homework.” [line 307, HES1] Exactly! Even the spelling [=format] is the same!
2/06	Milad[N-6HES-2]	“for example if our teacher praises us,

		or something.. then our friends will be upset and say:oh! The teacher likes him more, let's stop being friend with him" [line 302, HES1] I've said this.
		(...)
2/08	Ahmad[N-6HES-2]	"Miss, like what our group member said..." [Line 309, HES1] Oh! This is for em.. for Leon.. he's mentioning Bill..
2/09	Leon[N-4HES-2]	He is right, it's mine..."Miss, like what our group member said, it happened in our own class.. for example <i>WILL</i> (emphasis)
2/10	Researcher	Yeah! OK, I changed his name [= used a pseudonym] (smile)

In line 2/09, Leon[N-4HES-2] is reading an excerpt from his own statements. The excerpt was part of his statement in the participatory activity in which he referred to one of his classmates who was not in the interview session. When preparing the poster, I used a pseudonym for that student as well as the other participants. In line 2/09, Leon[N-4HES-2] replaces the pseudonym with the original one, assuming that it was spelt incorrectly.

Extract 136 portrays how children anticipated their input to be represented in the research. Most of the participants assumed that only a minor section of the project would be allocated to their input.

Extract 136.

Line	Speaker	Translation
172	Sara[N-5MOB-2]	I thought you would do the similar activities with more children, like the questions you asked, and then you would compare them with ours and um like you would say they are better than us (...)
178	Isabel[N-4MOB-2]	Um.. I thought you were asking us to do these.. and if we do it well, like if we respond in a way.. like.. I thought there was a correct 'answer' in your mind
179	Researcher	There is no answer in my mind. Now you know that? What I want to know is what you think. Your opinion is very important to me.

In line 172, Sara[N-5MOB-2] explains that she thought they were going to be evaluated. She assumed their input was part of a bigger set of data and was going to

be compared with that of other participants. Similar to Sara[N-5MOB-2], Isabel[N-4MOB-2] also thought that I was looking for specific responses.

Statements such as ‘I thought you would rephrase it in your- own way, Sara’s [N-5MOB-2]’ and ‘I thought you would censor some parts of it, Milad [N-6HES-2]’ are examples to show how children thought about the way their contribution would be presented in the project. It should be noted that in Iran, books go through monitoring and censorship before publication, and Milad [N-6HES-2] might have used the word ‘censor’ believing that the similar procedures is required for the thesis as well.

Participants at MAH also assumed that their comments would be changed and summarized for the final representation. This shows that children have this general assumption that they may not be adequately knowledgeable even when the topic is related to their own lives; therefore, their input to the project requires rephrasing and editing to be presented in the research. In Extract 137-line 130, Lavagirl[T-5MAH-2] expresses her satisfaction about the way her comments will be represented in the final version.

Extract 137.

Line	Speaker	Translation
124	Noura[T-4MAH-2]	I thought you just wanted to learn about our opinions.
125	Julia[T-6MAH-2]	Yeah, you just wanted our opinion, like you would write something about it yourself. For example, saying how children think in different ages. (...)
130	Lavagirl[T-5MAH-2]	I thought that the ‘ums’ [fillings] won’t go in.. I talk like that [with lots of fillings], and I really liked that you kept our own way of talking.

Students at INTL were also surprised about the way their input was going to be represented (see Extract 138). This also shows children naivety in believing that they would become famous after the publication of the data.

Extract 138.

Line	Speaker	Original text
211	DonDon[T-4INTL-2]	I feel cool. no not cool, .. I feel like I am famous
212	Lili[T-5INTL-2]	Me 2
213	Holly[T-4INTL-2]	Yeah
214	Sabrina[T-5INTL-2]	Now that it's in the book I think it would be better if you - we like just say our own name, (...)then we are famous <i>(smile)</i> (...)
221	DonDon[T-4INTL-2]	Everyone would know our name and they come to our school, and they'll be like 'wow! It's you, you are in a book!'
222	Researcher	What about you Lucy? I see you are shaking your head
223	Lucy[T-6INTL-2]	OK! I am going to be in a book, so seriously I need to improve my.. like I am reading these things that I've said and it doesn't make any sense, so I have to improve my.. talking.
224	Researcher	OK! D-does any of you feel like that?
225	Sabrina[T-5INTL-2]	Nooo
226	DonDon[T-4INTL-2]	Yeah!
227	Lucy[T-6INTL-2]	I'm embarrassed
228	Researcher	OK you said you are embarrassed?
229	Lucy[T-6INTL-2]	Yeah! yeah!
230	DonDon[T-4INTL-2]	I don't like to say like um ummm umm
231	Researcher	Do you think that anyone talks like books?
232	Lucy[T-6INTL-2]	No but this is really weird it doesn't make any sense

In line 223, Lucy[T-6INTL-2] expressed her discomfort with the way she speaks and the way it would be represented. In INTL context the participants were more confident to speak in English, but they were not necessarily fluent in this language; hence, they were more sensitive about the format of the transcription. According to Pinter and Zandian (2015:8) by introducing children to the format of transcription,

[t]he children not only become acquainted with the natural features of their talk, but they acquire some technical research know-how, and perhaps even more

importantly, realise that what was assumed to be messy and untidy can at the same time be positioned as technically ‘correct’. This messiness can be redefined as valuable and authentic from the researcher’s point of view.

Having this in mind, I tried to explain the technical term ‘transcribing’ to the participants and clarify that the messiness of their utterances is natural and valuable.

6.8. Why this Research?

In response to the question I asked about the purpose for conducting this research, children provided various responses. Extract 139 illustrates some of their assumptions in this regard.

Extract 139.

Line	Speaker	Translation
130	Nilou[N-5MOB-2]	I think, this was the biggest help we could offer you, so that you can do your thesis. And you tried to present your thesis [I think she meant research] in a way that we can understand it, and not in a way that we don’t understand a word.
131	Bloom[N-4MOB-2]	I think you taught others.. like what to do when they move to a new place, so that they won’t feel homesick. To learn new strategies, new ideas.. if they move to a new city and won’t be able to return... for example, my aunt is alone there, I told her about things we did at school, and I helped her a lot. She is not feeling homesick as much, and she is trying to learn German. Generally, this is a great help to Iranians. Because we want to go abroad and we are first excited about it, but then we get homesick. But this helps us not to feel homesick, show us new ways [to overcome it].

Extract 139 shows that Nilou[N-5MOB-2] saw this research as a university assignment which needed to be done, and the children helped the researcher conduct it. She also appreciated that this complicated project was represented in a simple way so that she

could understand it. Bloom[N-4MOB-2] also stated that this research would help people who move to another place.

I also asked the participants who they assumed would benefit from this study. Extract 140 portrays children's responses to this question.

Extract 140.

Line	Speaker	Translation
211	Researcher	And who do you think would benefit from reading your comments?
212	Bloom[N-4MOB-2]	Um ,those who want to move abroad forever [immigrate]
213	Sara[N-5MOB-2]	Those who are not familiar with the [new] language, or like they don't know what to do when they go there.

Lucy's[T-6INTL-2] response to the same question that 'your ideas are gonna help the researchers in the future, so it's kind of helpful for the future students' is a very interesting observation which refers to the poster that linked between the findings of the study and the related literature. Similarly Milad[N-6HES-2] and Leon[N-4HES-2] pointed out that other researchers would be able to use the findings of this research (see Extract 141).

Extract 141.

Line	Speaker	Translation
2/62	Researcher	Who do you think would use this data?
2/63	Max[N-2HES-2]	you
2/64	Researcher	OK, Who else?
2/65	Mr.Lee[N-5HES-2]	We who knew that it will be in the books
2/66	Max[N-5HES-2]	Psychologists
2/67	Researcher	How can they use it?
2/68	Leon[N-4HES-2]	By using the views of the others
2/69	Max[N-5HES-2]	Miss, for example [asking] about our feelings and how it works
2/70	Milad[N-6HES-2]	Miss, for example some psychologists... become researchers like you, and research about things which interest them, and will do the same things, and use these [the research materials].
2/71	Max[N-5HES-2]	Miss, will you come back here again?
2/72	Leon[N-4HES-2]	For example, the psychologists and um ...study this, to like pick some parts of it for issues about psychology.

Helping others who may experience sojourn in future, sharing the findings with others, and giving a ‘theory’ based on the findings were some of the implications children assumed this study would have. Nilou’s[N-5MOB-2] statement ‘I think after your research, you give theories (...) and you also learn something and you can share it with others’ is a sophisticated observation for a primary school pupil to make.

In response to my question that whether children in the same age as the participants would also benefit from the finding of this study or not, some of the participants stated that this research would mainly benefit the adults, while some others thought there could be some lessons in the study for children to learn as well. Leon’s[N-4HES-2] statement, ‘I think if they publish it, everyone can use it’ highlights the importance of the accessibility of the research findings. When children were responding to the questions regarding the benefits of the current research, there was an emphasis on the fact that the community outside the school should also know about international children’s situation and their needs.

6.9. Pseudonyms

Although the concepts of anonymity was explained before the administration of the questionnaires and also revisited throughout the data collection, still some of the participants were not convinced that the data collection could be done anonymously. Extract 142 is an example, illustrating the participants’ uncertainty about the anonymity of their input. This extract is part of the discussion about the questionnaire, when Abi[N-4HES-2] and Leon[N-4HES-2] share their discomfort about sharing their personal information.

Extract 142.

Line	Speaker	Translation
78	Researcher	Why weren't you comfortable to answer this question? [referring to Q6]
79	Abi[N-4HES-2]	It was a personal question.
80	Researcher	That's fine. It's OK to leave the questions you don't like to answer blank. And also if you don't write your name on the questionnaire, no one will realize that you've filled it out, so no one would know those are yours answers
90	Leon[N-4HES-2]	You can find out from our handwriting.

Although it was printed on the questionnaire and also mentioned several times during the administration of the questionnaire that the participants' input was very valuable for the research, in Extract 143 Leon[N-4HES-2] reveals that he was not honest in answering some of the questions in the questionnaire.

Extract 143.

Line	Speaker	Translation
130	Leon[N-4HES-2]	Like, I had an idea, but I couldn't say it, so I lied about it.
131	All	<i>(Laughter)</i>
132	Researcher	Well, it's good that you mentioned this... why didn't you want to tell your initial idea?
133	Leon[N-4HES-2]	Well.
134	Researcher	Did you think I could recognize your response?
135	Leon[N-4HES-2]	I wrote my name [on the questionnaire] anyway
136	Researcher	Well you had the option not to write your name.
137	Leon[N-4HES-2]	Whatever.
138	Researcher	Anyway, it's better not to lie in the questionnaire. Because it's not meant to collect fake results. You can choose not to answer the questions though.

Leon[N-4HES-2] explains that he preferred to have his name on the questionnaire, and then being aware of the fact that his responses would be identified, he decided to provide data that was not entirely honest. This shows that some children are unsure about anonymity, and this might be due to the traditional educational culture, or maybe due to their unfamiliarity with the research process. This highlights the importance of revisiting the research ground rules when researching with young people, especially

when they are not familiar with the concept of research. Children are rarely given the voice to talk about their views; therefore, they may not react responsibly when they are given the opportunity to express themselves. It is also important to acknowledge that when researching in contexts with traditional educational culture, the researcher may face such difficulties. After all, as the researcher I can only encourage the participants to be honest with themselves and the researcher when they volunteer to participate in the research and hope they would provide truthful responses.

I assume that only after seeing the concrete examples of the data, the children fully understood what pseudonym means. In Extract 144, line 169, Holly[T-4INTL-2] is asking about the concept of pseudonyms.

Extract 144.

Line	Speaker	Original text
168	Lucy[T-6INTL-2]	w-what is going to happen to this?
169	Holly[T-4INTL-2]	This aren't their real names?
170	Researcher	These are not their real names. These are the names that I put here so that nobody can recognize them, like the names that you gave me last time I came here. I will use those name, like Sabrina, DonDon...
171	Lili[T-5INTL-2]	Lili
172	Lucy[T-6INTL-2]	Lucy

Since this was a new and unfamiliar practice for the children, some of the participants did not fully comprehend why they had to choose a new name for themselves despite my explanation in the beginning of the group interviews. This was revealed during the follow-up sessions. Extract 145 which is part of my conversation with Bloom[N-4MOB-2] during the follow-up session illustrates this miscomprehension. Here, Bloom[N-4MOB-2] is explaining what the researcher did in the group interview.

Extract 145.

Line	Speaker	Translation
75	Bloom[N-4MOB-2]	They chose new names for themselves... I was Bloom, she was Isabel, she was Nilou, and .. you?

76	Sara[N-5MOB-2]	Sara
77	Researcher	So what did I say that you chose new names?
78	Bloom[N-4MOB-2]	You said.. if you want to go there[Abaloo boo] you have to change your names? I don't remember well.. you just said change your names.

After the participants learnt about the format of the final representation of the data, and saw the extracts of their own contributions linked to different names, it was clearer to them why pseudonyms were used in the research and what the concept of anonymity meant (see Extract 146).

Extract 146.

Line	Speaker	Translation
216	Bloom[N-4MOB-2]	And why did I ask for those names [pseudonyms]?
217	All	So that no one figures out[these are our comments]
218	Sara[N-5MOB-2]	Will you change your own name too?
219	Researcher	No, I will put 'researcher' instead.

This shows that it is not easy for children to understand the different elements of a research project without seeing it in practice. That is why it is important to go back to the child-participants and share the findings of the study with them. In this way, they would understand the research process better.

6.10. Summary

The third phase of this research was designed to fulfil the ethical concerns regarding research with children. Believing that it is the child-participants' right to be informed about the outcome of the research project, the follow-up sessions were conducted to share the initial findings of the research with the participants. The children's reactions to these sessions revealed that despite the explanations and clarification provided in the beginning and throughout the project about the aims and process of the research, children did not fully understand what this study was about and how they were contributing to it. The follow-up sessions provided an overview about children's

developing views regarding the research process. It also increased children's awareness about the research in general and their role in it. As Bloom's[N-4MOB-2] statement, 'But we've never seen what we did today before' illustrates this was a new experience for children.

Revisiting the participants after the initial analysis also was helpful in validating the researchers' interpretation of the data. Bergmark and Kostenius (2009) explain that a follow-up meeting with the participating children can give researchers first-hand validation and increase the understandings of the children's experiences.

Finally, participants stated that the questionnaire and the group interview helped them to learn more about their own feelings, and the discussions promoted their understanding of immigration.

Chapter 7

Discussion

7.1. Introduction

This study was an attempt to explore how students educated at primary level in Iran make sense of issues such as intercultural interactions and adjustment processes, with the aim of understanding their current levels of awareness. The following were the research questions in this study:

1. How do Iranian children make sense of /understand cross-cultural interactions and adjustment processes?

While the first research question was designed to guide the investigation. The second question emerged during the data collection process; this ‘meta question’ addresses the methodological challenges and advantages of using innovative participatory tools.

2. What are the advantages and limitations of using innovative participatory research methodologies with children in the given context?

This study consisted of three main phases:

- Phase 1: In the development of the research instruments, the content, structure and format of the research tools were negotiated with three children (10 to 12 years of age) through variety of activities.
- Phase 2: The data for this research were collected via both questionnaire and group interviews. The data collection began by the distribution of a questionnaire amongst 294 students (aged 10-12) in five private primary schools in Tehran. This ‘child-friendly’ questionnaire was used to gain insights

into the broad characteristics of a large number of children. To obtain more in-depth data, five semi-structured group interviews were carried out with 27 students who were also respondents of the questionnaire (4-6 students in each interview).

- Phase 3: Four months after the completion of phase 2, the follow-up sessions were organized to share the initial findings with the interview participants. This was motivated by the ethical concern that it is the children's right to be informed about the results of the research (Pinter and Zandian 2015).

The findings related to each phase are discussed in Chapters 4, 5, and 6. In this chapter, I discuss the findings in relation to previous studies and with respect to the contributions of this study to the methodological procedures for understanding children's perception of intercultural experiences. In this chapter, first I explain the main emerging themes from the data in the light of the literature, illustrating Iranian children's understandings of concepts such as intercultural encounters and adjustment. 'Ambivalent feelings', 'Schooling', 'Friendship', and 'Language' are the main themes studied in here, because they were dominant themes throughout the data and fit into different stages of Anderson's Model of adaptation which was the framework of this study.

Then, I discuss the ethical and methodological issues in relation to the existing literature on research with children, and discuss the advantages and limitations of using innovative participatory research methodologies. This part focuses on the power relations between adult researchers and child-participants, engagement of children in different stages of the research, and local ethical considerations in childhood research. Then, in the next chapter I make some practical recommendations based on this work and provide a summary of the contributions of this study to the field.

7.2. Summary of the Findings

The primary aim of this study was to explore how children who are living and being educated at the primary level in Iran make sense of concepts such as intercultural interaction and adjustment processes. To my knowledge, no study has explored this issue with this age group, and certainly not in Iran. The second phase of this study mainly aimed to answer this question. With respect to the analysis of the questionnaire, the descriptive statistics (e.g. percentage) are used for quantitative representation of the findings. The simple analysis of the quantitative data is supported by the qualitative analysis of the open-comment fields. The findings from the questionnaire were fed into the design of the participatory activities in group interviews. Hybrid thematic analysis (inductive and deductive analysis) was the method used for analysing the interview data.

In this section, I bring together the data from the questionnaires and the interviews, and explain the main findings in relation to the existing literature on cross-cultural adjustment. According to the findings from both of these research instruments, schooling, friendship, and language were found to be the key influential elements in children's understanding of intercultural interaction and adjustment. In addition, the data revealed that children had mixed feelings with respect to any future intercultural encounters. In the following sections, I will discuss each of these elements in the light of the related literature, and illustrate the relation between the findings of the two research instruments.

7.2.1. Ambivalent Feelings

The findings from both the questionnaires and the interviews show that children had mixed feelings about experiencing intercultural encounters. With respect to the findings in the questionnaire, this was mainly evident in the open responses to question

1 which aimed to investigate their feelings about the imagined intercultural encounter. Similarly, interview participants repeatedly expressed their mixed feelings. Statements such as ‘Miss, we want to and don’t want to at the same time, Abi[N-4HES-1]’ illustrate children’s ambivalent feelings with respect to experiencing intercultural encounters (see 5.4.1). In this regard Anderson (1994:309) explains that ‘the sojourner newly arrived in an unfamiliar culture may feel a mixture of opposing emotions and a blend of positive and negative attitudes to the sojourn’. This is something natural which any sojourner may experience during the early stages of transition. What made children’s mixed feelings exceptional was that while many of the participants expressed excitements about interacting with people from different cultural backgrounds, they showed strong negative attitudes towards certain nationalities. This was evident in the findings from both the questionnaires and the interviews. For instance, one of the questionnaire respondents expressed her curiosity about experiencing sojourn by selecting the second MC item in question 1 in the questionnaire (see 4.2.1.1.). The same respondent stated her unwillingness to host a newcomer in her class in questions 14 and 14b (see 4.2.2.1 and 4.2.2.3), and showed her negative attitudes about Afghans in question 12a when stating ‘well, I can be friend with the Afghans but I don't like Afghans’ (see 4.2.1.12). Participants also showed ambivalent feelings in the interviews (see Extract 54 in 5.4.7).

Afghanistan is located in north east of Iran, and has 945 km common border with Iran. The two neighbouring countries have very similar language, religion and climate. In 1979, Iran initially adopted a relatively open-door policy about refugees; consequently, Afghans refugees were permitted to integrate into Iranian society. However, over time and due to Iran’s political and economic problems, this policy changed into one that

was based on an apparent unwillingness to take on more refugees (Rajaei 2000). Despite the voluntary return of hundreds of thousands of refugees to their countries of origin during the past decade, Iran still remains a host to Afghan refugees, one of the world's largest and most protracted refugee populations. The main populations of concern to United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) in 2015 in Iran were Afghan refugees (UNHCR 2015). The current refugee policy in Iran mostly focuses on prevention and repatriation, and the society, in general, shows reluctance about the integration of the refugees. The presence of the large numbers of Afghan refugees for a long period of time in Iran could be the reason for the existing social and political resentments against this ethnic group (Rajaei 2000). Children are also part of the same society and are naturally influenced by it. It seems that the participants of this study were picking up this negative discourse against Afghans from the media and their homes. These findings add to our better understanding this issue which indeed needs more attention.

When children were sharing thoughts about the imaginary sojourn experiences, they expressed concerns about the possible negative reactions of the members of the host society (4.2.1.13; 5.4.4.1), they also acknowledged that the lack of environmental support and negative reaction of the host-nationals could jeopardise the adjustment process (5.5.2.1.3). At the same time, they expressed their negative attitudes towards the imaginary visitors to their own context (4.2.2; 5.4.7). For example, in the questionnaire, in response to question 1, Julia[T-6MAH-1] expressed her excitement about having interactions with new people; but in questions 14 and 14a she showed reluctance in interacting with a newcomer in her school. It was also evident from her statement 'It's important what kind of person comes here. I don't like it if she is one of those spoiled ones who cry whenever you say

something to them... I prefer someone who is more like me' in the interview that she was not entirely positive about having a newcomer to her class.

It is natural to have mixed feelings about interacting with people from different cultural backgrounds when living in an unfamiliar sociocultural context (Anderson 1994; Ward et al 2001). What was especially interesting about this data set is that when the participants were thinking of themselves as potential sojourners, they acknowledged the possible challenges they may face due to the negative reaction of the host-nationals (4.2.1 and 5.5.2.1), and still when thinking of themselves as members of the home society, many of them did not appreciate the possible challenges a newcomer may have due to their negative reactions. For example, Milad[N-6HES-1], who in the Hopes-&-Worries activity, expressed his concerns about attending the school in the new context due to the possible unfriendly environment of the new school, later in the group interview expressed his reluctance to have a sojourner sitting next to him in the class.

Bennett (1979:418) cited in DeTurk (2001:276) defines empathy as 'the imaginative, intellectual and emotional participation in another person's experience'. Broome (1991) brings to our attention particular situational conditions and argues that all interpretations are context-dependant. This emphasizes the relational aspect of empathy. Although the findings of this study indicate that children were able to anticipate the possible challenges they might have had during an imagined sojourn; they failed to show appreciation for the same challenges a newcomer might have had in the similar context. This might be due to the primary school children's inherently egocentric nature, and affected by the participants' socially, psychologically, and cognitively developmental level (Oliver 1998). For understanding others' struggles, a particular stage of consciousness is required, which might have been beyond children's

level of social consciousness (DeTurk 2001). Moreover, it is important to take into consideration the dynamic of power in relation to empathy across cultures or social groups (Miller 1992 cited in DeTurk 2001). In this study, it seems that children struggled to show empathy with someone from a minority group, influenced by the existing social structure which identifies the host-nationals as those with social power. These findings highlight the importance of raising empathy with and respect for ethnic minorities, and underline the need for intercultural education in this context.

7.2.2. Schooling

Children believed that the new school was one of the key elements in cross-cultural adjustment. In line with this, a longitudinal study about immigrant students with particular focus on schooling contexts, argue that one of the key factors in children's adaptation process is the quality of their schools (Suarez-Orozco, C. 2005). Although the educational context can be also part of the experience of the adult sojourners, the participants of this study were specifically referring to primary and secondary schools.

In the questionnaires, the 'new school' was selected as the least desirable aspect of the imaginary transition by many respondents (see 4.2.1.3). The discussion in the interviews revealed that not being accepted due to their nationality or background (being Iranian) was one of the concerns of the participants about going to the new school (see 5.4.4.1). Racism is recognized to be a common occurrence in the lives of many minority children (Pachter et al. 2010). Kostenius and Ohrling (2006) explored schoolchildren's well-being from their own perspective, and they also found that being accepted for the person they was as a decisive factor in children's well-being. Discriminative behaviour is categorized as bullying and certain factors such as lacking close friends at school and being from a different racial or ethnic group to the majority, which are usually characteristics of sojourners, increase the chance of getting bullied

at school (Department of Education 1994; Smith and Shu 2000). In line with this, a study of bullying in primary school children in England and Germany found evidence of a significant but weak association of ethnic background with bullying (Wolke, Woods, Bloomfield, and Karstadt 2001). In general, studies around the world show that bullying behaviour is widespread at primary school age (Smith and Brain 2000), specifically between grades 4 to 6 (Greeff and Grobler 2013), and victimisation can increase health problems at this age (Fekkes et al cited in Santrock 2007; Smith and Brain 2000; Wolke, Woods, Stanford, and Schultz 2001), as well as more loneliness and difficulty in making friends (Nansel et al 2001 cited in Santrock 2007).

The participants believed that other factors (e.g. linguistic difference and unfamiliarity with the educational expectations) may also lead to their low academic performance; consequently create educational problems during their sojourn (see 5.5.1). With respect to language difficulty, Bhattacharya (2000) argued that a relatively low level of proficiency in English was found to be a critical factor in low achievement and school failure amongst South Asian children who immigrated to the United States. Levels and Dronkers (2008) who investigated the educational performance of native and immigrant children from various countries of origin also pointed to the fact that the immigrants' mother tongue is often different from the language of the destination, and argued that this can have negative influence on the scholastic abilities of the immigrant students. They also referred to the influential role of the country of destination, as some countries of destination are better equipped to deal with immigration than others (Levels and Dronkers 2008). Briggs et al. (2008) report that the difference between cultures of home and school was one possible reason for the lower achievement of the minority students. Moreover, the absence of relevance between the materials offered at schools and the context of the ethnic minority students

can lessen these students' interest in the topic, and accordingly decrease their involvement with the subject, which can result in their lower academic performance (Lewis et al. 2008).

Not knowing anybody and being alone was another reason for children's feelings of unease about going to school in the new context. In line with the findings of this study, being recognized and included in a group were identified as effective factors in schoolchildren's well-being (Kostenius and Ohrling 2006). Studies show that children have preference in friendships and casual contacts with others of the similar ethnic background. The exclusive approach in social networking based on children's ethnicities can have strong negative effects on ethnic minorities (Fortuin et al. 2014). Studies also indicate a possible link between children's sociometric status (i.e. their popularity amongst their classmates) and their school adjustment and academic achievement (Fortuin et al. 2014; Tuma and Hallinan 1979; Wentzel and Asher 1995). Similarly, in a longitudinal study, six-grade students with no friend had lower grades and were more emotionally distressed compared to their counterparts who had friends. Two years later, those students who did not have any friends in their sixth grade were still more emotionally distressed (Wentzel et al. 2004).

In this study, children referred to the academic achievement as a strategy to facilitate social interaction at schools (4.2.1.8). In line with this, Levels and Dronkers (2008:1405) argue that 'education has long been regarded as the most important means of social advancement for immigrant families'. The new school was also selected as the main source of social networking (4.2.1.7). In line with the findings, Fortuin et al. (2014) highlight the important role of schools in developing positive relationships amongst students.

Some of the interview participants were enthusiastic about the idea of going to a new school, and shared their high expectations of the new educational contexts. They believed that having a better life should be the main reason for emigration; and to them, one of the defining factors of a higher life standard was the educational quality and facilities (e.g. teaching quality, ICT, etc.) in the new contexts. In many cases, people migrate to actualize new lifestyle standards (Suarez-Orozco, M. 2005). For the participants of this study, the quality of the educational contexts was one of the fundamental factors in defining life standards (see 5.4.2.1.1.).

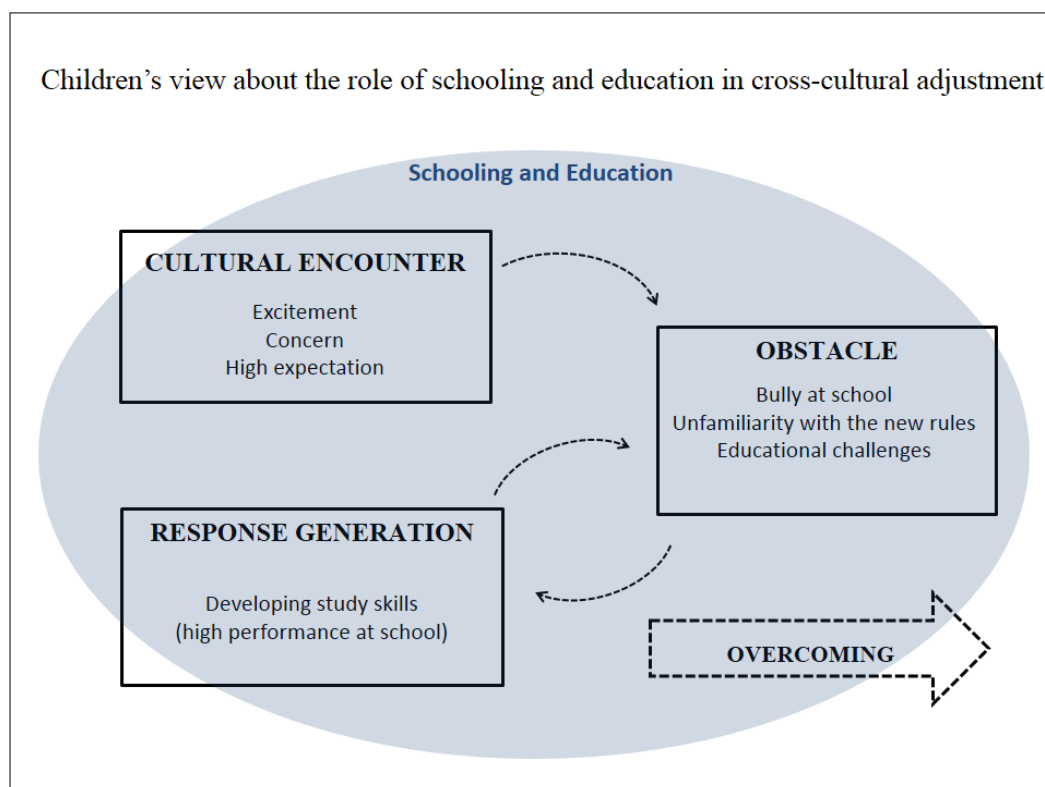
In addition to the fact that the participants of this study were schoolchildren, and obviously schooling played an important role in their lives, the parental expectations in this regard might have influenced children's educational expectations. Studies show that immigrant parents believe that their children can secure a good life through education (Li 2001). A study of the educational expectations of Chinese immigrant parents in Canada indicate that one of the influential factors in shaping the parents' high educational expectation is their desire for a better life for their children. This study shows that 'parents viewed education as a weapon against racism' (Li 2001:491).

Some studies argue that the educational success can facilitate the instrumental mobility for the immigrant children (Pinter 2011; Suarez-Orozco, C. 2005). However, it does not necessarily guarantee their social and psychological well-being (Qin et al. 2008). Peers have direct influence on each other's school attitudes and performance (Ream and Rumberger 2008). As it was mentioned earlier, the findings indicate that for many students the educational achievement was assumed as a strategy to make new friends (4.2.1.8; 5.3.1.2.4); However, some of the interview participants explicitly disagreed with this argument and explained that academic achievements may even trigger jealousy amongst other students and result in student's isolation (see 5.3.1.2.4).

In summary, the findings of this study contribute to our better understanding of children's view with respect to schooling and education in a new context. This can have implication for sojourn families and schools that are hosting sojourn children.

Figure 20 is a visual created based on the data about schooling and education. This figure shows the occurrence of the theme 'schooling and education' in this study with reference to the stages of adaptation in Anderson's Model. This visual presentation shows how school and school performance were perceived by the participants, and where these factors stand in relation to Anderson's model.

Figure 20. Schooling and education in relation to Cross-cultural adaptation model



With respect to the 'cultural encounter' stage in Anderson's model, the theme 'Schooling' emerged as part of children's excitement about the new experience. It was also their concern, because of the academic and social challenges they anticipated to have. The new education context was a decisive element in defining children's high expectations of the life in the new place. With respect to the 'obstacle' stage,

unfamiliarity with the new rules and possible educational challenges were emerging elements which seemed likely to jeopardize children's adjustment. In addition, becoming the victims of bullying at the school was referred to as a possible obstacle, highlighting sojourners' lack environmental support. With respect to the 'response generation' stage, 'high performance at school' emerged as part of the active coping strategies such as developing study skills.

With reference to Anderson's model, the findings indicate that for children, schooling was an influential element in the 'cultural encounter', 'obstacle', and 'response generation' stages. Although 'academic satisfaction' and 'intensify learning' were pointed out in Anderson's Model, the strong emphasis on schooling and school performance in this data set seems to be unique to children due to the fact that they spend a considerable portion of their time at school. Hence, these findings contribute to the development of this model in a way that it includes children.

7.2.3. Friendship

Interpersonal interaction, particularly friendship, was the other central element in the children's viewpoints about the imaginary transition. According to the findings from the questionnaire, the majority of the respondents (67% in Question 1 and 77% in Question 9) expressed their willingness to establish intercultural friendships, and/or experience intercultural interactions (see 4.2.1.1. and 4.2.1.9). Similarly in the interviews, children shared their excitement about making new friends and meeting new people (see Section 5.4.2). In this regard, Gallagher (2013:59) explains that 'it is the internal drive that pushes the individual away from a purely co-ethnic environment and into the host society and culture'.

On the other hand, when children were thinking about the imaginary sojourn experience, many expressed their concerns about separation from friends and loneliness in the new context (see 4.2.1.1 and 5.5.2.1.2). Peer and friendship relations become very important to primary school children (Santrock 2007). Brein and David (1971:217) explain that a sojourner 'is at the point where he is in most need of satisfactory relationships with others, yet, he lacks the social tools or means to bring these about'. In line with this claim, the findings from both interviews and the questionnaire indicate that the lack of friendship bonds and the absence of social support were named as the possible obstacles in the (imagined) adjustment process (See 4.2.1.13 and 5.5.2.1.2). Hartup (2000) cited in Santrock (2007:480) explains that 'transition, such as moving from elementary to middle school, are negotiated more competently by children who have friends than by those who don't'. A study which described and developed an understanding of schoolchildren's health and well-being from their own perspective also indicates that for children, experiencing togetherness was an influential element in feeling good. Togetherness is understood by children as 'having someone to whom children felt close' (Kostenius and Ohrling 2006:228). For the child-participants in Kostenius and Ohrling's (2006) study, togetherness was not only limited to friendship with human beings only; but also to pets and animals. This is in line with the findings of the present research when children mentioned having pets as the replacement for the missing social supports (see 5.6.3.1.).

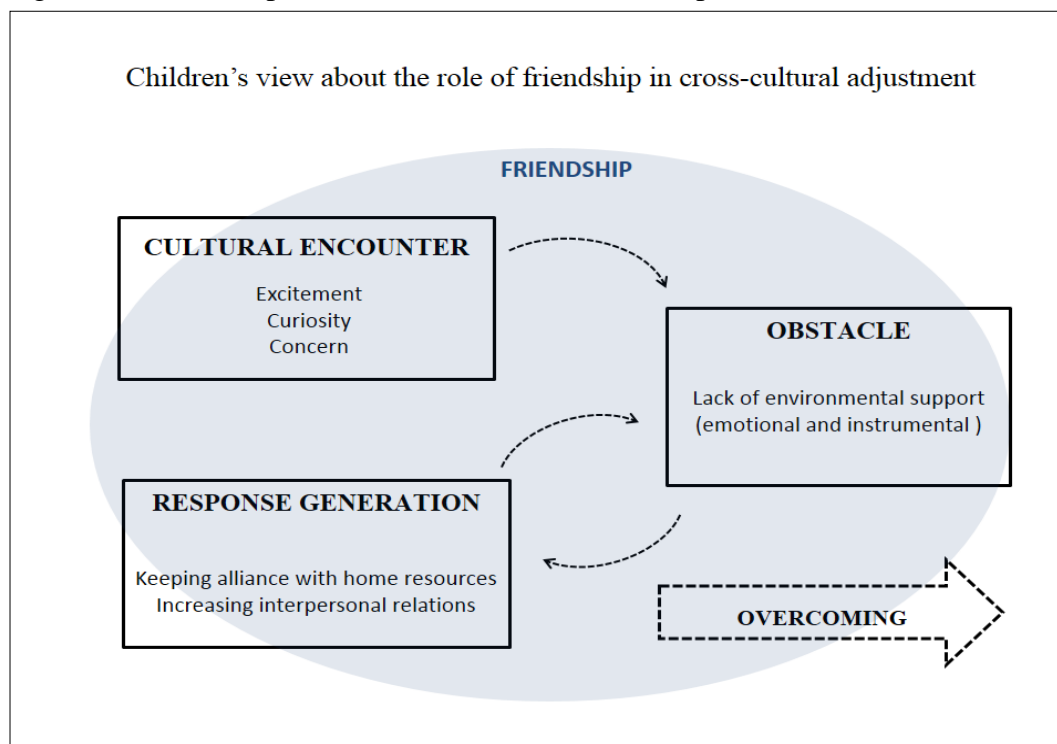
Children referred to friends as a source of social support, and recommended establishing friendship relations as a coping strategy (4.2.2, Question 16; 5.6.1 and 5.6.2). Anderson (1994) also refers to the support of the peers as one of the main factors in the obstacle-coping loop. In line with the findings of this study, Fortuin et al. (2014:57) state that 'peer relationships serve as a source of social and emotional

support, and as a context for learning and practicing social, cognitive and language skills'. Similarly, in this study, home social resources were referred to as sources of emotional and instrumental support (5.6.2.1), and alliance with the members of the home country was referred to as a strategy to reduce the stress and challenges of unfamiliarity with the new language (5.6.2.1; 5.6.2.2; 4.2.1; 4.2.2). In line with this, Bochner et al. (1977) state that a personal bond with the co-nationals who are in the similar situation usually provides the emotional support and affirmation of the culture of the origin.

Friendship with the members of the host society was mostly suggested because of the possible instrumental support they could provide (e.g. providing local information and helping in learning the new language). In line with this, Bochner et al. (1977) argue that networks with the host-nationals provide instrumental support and facilitation of academic and professional aspirations. The literature also suggests that the formation of social ties with members of the host culture can facilitate the adjustment in a new context (Church 1982; Ying and Liese 1994).

Figure 21 is a visual created based on the data about the friendship. This figure shows the occurrence of the theme 'friendship' in this study with reference to the stages of adaptation in Anderson's model. This visual presentation shows how the role of 'friendship' was perceived by the participants, and where this influential factor stands in relation to Anderson's model.

Figure 21. Friendship in relation to Cross-cultural adaptation model



With respect to the ‘cultural encounter’ stage in Anderson’s model, the theme ‘friendship’ emerged as part of children’s excitement and curiosity about interacting with people from different cultural backgrounds. This also emerged as part of their concerns. They were worried about the reluctance of the members of the host society to become their friends. As part of the ‘obstacle’ stage, failing to make new friends, and being apart from the old friends emerged as part of the general theme ‘the lack social support’ in the new context. With respect to the ‘response generation’ stage, the theme ‘friendship’ emerged as part of the coping strategies, such as increasing interpersonal relationship and replacing the missing environmental support. These findings add to our better understanding of the role of friendship bonds and interpersonal relations in children’s life.

7.2.4. Language

Language was another key element in the findings which was repeatedly reoccurring in the interviews and the questionnaire responses. According to the interview findings,

for some of the participants, learning a new language was one exciting aspect of moving to a new sociolinguistic context (5.4.6.3), at the same time linguistic unfamiliarity was one of the main concerns for many of the participants (5.4.1). In this regard, Gallagher (2013) mentions that lack of linguistic proficiency can increase the uncertainty and ambiguity, and consequently create anxiety and stress during the sojourn experience.

The lack of ability to interact in a new language was selected by many as a possible reason for sojourners' isolation (4.2.1.13); while only 12 per cent of the questionnaire respondents referred to 'not knowing the new language' as the most unpleasant aspect of sojourn (4.2.1.3). It should be noted that lack of linguistic facility might be one of the causes of isolation, but this does not mean it is necessarily in itself an unpleasant aspect of the sojourn experience. During the interviews it was also mentioned that the linguistic challenges children anticipated having created concerns about attending the school in the new context. The participants believed that not knowing the new language could hinder their social interactions and educational achievements. In line with this, Brein and David (1971:217) explain that a sojourner 'soon learns that his elementary knowledge of the host language is no longer adequate enough to cope with the increasing complexities of social communication'. Proficiency in the local language is particularly important within the acculturation process (Gallagher 2013). According to Anderson's model (1994), not knowing the local language can become an obstacle during the sojourn. However, studies that distinguish between psychological and sociocultural adjustment have reported mixed results in this regard (see Aronowitz 1984; Ward and Kennedy 1993; Ward et al. 2001).

The findings from both interviews (5.5.1.1; 5.3.1.2.1) and the questionnaires (4.2.1; 4.2.2) indicate that the children were aware of the critical role of linguistic proficiency

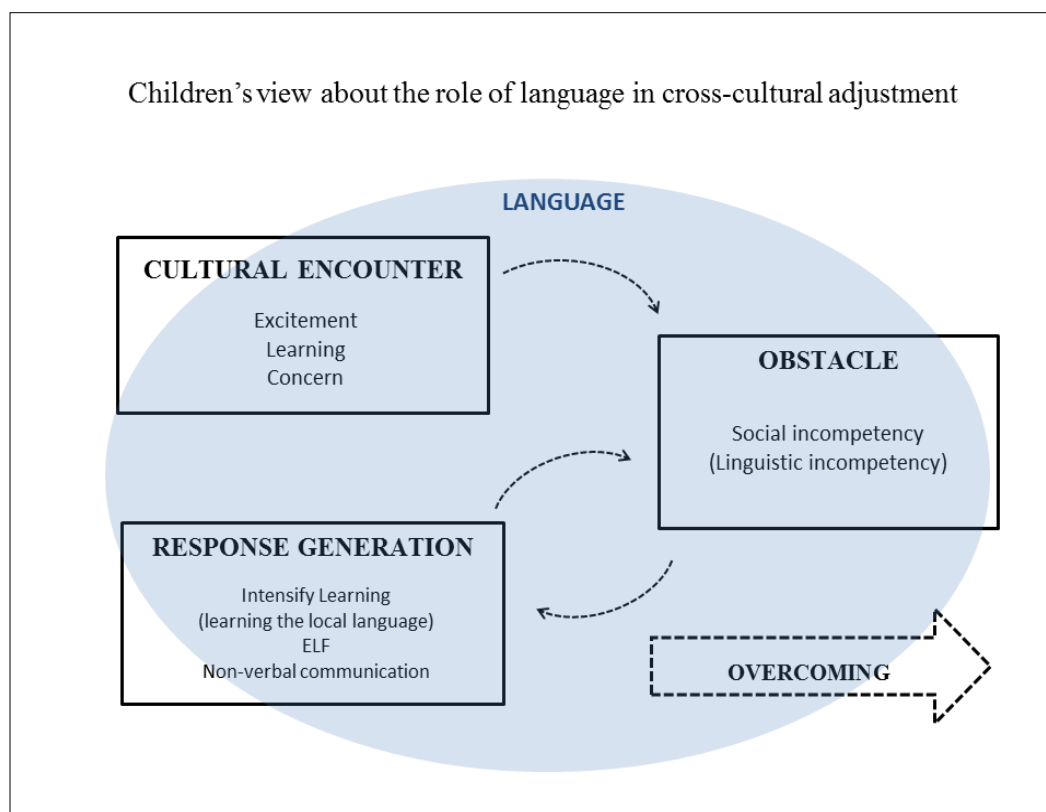
in experiencing a smooth adjustment, and suggested various strategies to improve their linguistic ability. One of the dominant strategies was interaction with members of the host society (5.6.1.1; 4.2.1.12). Similar to the findings of this study, Bochner et al. (1977), who investigated the friendship patterns in overseas university students, referred to the common instrumental function of a network with host-nationals. According to Bochner et al. (1977), interaction with the members of the host society is initially task-oriented which might develop into friendship in the longer term. In this regard, (Gallagher 2013:69) explains that ‘sojourners who are more willing to use the L2 across social situations are less prone to the irksome daily events involved with living in a new culture’.

Although in this study the local language in the imaginary country of destination was not specified, children referred to English as an International Language which could be used as an alternative in the absence of shared L1(5.3.1.3; 4.2.1.12). This was not mentioned in Anderson’s model (1994). This might be due to the fact that it was only in the late 90s that the concept of English as an International Language emerged, and this was long after Anderson’s Model was suggested. Moreover, children’s views in this regard might have been influenced by their language teacher and/or family members who aimed to motivate them in learning English.

Non-verbal communication was another strategy which was suggested by the participants of this study. This was not mentioned in the Anderson model either. Children suggested drawing (5.4.1.4) and playing (e.g. games, sports, musical instruments) (5.4.5.2; 4.2.2) as means of communication in the absence of a shared language. It seems that communicating non-verbally is less challenging for children as they are likely to be less inhibited in this respect, and also can easily interact with each other through drawing and playing games.

Figure 22 is a visual created based on the data about the language. This figure shows the occurrence of the theme ‘language’ in this study with reference to the stages of adaptation in Anderson’s Model.

Figure 22. Language theme in relation to Cross-cultural adaptation model



This visual presentation shows how the role of ‘language’ was perceived by the participants, and where this important factor stands in relation to Anderson’s model. With respect to the ‘cultural encounter’ stage in Anderson’s model, the theme ‘language’ emerged as part of children’s excitement about the new experience, concerns about unfamiliarity with the local language and learning process during the sojourn experience. With respect to the ‘obstacle’ stage, unfamiliarity with local language emerged as part of the possible social incompetency which can problematize the sojourn journey. With respect to the ‘response generation’ stage, the theme ‘language’ emerged as part of the active coping strategies such as learning a new

language, using EIL, and non-verbal communication in the absence of mutual language. As it was mentioned earlier, 'EIL, and 'non-verbal communication' were not mentioned in Anderson's model. These findings highlight the contribution of the present study to the development of Anderson's model by incorporating children's views about the role of communication (verbal and non-verbal) and linguistic proficiency (local language and EIL) in the process of cross-cultural adjustment.

7.3. Boundaries of Child-focussed Research

In this study I also wanted to explore the boundaries of child-focussed research. The findings from the third phase of this study as well as the reflection on the process of the research assisted me in addressing the second research question, 'what are the advantages and limitations of using innovative participatory research methodologies with children in the given context?'

The United Nations Convention on the Right of the Child in 1989 highlighted children's right to be considered as individuals whose voice needs to be heard. Consequently, many researchers started seeing children as social actors who are able to talk about their experiences of and perspectives on the issues which concern them (Hood et al. 1996; James et al. 1998; Slepickova and Bartosova 2014). This focus has also led to an increasing interest in developing appropriate methods and methodological innovations to give voice to children (Greene and Hill 2005; Matthews et al. 1998; Morrow 1999). In this research, attempts were made to develop more 'inclusive' (Barker and Weller 2003) and child-centred methodologies.

The particular social context of adult-child relationships, especially the unequal power dynamics that constitute these relationships require researchers' reflexivity and awareness (Davis et al. 2000; James et al. 1998). England (1994:82) refers to

reflexivity as ‘the self-critical sympathetic introspection and the self-conscious analytical scrutiny of the self as researcher’, which according to Barker and Weller (2003:210) can help in ‘mapping the relations between researcher and researched and the impact this may have upon our work, reflexivity can be seen as central to the process of undertaking qualitative research (Atkinson et al. 2001; Rose 1997)’.

In this section, I present ideas, based on the practice in this project, about ethical considerations, engagement of children in the design of the research instruments, issues about the design and usage of the ‘child-friendly’ questionnaire, and the group interviews with participatory activities. I also discuss the findings and my own reflections on the data collection process in relation to previous studies. Finally, I will discuss the advantages of revisiting the child-participants to share the initial findings of the study with them and explore their post hoc interpretations about the research.

7.3.1. Rapport Building between Children and Researcher

The space in which research is undertaken has significant impact upon the research process and the data produced (Barker and Weller 2003). Considering that in this study, the data was collected in schools, establishing trusting relationships with the participants was especially important. Despite the existing power gap between the adult researcher and children, it is still possible to access children’s views via building a trusting relationship with them (Kuchah and Pinter 2012). Through building relationships and negotiating identities, the generational power asymmetries imposed by the society can be re-negotiated (Christensen 2004). In this regard, Alerby and Kostenius (2011:127) explain that,

[b]y recognizing the value of being heard the time and effort to personally meet the participating children before distributing the questionnaire may have great

effects on the children's motivation to participate wholeheartedly when completing the questionnaire. The children will then know that someone is interested in listening to their experiences and the time spent may render richer data material.

Having this in mind, before starting the data collection, I spent several breaks with the students to meet them, and show them that it is important for me to hear their views (see Chapter 3). Many of the notes on the margin of the questionnaire (see 7.4.2.), and their feedback at the end of the interviews (see Chapter 6) indicate children's positive attitudes towards me as the researcher and the study. This supports the literature highlighting the key role of rapport building between the researcher and the child-participants.

7.3.2. Engaging Children in Design of Child-friendly Research Instruments

The preparation sessions were ideal opportunities to obtain an insider's perspective from the children. In this regard, Kellet (2010a:195) explains that 'children are party to the subculture of childhood which gives them a unique "insider" perspective critical to our understanding of their worlds'. Negotiating with children about the content and format of the research instruments, encouraging active participation, and conducting the follow-up sessions were attempts to reduce the adult's interpretations of children's preferences and needs, and facilitate their engagement in the project in a more child-friendly setting.

Harwood (2010:6) argues that 'by considering how and why the child's "voice" is operationalised within methodological decisions and making those choices explicit, researchers can add to the ongoing procedural conversations about research with and alongside children'. Although this research was not led by children, in the way Kellett

(2010a) argues, inviting children to take part in the design of the research instruments was an attempt to engage them in the research process. According to Alerby and Kostenius (2011:127), ‘this opens up children’s abilities to act as participants, in accordance with Skelton’s (2008) argument regarding children’s entitlement’. Moreover, being part of the research design team was an opportunity for some children to gain insight into the research project, which might have stimulated interest in research amongst them. It should be noted that none of the participants in this section had the experience of having been part of a research project before, and the whole concept of helping an adult researcher designing research instruments was something very new to them. Hence, this study contributes to our ongoing attempt in pushing the boundaries of research with children by including them in the design of the research instruments.

Children’s comments in the preparation sessions helped me modify the wordings and layout of the questionnaire and participatory activities. In addition to negotiating about the research tools and setting, children also helped with preparing the instruments (e.g. writing the statements for the Diamond-Ranking activity, sticking the post-it, etc.). I did this on the assumption that the child-participants can establish better connection with the materials made by children of their own age, rather than work produced by adults. However, for a variety of reasons such as lack of access and time, it is impossible to extend the invitation to design the research tools to all. This was the case in this research; hence, only the materials for the participatory activities in INTL were prepared by children.

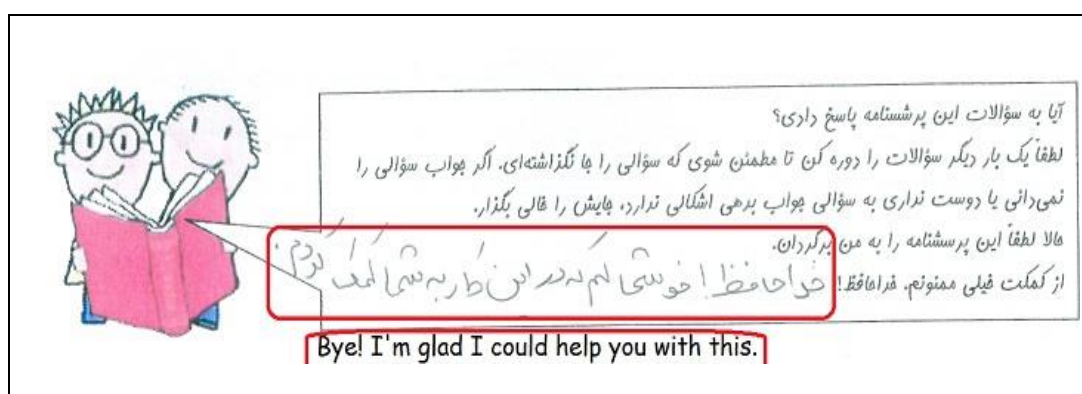
7.3.3. ‘Child-friendly’ Questionnaire

Questionnaires are a common method to describe specific characteristics of a large number of people (Dörnyei 2003; Matthews and Tucker 2000). Respondents can

anonymously complete a questionnaire which is one of the key advantages of this type of research instrument. However, some scholars argue that using questionnaires as a method to give voice to children's experiences has major limitations which require careful considerations (Alerby and Kostenius 2011). In this research project, I tried to recognize these limitations, and yet push the boundaries and explore how this innovative 'child-friendly' questionnaire was received by the child-participants.

In order to facilitate children's participation and give 'voice' to their experiences and views, several considerations were taken into account in the design of this 'child-friendly' questionnaire (see 3.5.1). In general, the number of completed questionnaires was very high, and only few questions were left blank. Alerby and Kostenius (2011) argue that the notes in the margins of the questionnaires can offer researchers an opportunity to reflect on the practicality of questionnaires. Comments such as the examples in Figure 23 indicate that many of the respondents established a good relationship with me as the researcher, and enjoyed completing the questionnaires.

Figure 23. Children's notes on the margins of the questionnaires





7.3.3.1. Respondents' Level of Literacy

The respondents' low level of literacy is an important issue which needs consideration in the design of questionnaires (Dörnyei 2003), particularly when the respondents are children. Writing long sentences can be an overwhelming task for young learners. That is why most of the questions in this questionnaire were in the format of MC items. However, MC items only offer limited range responses (Dörnyei 2003); hence, the 'other' category was inserted in almost all the questions, so that children could express themselves if the MC items did not represent their views. The frequency of the comments in the 'other' section was beyond my expectation. Many of the respondents used this section to express their feelings in detail or to add any other relevant information from their own perspectives (see Appendices 5 and 6).

As was mentioned earlier, the data collection was in Persian, the children's mother tongue, except in INTL. In this school, the data was collected in English, the mutual language in which the participants were more fluent in. It should be also noted that during the administration of the questionnaire it was repeatedly emphasised that comments with spelling and linguistic mistakes were perfectly acceptable, so that children's low level of literacy would not restrain them from writing down their comments.

7.3.3.2. Notes on the Margins

In addition to the comments in the 'other' section, to convey their message, children also commented and added notes next to some of the questions. This shows that they were actively engaged with this research instrument. Alerby and Kostenius (2011) argue that sometimes children try to share slightly more information or offer more clarification than what is asked for, and it is important to take these messages into consideration. Figure 24 is an example to illustrate this.

Figure 24. Example of notes on the margin of the questionnaire

فکر می‌کنی از چه چیزی کمتر از همه خوشت بیاید؟

تغییراتی که در زندگی‌ام به وجود می‌آید. ☐

یاد گرفتن زبان جدید. ☐

مدرسه جدید با همکلاسی‌هایی از کشورهای دیگر. ☒ اگر با دوست هم‌محلیم در آن وقت آخرین گزینه را انتخاب می‌کنم

غذا. ☐

موارد دیگر ☐

if I go there with my best friend, this won't be a problem! In that case, I would choose the last item.

Figure 24, illustrates a note on the margin of question 3. This question aimed to investigate the least pleasant aspect of children's imagined sojourn. The selected MC item is 'the new school' and the note next it says 'if I go there with my best friend, this won't be a problem! In that case, I would choose

the last time (food)'. This extra information on the margin provides a more personalized and relatively in-depth respond to this question, and shows respondent's engagement with the question.

The messages and marks next to the questions also signal that the pre-prepared answers did not fit exactly with the respondents' answer (Alerby and Kostenius 2011). This indicates the limitation of the questionnaire as a research tool to offer deep insight into an issue (Dörnyei 2003). Similarly, Matthews and Tucker (2000) refer to this as one of the disadvantages of written communication, which disempowers children from taking full control of the process.

The notes on the margin of the questionnaires in this study signal the respondents' active engagement. In other words, these notes illustrate the respondents' attempts to express their own voices despite the inherent restrictions of the questionnaires as the research tool. Alerby and Kostenius (2011:124) argue that 'the strict boundaries of a questionnaire allow no room for expression, leaving some things untold'. Although children's contributions in the construction of the questionnaire helped in getting closer to their lived experiences, some of the notes in the margin of this questionnaire indicate individuals' personal experiences or attitudes which questionnaires fail to capture. This extra information is important and needs to be included in the analysis of the questionnaire; however, usually these are not taken into account when the data are analysed in accordance with quantitative computer programmes (Alerby and Kostenius 2011). That is why in this study, in addition to the basic quantitative representation of the responses to each question, the notes on the margins, and comments in the 'other' sections were carefully considered and analysed qualitatively.

Alerby and Kostenius (2011) suggest that by engaging children in the construction of the questionnaire, there is a greater chance that the structure and prepared answers in a questionnaire fit better with the participants lived experiences. Consequently, it is less likely that we end up with unanswered questions. The findings from the questionnaire as well as the follow-up sessions revealed that the involvement of the children in the construction of the questionnaire can indeed reduce the mismatch between the children's feelings and the prepared responses.

7.3.3.3. Analysis of the Data

Questionnaires are usually self-completed; hence, there is always a chance that the questions be misread or misinterpreted by the respondents (Dörnyei 2003). To minimize the misinterpretation of the questions, I was present during the administration of the questionnaire in all five schools to provide the necessary clarifications, and answer questions. However, in general quantitative methods are not very sensitive in uncovering the reasons for a particular response (Dörnyei 2003), and are thus vulnerable to misinterpretations. Having this in mind, in some of the key questions, the respondents were encouraged to provide reasoning for their choices (see 3.5.1.2). The responses to these open-ended questions revealed noticeable differences in the initial objectives behind each MC item and the reasoning provided by the respondents. Table 22 illustrates examples in this regard. These examples are from responses to question 6a, in which children explained why they selected the MC item 'hotel' in response to question 6. Question 6 aimed to explore children's interest in having interaction with the larger society during the imagined sojourn.

Table 22. Example of responses to Q6a

Codes	Responses to Q6a
[T-6HES#010]	Because I want to live a bit better
[T-5MOB#013]	Because if I don't like a food in the hotel, I can order another one
[T-4HES#010]	Because I like to have breakfast, lunch and dinner in the hotel
[T-6MAH#018]	Because hotel is a nice place and is cheaper than a house.

The experience of staying in a hotel is quite different from living in the heart of the host community. The hotel guests are mainly cultural travellers from different places and the hotel staff are trained to interact with people who are often unfamiliar with the new context, and have limited cultural and linguistic knowledge of the new place. Hence, in this question, the MC item ‘hotel’ supposed to be representative of a more international environment; however, many of the respondents selected the hotel because of the luxury of life at the hotels and the readymade food rather than the international nature of this type of accommodation.



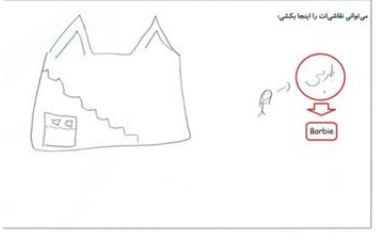

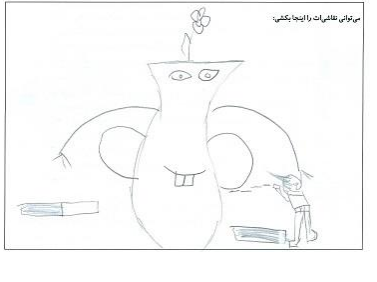

It should be noted that, although it is difficult to obtain deep insight into the respondents’ experiences and feelings via MC items, too many open-ended questions add complications to the analysis of the data, and can be challenging for the participants with limited linguistic abilities (Alerby and Kostenius 2011; Dörnyei 2003). However, in spite of the time consuming process of the qualitative analysis and codification of the large number of the responses to the open-ended questions and comments in the ‘other section’, the questionnaire data was enriched by such open-ended responses.

7.3.3.4. Analysis of the Drawings

In the design of this questionnaire, the main focus was to create a research instrument which pushes the inherent boundaries of a quantitative research tool and encourages active engagement of the child-participants in a fun and meaningful way. The use of drawings as an alternative/ addition to written responses facilitates transference of

information for respondents with a low level of literacy, and also introduces variety to the format of questions. However, drawings cannot be analysed quantitatively, and decoding the drawings without the written descriptions can be challenging. The table below illustrates some examples of the drawings in response to question 17 (see 4.2.2.6). In this question children were asked to suggest games to play an imaginary newcomer to their school who had no knowledge of the language of the host context. Children had the option to draw the games in addition to writing the name of the games. Table 23 illustrates a few examples of these drawing.

Table 23. Examples of drawings in Question 1

<p>a.</p> <p>17. تو کو فارسی بلد نیست. چه بازی‌هایی می‌توانی با او انجام دهی؟ بازی‌ها را نام ببر و یکی از بازی‌ها را توضیح بده. می‌توانی نقاشی یکی از بازی‌ها را نیز بکشی. (تو کو فارسی بلد نیست. چه بازی‌هایی می‌توانی با او انجام دهی؟ بازی‌ها را نام ببر و یکی از بازی‌ها را توضیح بده. می‌توانی نقاشی یکی از بازی‌ها را نیز بکشی. حساب بازیگر: در دستگیره و سبیل‌ال)</p> 	<p>17. تو کو فارسی بلد نیست. چه بازی‌هایی می‌توانی با او انجام دهی؟ بازی‌ها را نام ببر و یکی از بازی‌ها را توضیح بده. می‌توانی نقاشی یکی از بازی‌ها را نیز بکشی. (تو کو فارسی بلد نیست. چه بازی‌هایی می‌توانی با او انجام دهی؟ بازی‌ها را نام ببر و یکی از بازی‌ها را توضیح بده. می‌توانی نقاشی یکی از بازی‌ها را نیز بکشی. حساب بازیگر: در دستگیره و سبیل‌ال)</p> 
<p>b.</p> <p>17. تو کو فارسی بلد نیست. چه بازی‌هایی می‌توانی با او انجام دهی؟ بازی‌ها را نام ببر و یکی از بازی‌ها را توضیح بده. می‌توانی نقاشی یکی از بازی‌ها را نیز بکشی. (تو کو فارسی بلد نیست. چه بازی‌هایی می‌توانی با او انجام دهی؟ بازی‌ها را نام ببر و یکی از بازی‌ها را توضیح بده. می‌توانی نقاشی یکی از بازی‌ها را نیز بکشی. حساب بازیگر: در دستگیره و سبیل‌ال)</p> 	<p>17. CoCo can't understand the language you speak. What kind of games can you play with her? Name the games and describe one game briefly. You can also draw the picture of the game.</p> <p>potom</p> <p>You can draw the picture here.</p> 
<p>c.</p> <p>17. تو کو فارسی بلد نیست. چه بازی‌هایی می‌توانی با او انجام دهی؟ بازی‌ها را نام ببر و یکی از بازی‌ها را توضیح بده. می‌توانی نقاشی یکی از بازی‌ها را نیز بکشی. (تو کو فارسی بلد نیست. چه بازی‌هایی می‌توانی با او انجام دهی؟ بازی‌ها را نام ببر و یکی از بازی‌ها را توضیح بده. می‌توانی نقاشی یکی از بازی‌ها را نیز بکشی. حساب بازیگر: در دستگیره و سبیل‌ال)</p> 	<p>17. CoCo can't understand the language you speak. What kind of games can you play with her? Name the games and describe one game briefly. You can also draw the picture of the game.</p> <p>great animals</p> <p>You can draw the picture here.</p> 

The majority of the drawings were similar to the ones in category (a) which spoke for themselves even without the text. In some of the drawings, the text played a critical role in clarifying the content of drawings (b), and in a very few cases deciphering the content of the drawing was very challenging, especially without the written description (c). In order to clarify the meaning of the puzzling drawings, I revisited the schools and sought clarification from the children. The questionnaires were anonymous; however, they were classified based on the school and grades of the respondents. In each school and grade, the questionnaires were administered to one class only; thus, finding those few respondents with puzzling drawings was not impossible. However, in larger scale research this may not be feasible at all. That is why Sewell (2011) suggests the involvement of participants in the interpretation of the drawings in order to obtain more insightful analysis of the data.

7.3.3.5. Questionnaires or Tests

In designing the questionnaire, detailed considerations were made for making the layout very different from that of tests (see 5.3.1.2). It was also clarified on several occasions (in the consent form, during the administrations, on the front page of the questionnaire) that the questionnaire responses were not going to be judged or evaluated. Despite all these attempts, the evaluative practices were so deeply embedded in children's daily routine at the schools that many of them could not think of any other reasons for their participation (see 6.3). Children who never had the experience of participating in research are even more prone to having such misunderstandings; and it is important that researchers working with children acknowledge this. The brief verbal feedback at the end of the administration of the questionnaires and the more detailed discussions during the follow-up sessions clarified that most of the

respondents who initially had misinterpreted the questionnaire as a test, recognised its non-evaluative nature only afterwards, by reading the questions.

Kostenius and Ohrling (2006) argue that follow-up meetings with the participating children and sharing the main points of the findings can alleviate the issue of distrust. In line with this, in the follow-up session children realized that their participations were valued, and this strengthened their trust in the researcher and the research project. Hence, one of the contributions of this study is its attempt in pushing the boundaries of the questionnaire as a quantitative research instrument and developing trust in children about research by suggesting strategies such the follow-up session.

7.3.4. Group Interview with Participatory Activities

In the literature focusing on childhood research, there is a strong emphasis on the value of methods in which children produce data through practical activities, rather than simply talking or filling in surveys (Barker and Weller 2003; O’Kane 2000; Punch 2002). Qualitative methods tend to be more open-ended; therefore, they are more capable of capturing the richness of the participants’ experiences (Greene and Hogan 2005). Despite the considerations in this study to extend the questionnaire beyond the boundaries of the normal questionnaire, it was still a quantitative method, with some limitations. Considering this, group interviews were conducted to facilitate children’s voice to be heard, and to gain better understanding of their feelings and experiences in relation to intercultural interaction and adjustment. In line with this Alerby and Kostenius (2011) argue that connecting a quantitative method with a qualitative follow-up increases the chance to give voice to children’s experiences. In the following sections, some of advantages and disadvantages of group interviews with participatory activities are mentioned based on the findings of this study and in relation to previous research in this regard.

7.3.4.1. Empowering Children

“Participation” has become both an *aim* and a *tool* in an ethical quest towards “empowering” children. To this end, childhood researchers have experimented with a range of “child-friendly” methods, designed to make research “fun” and “relevant” to children’ (Gallacher and Gallacher 2008:501). When data is gathered exclusively via written communication, children are unable to control the process. This is one of the drawbacks of questionnaires or any written method of data collection (Matthews and Tucker 2000). Kostenius and Ohrling (2006:233) argue that ‘group discussions might alleviate the problem of children lacking control of the process, putting them in charge of what is important to share’. In other words, the participatory activities highlight children’s agencies and encourage their involvement. As a result, such interviews become an empowering experience for children (Matthews and Tucker 2000). In the process of participating in group talk, children have the opportunity to hear others’ ideas, and then, ‘clarify, defend, re-count and paraphrase their half-formed utterances’ (Kuchah and Pinter 2012:285). In this way, children build on each other’s ideas (Lewis 1992).

7.3.4.2. Visual Support for Discussion

Data collection methods should be sensitive to the ability of the participants (Dörnyei 2003; Matthews and Tucker 2000). Children should be involved through the organization of fun activities so that they feel free to express themselves (Lundy 2007). In this study, the participatory activities first engaged pairs with the topic, and then the variety of the responses children gave to the participatory activities initiated the discussion amongst the participants. Participatory activities also provide visual support to trigger discussions within the context of the focus group interviews (James et al. 1998; Johnson 2008; Kuchah and Pinter 2012; Matthews and Tucker 2000).

The generational power gap between the adult researcher and children raises challenges for interviews with children (Grover 2004; Houssart and Hilary 2011; Kuchah and Pinter 2012; Morrow and Richards). The group interviews accompanied with participatory activities can be less intimidating for children than individual interviews (Cohen et al. 2000), as the number of the child-participants overrides the number of the researcher(s), and to some extent reduces the existing power asymmetry. Moreover, the participatory activities in this study were designed for pair work, so that children had the opportunity to talk about the task with their peers. Children's comments in the follow-up interviews also show the popularity of the participatory activities. Hence, this study supports the literature in emphasising the use of visual support and pair activities in lessening the power imbalance and creating a fun and meaningful environment for children's participation in research.

7.3.4.3. Challenges of Group Interviews and Participatory Activities

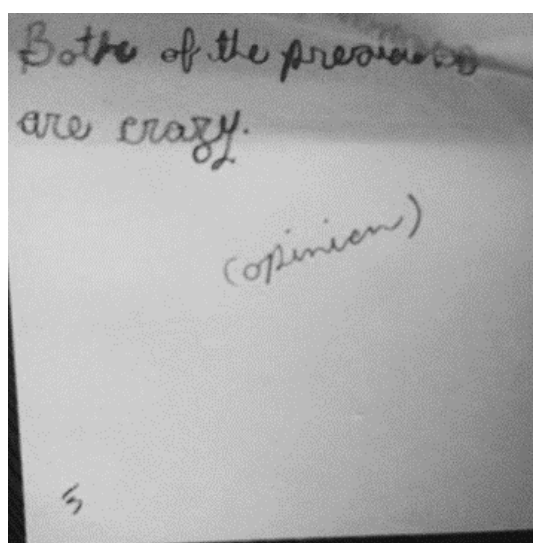
Although group interviews with participatory activities facilitate interaction with the child-participants, reduce the existing power gap between them, and create a child-centred environment, they also have certain drawbacks. In this section, I briefly explain the challenges I came across when I was conducting the group interviews and analysing the findings.

There is a high possibility that in the group interviews dominant and more confident participants talk more than the shy ones (Dörnyei 2007). This was particularly the case at KHER when I had to make sure that everyone gets a chance to talk because one of the participants was dominating the session (see 5.2.2). The dominant children may also influence others in a way that the shy participants feel less confident to express their opposing views. That is why I kept reminding children that different viewpoints

are welcomed. Also, pairing up children in the participatory activities would give them more confidence in the group discussions, as they first get a chance to discuss the topic with their peer and then represent it to the entire group. However, if children are not used to working in pairs/groups this can become a new challenge. In such cases, the ground rules of group work need to be explained and revisited during the activities.

Although in this study, I did not intend to focus on any sensitive matters, when children brought up the topic of ‘bullying’ at INTL, Patra[T-6INTL-1] refused to share her experience in this regard (see Extract 85). At the same interview, Lucy[T-6INTL-2] was reluctant to speak in front of others about her disapproval of the president of Iran and the country she used to sojourn before returning to Iran. Instead of speaking about this she wrote it on a post-it and showed it to me (see Picture 13).

Picture 13. Lucy’s note on the post-it



Such incidents show that children may be uncomfortable to talk about sensitive topics in front of other children. Sometimes, adult researchers may not see certain issues to be sensitive while children find them sensitive.

Another challenging aspect of group interviews is that children may say something to impress the other members of the group rather than expressing their true feelings or opinions. At HES, it seemed that Mr.Lee[T-5HES-1] tried to be different from the other members, particularly when he was insisting that it would be totally fine for him to travel independently (see Extract 61).

Transcribing the recording of group interviews and identifying each participant's voice are very challenging. Participants may not take turns when speaking, and their speech may overlap. This happened several times during the interviews despite my emphasis on turn taking. When children got engaged with the activities, it seemed that they could not wait for the other members to finish their statements. This might be also because in Iranian culture overlapping someone's talk is not assumed as rude as in some other cultures.

This study adds to the existing knowledge about child-centred research, by explaining the possible challenges in child-friendly research methodologies and suggesting strategies to push these boundaries.

7.3.5. Children's Interpretation of Research

In this study, every attempt was made to engage children with the research and allow their voices to be heard. From the beginning, children were involved in the construction of the research tools, and measures were taken to establish trusting relationship with the children and ensure their active participation during the data collection. Despite all these considerations, children still need to know that their contributions to the project are taken seriously; otherwise, they may refuse to engage with the study wholeheartedly (Alerby and Kostenius 2011). Giltlin et al. (1992) cited in Alerby and Kostenius (2011:127) note that 'one's voice can be silenced because no

one will listen, and at times silence can be, instead of an absence of voice, more a lack of an acceptable voice'. In addition to the fact that sharing the findings of the study with the child-participants is an attempt to show them that their contributions were important, revisiting the project with child-participants is also an ethical concern about children's right to see the outcome of the research they contributed to (Matthew and Tucker 2000; Pinter and Zandian 2015).

It is important to give feedback to the children shortly after the data collection, because children may forget what the project is about or lose their interest in the research as time passes (Matthews and Tucker 2000). Having considered this, four months after the data collection, I revisited the interview participants and shared with them some of the initial findings of the study in a child-friendly way (see Chapter 6). The follow-up session opened up a transformational space (Farrell 2005), and improved the children's understandings about research processes. Children commented on the research approach and tools, and shared their reflections about the findings. This session also created a dynamic space, in a way that children initiated discussions on certain aspects of the research process which were particularly interesting to children.

7.3.5.1. Children's Voices in Research

One of the main focuses of this study was to facilitate children's voices to be heard. However, 'before we can simply "give a voice" to children, we need to acknowledge that there are ambiguities involved in human communication, and that these ambiguities result from the "socialness" of human interaction, discourses and practices' (Komulainen 2007:13). Ritala-Kosinen (1994) cited in Matthews and Tucker (2000:309) argues that 'there is no authentic voice of the child waiting to be discovered, only different versions of childhood'. Komulainen (2007) sees the notion

of 'voice' as a multidimensional social construction, which is subject to change, because 'voices' demonstrate discourses, practices and contexts in which they occur.

The concept of children's voices is also closely related to the concept of power (Lundy 2007). The issues around the asymmetry of power relations between children and adult researchers, and the possible considerations to reduce this gap were discussed earlier. What is worth consideration is that in any encounter with an adult, children's comments are influenced by the other voices which have been appropriated from the previous discourse or social practice (Bakhtin 1986:94). It is important to include considerations of the dynamics of human communication and interaction in the analysis of children's 'voices' (Komulainen 2007), because children's utterances can be only partially theirs, and some of their statements might be the echo of the adults' voices, or the discourse which they may assume is expected of them (Kuchah and Pinter 2012; Pinter and Zandian 2015). In many cases, entirely child-centred research is an ideal rather than reality. In this regard Barker and Weller (2003:223) argue that,

[d]espite our attempts to place children at the centre of research, the research process is influenced by, and embedded within, both our own situations and positions as researchers, as well as the specific places in which we conduct research, and all the wider familial and institutional power relations within those spaces.

After all as researchers we need to acknowledge the adult mediation and construction of children's 'voices' (Komulainen 2007). In spite the fact that conducting an entirely child-centred research might be a seriously challenging task, being grounded and having reflexive awareness about the boundaries and limitations of research with

children is of great importance in this ongoing attempt to develop child-centred research (Barker and Weller 2003).

7.3.5.2. Children's Unsolicited Comments

One of the highlights of revisiting the child-participants was the abundant unsolicited comments and spontaneous questions I received from them. Kuchah and Pinter (2012:295) state that 'the unsolicited, raw and emotional comments are all examples which indicate that children [are] able to go beyond what the adult was asking'. 'Participation means taking part, which necessitates some predefined activity in which the participants can take part. However, children may (...) act in ways beyond the limits prescribed by "participatory" techniques' (Gallacher and Gallacher 2008:507). It is important to include such unexpected behaviour or comments as potential data (Gallacher and Gallacher 2008).

Most of the statements in the follow-up session were unexpected and emerged from children's amazement when I shared some initial findings with them in the format of interview transcripts (see 6.6). Children asked the researcher a series of spontaneous questions which were triggered by their enthusiasm and curiosity. The discussion enhanced their understanding about research in general, and their own role in it. This is one of the contributions of this study. Providing simplified samples and materials from research can assist the clarification for the purpose and process of the research project to the children in a more tangible way. The spontaneous questions coming from the children provided me with an opportunity to explain the aspects of the research project which interested children in a less abstract manner.

7.3.5.3. Children's Perceived Role in Research

Kuchah and Pinter (2012:284) argue that 'children are aware that adults are in control of all aspects of their lives, and this expectation will naturally extend to the research content and procedures as well'. The findings from the follow-up interviews supported this claim. Children expected that their voices would be represented only minimally (see 6.5). Their expectations and original conceptions about the way their voice would be represented were very similar to the findings from a smaller scale study with a similar methodological approach (see Pinter and Zandian 2015). The findings portray children's general assumption that the adult researcher's interpretation of their statements would automatically override what they have said. This indicates children's belief that the adult researcher would have control over their contributions to the research. Such assumptions signal 'an assumed lack of authority and expectation to hand over power and responsibility to the knowledgeable and competent adult' (Pinter and Zandian 2015:9).

Although in this study children were perceived as 'social actors' (Alderson 2008, Christensen and Prout 2001; Harwood 2010), and their active participation was the core of the research design, the findings indicate that children clearly considered themselves objects of the research rather than the active subjects. This also suggests their automatic assumption is that the adult representations must be more reliable and valuable than their words. It is important that researchers who work with children acknowledge this issue and encourage children to express their views and show them that their views are taken seriously (Lundy 2007). By revisiting the participants and sharing the findings with them, this study contributes to developing children's understanding of their own crucial role in childhood research.

7.3.5.4. Children's Self-confidence and Research

‘Often children are asked for their views and then not told what became of them; that is, whether they had any influence or not’ (Lundy 2007:938). The findings of this study indicate that sharing the research data with the participants and showing them that their contributions were taken seriously increase their sense of self-satisfaction and contribute to their empowerment, consequently boosting their confidence, particularly in shy and less expressive participants. It is important to include groups in the research who have little opportunity to express their ideas (Matthews and Tucker 2000), such as children who are less confident and those who usually remain in the shadow of the others. Mitra (2004) cited in Alerby and Kostenius (2011) add that providing opportunities for children to express themselves and be heard increases their sense of agency, belonging and competence. In this regard, Kostenius and Ohrling (2006) argue that even the interviews and the communication process in child-centred research projects can be an empowering experience for children. When children understand that their contributions to research are as valuable as those in the wider literature, they feel proud and important (Pinter and Zandian 2015), and this can lead into improvement in their sense of self-satisfaction and self-confidence.

Within this study, revisiting the children and informing them about the initial findings reassured them that they were not seen only as research informants. Along the same lines, scholars in the field argue that informing children about the outcome of the study shows them that they have been taken seriously and their contributions were considered valuable; hence, empowers them (Kostenius and Ohrling 2006; Eder and Fingerson 2002; Matthews et al. 1998).

7.3.5.5. Developing a Culture of Research

Conducting child-centred research projects, revisiting the child-participants and sharing the findings with them in a child-friendly format contribute to developing the culture of research amongst the students and staff in the educational environments. Participants of this study claimed that this research broadened their own horizons about both concepts related to intercultural issues and research methodology.

Although the purpose and process of the research and the ethical issues such as confidentiality and anonymity were addressed in the briefing and revisited during the data collection, there is evidence that after the follow-up session and having been presented with the sample dissertation and posters, children understood better what the whole project had been about. They learnt about different stages of the research, and how their voices were represented. The findings show that children only gained a deeper understanding of pseudonyms and their usage after they saw how they were used in the transcriptions. In the follow-up sessions, children also saw how the insights gained from them were compared with the insights from the literature (see 6.6). Hence, another contribution of this study is developing the culture of research in a context where research is not a familiar phenomenon to children. This happened by including children in the research, sharing the findings with them, and explaining their roles in it.

7.3.6. Ethical Considerations in Iran

There are significant differences between the general ethical demands of research and local research expectations and regulations (Shamim and Qureshi 2013). Based on my experience of conducting this research in Iran, in this section I explain some of these local ethical considerations.

7.3.6.1. Children's Consent

If children are considered as competent beings and active participants in research, it is crucial that their consent is sought in addition to teachers' and parents' consents (Kuchah and Pinter 2012; Slepickova and Bartosova 2014). However, the presence of the staff during the initial contact with students can influence how the young people respond to being consulted or involved (Matthews and Tuckerhey 2000). During the administration of the questionnaires, I was told by some of the teachers that they could offer a choice of involvement to the students in a way that all of them would decide to participate. Similar to this experience, Slepickova and Bartosova (2014) explain that sometimes teachers use authoritative means to get children to cooperate in research. Obviously, this is against the ethics of good practice in research. In this regard, Matthews and Tuckerhey (2000) emphasize that children should also be able to decide whether they want to take part in the research or not, without any pressure from the researcher, peers, parents, or teachers.

According to Alderson (2000), the ability to give consent should be related to the participants' capability to comprehend what the project entails and their ability to understand their own roles and rights within it rather than the age of the participants. Even if children enthusiastically sign the consent form at the beginning, they should be given the chance to rethink their consent as a project progresses (Hurley and Underwood 2002; Lewis 2010; Kuchah and Pinter 2012). Having this in mind, in addition to the written consent from the school principals and parents, and children's verbal consents, efforts were made to make sure children were happy to continue their participation throughout the research project.

Moreover, although ethical issues such as obtaining consent for taking photos from children are not common practice in Iran, when the chance is given to the children, some may prefer not to disclose their identities in the pictures.

7.3.6.2. Schools as the Location of the Data Collection

The location of the research with children is of great importance. Schools were the only available option for this project. The inherent hierarchical social structure of educational contexts can negatively influence the research process (Slepickova and Bartosova 2014). To reduce the likelihood that children might confuse research with school work or assessment, attempts were made to establish a trusting relationship with the participants, and the non-evaluative purpose of the study was explained and revisited several times throughout the research. However, it is important to acknowledge the existence of the institutional surveillance and control in the educational contexts (Barker and Weller 2003). In this regard, Slepickova and Bartosova (2014:87) state that

the position of the researcher in a school environment is usually marked by ambivalence – trying to establish a good relationship with the student as informant, while not losing the favor of the teachers, because the possibility of remaining in that environment depends on them.

In this study, occasionally members of the staff were reluctant to leave the research environment, and sometimes they visited the interview sessions which caused interference in the course of the research. This was very similar to Slepickova and Bartosova's (2014) experience of conducting research at schools in the Czech Republic. Barker and Weller (2003) and France et al. (2000) also faced challenges in

maintaining the confidentiality of the data from their child-participants in the educational contexts.

Although not overtly announced, while conducting the research, I sensed that staff visits to the research environment were due to the cautionary practice to ensure children's safety with an outsider adult researcher in the room. Some of the staff also assumed that it would be legitimate for them to learn about children's comments as part of their duties to protect and supervise the students. Another possibility is that this kind of interference might be due to the cultural differences in ethical codes and guidelines (Shamin and Qureshi 2013). As a PhD student in the UK who was collecting data in Iran, I needed to meet both local as well UK ethics, and this added complications to the data collection process. In this regard, Slepickova and Bartosova (2014:90) argue that 'the observance of ethical principles in practice is rarely straightforward and a variety of stipulations that may occur during the research process can never be fully captured by pre-established standards'. This is a complex and difficult challenge for the researcher who is trying to adhere to certain ethical standards.

7.3.6.3. The Concept of Anonymity for Children

To involve children in the research process, it is often suggested that we let them choose their own pseudonyms (Barker and Weller 2003). In this study, participants chose their own pseudonyms in the beginning of the interview sessions when they received briefings. However, only at the end of the follow-up sessions after having seen their own quotations and the sample dissertation, did they realize how quotations from the interviews and discussions were used in relation to pseudonyms. Consequently, some of them decided to keep their real names rather than the

pseudonyms. Those who decided to have their real name felt so proud about their contribution to the research that they wanted to be recognizable.

It should be noted that children's real names are not used in this thesis, as most of the data was already transcribed and coded by the time children expressed their preference in using their real names. Moreover, the confidentiality of the data is a sensitive matter which needs serious considerations. In the follow-up sessions, children were shown only a few examples of their quotations in the interviews, and might have had a different opinion about revealing their identity if they had read the entire interview extracts. Lavagirl's[T-5MAH-2] statement 'can't you just keep our own name but just say that it's our pseudonyms? (*laughter*)' also touches upon the issue of 'honesty', another ethical consideration in research.

Chapter 8

Implications and Conclusions

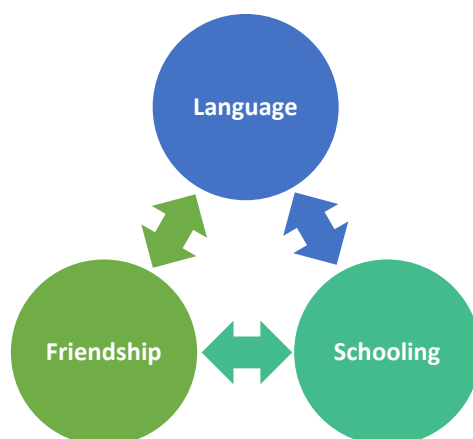
8.1. Introduction

In this final chapter, I provide a brief summary of the research and outline the summary of its main contributions to knowledge and research methodology. I also discuss the implications and limitations of the study, and suggest future research directions.

8.2. Summary of the Research

As was mentioned in Chapter 2, the simultaneous emigration and immigration of Iranians inside and outside Iran has brought this nation into closer contact with a wider range of cultures than ever before. Recognizing the importance of fostering intercultural sensitivity and solidarity, there is a need to introduce intercultural learning into the Iranian educational curricula. The first step in this involves understanding current levels of awareness of children in Iran and the potential for creating opportunities for intercultural learning. Therefore, this study aimed to explore how children living and being educated at the primary level in Iran make sense of/understand intercultural interaction and adjustment processes. To achieve this, 294 questionnaires were administered in five private primary schools in Tehran, and five follow-up group interviews were carried out with 27 participants between 10 to 12 years of age. The findings related to the first research question revealed children's ambivalent feelings about experiencing intercultural encounters. Schooling, friendship, and language were found to be the key influential elements in children's understanding of intercultural interaction and adjustment; these three elements are related to one another (see Figure 25).

Figure 25. Relationship within the three influential elements in cross-cultural adjustment



The second research question emerged during the data collection process, as I became interested in exploring the boundaries of child-focussed research. The findings from the follow-up sessions as well as my reflection on the research process indicate the limitation and advantages of innovative research with children and reveals children's initial understandings of research and the way they perceived their contribution to the project.

8.3. Summary of Research Contributions

One of the theoretical contributions of this study is working towards a model of children's conception of cross-cultural adjustment. To my knowledge, no model of cross-cultural adjustment has uniquely focussed on children's experiences and perceptions in this regard. The findings of this study contribute towards developing a model which incorporates children's views about cross-cultural adjustment in a more comprehensive way.

Another contribution of this study is the importance given to the perspectives of children and the way in which these perspectives were incorporated in extending our knowledge about the way children perceive and make sense of the different aspects of

intercultural issues. The current findings can be used to inform interventions designed to improve intercultural relations during childhood. Iranian children's viewpoints in this regard have never been explored before, and by exploring their perspectives, I have been able to learn how they apprehend issues such as intercultural interaction and adjustment. This study provides unique and vital data for educational purposes, and can be a stepping stone for the development of intercultural learning in Iran. In the globalized world, this can have increasing benefit to children in Iran.

In this study children were seen as important social actors. Adapting this paradigm in social research with children indicates methodological and ethical requirements. In this study, every attempt was made to facilitate and encourage children's active participation. By involving children in the preparation of the research instruments, I aimed to explore and also include children's opinions in the design of the research tools. By developing a 'child-friendly' questionnaire, I aimed to push the inherent boundaries of research tools of this kind, so that children engage more actively with this research instruments. By conducting group interviews with participatory activities, I aimed to create a more child-centred research environment where children would interact and express their views freely. By revisiting the child-participants and sharing the initial findings of the study with them, I aimed to open up a transformational space to explore children's post hoc interpretations about the research, while developing researcher reflexivity. Hence, this study also contributes to the existing knowledge about researching childhood, both in the design of the instruments and the process of research. By including children in the design of research instruments and sharing the findings with them, this study also contributes to the development of children's awareness about research process as well and their better understanding of intercultural issues.

8.4. Implications of the Study

The process and results of this research study have implications for researchers and language teachers. It also has an impact on Anderson's model.

8.4.1. Implication for Research and Researchers

Whilst research related to adult, adolescent, and child migrant experiences of cross-cultural adaptation is plentiful (Pinter 2010), very little research to my knowledge has focussed on children's understanding of these issues. With respect to the research procedure, this study can have implications for the researchers who are interested in exploring the experiences and perceptions of children.

Pinter and Zandian (2015:12) argue that an example of meaningful engagement between a researcher and children happens when 'the researcher took note of and engaged with the children's spontaneous observations and comments about voice, representation, transcribing and incorporating new data with old'. In this regard, Alerby and Kostenius (2011) suggest building a ground for mutual exchange between the children and the researcher. The participants' unsolicited comments in the follow-up sessions contributed to our better understanding of the way children perceive research, and the more we, as researchers, understand how children see research and their part in it, the better we can design child-centred research methods (Pinter and Zandian 2015). This research has implications for researchers who continue to make efforts to think of ways in which research can be explained to children, so that child participants realize that they are recognized as competent individuals who are capable of commenting about issues affecting their own lives. This is a challenging task, and seems that can only be fully accepted through practice.

Moreover, the discussion with children about the ethical issues and dissemination of research during the follow-up session turned into a spontaneous 'research training

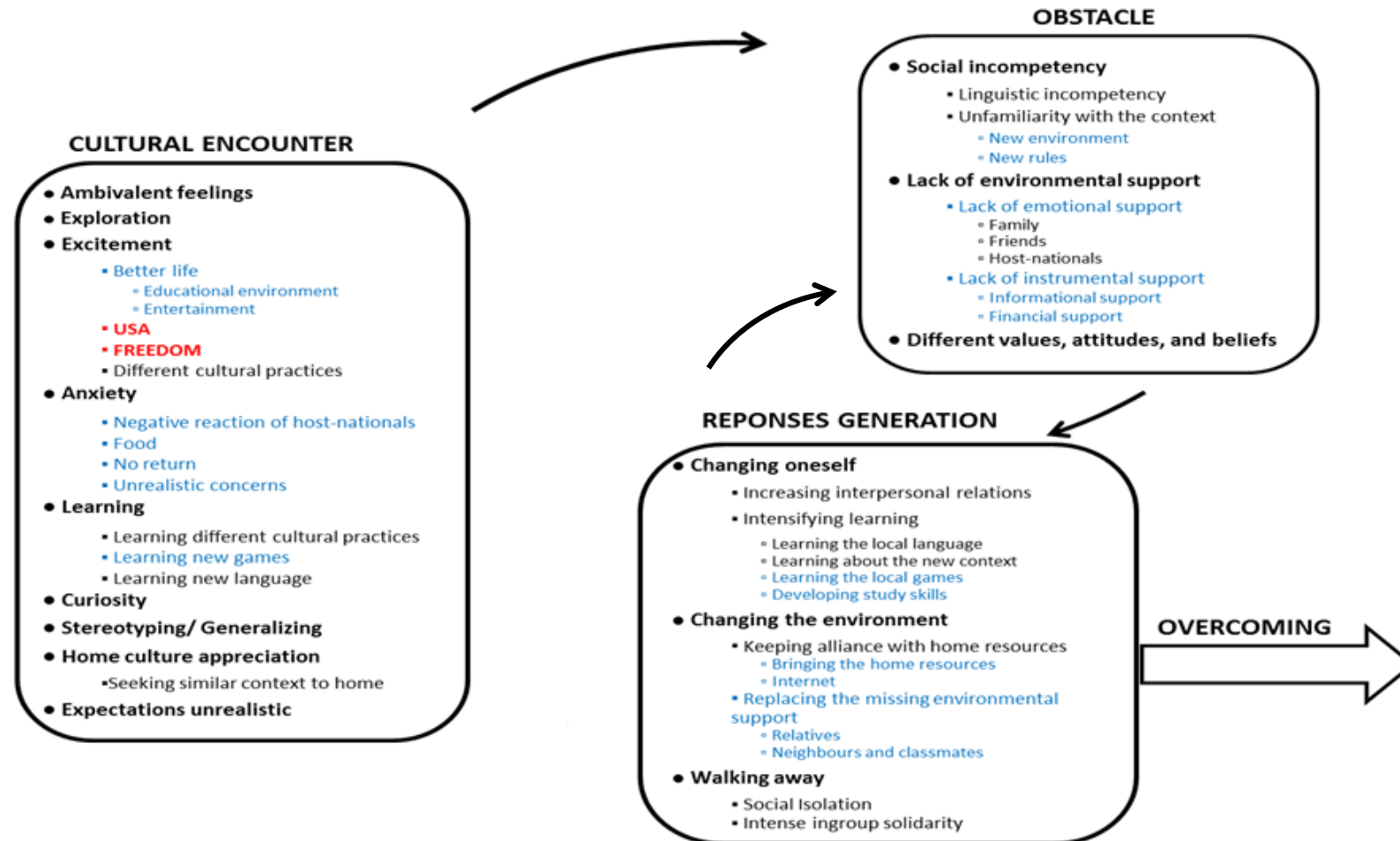
session'. This kind of retrospective reflection has implications for raising children's awareness about research as well as developing researcher reflexivity.

8.4.2. Implications for Anderson's Model

As mentioned earlier, the conceptual framework for this research draws on Anderson's model of cross-cultural adaptation. Since there is no child model of cross-cultural adaptation, this model was chosen for this study, particularly because in this model, 'cross-cultural adaptation represents in essence a common process of environmental adaptation' (Anderson 1994:29). However, this adult model does not entirely meet the experiences and expectations of children. Moreover, this model was developed in early 90s and does not include more recent features such as EIL and technology. Hence, the findings of this study have implications for Anderson's model, in a way that it includes children and more recent features of adaptation.

For the convenience, I included below the revised model presented in Chapter 5 and highlighted where the key differences are (see Figure 26). Having inspired by Anderson's model and her paper, I took the three key areas of cross-cultural adaptation, *cross-cultural encounter*, *obstacle*, and *response generation* to produce a consolidated picture which allows me to show the additional dimensions of the cross-cultural adjustment which apply to the case of children. In other words, I used Anderson's model as a framework and contributed to the development of a model which can comply for children.

Figure 26. An adaptation of Anderson's Model



8.4.3. Pedagogical Implications

In this study, I aimed to understand current levels of awareness of children in Iran to investigate the potentials for creating opportunities for intercultural learning. That is why this study has far-reaching implications for EL teachers in this context.

The findings revealed the levels of children's basic intercultural awareness, and potential for developing deeper intercultural understanding; however, a certain degree of stereotyping was also evidenced in the children's utterances. Guest (2002:158) argues that 'a certain degree of generalization is acceptable within certain genres of large-scale cultural interaction. But problems occur when we apply these general interpretive pegs to immediate culturally situations and personalized discourse'. Although formation of stereotypes is a natural state of developing intercultural sensitivity (Baker 2012), lack of a systematic and well planned intercultural learning in the education system may result in misunderstanding other cultures. Sowa (2014:107) has also observed that 'it is in childhood that negative or positive stereotypes are formed, and these tend to be long-lived and continue to impact well into adulthood'. In order to avoid stereotyping and prejudice, it is important to bring intercultural awareness into the classroom context. Despite the importance of promoting intercultural awareness amongst children at primary level, 'very little has been written to date with regard to how intercultural awareness should be promoted with young EFL learners' (Sowa 2014:107). Considering the cognitive and emotional development of the children, Barrett (2007:98) argues that,

[t]he ideal age for starting intercultural education would be middle childhood. It is in these years that children began to identify themselves with other perspectives rather than only their country and nationality. Moreover, as children

move to middle childhood they start forming stereotypes and prejudices about different countries and ethnicities, which underlines the need for intercultural learning.

Teachers are one of the main groups of people who would benefit from the findings of this study, particularly language teachers in my contexts. Language which is used for communication does not exist in a cultural vacuum (Baker 2012), and in fact, other cultures and nations are integrating cultural awareness into foreign language teaching. That is why language classrooms are favourable places for promoting intercultural awareness and introducing respect for diversity of cultures (Byram 1997; Sowa 2014). With the aim of developing language learners' intercultural competence, course materials can blend intercultural communication and language learning (Byram et al. 1994 cited in Corbett 2000). When inserting cultural elements into language classroom, it is important to avoid perceiving culture as a monolithic entity, and instead approach it in a non-essentialist and dynamic manner (Baker 2012).

Having considered the cognitive and emotional development of children at primary level, Byram (2008), suggests developing children's attitudes and knowledge through adding to their existing knowledge about their surroundings, and encouraging them to identify the similarities and differences between social practices in their own context and other places. In general, the aim of raising intercultural awareness amongst learners is to develop their knowledge, attitudes, and skills and enable them to communicate with people from different linguistic and cultural backgrounds, either in or across their own communities. 'In this manner they can become more open towards the "other" and the "different"' (Speiser 2000:235). This is an attempt to increase mutual understanding, tolerance and respect for differences (Sowa 2014). The initial

steps in intercultural education can be developing students' interest, readiness and a capacity to dialogue with those whom they consider to be different (Speiser 2000). The basic understanding of cultural contexts can possibly result in cultural stereotypes or generalizations, but the aim is to develop the ability to move beyond these, 'to more complex understanding of language and culture and finally to the fluid, hybrid, and emergent understanding of cultures and languages in intercultural communication' (Baker 2012:67).

In general, the major challenges language teachers face when it comes to intercultural capacity-building is the shortage of the resources as well as the lack guidelines for including intercultural awareness into the classroom activities (Sowa 2014). In the following section a few suggestions for inserting intercultural elements into the young learner's foreign language classrooms are presented, not all of which will be relevant in all settings.

8.4.3.1. Stories

Considering the Iranian context, English version of the Asian and Middle Eastern folk stories and fairy tales can be added to the English language learner's reading list to enhance their knowledge and understanding of regional folk talks and literature. Moreover, traditional folk stories usually have universal motifs which highlight the universality of human beings, and culture-specific details which illustrate uniqueness of every culture (e.g. Roudabeh vs. Rapunzel). Students can also improvise folk stories, based on clues given to them beforehand. Then, they can hear or read the original folktale, and compare it with their own improvised version. In this way they get to explore situations from different perspectives (Heathfield 2014).

At a more advanced stage of intercultural education, the aim is to move beyond single cultural frames of reference (Baker 2012) and develop learner's 'knowledge, skills, and attitudes which can then be utilized in understanding specific cultures and in communicating across diverse cultures' (Baker 2012:65). Learners need to see the relationship between their own and other cultures. They also need to develop awareness about the way their own culture is seen from other people's perspectives (Byram et al. 2002). Hence, for older students who have gone through the basic stages of intercultural learning, in addition to the rich variety of folk tales and ethnic-interest stories, exploration of literary texts by writers originally sharing the same culture as the learners but who now live in an English speaking country and write in English would be an excellent exercise in cultural relativity. 'Authentic' English literary texts created by migrant writers can be used in classrooms to illustrate a target culture through the wider cross-cultural perspectives of a migrant speaker. Such materials can highlight the similarities and differences between cultures in a more tangible way for EFL learners (for more details see Zandian 2015).

8.4.3.2. Games

The findings of this study suggest that games could play an important role in establishing intercultural interaction amongst children (5.4.; 4.2.2). According to the findings, playing games can be a strategy to initiate and/or facilitate social interaction, particularly amongst children with limited linguistic knowledge. Games are an indispensable part of children's world, and can be modified or designed for language learning purposes. Learning how to play the common/ local games in other parts of the world enhances children's cultural knowledge in a fun and engaging way. Simple example of these games can be 'clapping games' which have a general rule, but the patterns and rhythms change in different regions. 'Red tomato' / 'hot hands' is another

children's game which is played in Iran and other parts of the world with some subtle differences in the rules. In addition to learning games commonly played in different places, children can take part in the guessing games which are modified for raising their cultural awareness. They can be invited to look at the pictures of everyday household objects from different parts of the world, and guess the implications of each object. Afterwards, they can discuss the similarities and differences between the objects used in their own context and those in other parts of the world (Sowa 2014).

8.4.3.3. Puppets

In general, puppets are helpful tools when working with children. Language teachers can bring a puppet as a newcomer to the class, and ask the students to help him/her adopt with the new environment. In this way, children learn about the possible challenges cultural minorities may have, and develop the sense of empathy, which is one of the important elements of intercultural competence.

One of the goals of learning English is to enable learners to explain and discuss their own culture in another language (Byram 1997). In this way, 'EFL learners around the world could become bridge-builders across cultures' (Ghosn 2002:176). Children can use the new language to convey their own cultural practices to the puppet, and also hear about cultural practices in different parts of the world. Students can be nominated to take the puppet home during the national festivities and introduce their own cultural practices to the puppet and write a diary about it.

8.4.3.4. Collaboration with International Students in Iran

Contact with children from different cultural background could be a great opportunity for children to get to know people from other countries, and raise their intercultural awareness. The local resources could be the multicultural and linguistic communities

in the English-medium international schools (Sowa 2014). In Iran, children with non-Iranian nationalities usually study in international schools. Collaborative language projects between the students in the international and mainstream schools can create unique opportunities for both groups to interact with one another. INTL and MAH were different sections of a same educational complex, and the students at INTL fit into the category of international students as they were born in another country. Students in these two branches could meet to develop a project together. For instance, they could collaborate in designing a guidebook (Sowa 2014) for tourists in Iran. The international students could name what a newcomer would need to know based on their personal experience of visiting Iran, and the Iranian students could name the most interesting places to visit in Iran. Then, both groups could plan together an imaginary short trip to Iran. In this way, the Iranian students use English to explain their own cultural practices to the international students, and both groups extend their knowledge about Iran. Meanwhile, using English in such real situations would increase the language learners' motivation (Sowa 2014). A similar project about another country could be developed, and groups can accept different responsibilities. Projects of this kind focus on raising children's intercultural awareness through an exploration of the cultural heritage of individual children in both the international schools and mainstream schools.

Face-to-face collaborative learning might not be always possible. In the absence of opportunities for real interaction with the international children, electronic media can be used to facilitate intercultural interaction with language learners in other parts of the world.

8.4.3.5. Exploring IT/ Electronic Media through English

The findings of the current study indicate that food can be an appealing topic for classroom discussion, as the participants of this study expressed enthusiastic views regarding food when sharing their hopes and worries about an imagined sojourn. As a class activity, children can create an international menu or recipes in English. For preparation they can explore different sources of information such as internet and family members as homework to learn about eating habits in different parts of the world (Sowa 2014).

At the basic stage of intercultural education, learners are encouraged to investigate local cultures, to ‘become aware of the culturally based norms, beliefs, and behaviours of their own culture and other cultures’ (Baker 2012:65). Considering this, students can develop a cultural project in groups, representing one of their own cultural practices and exchange their project outcome with students in another part of the world. In the case of younger learners, language teachers can exchange emails with teachers in another part of the world and share the outcome and photos of the project. In the later stages of intercultural learning, developing online projects between students in different regions and countries can provide opportunities for intercultural interactions (Sowa 2014). Older learners can establish email exchanges and chatroom-type communication with language students in other countries (Baker 2012). This can create strong motivation amongst learners to develop their linguistic as well as intercultural competence. It is important to acknowledge that such experiences can only provide partial accounts of cultures and will inevitably be biased. In this regard, Baker (2012:69) argues that as long as ‘learners and teachers approach the cultural images and information presented in a critical manner, these can provide valuable

opportunities for experience of and reflection on intercultural communication and contact with other cultures’.

8.4.3.6. The Autobiography of Intercultural Encounters

The Autobiography of Intercultural Encounters is developed for the Language Policy Division of the Council of Europe, and has been designed to help learners analyse a specific intercultural encounter which they themselves have experienced (Byram et al. 2009:3). Students’ experiences can range from meeting someone from a different country, a different region within the same country, a different ethnicity, or meeting someone who speaks a different language. Inserting this Autobiography into language classrooms is another suggestion for developing self-reflection and critical thinking in students. There are no fixed rules about how the autobiography should be used. Hence, it can be modified for the need of the students. Based on the literacy level of the learners, pupils can either write the answers in the allocated sections, or respond in a form of classroom discussion or group interviews (Byram et al. 2009). It can be also done as part of the ‘Sharing Time’ activity, in which students share feelings or ideas with the rest of the group. This activity can be modified to include Autobiography of Intercultural Encounter.

‘Sharing time’ is a popular and widespread activity in both L1 and EFL classrooms for young learners. ‘Sharing time’ creates safe, non-judgmental, authentic, and meaningful contexts where students can operate in real life issues, narrate experiences and enhance their thinking and learning skills. In addition to the fact that children enjoy this activity, they also develop their speaking and learning skills, as well as social and interactional skills (Yazigi and Seedhouse 2005).

8.4.3.7. Textbooks

In his framework, Byram (2008) suggests extending the learners' knowledge about their surroundings. As Byram (1997) emphasise one of the aims of learning a new language is enabling learners to explain and discuss their own culture in another language. With respect to this particular aim of learning a new language, *Ant and Elephant*, *Secret of the Turtles*, and *On the Road Again* by S. Ghahremani-ghajar are three ELT textbooks for young learners in Iran which have embedded this objective in the lessons. These books which are in the process of publications seem to aim at enhancing learner's knowledge about existing cultural varieties inside Iran, and focus on raising learners' intracultural awareness. However, there is more emphasis on Islamic aspect of Iranian culture rather than the other aspects.

8.4.3.8. Teacher Training

Santrock (2007:289) suggests that 'teachers can reduce bias by displaying images of children from diverse ethnic and cultural groups, selecting play materials and classroom activities that encourage cultural understanding, helping students resist stereotypes'. This can begin with developing the capacity for dialogue among different groups with a focus on plurality (Speiser 2000). Even if it is a simplification of the whole complex concept, teachers and students need to take the first steps in this educational process (Byram 2008). This requires teachers to be competent cultural mediators; however, the lack of teacher education programmes in this regard is another issue which requires consideration. Sowa (2014:120) argues that,

the way in which teachers' underpinning beliefs and assumption about cultural and what intercultural awareness-raising implies inform the ways in which in teachers will approach this with learners. Thus, helping teachers to locate and effectively exploit resources also requires the provision of professional

development opportunities to critically engage with what is meant by culture and interculturality.

The mismatch between the theoretical understanding of intercultural learning and what is usually practiced in classrooms can be reduced through teacher training programmes which address this issue (Secru 2006). In the drive for more effective dissemination of information, I intend to hold workshops for teachers in all the schools where I collected the data. This can be a starting point for raising teachers' awareness about intercultural education in Iran.

8.5. Research Limitations

Ideally, I would have preferred to include state schools in this research project, and extended the scope of the study to other regions of the country. However, this was not possible due to time restrictions and the strict and complicated process of gatekeeping at the state schools in Iran. I also would have preferred to conduct another series of interviews with the participants about their understanding of the research project to compare their initial understandings of the research project with what they would recall after the follow-up session. Unfortunately, this was impossible due to practical constraints of funding and time. Moreover, because of data overload, I was obliged to prioritize some parts of data over the rest. Hence, some interesting data about children's evaluation of the research instruments as well as the biographic data in the questionnaires are not included in this study, but will be published in future.

Researching with children is a relatively unfamiliar concept in Iran; hence, I was not able to involve children as co-researchers in this study, mainly due to the absence of resources and the lack of time. In schools, the institutional processes of supervision and control can conflict with ensuring confidentiality (Barker and Weller 2003). During the data collection, occasionally the teachers and head teachers expressed their

interest in knowing about children's comments; however, after I revisited the issues around confidentiality of the data, they were convinced and respected this.

Finally, the findings of this study cannot be generalised, and more comprehensive studies are required to be able to make any generalizations.

8.6. Future Research Directions

Based on the findings, contributions, implications and limitations of this study, I would like to make the following suggestions for future research.

- This research aimed to explore how children inside Iran make sense of different aspects of intercultural issues. I would encourage a similar study with the aim of exploring the living experiences of Iranian immigrant children to add a different angle to this study. A study with this focus would shed light on Iranian child sojourner/immigrants' lived experiences of cross-cultural adaptation and could also investigate the 'overcoming stage of adaptation' which was not possible in the current study.
- In order to obtain a more comprehensive understanding of children in primary level in Iran, I encourage a similar study in different regions of Iran, and in both private and state schools. To give this study a global resonance, similar research in other contexts is also recommended.
- Although the gender and age differences of the participants were not the main focus of this study, the findings suggest that similar research with focus on children's age and gender might help in revealing children's preferences based on gender and age.
- Due to the huge difference between the number of the respondents with and without the experience of travelling abroad, the test of statistical analysis would not yield meaningful results in this study. Hence, the findings could not

indicate the significance of results in this regard. A study with a focus on similarities and differences between the attitudes of these two subgroups could reveal interesting results.

- The findings revealed traces of cultural misunderstandings and stereotyping amongst the participants; however, these are tentative conclusions. Hence studies with a focus on the living experiences of immigrant children in Iran would add a new angle to this research.
- In this study, I tried to explore children's viewpoints about intercultural issues. Studies with a focus on teachers' and parents' perspectives on children's intercultural awareness and intercultural education would add different dimensions to this issue.
- Considering the need for introducing intercultural education to the education system in Iran, as part of the implications of this study I suggested some strategies to include intercultural elements in language classrooms. I encourage studies with the aim of exploring the practicality of these strategies. Moreover, investigating the teachers' views with respect to possible ways of enhancing intercultural awareness would provide valuable insights into this domain.

8.7. Concluding Remarks

It seems that this is the end of a journey I started four years ago, which has transformed into this thesis during the last few years. I would like to conclude this thesis by reflecting on the impact of this journey on my professional development as a teacher and researcher. Throughout this journey, I learnt about the importance of listening to children's voices and became fascinated by their capability to contribute to the issue related to their lives. Firstly, collaborating with children in designing the research instruments led to my better understanding of their needs as participants of research.

Secondly, working with children during the research process provided me with deeper insight into the children's world in general, and in particular, the way they perceive some aspects of intercultural issues. Thirdly, sharing the initial findings of the research with the participants and hearing their comments about the aspects of research which interested them helped me gain new understandings about children's perceptions about research, and consequently encouraged me to think about possible ways of developing their understating of the research process. Having worked as a language teacher in Iran, I always sensed the absence of intercultural learning in the language classrooms. Throughout this study, I gained better insight into children's perspectives about intercultural issues, which encouraged me to reflect about the possible ways of enhancing children's intercultural knowledge and satisfying their curiosity in this regard.

I end this journey with the strong belief that this is my starting point for many other journeys in the world of knowledge.

References

- Adelman, M. B.** 1988. 'Cross-cultural adjustment: A theoretical perspective on social support'. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations* 12/3: 183-204.
- Alderson, P.** 2000. 'Children as researchers' in P. Christensen and A. James (eds.). *Research with Children: Perspectives and Practices*. London: Routledge Falmer.
- Alerby, E. and C. Kostenius.** 2011. "'Dammed taxi cab" – how silent communication in questionnaires can be understood and used to give to children's experiences'. *International Journal of Research and Methods in Education* 34/2: 117-130.
- Aliakbari, M.** 2004. *The Place of Culture in the Iranian ELT Textbooks in High School Level*. Paper presented at 9th Pan-Pacific Association of Applied Linguistics Conference. August 2004, Namseoul University, Korea.
- Almqvist, K. and M. Brandell-Forsberg.** 1995. 'Iranian refugee children in Sweden: A study of preschool children exposed to organized violence and forced migration on preschool children'. *Am J Orthopsychiatry* 65/2: 225-237.
- Almqvist, K. and A. G. Broberg.** 1999. 'Mental health and social adjustment in young refugee children 3½ years after their arrival in Sweden'. *Journal of the American Academy of Child & Adolescent Psychiatry* 38/6: 723-730.
- Almqvist, K. and P. Hwang.** 1999. 'Iranian refugees in Sweden coping processes in children and their families'. *Childhood* 6/2: 167-188.
- Anderson, L. E.** 1994. 'A new look at an old construct: Cross-cultural adaptation'. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations* 18/3: 293-328.
- Aronowitz, M.** 1984. 'The social and emotional adjustment of immigrant children: a review of the literature'. *International Migration Review* 18/2: 237-257.
- Aronson, K. M. and R. Brwon.** 2013. Acculturation and social attitudes among majority children'. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations* 37: 313-322.
- Ateweh, B., S. Kemmis, and P. Weeks.** 1998. *Action Research in Practice: Partnerships for Social Justice in Education*. London: Routledge.
- Atkinson, P., A. Coffey, S. Delamont, J. Lofland, and L. Lofland.** 2001. 'Editorial Introduction' in P. Atkinson, A. Coffey, S. Delamont, J. Lofland and L. Lofland (eds.). *Handbook of Ethnography*. London: Sage.
- Ayano, M.** 2006 'Japanese students in Britain' in M. Byram and A. Feng (eds.). *Living and Studying Abroad*. Clevedon: Multilingual Matters.
- Baker, W.** 2012. 'From cultural to intercultural awareness'. *ELT Journal* 66/1: 62-70.

- Bakhtin, M.** 1986. *Speech Genres and Other Late Essays*. Austin: University of Texas Press.
- Barker, J. and S. Weller.** 2003. “‘Never work with children?’: the geography of methodological issues in research with children’. *Qualitative Research* 3/2: 202-227.
- Barret, M.** 2007. *Children's Knowledge, Beliefs and Feelings about Nations and National Groups*. Hove: Psychology Press.
- Barker, J. and S. Weller.** 2003. “‘Never work with children?’: the geography of methodological issues in research with children’. *Qualitative Research* 3/2: 202-227.
- Barron, C.L.** 2000. *Giving Youth a Voice: A Basis for Rethinking Adolescent Violence*. Halifax, NY: Fernwood Publishing.
- Bartlett, L.** 2007. ‘Bilingual illiteracies, social identification, and educational trajectories’. *Linguistics and Education* 18: 215-231.
- Bennett, M. J.** 1986. ‘A developmental approach to training for intercultural sensitivity’. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations* 10: 179–196.
- Bennett, M. J.** 1979. ‘Overcoming the golden rule: sympathy and empathy’ in D. Nimmo (ed.). *Communication Yearbook* 3. Beverly Hills: Sage.
- Bentz, V.M. and J.J. Shapiro.** 1998. *Mindful Inquiry in Social Research*. London: Sage.
- Bergmark, U. and C. Kostenius, C.** 2009. “‘Listen to me when I have something to say’: Students’ participation in research for sustainable school improvement’. *Improving Schools* 12/ 3: 249–260.
- Berry, J. W.** 2005. ‘Acculturation: living successfully in two cultures’. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations* 29: 697-712.
- Berry, J. W.** 2002. ‘Conceptual approaches to acculturation’ in K. M. Chun, P. B. Organista, and G. Mari’n (eds.). *Acculturation: Advances in Theory, Measurement, and Applied Research*. Washington: American Psychological Association.
- Berry, J. W.** 1997. ‘Immigration, acculturation, and adaptation’. *Applied Psychology: An Internon-immigrant Review* 46/1: 5–34.
- Berry, J. W., U. Kim, S. Power, M. Young, and M. Bujaki.** 1989. ‘Acculturation attitudes in plural societies’. *Applied Psychology: An International Review* 38:185–206.
- Berry, J. W., J. S. Phinney, D. L. Sam, and P. Vedder.** 2006. ‘Immigrant youth: acculturation, identity and adaptation’. *Applied Psychology: An International Review* 55/3: 303-332.
- Bhattacharya, G.** 2000. ‘The school adjustment of South Asian immigrant children in the United States’. *Adolescence* 35/137: 77-85.

- Bigelow, B. J. and J. J. La Gaipa.** 1980. 'The development of friendship values and choice' in H. C. Foot and A. J. Smith (eds.). *Friendship and Social Relations in Children*. Chichester: Wile.
- Black, J. S. and G. K. Stephens.** 1989. 'The influence of the spouse on American expatriate adjustment in Pacific Rim overseas assignments'. *Journal of Management* 15: 529- 544.
- Bochner, S., B. M. MacLeod and A. Lin.** 1977. 'Friendship patterns of overseas students: a functional model'. *International Journal of Psychology* 12: 277-297.
- Boyatzis, R.** 1998. *Transforming Qualitative Information: Thematic Analysis and Code Development*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Braun, V. and V. Clarke.** 2006. 'Using thematic analysis in Psychology Qualitative'. *Research in Psychology* 3/2: 77-101.
- Breakwell, G.** 1990. *Interviewing*. London: Routledge.
- Brein, M. and K. David.** 1971. 'Intercultural communication and the adjustment of the sojourner'. *Psychological Bulletin* 76/ 3: 215-230.
- Briggs, C. J., S. M. Reis. and E. E. Sullivan.** 2008. 'A national view of promising programs and practices for culturally, linguistically, and ethnically diverse gifted and talented students'. *Gifted Child Quarterly* 52: 131-145.
- Broome, J. B.** 1991. 'Building shared meaning: Implications of a relational approach to empathy for teaching intercultural communication'. *Communication Education* 40/3: 235-249.
- Brown, B. B.** 2013. 'Adolescents, organized activities, and peers: Knowledge gained and knowledge needed' *New Directions for Child and Adolescent Development* 140: 77-96.
- Brown, J. D.** 2001. *Using Surveys in Language Programs*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Brownlie, J., S. Anderson. and R. Ormston.** 2006. *Children as Researchers*. Available at <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Resource/Doc/925/0080040.pdf> (accessed 17 April 2015).
- Bryman, A.** 1988. *Quantity and Quality in Social Research*. London and New York: Routledge.
- Byram, M.** 2008. *From Foreign Language Education to Education for Intercultural Citizenship*. Clevedon: Multilingual Matters.
- Byram, M.** 1997. *Teaching and Assessing Intercultural Communicative Competence*. Clevedon: Multilingual Matters.

- Byram, M., B. Gribkova, and H. Starkey.** 2002. *Developing the Intercultural Dimension in Language Teaching: A Practical Introduction for Teachers*. Strasbourg: Language Policy Division, Directorate of School, Out-of-School and Higher Education, DGIV, Council of Europe.
- Byram, M., A. Nicols, and D. Stephens.** 2001. *Developing Intercultural Competence in Practice*. Levedon: Multilingual Matters.
- Cairns, D.** 2002. 'Phenomenology and Present-Day Psychology'. *Phenomenology and the Cognitive Sciences* 1: 69–77.
- Cameron, L.** 2001. *Teaching Languages to Young Learners*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Chambers, A.** 2004. 'Changing concepts in culture and language learning' in M. Smith (ed.). *Readings in the Teaching of Culture*. Dublin: ITE.
- Chataway, C. J. and J.W. Berry,** 1989. 'Acculturation experiences, appraisal, coping and adaptation: A comparison of Hong Kong Chinese, French, and English students in Canada'. *Canadian Journal of Behavioral Science* 21/3: 295-309.
- Christensen, P.** 2004. 'Children's participation in ethnographic research: Issues of power and representation'. *Children & Society* 18/2: 165-176.
- Christensen, P., and A. James.** (eds.). 2000. *Research with Children*. Perspectives and practices. London: Falmer Press.
- Christensen, P. and A. Prout.** 2002. 'Working with ethical symmetry in social research with children'. *Childhood* 9/4: 477- 497.
- Church, A.** 1982. 'Sojourner adjustment'. *Psychological Bulletin* 91/3: 540–572.
- CIA.** 2010. Available at <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/ir.html> (accessed 29 March 2012).
- Cohen, L., L. Manion and K. Morrison.** 2000. *Research Methods in Education* (Fifth edition). London: Routledge.
- Corbett, J.** 2000. 'Teaching culture through language variety' in N. McBride and K. Seago (eds.). *Target Culture- Target Language?* London: CILT publications.
- Cortazzi, M. and L. Jin.** 1997. 'Communication for learning across cultures' in D. McNamara and R. Harris (eds.). *Overseas Students in Higher Education*. Routledge: London.
- Creswell, J. W.** 2007. *Qualitative Inquiry and Research Design – Choosing Among Five Approaches* (Second edition). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

- Cribb, A. and S. Gewirtz.** 2003. 'Towards a sociology of just practices: an analysis of plural conceptions of justice' in: C. Vincent (ed.). *Social Justice, Education and Identity*. London: Routledge Falmer.
- Cross, S. E.** 1995. 'Self-construals, coping, and stress in crosscultural adaptation'. *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology* 26: 673-697.
- Cruddas, L.** 2007. 'Engaged voices—dialogic interaction and the construction of shared social meanings'. *Educational Action Research* 15/3: 479-488.
- Dahmardeh, M.** 2009. *English Language Teaching in Iran and Communicative Language Teaching*. Unpublished PhD thesis, University of Warwick, UK.
- Davari, H. and F. Aghagolzadeh.** 2015. 'To teach or not to teach? Still an open question for the Iranian education system' In C. Kennedy (ed.). *English Language Teaching in the Islamic Republic of Iran: Innovations, Trends and Challenges*. London: British Council. Available at <http://www.britishcouncil.ir/en/teach/English-Language-Teaching-Iran> (accessed 26 June 2015).
- Davis, J., N. Watson, and S. Cunningham-Burley.** 2000. 'Learning the lives of disabled children: developing a reflexive approach' in P. Christensen and A. James (eds.). *Research with Children: Perspectives and Practices*. London: Falmer Press.
- Deardorff, D. K.** 2006. 'Identification and assessment of intercultural competence as a student outcome of internationalization'. *Journal of Studies in International Education* 10/3: 241-266.
- Department of Education.** 1994. *Bullying: Don't Suffer in Silence. An Anti-Bullying Pack for Schools*. London: HMSO.
- DeTurk, S.** 2001. 'Intercultural empathy: myth, competency, or possibility for alliance building?'. *Communication Education* 50/4: 374-384.
- Dixon, P. and M. Hayden.** 2008. "'On the move": primary age children in transition'. *Cambridge Journal of Education* 38/4: 483-496.
- Dörnyei, Z.** 2007. *Research Methods in Applied Linguistics*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Dörnyei, Z.** 2003. *Questionnaire in Second Language Research: Construction, Administration and Processing*. Mahwah: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
- Ebrahim, H. B., and N. Muthukrishna.** 2005. 'Research with under fours: Some sense making moves'. *Journal of Education* 37: 80-102.
- Eder, D. and L. Fingerson.** 2002. 'Interviewing children and adolescents' in J. K. Gubrium and J. A. Holstein (eds.). *Handbook of Interview Research*. London: Sage.

- England, K.** 1994. 'Getting Personal: Reflexivity, Positionality and Feminist Research'. *The Professional Geographer* 46/1: 80–89.
- Farhady, H, F. Sajadi Hezaveh, and H. Hedayati.** 2010. 'Reflections on foreign language education in Iran'. *TESL-EJ* 13/4. Available at www.tesl-ej.org/wordpress/issues/volume13/ej52/ej52a1 (accessed 17 April 2015).
- Farrell, A.** 2005. 'New possibilities for ethical research with children' in A. Farrell (ed.) *Ethical Research with Children*. Milton Keynes: Open University Press, pp.176-178.
- Fendler, L.** 2001. 'Educating flexible souls: the construction of subjectivity through developmentality and interaction' in K. Hultqvist and G. Dahlberg (eds.). *Governing the Child in the New Millenium*. London: Routledge Falmer.
- Fereday, J. and E. Muir-Cochrane.** 2006. 'Demonstrating rigor using thematic analysis: a hybrid approach of inductive and deductive coding and theme development'. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods* 5/1: 80-92.
- Fleta T. and E. Forster.** 2014. 'From Flat Stanley to Flat Cat: An Intercultural, Interlinguistic Project'. *CLELE Journal* 2/ 1: 57-71.
- Fortuina, J., M. van Geela, A. Zibernab, and P. Veddera.** 2014. 'Ethnic preferences in friendships and casual contacts between majority and minority children in the Netherlands'. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations* 41: 57-65.
- France, A., G. Bendelow and S. Williams.** 2000. 'A "risky" business: Researching the health beliefs of children and young people' in A. Lewis and G. Lindsay (eds.). *Researching Children's Perspectives*. Buckingham: Open University Press.
- Frones, I., C. Jenks, J. Qvortrup, I Rizzini. and B. Thorne.** 2000. 'Editorial: Children's places and spaces in the world'. *Childhood* 7/1: 5-9.
- Furnham, A. and S. Bochner.** 1982. 'Social difficulty in a foreign culture: an empirical analysis of culture shock' in S. Bochner (ed.). *Cultures in Contact: Studies in Cross-cultural interactions*. Oxford: Pergamon.
- Gallacher, L. and M. Gallacher.** 2008. 'Methodological immaturity in childhood research? Thinking through "participatory methods"'. *Childhood* 15/4: 499–516.
- Gallagher, H. C.** 2013. 'Willingness to communicate and cross-cultural adaptation: L2 communication and acculturative stress as transaction'. *Applied Linguistics* 34/1: 53–73.
- Garton, S. and F. Copland.** 2010. "'I like this interview; I get cakes and cats!": the effect of prior relationships on interview talk'. *Qualitative Research* 10/5: 533-551.

Ghosn, I. K. 2002. 'Four good reasons to use literature in primary school ELT'. *ELT Journal* 56/2: 172-182.

Giltlin, A., K. Bringhurst, M. Burns, V. Cooley, K. Myers, K. Price, R. Russell, and P. Tiess. 1992. *Teachers' Voices for School Change: An Introduction to Educative Research*. London: Routledge.

Gougeon, T. D. 1993. 'Urban schools and immigrant families'. *The Urban Review* 25/4: 251-287.

Greeff, P. and A. Grobler. 2008. 'Bullying during the intermediate school phase: A South African study'. *Childhood* 15/1: 127-144.

Greene, S. and M. Hill. 2005. 'Researching children's experience: Methods and methodical issues' in S. Greene and D. Hogan. (eds.). *Researching Children's Experience. Approaches and Methods*. London: Sage Publications.

Grimshaw, T. and C. Sears. 2008. '“Where am I from?” “Where do I belong?” The negotiation and maintenance of identity by international school students'. *Journal of Research in International Education* 7/3: 259-278.

Groiss, A. and N. Toobian. 2006. *The Attitude to 'the other' and to Peace in Iranian School books and Teacher's Guides*. Available at <http://www.impact-se.org/docs/reports/Iran/Iran2006.pdf> (accessed 26 June 2015).

Grover, S. 2004. 'Why won't they listen to us? On giving power and voice to children participating in social research'. *Childhood* 11/1: 81-93.

Guba, E. G. and Y. S. Lincoln. 1994. 'Competing paradigms in qualitative research' in N. K. Denzin and Y. S. Lincoln (eds.). *Handbook of Qualitative Research*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Guba, E. G. and Y. S. Lincoln. 1989. *Fourth Generation Evaluation*. London: Sage Publications.

Guest, M. 2002. 'A critical “checkbook” for culture teaching and learning'. *ELT Journal* 56/2: 154-161.

Hakimzadeh, S. 2006. *Iran: a Vast Diaspora Abroad and Millions of Refugees at Home*. Available at <http://www.migrationpolicy.org/article/iran-vast-diaspora-abroad-and-millions-refugees-home> (accessed 15 April 2015).

Hajisoteriou, C., P. Angelides, A. Costi and M. Hadjiaggeli. 2011. 'Urging inclusion for interculturalism: Fostering excellence in a Cypriot primary school'. *Intercultural Education* 22/5:437-444.

Harrington, P. 2008. 'The negotiation of identity in an international school setting'. *International Schools Journal* 28/1: 12-16.

- Hart, J. and B. Tyrer.** 2006. *Research with Children Living in Situations of Armed Conflict: Concept, Ethics and Methods*. Refugee Studies Centre, Working Paper Series (Working Paper 30), University of Oxford.
- Harwood, D.** 2010. 'Finding a voice for child participants within doctoral research: experiences from the field'. *Australasian Journal of Early Childhood* 34/4: 4-13.
- Hawkins, M. R.** 2005. 'Becoming a student: identity work and academic literacies in early schooling'. *TESOL Quarterly* 39/1: 59–82.
- Heathfield, D.** 2015. *Storytelling with our Students: Techniques for Telling Tales from around the World*. Surrey: Delta Publishing.
- Hennessy, E. and C. Heary.** 2005. 'Exploring children's view through focus groups' in S. Greene and D. Hogan (eds.). *Researching Children's Experience*. London: Sage Publication.
- Highet, G.** 2003. 'Cannabis and smoking research: Interviewing young people in self-selected friendship pairs'. *Health Education Research, Theory & Practice* 18/1: 108–118.
- Hill, S. and M. Hayden.** 2008. 'Children on the move: using Pollock's transition model for better understanding of internationally mobile primary-aged pupils'. *International Schools Journal* 27/2: 37-43.
- Holland, S., E. Renold, N. J. Ross, and A. Hillman.** 2010. 'Power, agency and participatory agendas: A critical exploration of young people's engagement in participative qualitative research'. *Childhood* 17/ 3: 360-375.
- Hood, S., P. Kelley. and B. Mayall.** 1996. 'Children as research subjects: A risky enterprise'. *Children and Society* 10: 117–128.
- House, J.** 2003. 'English as a lingua franca: A threat to multilingualism?'. *Journal of Sociolinguistics* 4: 556-576.
- Houssart, J. and H. Evens.** 2011. 'Conducting task based interview with pairs of children: consensus, conflict, knowledge construction and turn taking'. *International Journal of Research and Methods in Education* 34/1: 63-79.
- Howard Hamilton, M. F., B. J. Richardson. and B. Shuford.** 1998. 'Promoting multicultural education: a holistic approach'. *College Student Affairs Journal* 18: 5-17.
- Huff, J. L.** 2001. 'Parental attachment, reverse culture shock, perceived social support, and college adjustment of missionary children'. *Journal of Psychology and Theology* 29/3: 246-264.

- Hurley, J. C. and M. K. Underwood.** 2002. 'Children's understanding of their research rights before and after debriefing: Informed assent, confidentiality, and stopping participation'. *Child Development* 73/1: 132-143.
- James, A., C. Jenks, and A. Prout.**1998. *Theorizing Childhood*. Cambridge: Polity.
- Jenkins, J.** 2009. *World Englishes: A Resource Book for Students* (Second edition). London: Routledge.
- John, M.** (ed.). 1996. *Children in Charge: The Child's Right to a Fair hearing*. London: J. Kingsley Publishers.
- Johnson, K.** 2008. 'Teaching children to use visual research methods' in P. Thomson (ed.): *Doing Visual Research with Children and Young People*. London: Routledge.
- Kefyalew, F.** 1996. 'The reality of child participation in research: experience from a capacity-building programme'. *Childhood* 3/2: 203-214.
- Kellett, M. and S. Ding.** 2004. 'Middle childhood' in S. Fraser, V. Lewis, S. Ding, M. Kellet, and C. Robinson (eds.). *Doing Research with Children and Young People*. London: Sage Publication.
- Kellett, M.** 2010a. 'Small shoes, big steps! Empowering children as active researchers'. *Am J Community Psychol* 46: 195- 203.
- Kellett, M.** 2010b. *Rethinking Children and Research: Attitudes in Contemporary Society*. London: Continuum International Publishing Group.
- Khajavi, Y and R. Abbasian.** 2011. 'English language teaching, national identity and globalization in Iran: The case of public schools'. *International Journal of Humanities and Social Science* 1/10: 182-186.
- King, P. M. and M. B. Baxter Magolda.** 2005. 'A developmental model of intercultural maturity'. *Journal of College Student Development* 46/6: 571–592.
- Kirova, A. and M. Emme** 2008. 'Fotonovela as a research tool in image-based participatory research with immigrant children'. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods* 7/2: 35-57.
- Komulainen, S.** 2007. 'The ambiguity of the child's voice in social research'. *Childhood* 14/1: 11-28.
- Kostenius, C.** 2011. 'Picture this – our dream school! Swedish schoolchildren sharing their visions of school'. *Childhood* 18/4: 509–525.
- Kostenius, C. and K. Ohrling.** 2006. 'Schoolchildren from the north sharing their lived experience of health and well-being'. *Journal of Qualitative Studies of Health and Well-being* 1/1: 226–235.

- Kostenius, C. and K. Ohrling.** 2008. 'The meaning of stress from schoolchildren's perspective'. *Stress and Health* 24/4: 287–293.
- Kuchah K. and A. Pinter** 2012. "'Was this an interview?'" Breaking the power barrier in adult-child interviews in an African context'. *Issues in Educational Research* 22/3: 283–297.
- Kuo, B. C. H. and G. Roysircar.** 2005. 'An exploratory study of cross-cultural adaptation of adolescent Taiwanese unaccompanied sojourners in Canada'. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations* 30: 159-183.
- Kvale, S. and S. Brinkmann.** 2009. *Interviews: Learning the Craft of Qualitative Research Interviewing*. Thousand Oaks: London: Sage.
- Lazarus, R. S.** 1976. *Patterns of Adjustment*. New York: McGraw-Hill.
- Leong, C. and C. Ward.** 2000. 'Identity conflict in sojourners'. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations* 24:763-776.
- Levels, M. and J. Dronkers.** 2008. 'Educational performance of native and immigrant children from various countries of origin'. *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 31/8: 1404-1425.
- Lewis, A.** 2010. 'Silence in the context of child "voice"'. *Children and Society* 24/1: 14-23.
- Lewis, A.** 1992. 'Group child interviews as a research tool'. *British Educational Research Journal* 18/4: 413-421.
- Lewis, C. W., M. James, S. Hancock, and V. Hill-Jackson.** 2008. 'Framing African American students' success and failure in urban settings: A typology for change'. *Urban Education* 43: 127-153.
- Li, J.** 2001. 'Expectations of Chinese immigrant parents for their children's education: The interplay of Chinese tradition and the Canadian context'. *Canadian Journal of Education* 26/ 4: 477-494.
- Lundy, L.** 2007. "'Voice' is not enough: conceptualising article 12 of the United Nations convention on the rights of the child". *British Educational Research Journal* 33/6: 927–942.
- MacKennedy, S., D. Pepler, W. Craig, and J. Connolly.** 2006 'Peer victimization and psychological adjustment: The experiences of Canadian immigrant youth'. *Electronic Journal of Research in Education Psychology* 4/2: 239-264.
- Mandell, N.** 1988. 'The least-adult role in studying children'. *Journal of Contemporary Ethnography* 16/4: 433-467.

- Marshall, W.** 1996. 'Professionals, children and power' in E. Blyth and J. Milner (eds.). *Exclusion from School: Inter-Professional Issues for Policy and Practice*. London: Routledge.
- Mason, J. and S. Hood.** 2010. 'Exploring issues of children as actors in social research'. *Children and Youth Services Review* 33: 490-495.
- Matthews, H., M. Limb, and M. Taylor.** 1998. 'The geography of children: Some ethical and methodological considerations for project and dissertation work'. *Journal of Geography in Higher Education* 22: 311-324.
- Matthews, H. and F. Tucker.** 2000. 'Consulting children'. *Journal of Geography in Higher Education* 24/2: 299-310.
- Mauthner, M.** 1997. 'Methodological aspects of collecting data from children: lessons from three research projects'. *Children and Society* 11: 16-28.
- Mendenhall, M., M. Stevens, A. Bird, G. Oddou, and J. Osland.** 2008. *Intercultural Effectiveness Scale: Technical Report*. The Kozai Group: Chesterfield.
- Miller, J. B.** 1992. 'Domination and subordination' in P. S. Rothenburg (ed.). *The Social Construction of Difference: Race, Class, Gender, and Sexuality*. New York: St Martin's Press.
- Mills, J.** 2001. 'Being bilingual: perspectives of third generation Asian children on language, culture and identity'. *International Journal of Bilingual Education and Bilingualism* 4/6: 383-402.
- Ministry of Education.** 1999. 'Islamic Republic of Iran: Report of education for all assessment, the year 2000' in *The EFA 2000 Assessment: Country Reports*. Available at http://www.unesco.org/education/wef/countryreports/iran/rapport_1.html (accessed 26 June 2012).
- Mitra, D.** 2004. 'The significance of students: Can increasing "student voice" in schools lead to gains in youth development?'. *Teachers College Record* 106/ 4: 651-688.
- Moore, T., M. McArthur, and D. Noble-Carr.** 2008. 'Little voices and big ideas: Lessons learned from children about research'. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods* 7/2:77-91.
- Morrow, V.** 1999. "'It's cool ...Cos you can't give us detention and things, can you?!": Reflections on research with children' in P. Milner and B. Carolin (eds.). *Time to Listen to Children: Personal and Professional Communication*. London: Routledge.
- Morrow, V. and M. Richards.** 1996. 'The ethics of social research with children: An interview'. *Children and Society* 10: 90-105.

- Munniksmma, A., A. Flachea, V. Maykel, and V. René.** 2012. 'Parental acceptance of children's intimate ethnic outgroup relations: The role of culture, status, and family reputation'. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations* 36: 575– 585.
- Murphy, E. and R. Dingwall.** 2001. 'The Ethics of ethnography' in P. Atkinson, A. Coffey, S. Delamont, J. Lofland and L. Lofland (eds.). *Handbook of Ethnography*. London: Sage.
- National Curriculum of Islamic Republic of Iran.** 2013. Available at <http://www.medu.ir/Portal/Home/Default.aspx?CategoryID=ca78c9d1-def8-4929-a41b-448493e8e91c> (accessed 17 April 2015).
- Nieuwenhuys, O.** 1996. 'Action research with street children: A role for street educators'. *PLA Notes, Special Issues on Children's Participation* 25. London: IIED.
- Nigbur, D., R. Brown, L. Cameron, R. Hossain, A. Landau, D. Le Touze, A. Rutland, and C. Watters.** 2008. 'Acculturation, well-being and classroom behaviour among white British and British Asian primary-school children in the south-east of England: Validating a child-friendly measure of acculturation attitudes'. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations* 32: 493–504.
- Nind, M.** 2011. 'Participatory data analysis: a step too far?'. *Qualitative Research* 11/4: 349–363.
- O'Kane, C.** 2008. 'The development of participatory techniques: Facilitating children's views about decisions which affect them' in P. Christensen and A. James (eds.). *Research with Children: Perspectives and Practices*. London: Routledge.
- Oliver, R.** 1998. 'Negotiation of meaning in child interactions'. *The Modern Language Journal* 82/3: 372-356.
- Paivandi, S.** 2006. Religion et éducation en Iran. L'échec de l'islamisation de l'école / GRIFFIN Rosarii. Education in the Muslim World Paris: L'Harmattan, 2006. Oxford: Symposium Books.
- Park, S. J.** 2002. 'An investigation into Korean children's perceptions of key variables which influence their English learning'. Unpublished MA dissertation, University of Warwick.
- Pachter, M. L., B. A. Bernstein, L. A. Szalacha, and C. García Coll.** 2010. 'Perceived racism and discrimination in children and youths: an exploratory study'. *Health Social Work* 35/1: 61-69.
- Pearson-Evans, A.** 2006. 'Recording the journey: Diaries of Irish students in Japan' in M. Byram and A. Feng (eds.). *Living and Studying Abroad*. Clevedon: Multilingual Matters.
- Phillipson, R.** 2009. *Linguistic Imperialism Continued*. London: Routledge.

- Pinter, A.** 2006. *Teaching Young Language Learner Oxford Handbook for Language Teachers*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Pinter, A.** 2010. 'Sojourner parents' perspectives on their children's adaptation processes during their first year in the UK'. Available at http://www2.warwick.ac.uk/fac/cross_fac/globalpeople/resourcebank/researchpapers/processes_of_adaptation.pdf (accessed 17 April 2015).
- Pinter, A.** 2011. *Children Learning Second Languages*. Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Pinter, A.** 2014. 'Child participant roles in applied linguistics research'. *Applied Linguistics*. 35/2: 168-183.
- Pinter, A.** and **S. Zandian**. 2015. "'I thought it would be tiny little one phrase that we said, in a huge big pile of papers': Children's reflections on their involvement in participatory research'. *Qualitative Research* 15/2: 235-250.
- Pinter, A.** and **S. Zandian**. 2014. "'I don't ever want to leave this room" - researching with children'. *ELT Journal* 68/1: 64-74.
- Pollock, D. C.** and **R. E. Van Reken**. 1999. *The Third Culture Kid Experience. Growing up among Worlds*. Yarmouth, Maine: Intercultural Press.
- Prout, A.** and **A. James**. 1990. 'A New paradigm for the sociology of childhood? Provenance, promise and problems' in A. James and A. Prout (eds.). *Constructing and Reconstructing Childhood: Contemporary Issues in the Sociological Study of Childhood*. London: Falmer Press.
- Punch, S.** 2002. 'Research with children the same or different from research with adults?'. *Childhood* 9/3: 321-341.
- Qin, D. B., W. Niobe,** and **P. Mukherjee**. 2008. 'The other side of the model minority story: the familial and peer challenges faced by Chinese American adolescents'. *Youth and Society* 39/ 4: 480-506.
- Qvortrup, J.** 1990. 'A voice for children in statistical and social accounting: A plea for children's right to be heard' in A. James and A. Prout (eds.). *Constructing and Deconstructing Childhood: Contemporary Issues in the Sociological Study of Childhood*. New York: The Falmer Press.
- Radio Zamaneh**. 2012. 'Iran faced with growing brain drain'. Available at <http://radiozamaneh.com/english/content/iran-faced-growing-brain-drain> (accessed 11 June 2012).
- Rajaei, B.** 2000. 'The politics of refugee policy in post-revolutionary Iran'. *Middle East Journal* 54/1: 44-63.

- Rapley, T.** 2011. 'Some pragmatics of data analysis' in D. Silverman (ed.). *Qualitative Research: Issues of Theory, Method and Practice* (Third edition). London: Sage.
- Rashidi, N. and R. Najafi.** 2010. 'The representation of culture in Iran language institute advanced level textbooks'. *Journal of Language Teaching and Research* 1/5: 624-631.
- Ream, R. K. and R. W. Rumberger.** 2008. 'Student engagement, peer social capital, and school dropout among Mexican American and Non-Latino White students'. *Sociology of Education* 81: 109-139.
- Reeves, C.** 2006. 'Developing a comprehensive support programme for families in transition: A working model in practice'. *International Schools Journal* 26/1: 30-36.
- Richards, K.** 2003. *Qualitative Inquiry in TESOL*. Houndmills: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Ritala-kosinen, A.** 1994. 'Children and the construction of close relationships: how to find out the children's point of view' in J. Brannen and M. O'Brien (eds.). *Childhood and Parenthood*. London: Institute of Education.
- Rose, G.** 1997. 'Situating Knowledges: Positionality, reflexivities and other tactics'. *Progress in Human Geography* 21/3: 305-320.
- Santrock, J.** 2007. *Children*. New York: McGraw Hill.
- Schild, E. O.** 1962. 'The foreign student as a stranger learning the norms of the host culture'. *Journal of Social Issues* 18/1: 41-54.
- Schwippert, K.** (ed.). 2007. 'Progress in reading literacy: The impact of PIRLS 2001 in 13 countries'. *Studies in International Comparative and Multicultural Education*: 7. Waxmann Verlag GmbH.
- Science Applications International Corporation (SAIC).** 2007. *Iranian Textbooks Content and Context*. Available at <http://www.fas.org/irp/dni/osc/irantext.pdf> <http://www.darsiran.ir/> (accessed 26 March 2012).
- Searle, W. and C. Ward.** 1990. 'The prediction of psychological and sociocultural adjustment during cross-cultural transitions'. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations* 14: 449-464.
- Secru, L.** 2006. 'The foreign language and intercultural competence teacher: the acquisition of a new professional identity'. *Intercultural Education* 17/1: 55-72.
- Sermeno, S. E.** 2011. 'Building a case for cultural sensitivity through personal storytelling and interpersonal dialogue in international education'. *International Schools Journal* 30/2: 10-17.

- Sewell, K.** 2011. 'Researching sensitive issues: a critical appraisal of "draw-and-write" as a data collection technique in eliciting children's perceptions'. *International Journal of Research and Methods in Education* 34/2: 175-191.
- Shaffer, L. F. and E. J. Jr. Shoben.** 1956. *The Psychology of Adjustment*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin.
- Shamim, F. and R. Qureshi.** 2013. 'Informed consent in educational research in the South: tensions and accommodations'. *Compare* 43/4: 464-482.
- Shirazi, R.** 2014. 'The pedagogy of visibility: Constructs and contests of Iranianness in a community organized school in a large southern U.S. city'. *Diaspora, Indigenous, and Minority Education* 8/2: 108-124.
- Silverman, D.** 2010. *Doing Qualitative Research* (Third edition) .London: Sage Publication.
- Skelton, T.** 2008. 'Research with children and young people: Exploring the tensions between ethics, competence and participation'. *Children's Geographies* 6/1: 21-36.
- Slepickova, L. and M. K. Bartosova.** 2014. 'Ethical and methodological association in doing research on children in a school environment'. *The New Educational Review* 38/4: 84-93.
- Smith, L. E.** 1976. 'English as an international auxiliary language'. *RELC Journal* 7/2: 38 -42.
- Smith, P. K. and P. Brain.** 'Bullying in schools: Lessons from two decades of research'. *Aggressive Behavior* 26: 1-9.
- Smith, P. and S. Shu.** 2000. 'What good schools can do about bullying: Findings from a survey in English schools after a decade of research and action'. *Childhood* 7/2: 193-211.
- Snape, D. and L. Spencer.** 2003. 'The foundations of qualitative research' in J. Ritchie and J. Lewis (eds.). *Qualitative Research Practice: A Guide for Social Science Students and Researchers*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- Sowa, E.** 2014. 'Addressing intercultural awareness-raising in the young learner EFL classroom in Poland: Some teacher perspectives' in S. Rich (ed.). *International Perspectives on the Teaching English to Young Learners*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Speiser, S.** 2000. 'Becoming an intercultural primary school teacher: experiences from Bolivia. *Intercultural Education* 11/3: 225-237.
- Spencer-Oatey, H. and P. Franklin.** 2009. *Intercultural Interaction: A Multidisciplinary Approach to Intercultural Communication*. Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan.

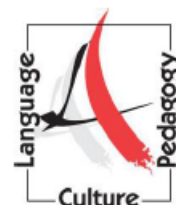
- Spencer-Oatey, H.** and **Z. Xiong.** 2006. 'Chinese students' psychological and sociocultural adjustment to Britain: an empirical study'. *Language, Culture and Curriculum* 19/1: 37-53.
- Spitzberg, B. H.** and **G. Changnon.** 2009. 'Conceptualizing intercultural competence' in D. K. Deardorff (ed.). *The SAGE Handbook of Intercultural Competence*. London: SAGE Publication.
- Straffon, D. A.** 2003. 'Assessing the intercultural sensitivity of high school students attending an international school'. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations* 27: 487-501.
- Suarez-Orozco, C.** 2005. 'Identities under siege: immigration stress and social mirroring among the children of immigrants' in M. M. Suarez-Orozco, C. Suarez-Orozco, and D. Baolian Qin (eds.). *The New Immigration: An Interdisciplinary Reader*. London: Routledge.
- Suarez-Orozco, M. M.** 2005. 'Right moves? Immigration, globalization, utopia, and dystopia' in M. M. Suarez-Orozco, C. Suarez-Orozco, and D. Baolian Qin (eds.). *The New Immigration: An Interdisciplinary Reader*. London: Routledge.
- Tangen, R.** 2008. 'Listening to children's voices in educational research: some theoretical and methodological problems'. *European Journal of Special Needs Education* 23/2:157-166.
- Temple, T.** and **A. Young.** 2004. 'Qualitative research and translation dilemmas.' *Qualitative Research* 4/2: 161-178.
- The International Bureau of Education of UNESCO.** 2011. *World Data on Education* (Seventh edition). Available at <http://www.ibe.unesco.org/en/services/online-materials/world-data-on-education.html> (accessed 10 February 2015).
- Thomas, N.** and **C. O'Kane.** 1998. 'The ethics of participatory research with children'. *Children & Society* 12/5: 336-348.
- Tuma, N.** and **M. Hallinan.** 1979. 'The effects of sex, race and achievement on schoolchildren's friendships'. *Social Forces* 57/4: 1265-1285.
- United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child** 1989. Geneva: United Nations. United Nations (1989). Convention on the rights of the child. UN Document A/44/25.
- UNHCR** 2015. *UNHCR country operations profile - Islamic Republic of Iran*. Available at <http://www.unhcr.org/pages/49e486f96.html> (accessed 03 March 2015).

- Valentine, G.** 1999. 'Being seen and heard? The ethical complexities of working with children and young people at home and at school'. *Ethics, place and Environment* 2/2: 141–155.
- Veale, A.** 2005. 'Creative methodologies and their use in a participatory research project in Rwanda' in S. Greene and D. Hogan (eds.). *Researching Children's Experiences*. London: Sage.
- Velliari, D. M.** 2010. 'International parents in Tokyo and the education of their transnational children'. *Journal of Research in International Education* 9/3: 336–337.
- Vest, A. E. and S. D. Simpkins.** 2013. 'When is sport participation risky or protective for alcohol use? The role of teammates, friendships, and popularity' in J. A. Fredricks and S. D. Simpkins (eds.). *Organized Out-of-School Activities: Settings for Peer Relationships. New Directions for Child and Adolescent Development* 140: 37–55.
- Wallace, C.** 2003. *Critical Reading in Language Education*. Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Ward, C., S. Bochner, and A. Furnham.** 2001. *The Psychology of Culture Shock*. London: Routledge.
- Ward, C. and A. Kennedy.** 1999. 'The measurement of sociocultural adaptation'. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations* 23/4: 659–677.
- Ward, C. and A. Kennedy.** 1994. 'Acculturation strategies, psychological adjustment and sociocultural competence during cross-cultural transitions'. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations* 18: 329–343.
- Ward, C., and A. Kennedy.** 1993. 'Psychological and sociocultural adjustment during cross-cultural transitions: a comparison of secondary students at home and abroad'. *International Journal of Psychology* 28: 129–147.
- Ward, C. and W. Searle.** 1991. 'The impact of value discrepancies and cultural identity on psychological and sociocultural adjustment of sojourners'. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations* 15: 209–225.
- Watson, A.** 1999. Getting behind pupils' written test performances: what they did; what they thought they did; what they could have done'. Paper presented at the fourth British Congress of Mathematics Education, July 15–17, in University College, Northampton.
- Wentzel, K. and S. Asher.** 1995. 'The academic lives of neglected, rejected, popular, and controversial children'. *Child Development* 66/3: 754–763.

- Wentzel, K. R., C.M. Barry. and K. A. Caldwell.** 2004. 'Friendships in middle school: Influences on motivation and school adjustment'. *Journal of Educational Psychology* 6/2: 195-203.
- Westcott, H. L. and K. S. Littleton.** 2005. 'Exploring meaning in interviews with children' in S. Greene and D. Hogan (eds.). *Researching Children's Experience*. London: Sage Publication.
- Wolke, D., S. Woods, L. Bloomfield and L Karstadt.** 2001. 'Bullying involvement in primary school and common health problems'. *Arch Dis Child* 85:197–201.
- Wolke, D., S. Woods, K. Stanford and H. Schultz.** 2001. 'Bullying and victimisation of primary school children in England and Germany: Prevalence and school factors'. *British Journal of Psychology* 92/4: 673–696.
- Word Education Service.** 2004. *Iran: Education Overview*. Available at <http://www.wes.org/ca/wedb/iran/iredov.htm> (accessed 21 June 2015).
- Yazigi, R. and P. Seedhouse** 2005. "'Sharing Time" with young learners'. *TESL-EJ* 9/3: 1-26. Available at <http://www.tesl-ej.org/wordpress/> (accessed 17 April 2015).
- Ying, Y.** 2002. 'Formation of cross-cultural relationships of Taiwanese international students in the United States'. *Journal of Community Psychology* 30: 45-55.
- Ying, Y. and W. Liese** 1994. 'Initial adjustment of Taiwanese students to the United States: impact of postarrival variables'. *Journal of Cross-cultural Psychology* 25/4: 466-477.
- Zandian, S.** 2015. 'Migrant literature and teaching English as an international language in Iran' in C. Kennedy (ed.). *English Language Teaching in the Islamic Republic of Iran: Innovations, Trends and Challenges*. London: British Council.
- Zandian, S.** 2011a. 'Children's experience and perception of adaptation and intercultural encounters'. Unpublished MA dissertation, University of Warwick, UK.
- Zandian, S.** 2011b. 'A personal reflection on the impact of researching children on my own professional development'. *ELTED Journal* 14: 32-36.
- Zung, W. W. K.** 1965. 'A self-rating depression scale'. *Archives of General Psychiatry* 12: 63-70.

Appendices

Appendix 1. Initial permission letter for schools



Dear Sir/ Madam

Miss Samaneh Zandian is a current PhD. student in English Language Teaching and Applied Linguistics at The Centre for Applied Linguistics, University of Warwick. For the purpose of her research, 'Children's Experiences and Perceptions of Adaptation and Intercultural Encounters', she is interested in studying intercultural interactions and cultural competence amongst young learners in Iran. To this end, the data needs to be collected from students in Iran via interviews and anonymous questionnaires. The data will be kept confidential between her supervisor and herself for the purpose of this research only.

I would greatly appreciate it, if you kindly give your consent.

Sincerely yours,

The Centre for Applied Linguistics
The University of Warwick
Coventry, CV4 7AL
United Kingdom
Tel: +44(0)24 7652 3200
Fax: +44(0)24 7652 4318
Email: appling@warwick.ac.uk
Website: <http://www.warwick.ac.uk/al>

THE UNIVERSITY OF
WARWICK

www.warwick.ac.uk

Appendix 2. The questionnaire



Hi! I am Samaneh, I'm a university student, and I am interested in your ideas about children who go to school in other countries.

You don't need to write your name and no one will see your answers other than me.

If you don't like to answer this questionnaire you can hand it back to me now.



First, Let's practice putting an X in the appropriate box.



[Sample Question] What is your favourite colour?

Put an X in the ☐ next to your favourite colour. For example, If your favourite colour is 'blue', put an X in the ☐ next to blue.

☒ Blue ☐ Red ☐ Pink ☐ Green ☐ Other _____



Now that you know how to fill in a questionnaire, please help me know you better and answer the following questions about yourself. Just remember you have to put an X in only ONE box.

- ☐ Girl  • ☐ Boy 
- Year of Birth:
- Grade: ☐ 3rd ☐ 4th ☐ 5th ☐ 6th
- The city you were born in: _____
- The language or languages you speak at home _____
- If you ask a foreigner: 'what do you think about the Iranians?' what do you think he or she would answer? _____
- If I could live in another country with my parents, I would go to _____, because _____

- Have you ever travelled to a country where you didn't know the language?
☐ Yes
☐ No



If you chose 'YES', please write the answer on the line:

- Name the countries you travelled to: _____

- What were the similarities or differences between countries you have visited and Iran that surprised you? _____

Remember, this is NOT a test. There is no right and wrong answer. Please read each question carefully and put an X in the box according to your own idea, you may have to choose which answer is closest to your feelings. If you have another idea, write your answer on the line next to the option 'Other'.

Are you ready? Let's go!










Abalooboo is an imaginary country. Imagine you are going to travel to *Abalooboo*, for a year with your family and you do not know their language.


Now please answer the following questions.

1. How do you feel about this change in your life?

- ☐  I am excited because I like to make friends with children from other countries.
- ☐  I am curious because I want to meet people from other countries.
- ☐  I am worried because things will be different in *Abalooboo*, and I will be very lonely.
- ☐  I am sad because I hate going to a new school with new rules.
- ☐ Other _____

2.  What do you think you will like the most?

- ☐ Seeing the different part of the world and learning about *Abalooboo*.
- ☐ The change.
- ☐ Making new friends with the students from other countries.
- ☐ Other _____

3.  What do you think you will like the least?

- ☐ The change.
- ☐ Learning the new language.
- ☐ The new school with students from another country.
- ☐ The food.
- ☐ Other _____

4. Ranaa, Bardia, and Noushin, and Farzan are also moving to another country with their families. They are preparing themselves for the new life. Which one of them is more like you?

- ☐ Ranaa is collecting her friends' email address to contact them frequently when she is far away from home.
- ☐ Bardia is watching some programs on TV about traveling. He is learning about the food and weather in the new country. He also asks his parents and teacher about the schools and life there.
- ☐ Noushin is calling her friend's cousin who lives in the same country she is going to spend the next year in. She is making a new friend there and her parents are going to send her to the same school.
- ☐ Farzan is going to language class in summer before starting the school year in the new country.
- ☐ Other _____

5. When I arrive in *Abalooboo*, I will first...
- ☐ ask my parents to show me around.
 - ☐ call my gran and tell her that I've missed her and I want to come back.
 - ☐ unpack and put my clothes in the wardrobe.
 - ☐ try to make friend with our new neighbour, but hoping to go home to my friends when our stay here is over.
 - ☐ Other _____

6. In *Abalooboo*, I prefer to stay...
- ☐ in a hotel
 - ☐ with a host family
 - ☐ at one of your relatives house.
 - ☐ in a house where the neighbours are also from another country.
 - ☐ Other _____





6a. Please explain your choice: _____

7. Where in *Abalooboo* do you think you can find more friends?
- ☐ Parties I go with my parents.
 - ☐ Complementary school (the school for Iranian students to learn how to read and write in Farsi).
 - ☐ Religious ceremonies in the Mosque.
 - ☐ School.
 - ☐ Other _____

8. How will you make friends at the new school?
- ☐ I will play sport with them.
 - ☐ I will teach them how to say "Hello" in Farsi.
 - ☐ I will try to look like them and speak their language.
 - ☐ I will try to be a good student so that everyone loves me.
 - ☐ Other _____

9. You are enjoying your stay in *Abalooboo*. This is because:
- ☐ You enjoy making new friends from other countries.
 - ☐ You don't mind changing your school.
 - ☐ You are interested in geography and you know a lot about other countries.
 - ☐ You like meeting people from different countries.
 - ☐ Other _____







10. There are two schools in *Abalooboo*, which one would you choose to go?

- ☐  a. This school is for girls only.
- ☐  b. This school is for both girls and boys.







10a. Please explain your choice: _____

11. Imagine you have a brother or sister. How do you feel if he or she studies in the same school you are going to in *Abalooboo*? Why?

- ☐  Because I won't feel alone and we can talk in Farsi with each other.
- ☐  Because I can be friend with her or his friends.
- ☐  Because I want to find new friends of my own.
- ☐  Because then I have to take her or him everywhere with myself.
- ☐  Other _____
- ☐  Other _____

12. Jin, Saabira, Adeleh, and Sarah are your classmates. Next to which of them do you like to sit?

- ☐  Saabira is originally from Africa, but her parents moved to *Abalooboo* after she was born.
- ☐  Adeleh and her sister are from Afghanistan. They have recently moved to *Abalooboo*. Their mother tongue is Farsi.
- ☐  Sarah was born in *Abalooboo*. She can only speak the language spoken in *Abalooboo*.
- ☐  Jin is from China. She moved to *Abalooboo* with her parents one year before you.



12a. Please explain your choice: _____

13. If you are invited to a birthday party in *Abalooboo*, and you don't feel like going, that's because...

- ☐ you don't know anyone.
- ☐ you can't understand what they say.
- ☐ you don't know how to play their games.
- ☐ Other _____



Imagine a new student has come to your class in the middle of the term. Her name is CoCo. She is from another country and she only speaks the language spoken in her country which you don't know.

Now please answer the following questions.

14. How do you feel if CoCo sits next to you in the classroom?



Please complete the following sentence if you chose '😊'.

14a. I like it if she sits next to me, because...

- ☐ I like to know people from other countries.
- ☐ I think she is lonely and scared and I can help her.
- ☐ I can learn another language from her.
- ☐ I can learn about her country.
- ☐ Other _____



Please complete the following sentence if you chose '😞'.

14b. I DON'T like it if she sits next to me, because...

- ☐ I don't like new students who do not know much about here.
- ☐ I don't speak her language and I can't communicate with her.
- ☐ she is very different and behaves in a strange way.
- ☐ I prefer to seat next to my own friend.
- ☐ Other _____

15. Someone in your class has a birthday party but CoCo is not invited, what is the reason?

- ☐ she doesn't talk.
- ☐ she doesn't understand our jokes and is not fun.

- ☐ because the birthday girl doesn't want CoCo to be her friend.
- ☐ She is grumpy and is always crying.
- ☐ Other _____

16. How can you help CoCo not to feel homesick?

- ☐ I can show her around the school.
- ☐ I can invite her to my house.
- ☐ I can introduce her to another student who can speak her language.
- ☐ We can play some sport.
- ☐ I can help her with Farsi.
- ☐ Other _____

17. CoCo can't understand the language you speak. What kind of games can you play with her? Name the games and describe one game briefly. You can also draw the picture of the game.

You can draw the picture here.



Have you finished the questionnaire?

Please check if there are any questions that you missed out. Don't worry if there are questions that you don't know the answer or do not want to respond. Just leave them blank.

Now, please hand in your questionnaire to your teacher.

Thank you very much for your time and help. Bye!

Appendix 3. The Persian version of the questionnaire (for Boys)



سلام! اسم من سمانه است و دانشجو هستم. خیلی دوست دارم نظرت را
در مورد بچه‌های ایرانی که در کشورهای دیگر زندگی می‌کنند و به مدرسه
می‌روند بدانم.
احتیاجی نیست که اسم‌ات را روی این برگه بنویسی. من تنها کسی هستم
که جواب‌های تو را می‌خوانم.
پُر کردن این پرسشنامه اجباری نیست و اگر دوست نداری آن را پُر کنی،
می‌توانی همین الان آن را به من برگردانی.

بیا اول تمرین کنیم که چطوری به پرسش چندگزینه ای جواب دهیم.
مثال: چه رنگی را دوست داری؟
یک ضربدر (X) داخل مربع رنگ مورد علاقهات بزن. مثلاً اگر رنگ آبی را دوست
داری، داخل مربع کنار رنگ آبی یک ضربدر بزن.



☐ سبز ☐ صورتی ☐ قرمز ☒ آبی ☐ موارد دیگر _____

حالا که می دانی چطوری به این پرسشنامه پاسخ دهی، لطفاً کمک کن تا بهتر بشناسمت و به سوالات زیر پاسخ بده.
یادت نرود که برای هر سؤال فقط در یکی از مربع ها ضربدر بزنی.



- پایه تحصیلی: ☐ سوم ☐ چهارم ☐ پنجم ☐ ششم
- محل تولد: (شهر) _____
- اگر از یک خارجی بپرسند ایرانی ها چگونه مردمی هستند، به نظر تو چه جوابی می دهد؟

- اگر می توانستی در کشور دیگری زندگی کنی، کجا را انتخاب می کردی؟ چرا؟

- تا حالا به کشور دیگری (حتی برای تعطیلات) سفر کرده ای؟
☐ بله ☐ خیر

اگر گزینه "بله" را انتخاب کرده ای به سوال زیر پاسخ دهید:




- کشورهایی را که به آنها سفر کرده ای نام ببر: _____
- چه چیزهایی در آن کشورها بیشتر باعث تعجبات شد؟

یادت باشه که این یک امتحان نیست و گزینه درست و غلط وجود ندارد.
لطفاً سوالات را با دقت مطالعه کن و گزینه مورد نظرت را انتخاب کن و داخل مربع کنار آن ضربدر بزن. اگر
پاسخی جز آنچه در گزینه ها آمده داری، پاسفت را در فضای خالی کنار گزینه "موارد دیگر" بنویس.

فاشتری؟ پس شروع کن!










آتلوووویوو کشوری خیالی است که مردم آن به زبانی صحبت می‌کنند که تو بلد نیستی. تصور کن که قرار است برای یک سال با خانواده‌ات به آتلوووویوو سفر کنی.

حالا لطفاً به سؤالات زیر پاسخ بده.

۱. چه احساسی درباره این اتفاق در زندگی‌ات داری؟

- هیچ‌آنزده‌ام: زیرا دوست دارم با بچه‌های خارجی دوست شوم.  ☐
- کنج‌کاوم: زیرا می‌خواهم مردم کشورهای دیگر را ببینم.  ☐
- نگرانم: زیرا همه چیز در آتلوووویوو متفاوت خواهد بود.  ☐
- ناراحتم: چونکه دوست ندارم به مدرسه‌ای جدید بروم.  ☐

☐ موارد دیگر _____


۲. فکر می‌کنی از چه چیزی بیشتر از همه خوشت بیاید؟ 

☐ دیدن جای دیگری از دنیا

☐ تغییراتی که در زندگی‌ام به وجود می‌آید.

☐ پیدا کردن دوستان خارجی.

☐ موارد دیگر _____

۳. فکر می‌کنی از چه چیزی کمتر از همه خوشت بیاید؟ 

☐ تغییراتی که در زندگی‌ام به وجود می‌آید.

☐ یاد گرفتن زبان جدید

☐ مدرسه جدید

☐ غذا.

☐ موارد دیگر _____

۱. رعنا، بردیا، نوشین و فرزانه قرار است به کشوری دیگر سفر کنند. آنها خود را برای زندگی جدیدشان آماده می‌کنند. به

کدامیک از آنها شباهت بیشتری داری؟

☐ رعنا ایمیل دوستانش را می‌نویسد تا با آنها در تماس باشد.

☐ بردیا از معلمش سؤالاتی درباره کشور جدید می‌پرسد.

☐ نوشین به دختر دایی دوستش که در کشور جدید است تلفن می‌زند تا با او دوست شود.

☐ فرزانه به کلاس زبان می‌رود.

☐ موارد دیگر _____

۲. در اولین فرصت پس از ورود به آتلویوپورو

☐ از پدر و مادر می‌خواهم که شهر جدید را به من نشان دهند.

☐ به مادر بزرگم زنگ می‌زنم و به او می‌گویم که چقدر دلم برایش تنگ شده‌است.

☐ چمدانم را باز می‌کنم و لباس‌هایم را در کمد جدید می‌گذارم.

☐ با همسایه جدیدمان دوست می‌شوم ولی امیدوارم که زودتر به پیش دوستان خودم برگردم.

☐ موارد دیگر _____

۳. در آتلویوپورو دوست داری کجا زندگی کنی؟

☐ هتل

☐ خانه یکی از اهالی آتلویوپورو که به مسافران خارجی جا و غذا می‌دهد.

☐ خانه یکی از فامیل‌ها که آن‌جا زندگی می‌کند.

☐ خانه‌ای در محله‌ای که بیشتر اهالی آن خارجی‌اند.

☐ موارد دیگر _____

الف. لطفاً علت انتخاب خود را توضیح دهید:



۴. فکر می‌کنی در چه جایی از آتلویوپورو بتوانی دوستان بیشتری پیدا کنی؟

☐ مهمانی‌هایی که با پدر و مادر می‌روم.

☐ مدرسه ایرانی‌ها

☐ مراسم مذهبی که در مسجد برگزار می‌شود.

☐ مدرسه

☐ موارد دیگر

8. در مدرسه جدید چطوری با همکلاسی‌هایت دوست می‌شوی؟

☐ با هم بازی و ورزش می‌کنیم.

☐ به آنها یاد می‌دهم که چطوری به فارسی سلام کنند.

☐ شبیه آنها لباس می‌پوشم و زبان آنها را یاد می‌گیرم.

☐ سعی می‌کنم دانش آموز خوبی باشم.

☐ موارد دیگر

9. از زندگی در آبلوووووو راضی هستی، برای اینکه ...

☐ از دوست شدن با خارجی‌ها لذت می‌بری.

☐ از اینکه مدرسه‌ات را عوض کرده‌ای خیلی ناراحت نیستی.

☐ درس جغرافی را دوست داری و درباره کشورهای دیگر چیزهایی می‌دانی.

☐ دوست داری با مردم کشورهای دیگر آشنا شوی.

☐ موارد دیگر

10. در آبلوووووو دو مدرسه است، کدام را انتخاب می‌کنی؟

مدرسه‌ای که دانش‌آموزان دختر و پسر
در یک کلاس درس می‌خوانند.



☐

مدرسه پسرانه.



☐

11. تصور کن که خواهر یا برادری داری. اگر او هم به همان مدرسه‌ای که تو در آبلوووووو می‌روی بروی، چه احساسی خواهی داشت؟ چرا؟



☐ تنها نمی‌مانم و ما می‌توانیم با یکدیگر فارسی صحبت کنیم.



☐ می‌توانم با دوستان او دوست شوم.



☐ می‌خواهم دوستان جدیدی برای خودم پیدا کنم.

☐ آن وقت مجبورم او را با خود به همه جا ببرم.

☐ موارد دیگر

☐ موارد دیگر

۱۲. هری، امیر، مایکل و جیان همکلاسی‌های تو هستند. دوست داری کنار کدامیک از آنها بنشینی؟

☐ هری در آفریقا به دنیا آمده است، اما سال‌هاست در آتلوویووو زندگی می‌کند.

☐ امیر افغانی است و به تازگی به آتلوویووو آمده‌است. زبان مادری او فارسی است.

☐ مایکل در آتلوویووو به دنیا آمده است. او تنها می‌تواند به زبانی که در آتلوویووو صحبت می‌شود حرف بزند.

☐ جیان چینی است. او یک سال است که به آتلوویووو آمده‌است.

☐ موارد دیگر

۱۲الف. لطفاً علت انتخاب خود را توضیح بده:


۱۳. در آتلوویووو به مهمانی تولدی دعوت شده‌ای ولی دوست نداری در آن مهمانی شرکت کنی، چون که ...

☐ هیچ‌کس را در مهمانی نمی‌شناسی.

☐ صحبت‌های بچه‌های دیگر را نمی‌فهمی.

☐ بلد نیستی با بچه‌های دیگر بازی کنی.

☐ موارد دیگر




حالا تصور کن که وسط سال، دانش آموز جدیدی به کلاس‌ات آمده‌است. اسم او **یُوئو** است و از کشور دیگری آمده است. او فارسی بلد نیست و نمی‌تواند با تو ارتباط برقرار کند.

خواهش می‌کنم به سؤالات زیر پاسخ بده.

۱۴. چه احساسی خواهی داشت اگر یُوئو بغل‌دستی تو در کلاس باشد؟


☐


☐

اگر گزینه "  " را انتخاب کردی، لطفاً به سؤال ۱۴ الف پاسخ بده:



۱۴ الف. از اینکه یُوئو کنار من بنشیند خوشحال می‌شوم، چونکه ...

- ☐ از آشنایی با خارجی‌ها خوشحال می‌شوم.
- ☐ فکر می‌کنم که تنها است و من می‌توانم کمکش کنم.
- ☐ می‌توانم زبان جدیدی از او یاد بگیرم.
- ☐ می‌توانم از او چیزهایی درباره کشورش یاد بگیرم.
- ☐ موارد دیگر _____

اگر گزینه "  " را انتخاب کردی، لطفاً به سؤال ۱۴ اب پاسخ بده:



۱۴ اب. دوست ندارم یُوئو کنارم بنشیند، چونکه ...

- ☐ از شاگردهای تازه‌وارد که چیز زیادی درباره اینجا نمی‌دانند خوشم نمی‌آید.
- ☐ نمی‌توانم با او ارتباط برقرار کنم.
- ☐ با بقیه فرق دارد و رفتارش عجیب است.
- ☐ دلم نمی‌خواهد بغل‌دستی‌ام را عوض کنم.
- ☐ موارد دیگر _____

۱۵. کسی در کلاس تولد گرفته ولی یُوئو دعوت ندارد، به نظر تو چرا یُوئو دعوت نشده‌است؟

- ☐ او با کسی حرف نمی‌زند.
- ☐ او شوخی‌های ما را نمی‌فهمد.
- ☐ صاحب تولد دلش نمی‌خواهد با یُوئو دوست باشد.
- ☐ او آخموست و همیشه گریه می‌کند.
- ☐ موارد دیگر _____

16. چطوری می‌توانی بُوُیو را از دلتنگی در بیاوری؟

☐ مدرسه را نشان می‌دهم.

☐ به خانه‌ام دعوتش می‌کنم.

☐ با یکی که بُلد است به زبان او صحبت کند آشنایش می‌کنم.

☐ با هم بازی و ورزش می‌کنیم.

☐ در یادگیری فارسی به او کمک می‌کنم.

☐ موارد دیگر _____

17. بُوُیو فارسی بُلد نیست. چه بازی‌هایی می‌توانی با او انجام دهی؟ بازی‌ها را نام ببر. می‌توانی نقاشی یکی از بازی‌ها را نیز بکشی.

می‌توانی نقاشیات را اینجا بکشی:




آیا به سوالات این پرسشنامه پاسخ داری؟
لطفاً یک بار دیگر سوالات را دوره کن تا مطمئن شوی که سؤالی را جا نگذاشته‌ای. اگر جواب سؤالی را نمی‌دانی
یا دوست نداری به سؤالی جواب بدهی اشکالی ندارد، جایش را خالی بگذار.
هالا لطفاً این پرسشنامه را به من برگردان.
از کمکت خیلی ممنونم. فراخاقت!

Appendix 4. The objective of each question and the multiple items in the questionnaire

Abalooboo is an imaginary country. Imagine you are going to travel to Abalooboo, for a year with your family and you do not know their language. Now please answer the following questions.				
No	Q's objectives	Question	Item's objectives	Items
1.	Children's feelings about the concept of transition	How do you feel about this change in your life?	Excited	I am excited because I like to make friends with children from other countries.
			Curious	I am curious because I want to meet people from other countries.
			Worried	I am worried because things will be different in Abalooboo, and I will be very lonely.
			Sad	I am sad because I hate going to a new school with new rules.
2.	The least stress-provoking unit in cross-cultural transitions	What do you think you will like the most?	Exploration	Seeing the different part of the world and learning about Abalooboo.
			Change	The change.
			Friendship	Making new friends with the students from other countries.
3.	The most stress-provoking unit in cross-cultural transitions	What do you think you will like the least?	Change	The change.
			Learning (e.g. language)	Learning the new language.
			New school	The new school with students from another country.
			Food	The food.
4.	Individuals coping style Intercultural Interaction, p.156	Ranaa, Bardia, Noushin and Alireza are also moving to another country with their family. They are preparing themselves for the new	emotional social support/ source: home resources	Ranaa is collecting her friends' email address to keep in touch with them.
			Instrumental support/ source: information	Bardia asks his teacher about the new country.
			Instrumental support/ source: acquaintance	Noushin is calling her friend's cousin who lives in the same country she is going to spend the next year in. She is already making a new friend there.

		life. Which one of them is more like you?	Active Coping/ source: skill	Farzan is going to language class.
5	Individuals feeling in intercultural context (physical surrounding) <i>Intercultural Interaction, p.163</i>	When I arrive in <i>Abalooboo</i> , I will first...	Behavioural insideness	ask my parents to show me around.
			Existential outsideness	call my gran and tell her that I've missed her and I want to come back.
			Empathetic insideness	unpack and put my clothes in the wardrobe.
			Incidental outsideness	try to make friend with our new neighbour, but hoping to go home to my friends when our stay here is over.
6	<i>Berry's(1997) Framework: Is it considered to be of value to maintain relationships with larger society? (interest in having relationships with the larger society)</i>	In <i>Abalooboo</i> , I prefer to stay...	international context	in a hotel
			host context	with a host family
			home context resource	at one of your relatives house.
			comparable others (Adelman 1988)	in a house where the neighbours are also from another country.
6a		Please explain your choice:		
7			parties	Parties I go with parents
			Co-national	Complementary school

	Source of friendship network	Where in <i>Abalooboo</i> do you think you can find more friends?	Religious similarity	Mosque
			school	School
8	Children’s strategies in making friends in new cultural environment	How will you make friends at the new school?	Play	I will play sport with my classmates.
			Transference of Knowledge	I will teach my classmates how to say “Hello” in Farsi.
			Assimilation	I will try to look like other students and speak their language.
			Educational success	I will try to be a good student so that everyone loves me.
9	Personality	You are enjoying your stay in <i>Abalooboo</i> . This is because:	Relationship interest	You enjoy making new friends from other countries.
			Flexibility	You don’t mind changing your school.
			Exploration	You are interested in geography and you know a lot about other countries.
			Good Interpersonal skills	You like meeting people from different countries.
10	Gender preference	There are two schools in <i>Abalooboo</i> , which one would you choose to go?	Same sex	a. This school is for girls (boys) only.
			Different sex	b.
10a		Please explain your choice:		
11	Source of social support: family	Imagine you have a brother or sister. How do you feel if he or she studies in the same school you are going to in <i>Abalooboo</i> ? Why?	Positive Reason: same language	😊 Because I won’t feel alone and we can talk in Farsi with each other.
			Positive Reason: aid for finding another source of social support (friends)	😊 Because I can be friend with her or his friends.
			Negative: preferring friend as a source of social support.	😞 Because I want to find new friends of my own.

			Negative: Need to be independent.	 Because then I have to take her or him everywhere with myself.
12	Friends as a source of social support <i>The Psychology of Culture Shock</i> p.86	Jin, Saabira, Adeleh, and Sarah are your classmates. Next to which of them do you like to sit?	Shared migration experience	Saabira is originally from Africa, but her parents moved to <i>Abalooboo</i> after she was born.
			Cultural similarities (Same religion+ same language)	Adeleh and her sister are from Afghanistan, They have recently moved to <i>Abalooboo</i> . Their mother tongue is Farsi.
			Host- national	Sarah was born in <i>Abalooboo</i> . She can only speak the language spoken in <i>Abalooboo</i> .
			Comparable other	Jin is from China. She moved to <i>Abalooboo</i> with her parents one year before you.
12a		Explain your choice:		
13	Social situation difficulty in cross-cultural transition: Lack of instruments which cause difficult experiences in social encounters <i>The psychology of culture shock</i> P. 67	If you are invited to a birthday party in <i>Abalooboo</i> , and you don't feel like going, that's because...	Resilience/ being with people that you don't know very well	I don't know anyone.
			Relationship interest / not knowing the language	I can't understand what they say.
			Exploration / not knowing how to play games	I don't know how to play their games.

Now imagine a new student has come to your Music class in the middle of the term. Her name is CoCo. She is from another country and she can't speak much English.				
14	Children's perception from different cultural context	How do you feel if Coco sits next to you in the classroom?	Positive	😊
			Negative	😞
14a	Positive	Please complete the following sentence if you chose '😊'. I like it if she sits next to me, because...	Exploration	I like to know people from other countries.
			Positive regards	I think she might be a nice person.
			Relationship interest	I can learn another language from her.
			Global mindset	I can learn about her country.
14b	Negative	Please complete the following sentence if you chose '😞'. 13b. I DONT like it if she sits next to me, because...	Exploration (10)	don't like new students who do not know much about here.
			Relationship interest (28)	she can't speak Farsi and I cannot communicate with her.
			Positive regards (stereotypes)	she is very different and behaves in a strange way.
			Resilience	I prefer to seat next to my own friend.
15	Social situation difficulty in intercultural encounters	Someone in your class has a birthday party but Coco is not invited, what do you think is the reason?	Lack of skill (Language)	she doesn't talk.
			Lack of cultural awareness.	she doesn't understand our jokes and is not fun.
			Negative reaction of host country	because the birthday girl doesn't want Coco to be her friend.
			MA participants comment (resilience)	She is grumpy and is always crying.
16	Way in which children can facilitate	How can you help Coco not to feel homesick?	Knowledge	I can show her around the school.
			Emotional support form host-national	I can invite her to my house.

	acculturation for the international classmates.		Emotional support from co-national	I can introduce her to another student who can speak her language.
			Non-verbal Communication	We can play some sport.
			Skill	I can help her with Farsi.
17	Non-verbal ways of interpersonal communication	Coco does not know much Farsi. What kind of games can you play with her? Name the games and describe one game briefly. You can also draw the picture of the game.		

Appendix 5. Question 1: codes of mixed feelings

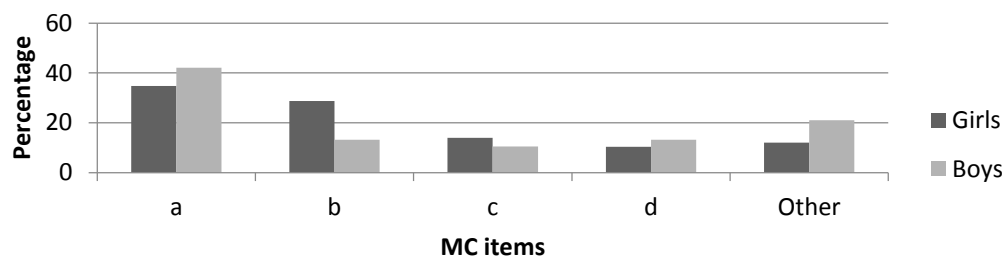
No.	SAD & HAPPY	WORRIED & SAD	EXCITED & WORRIED	EXCITED & CURIOUS	EXCITED, CURIOUS & WORRIED
1.	I have kind of all the feelings. I feel <u>sad</u> because I won't see the rest of my family, <u>happy</u> for the change. [6INTL]	I am worried because I will be alone, and I am sad because I will lose my old friends and city. [5KHER]	(also item 1-excited) I am also slightly worried, because I don't understand their language. [6MAH]	I am very excited, and also having a very strange feeling (item 2- curious was also selected [5MAH]	I'm excited but worried that I don't know the language. Also curious (item 2)[5KHER]
2.	I am happy because I will settle down, and will have freedom, respect, and security. I am sad because everything is new and I am away from my friends and family. [6KHER]	I am both worried and sad, because everything will be different. I also don't like to go to the new school, unless my friends come with me and the school will be a better one. [6KHER]	I'm worried because maybe no one wants to be my friend, then I will be alone, but I am also happy because I may make new friends. [6MOB]	it's interesting I would like to try it. (item 1 was also selected) [5KHER]	
3.	In the beginning I will be a bit worried and grey, but I will get used to it for sure. [6MAH]	I'm worried, feeling miserable, humiliated. [6KHER]	I'm excited but worried that I don't know the language [T_5KHER]	I am excited because I want to see there and how they speak. I also want to know what food they have. [T_5KHER]	
4.	I'm both sad and happy; because I will be apart from my friend and family and happy because I am going to learn a new language and meet new people. [4MOB]				

Appendix 6. An example of the thematic analysis of open responses in the questionnaire

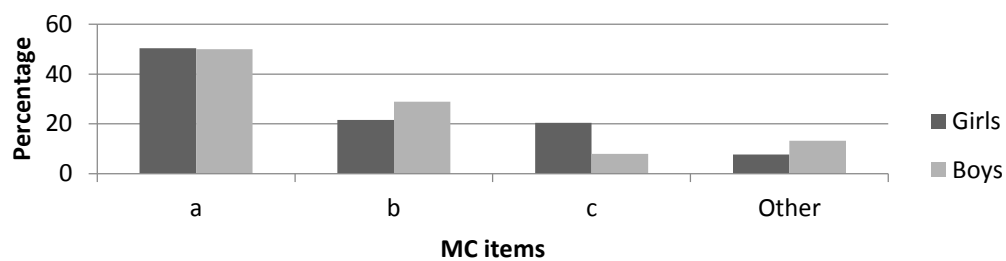
No.	Code	Category	Comments on other section
01	[T-4HES]	EXCITED	Because I like the airplane, and I will make friend with the children there and will go to the funfair.
02	[T-5HES]	EXCITED	I am amazed
03	[T-4KHER]	EXCITED	I am excited because we are going to a nice city
04	[T-5KHER]	EXCITED	I am happy because I will see a country which I have never heard of and will make new friends from other countries.
05	[T-5KHER]	EXCITED	I'm happy that I can make friends with both girls and boys
06	[T-5KHER]	EXCITED	I'm happy because I am not supposed to wear head-scarf
07	[T-5KHER]	EXCITED	I'm happy because I go to a new place where people have a different lifestyle
08	[T-6KHER]	EXCITED	I am happy because I can experience living in that country.
09	[T-4MAH]	EXCITED	I am excited because I will go to a new place.
10	[T-5MAH#017]	EXCITED	I am excited that I can meet people from different nationalities.
11	[N-4MOB]	EXCITED	I like to go to Abalooboo and I hope there will be a 'candyland' there
12	[T-5MOB]	EXCITED	I'm happy because I can go to a country where no one else has travelled to.
13	[T-4MAH]	EXCITED	I'm happy because I can make loads of friends and see other places (item 1 was also selected)
14	[T-5MOB]	EXCITED	I am excited because I want to see that country
15	[T-4HES]	CURIOUS	I like to know the language of that country.
16	[T-4HES]	CURIOUS	I want to know how they treat me.
17	[T-6HES]	CURIOUS	I want to learn about their life, costumes and ceremonies. (also 2)
18	[N-5KHER]	WORRIED	I am worried because I will be alone, and I am sad because I will lose my old friends and city.
19	[T-4HES]	SAD	if I see someone is pointing at me I would think he is pointing at me and is surprised and I don't like it
20	[T-4HES]	SAD	I will feel homesick
21	[T-6INTL]	SAD	I hate being in this country.
22	[T-4KHER]	SAD	I am sad because I don't want to leave my house and be away for a year from my family (maybe relatives)
23	[T-4KHER]	SAD	I'm sad (erased)
24	[T-5KHER]	SAD	It's difficult for me , the new school, with the new friends and new language
25	[T-5KHER]	SAD	I am sad because I don't want to leave my country where I was born and lived in.
26	[T-6KHER]	SAD	I am sad because I don't like going to a new school and I can't speak (the language)
27	[T-6KHER]	SAD	I will be homesick
28	[T-6MAH]	SAD	I am sad because I like to live in my own country
29	[T-4MOB]	SAD	I'm sad because I will be separated from my friends
30	[T-5HES]	MIXED	I am excited because I want to know how people live in Abalooboo, and what language they speak.

Appendix 7. Comparison of the responses in the questionnaire and the participants' gender

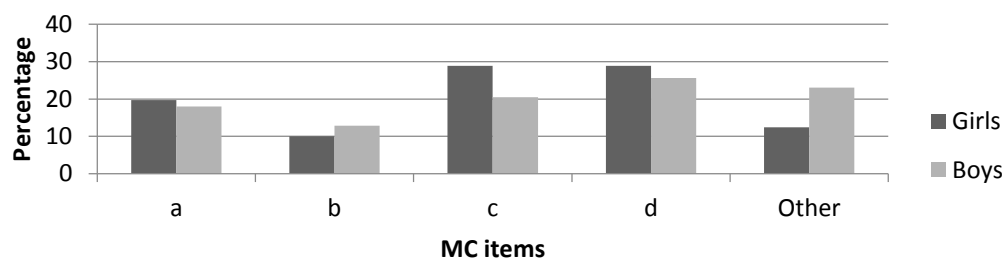
Question 1



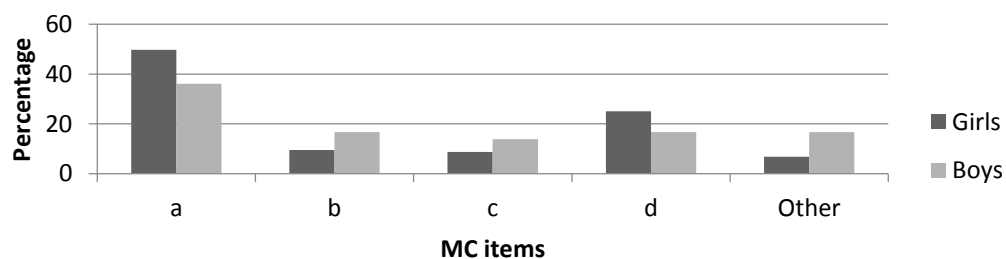
Question 2



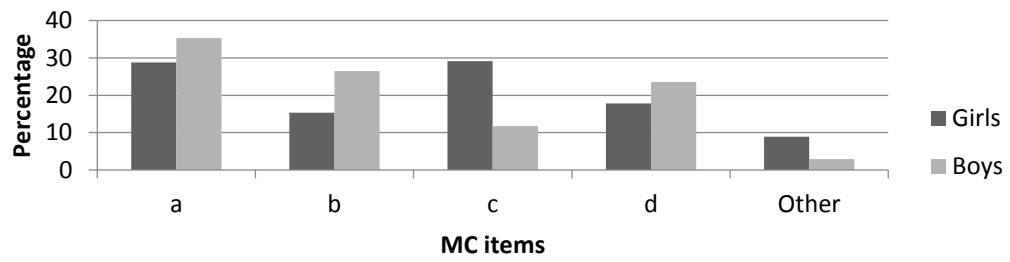
Question 3



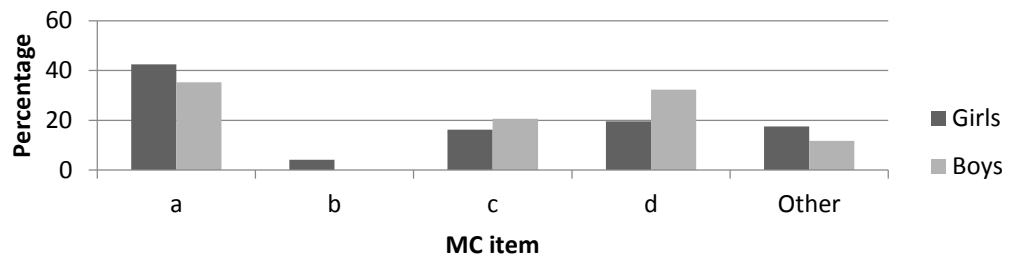
Question 4



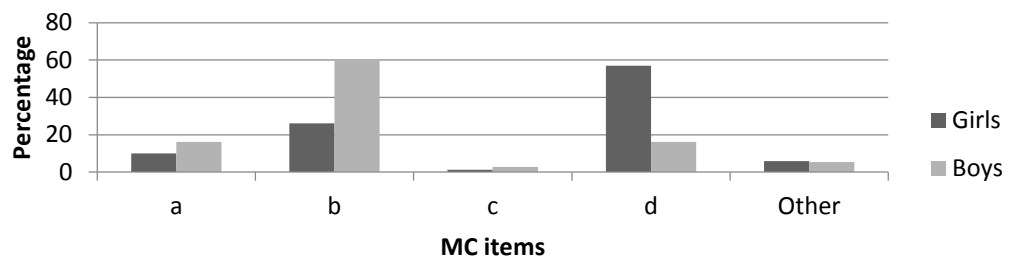
Question 5



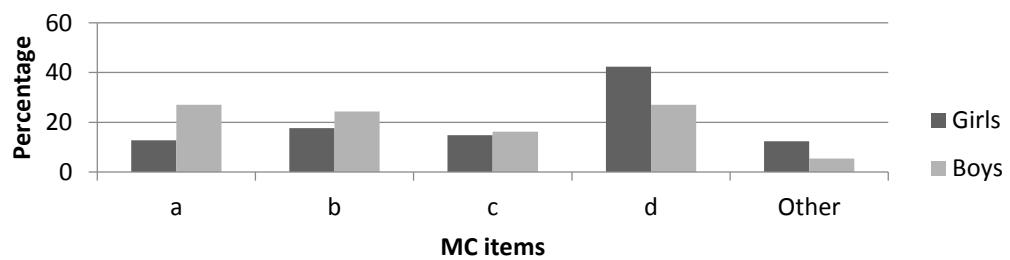
Question 6



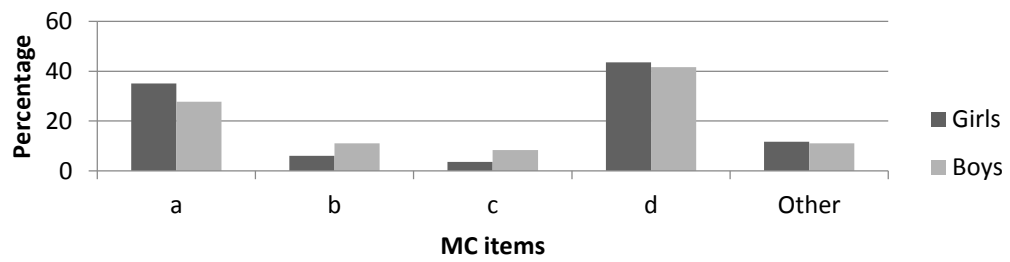
Question 7



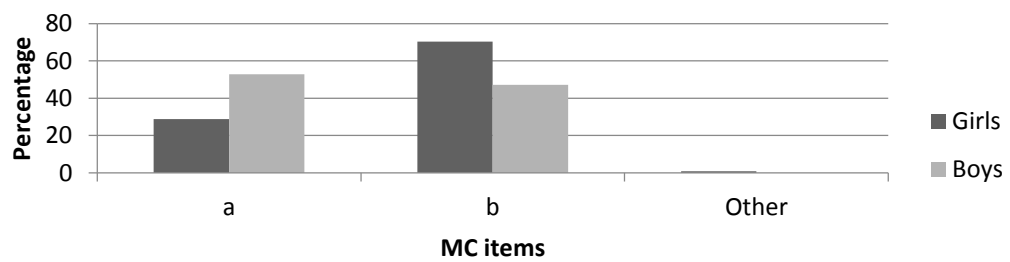
Question 8



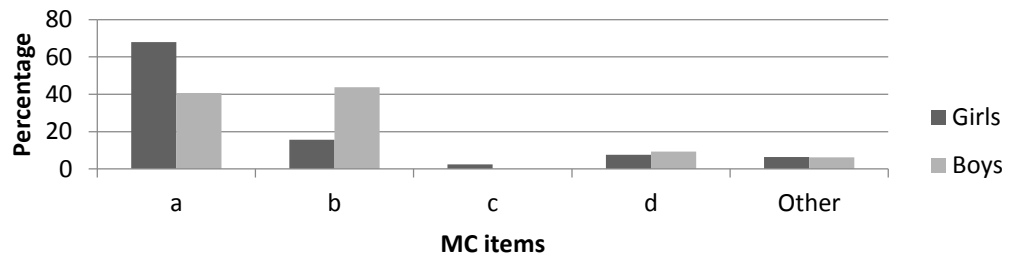
Question 9



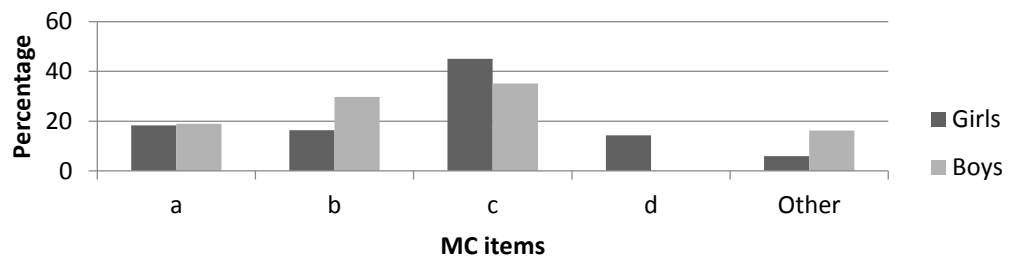
Question 10



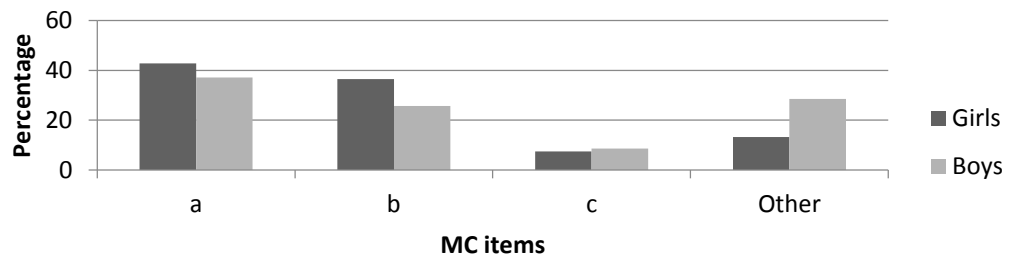
Question 11



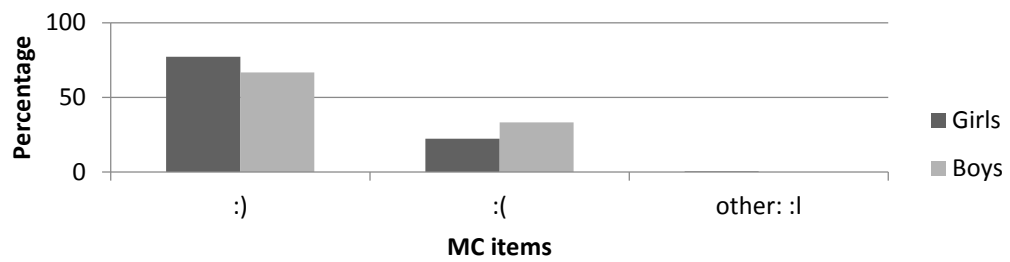
Question 12



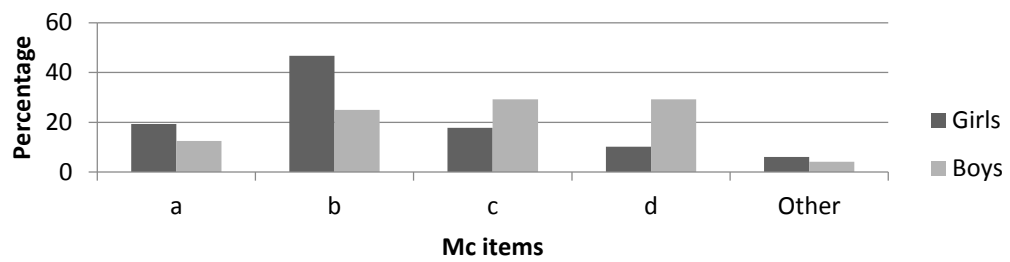
Question 13



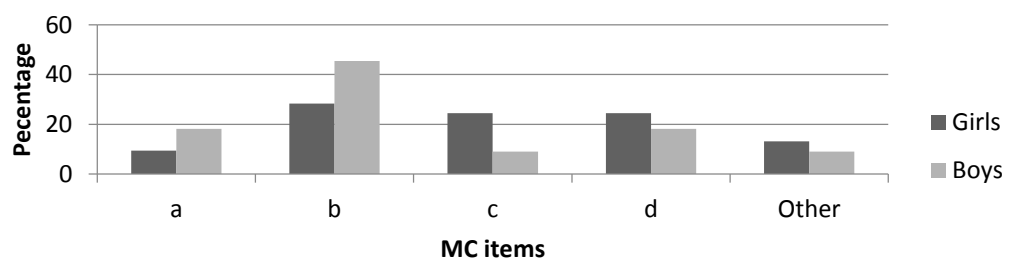
Question 14



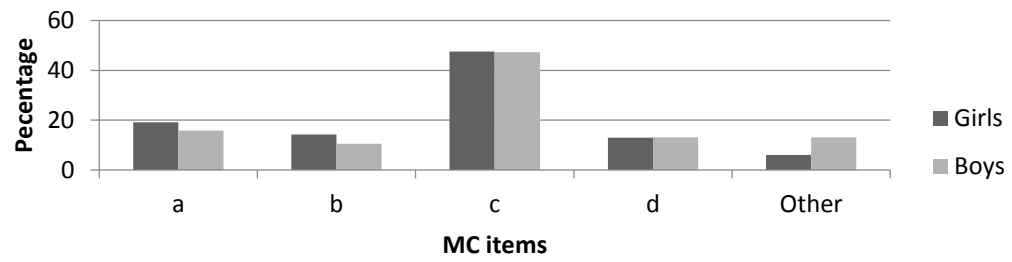
Question 14a



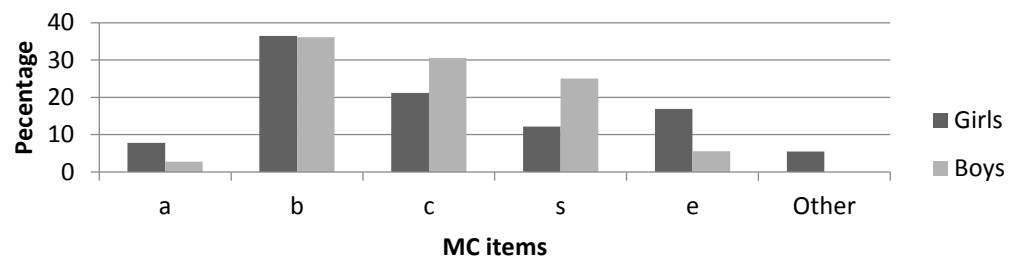
Question 14b



Question 15

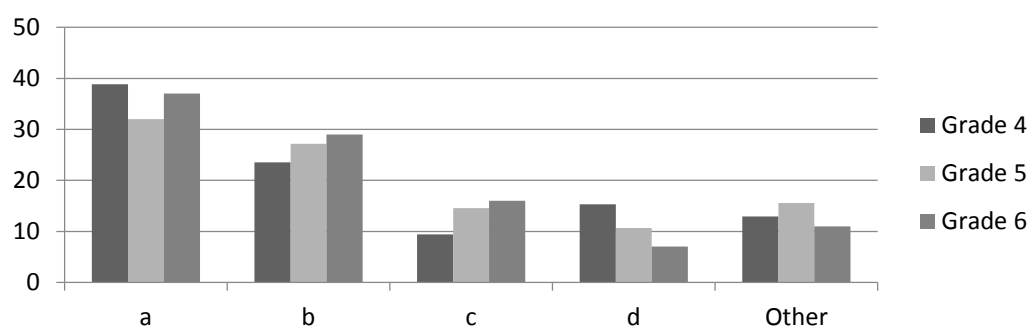


Question 16

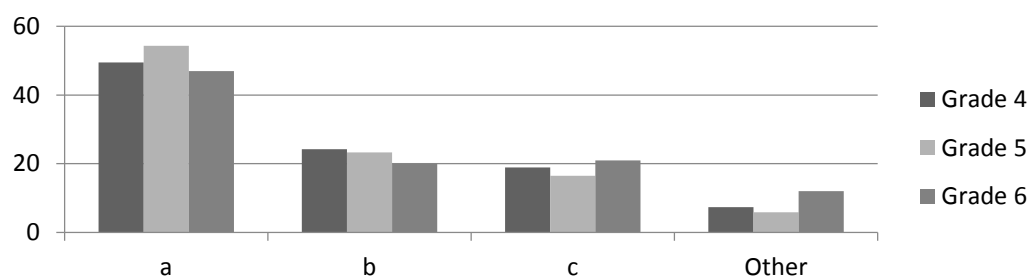


Appendix 8. Comparison of the responses in the questionnaire and the participants' age
(The vertical axis represent the percentages and the horizontal axis represent the IC items)

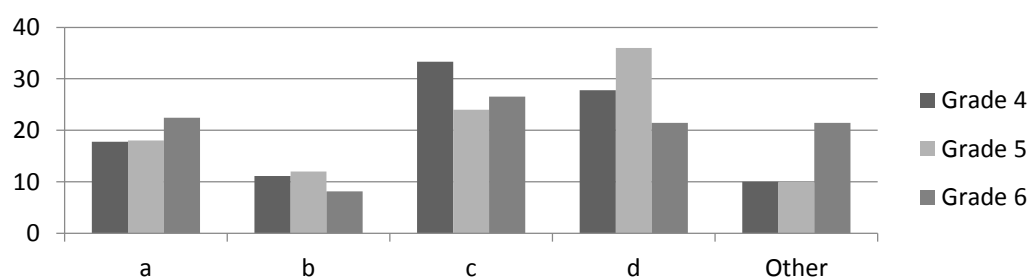
Question 1



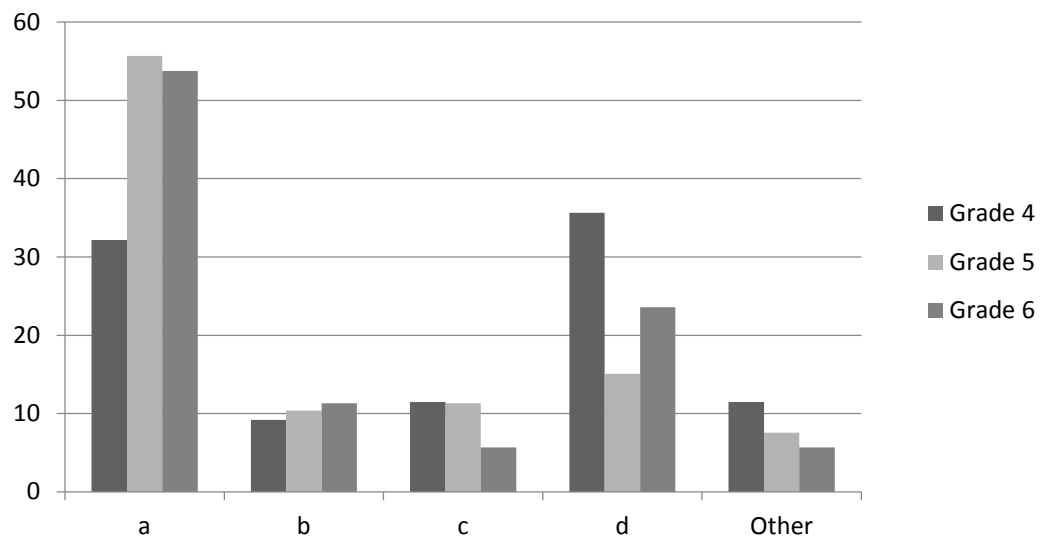
Question 2



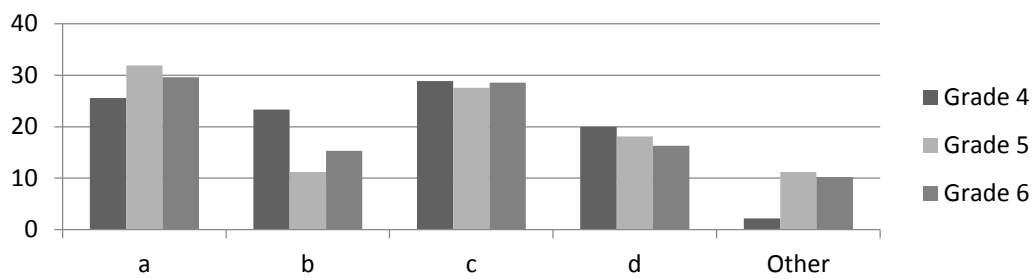
Question 3



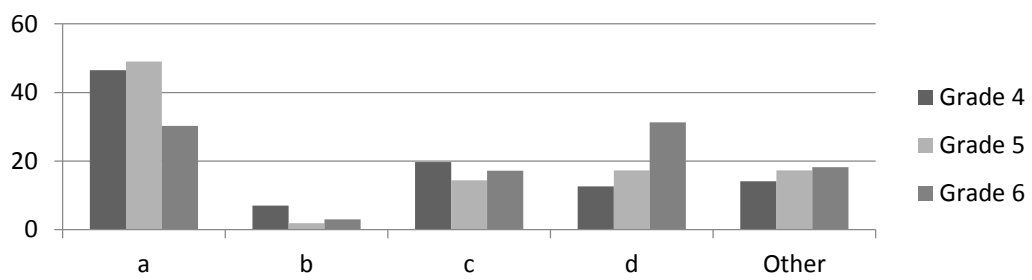
Question 4



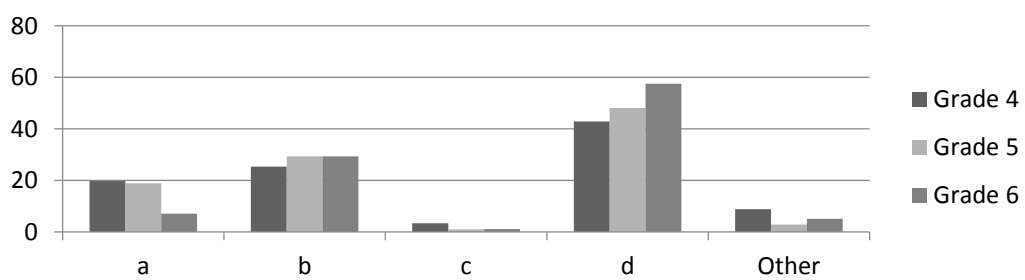
Question 5



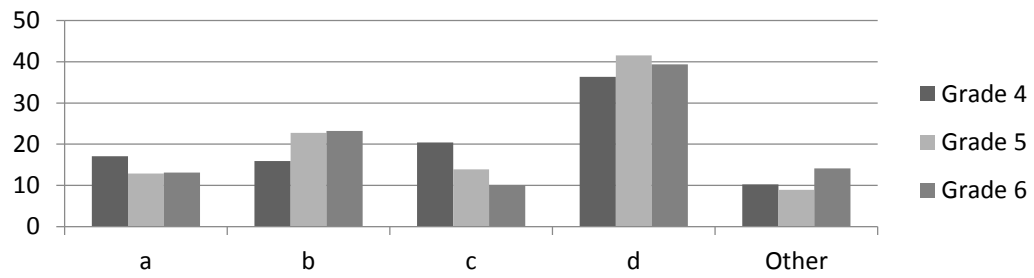
Question 6



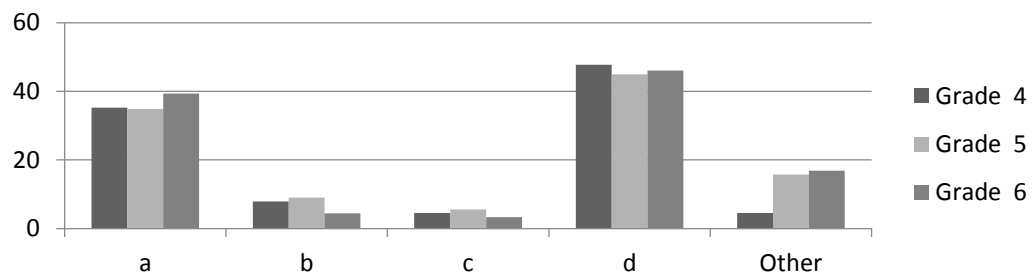
Question 7



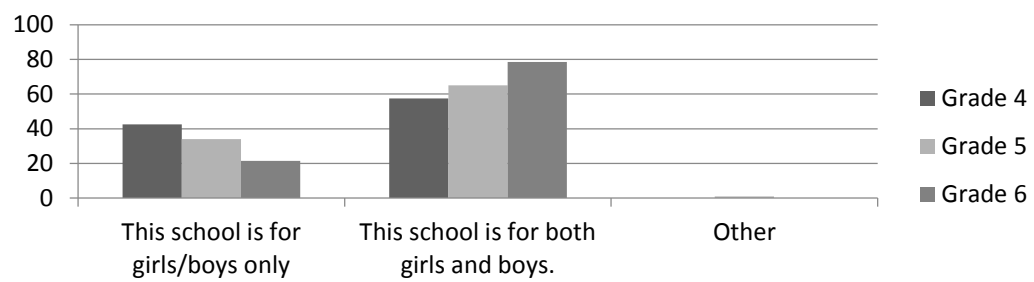
Question 8



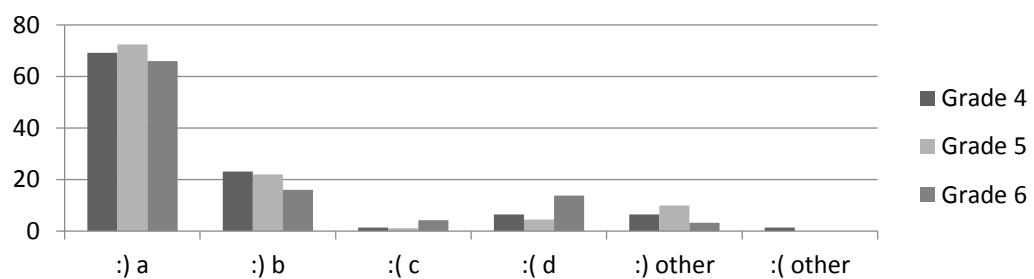
Question 9



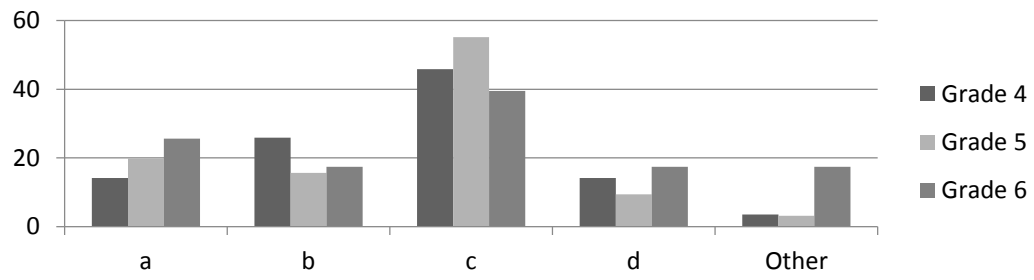
Question 10



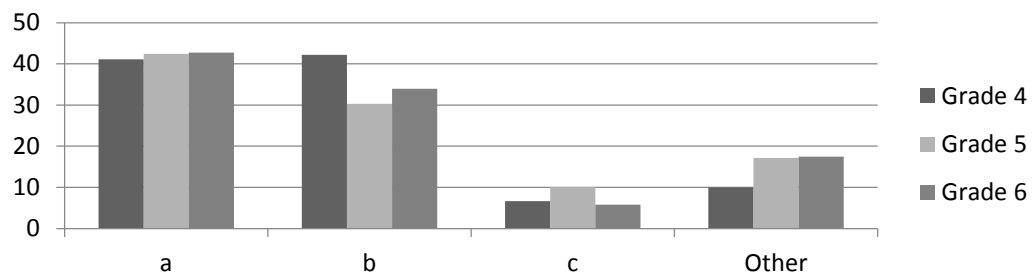
Question 11



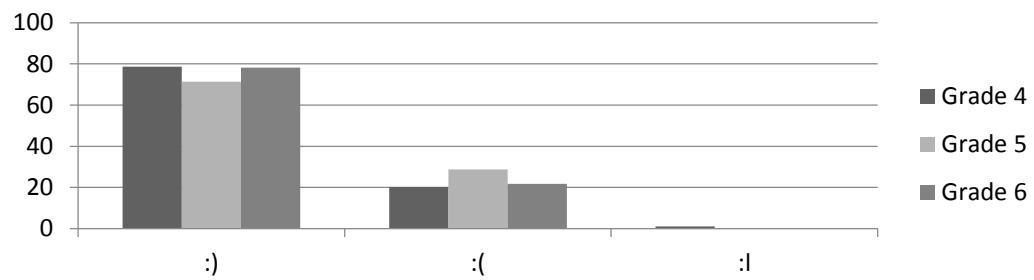
Question 12



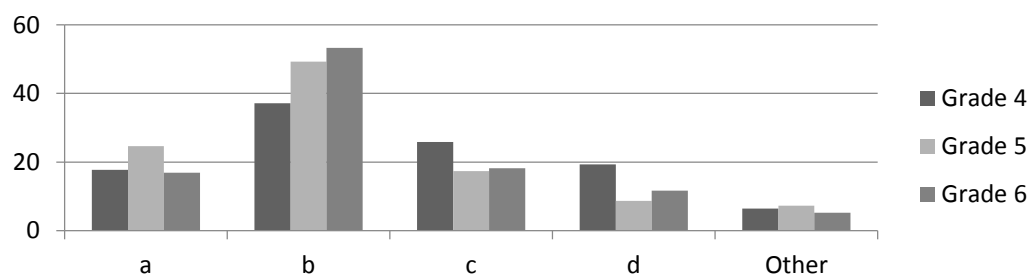
Question 13



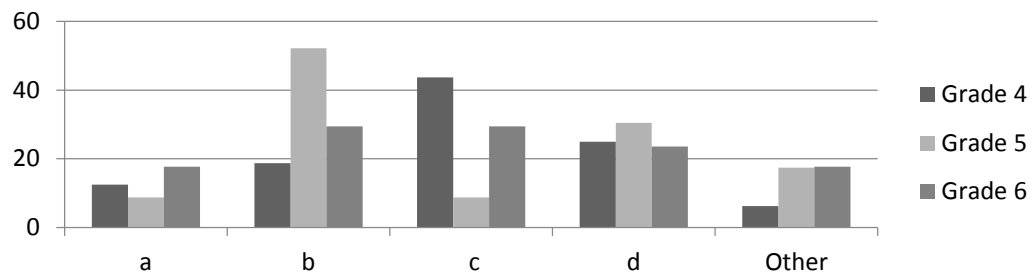
Question 14



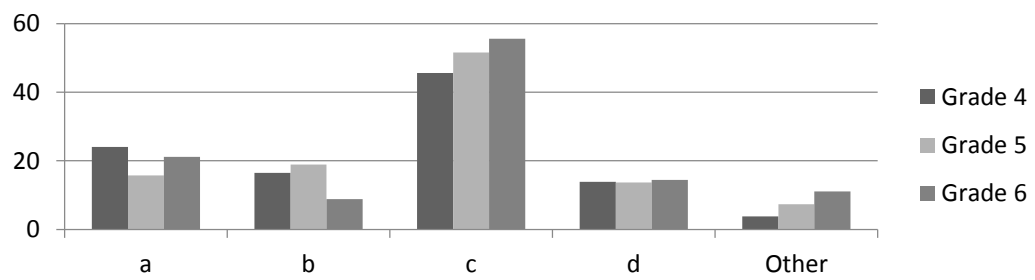
Question 14a



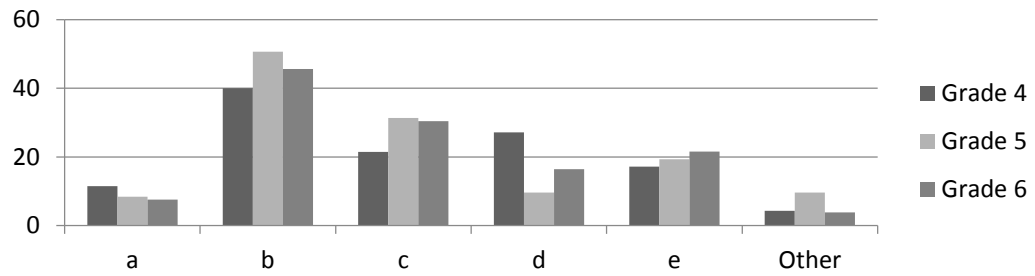
Question 14b



Question 15



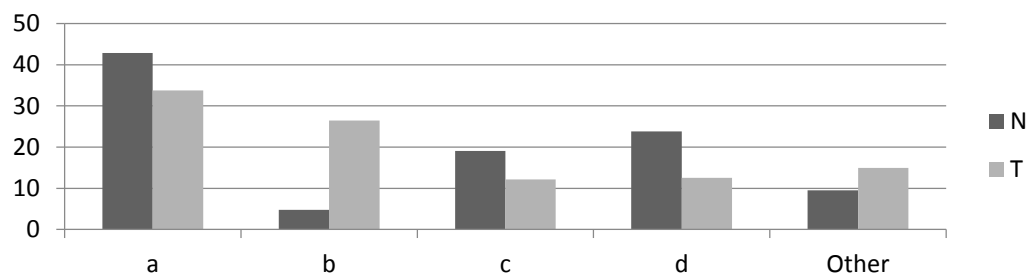
Question 16



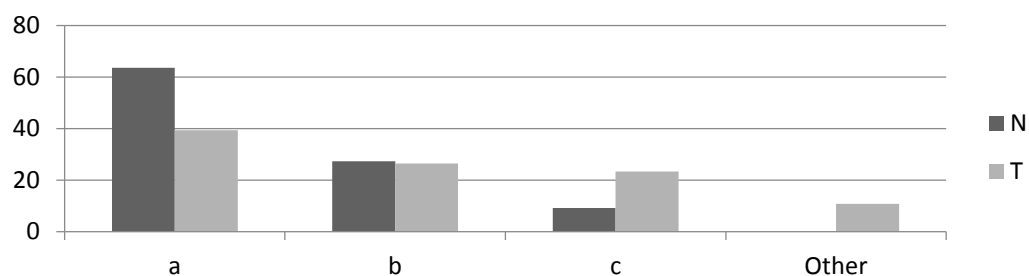
Appendix 9. Comparison of the responses between the respondents with(T) and without(N) the experience of travelling abroad

(The vertical axis represent the percentages and the horizontal axis represent the IC items)

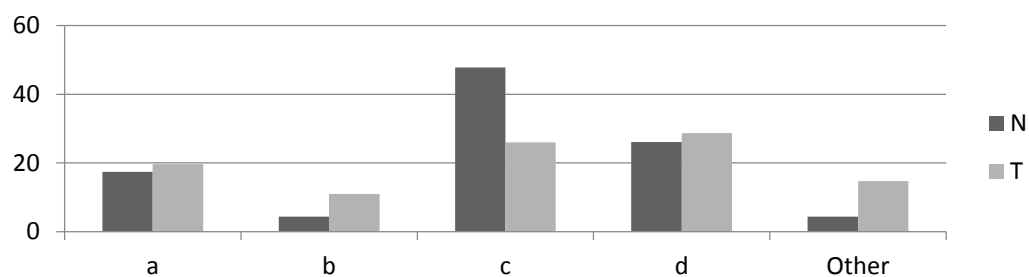
Question 1



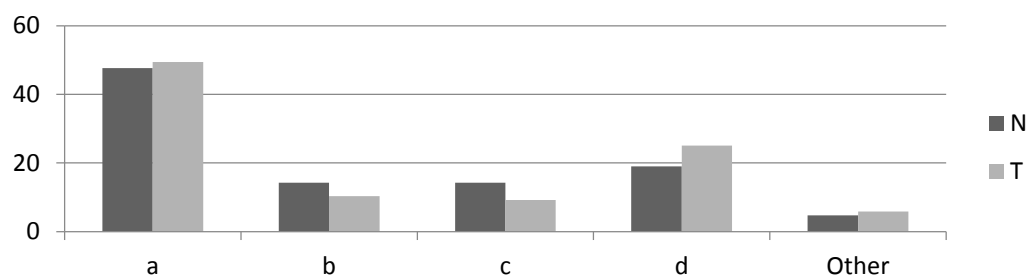
Question 2



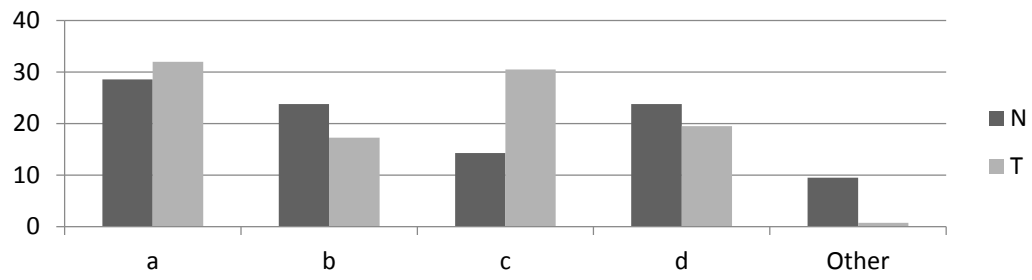
Question 3



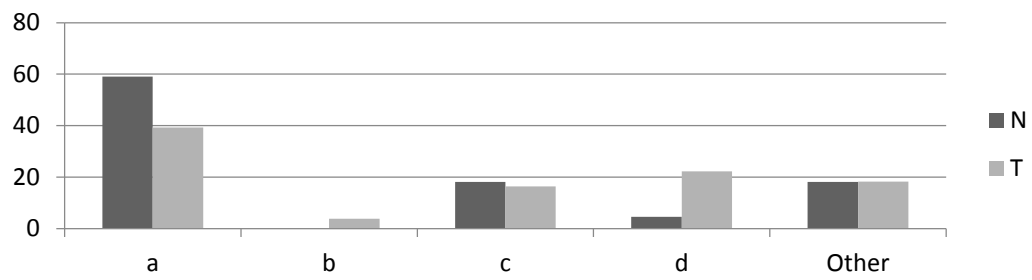
Question 4



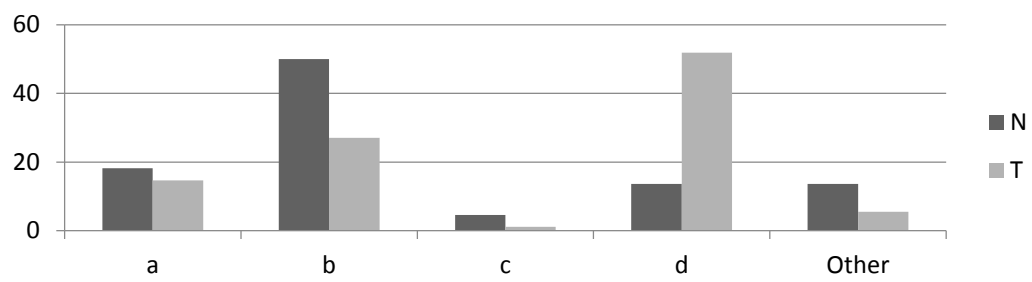
Question 5



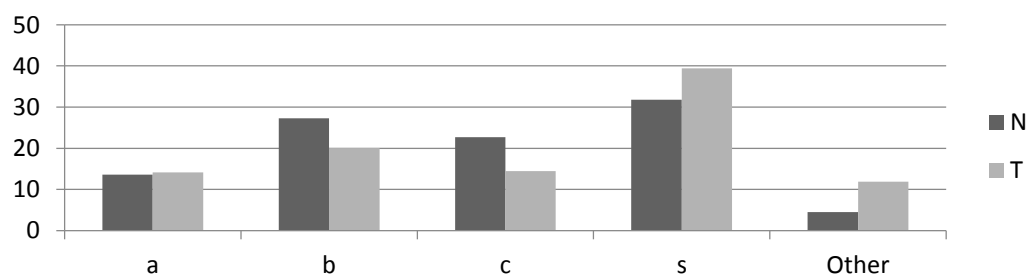
Question 6



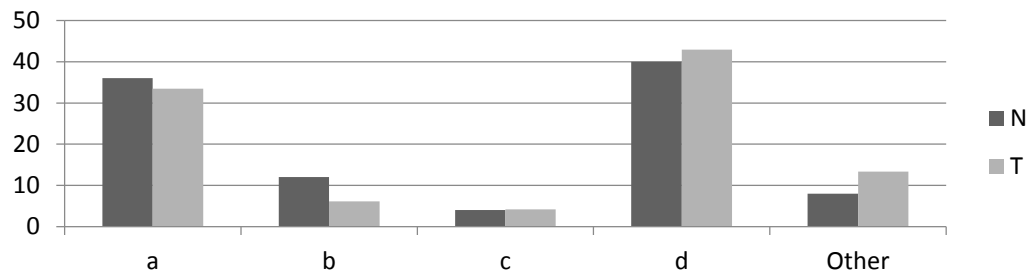
Question 7



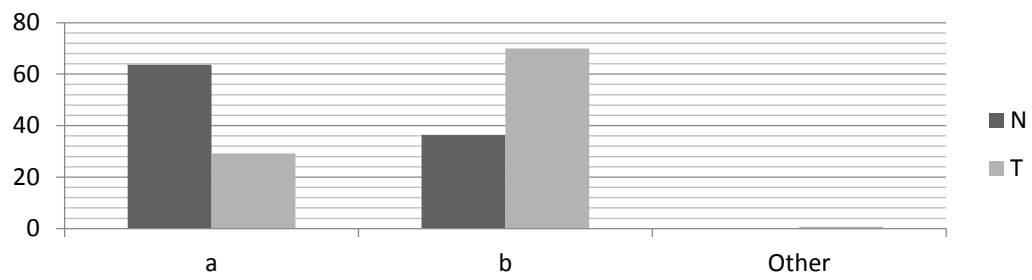
Question 8



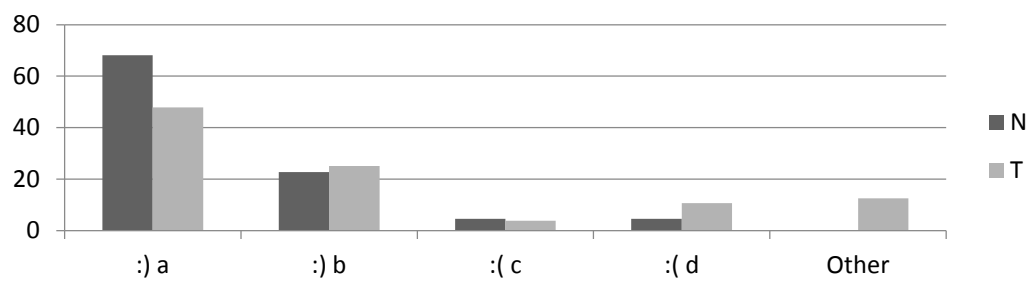
Question 9



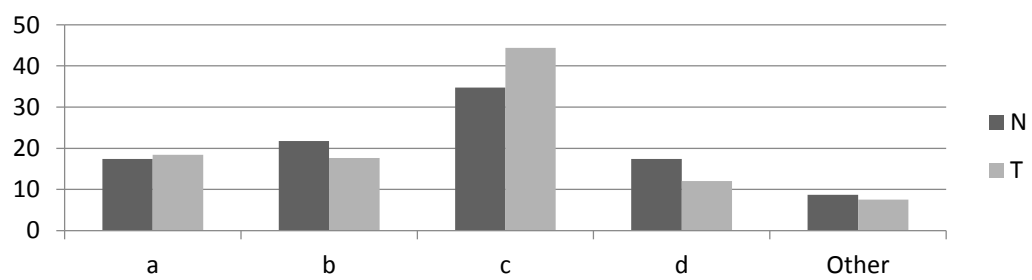
Question 10



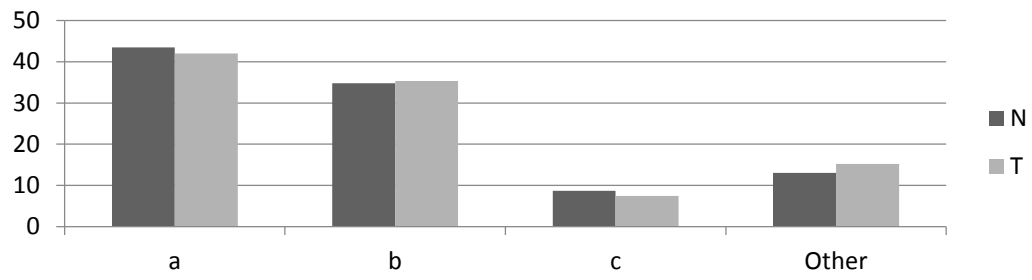
Question 11



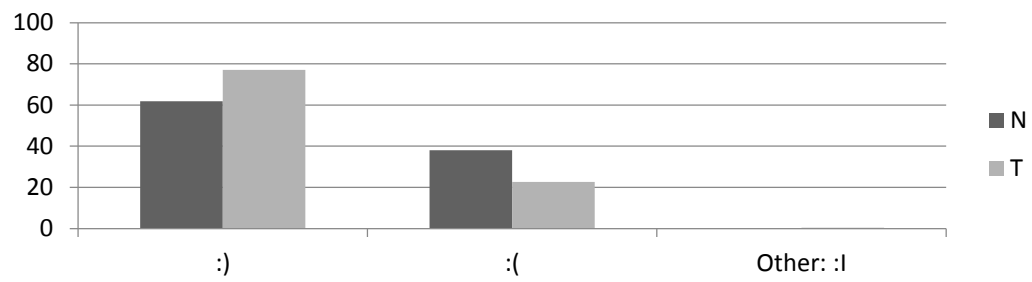
Question 12



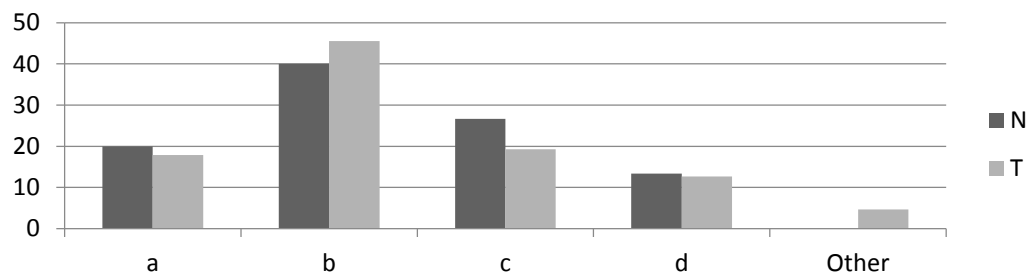
Question 13



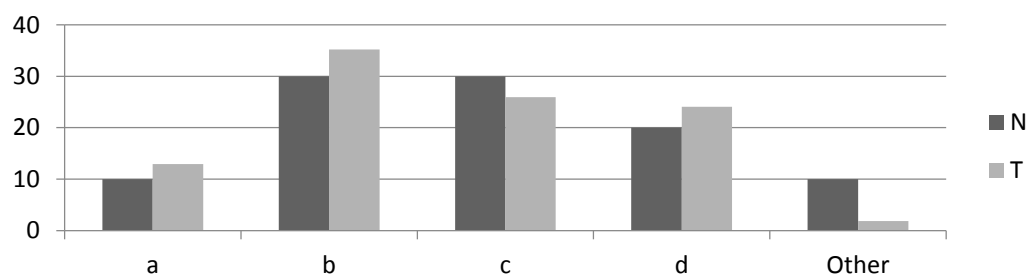
Question 14



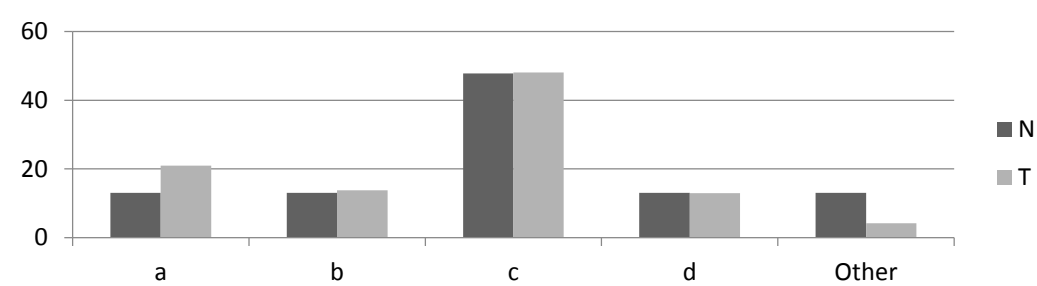
Question 14a



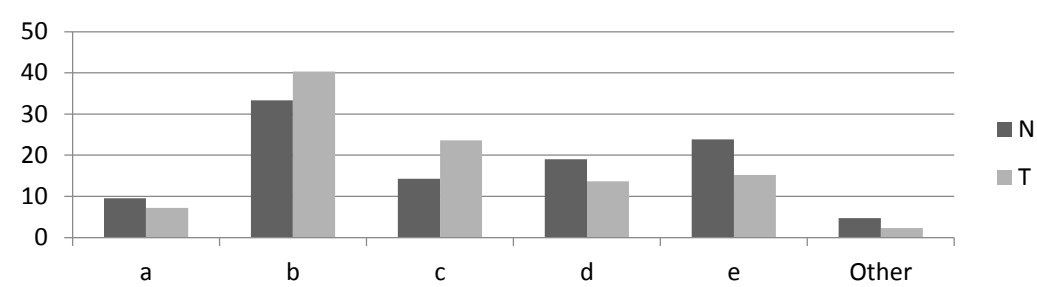
Question 14b



Question 15



Question 16



Appendix 10. Participatory activities: outcome of Hopes-&-Worries activity

Hopes & Worries			
School	Grade	Hopes	Worries
	4	Having new food	To comunicate with the people
		Having a new culture	Having to expet their laws
		Seeing the different part of the world	New school
		Learning the new language	The driving way might be different
		Having new friends	Not liking their food
	5	New friend	Not knowing there language
		Seeing the different part of the world	Being lost in the country
		The have delesuse food	New school
		Abalooboo is a new country for us	They have undelesuse food
		Abalooboo has lot's of shopping center so we can go shopping	Not knowing any person in the country
	6	Seeing the different part of the world	Not being able to communicate with them
		Visiting their historical places	Living my stuff behind
		Finding new friends and learning their life style	The new school
		Learning their language, and try their food	Not knowing how people will react when the see me
		Learning about new cultures	If they bully me and make fun of me
	4	New food	Won't be able to see our family
		New friends	Won't be able to see our old friends
		Seeing the different part of the world	New school
		Learning their language	Stress of the exams
		Good or bad hotel	Getting a taxi
	5	Being away from my country	Being away from our family
		Islam is no obligatory (like in Dubai and Turkey)	Not knowing any one or any place
		Seeing the different part of the world	New food
		Making new friends	Not knowing the language
		Shopping more	Struggling to survive there
	6	This is very exciting to meet new ppl in a new environment.	We are worried that we'll be robbed
		Shopping in various stores and brands	The current currency fluctuation
		Freedom in the USA	Due to the conflict between Iran and USA we are worried that we won't be able to come back to visit our family.

		New food	Getting fat due to eating fast food
		Seeing the different part of the world	Making fun of us because we are Iranian
	4	Seeing the different part of the world	A very bad school
		Cool and interesting facilities. Better life. وسيله های باحال و جالب. امکانات زندگی بیشتر می شود.	The hotel and our house (or rental house), (if it was bad) if we don't get used to there. If the people were grumpy.
		Maybe there are a lot of historical places there.	Making friends at home or at school
		The attitude and behaviour of the people there	Learning the new language
		Maybe the food there is delicious	New food (if it would be dirty)
	5	Making friends	lack of public health
		Getting familiar with their culture and custom	Bad weather
		Seeing the different part of the world	Lack of city law
		More entertainment	Grumpy people
		Trying the facilities there	Not getting used to their language
	6	Seeing the different part of the world	Not knowing the rules
		Learning about the new culture	Not being familiar with the place
		Going to the new school	Not making friends
		Seeing the new place in that country	Being away from the relatives
		Learning the new language	
	New food		
	4	3D animations	New food
		Trying their snacks	Reading books
		Seeing the different part of the world	Being away from classmates
		New games	New school
		Making new friends	New language
	5	Learning the new language	New food
		Going to the new school	We don't know anyone
		Seeing the different part of the world	Not knowing the language
		Making new friends	Not knowing their religion
		Going to interesting and new places	Their attitude
	4	Seeing different part of the world	New food
		Seeing different animals	Not knowing the language of the country

		Seeing different games	Education in another country
		Making new friends	Killer animals
		I can live in a country which has more freedom than Iran	The weather in that country
	5	Seeing different part of the world	Going to a new school
		Swimming in the sea	The facilities in that country
		Going to a new wonderland	Eating fish
		Seeing new animals	working
		New food	-
		The new customs	-
	6	New food	New school
		Learning a new language	Not knowing the language
		New place to live	Being away from our home country
		Seeing different part of the world	The new customs
		Making new friends	-
		Shopping	-

Appendix 11. Participatory activities: outcome of Diamond-Ranking activity

Diamond Ranking			
INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL			
	Grade 6	Grade 5	Grade 4
1	Knowing the language.	Knowing the language.	Being with your family.
2	Having friendly neighbours and classmates.	Knowing about the new place.	Knowing the language.
	Knowing someone there.	Being with your family.	Being a good student.
3	Being friendly and having a big smile.	Being friendly and having a big smile.	Knowing about the new place.
	Having a pet.	Knowing someone there.	Knowing someone there.
	Being a good student.	Having friendly neighbours and classmates.	Being in contact with your friends in your home town.
	Being in contact with your friends in your home town.	Being good at games.	Having friendly neighbours and classmates.
4	Knowing about the new place.	Being a good student.	Being friendly and having a big smile.
5	Being good at games.	Having a pet.	Being good at games.
6	Being with your family.	Being in contact with your friends in your home town.	Having a pet.
MAH			
	Grade 6	Grade 5	Grade 4
1	Knowing the language.	Being friendly and having a big smile.	Being with your family.
2	Having friendly neighbours and classmates.	Being with your family.	Being in contact with your friends in your home town.
	Knowing about the new place.(USA)	Knowing someone there.	Knowing someone there.
3	Being friendly and having a big smile.	Knowing the language.	Knowing the language.
	Being with your family.	Having a pet.	Having a pet.
	Knowing someone there. (USA)	Being good at games.	Being good at games.
4	Having a pet.	Knowing about the new place.	Being friendly and having a big smile.
	Being in contact with your friends in your home town.	Being in contact with your friends in your home town.	Having friendly neighbours and classmates.
5	Being a good student.	Being a good student.	Knowing about the new place.
6	Being good at games.	Having friendly neighbours and classmates.	Being a good student.
KHER			
	Grade 6	Grade 5	Grade 4
1	Knowing about the new place.	Knowing the language.	-
2	Being with your family.	Being with your family.	-
	Knowing someone there.	Being a good student.	-
3	Knowing the language.	Having a pet.	-
	Being in contact with your friends in your home town.	Being in contact with your friends in your home town.	-
	Being a good student.	Being friendly and having a big smile.	-
4	Having friendly neighbours and classmates.	Having friendly neighbours and classmates.	-
	Being friendly and having a big smile.	Being good at games.	-
5	Being good at games.	Knowing someone there.	-

6	Having a pet.	Knowing about the new place.	-
MOB			
	Grade 6	Grade 5	Grade 4
1	-	Knowing about the new place.	Being in contact with your friends in your home town.
2	-	Knowing the language.	Having friendly neighbours and classmates.
	-	Being with your family.	Being friendly and having a big smile.
3	-	Having friendly neighbours and classmates.	Having a pet.
	-	Knowing someone there.	Knowing someone there.
	-	Being a good student.	Being a good student.
4	-	Being in contact with your friends in your home town.	Knowing the language.
	-	Being friendly and having a big smile.	Knowing about the new place.
5	-	Being good at games.	Being with your family.
6	-	Having a pet.	Being good at games.
HES			
	Grade 6:	Grade 5	Grade 4
1	Being with your family.	Being a good student.	Knowing the language.
2	Knowing the language.	Being friendly and having a big smile.	Knowing about the new place.
	Knowing someone there.	Being in contact with your friends in your home town.	Knowing someone there.
3	Having friendly neighbours and classmates.	Knowing the language.	Having friendly neighbours and classmates.
	Being friendly and having a big smile.	Being good at games.	Being good at games.
	Being in contact with your friends in your home town.	Having a pet.	Being with your family.
4	Knowing about the new place.	Knowing about the new place.	Being friendly and having a big smile.
	Being a good student.	Being with your family.	Being in contact with your friends in your home town.
5	Being good at games.	Knowing someone there.	Being a good student.
6	Having a pet.	Having friendly neighbours and classmates.	Having a pet.

Appendix 12. Example of the transcription: interview at INTL

Line	Speaker	Original text
1	Researcher	OK ...think about these, which ones were similar, which ones were different?
2	DonDon [T-4INTL-1]	We had this, and it's kind of similar to ours... learning the new culture is similar to ours.. what does it say? Finding new friends, learning their lifestyle... visiting the historical places
3	Holly [T-6INT-1]	'Not knowing their language' we had that
4	Researcher	Are you listening to me? now.. I want group Green to tell me what they wrote and what were the similarities with the other group members. Can we start with P-Patra?
5	Patra [T-6INT-1]	O.kay! we have um.. from the good part Okay?, we had.. all of them were the same as the pink em group, group pink, we had five same from them
6	Researcher	So what were those?
7	Patra [T-6INT-1]	They were 'seeing different part of the world', 'visiting different places', 'learning about the new culture', a:nd ..' learning their language' and 'trying their food' em 'finding new friends', and 'learning their lifestyle'
8	Researcher	Group ..em Pink, em did you have the same ones there?
9	DonDon [T-4INTL-1]	We didn't have 'the historical places' but we had.. some of them.
10	Researcher	What else did you write instead of historical places?
11	DonDon [T-4INTL-1]	'Having a new.. culture', 'Having a, having new food'
12	Holly [T-6INT-1]	='Seeing different parts of the world'='
13	DonDon [T-4INTL-1]	'learning the new language', 'having new friends'
14	Researcher	Oh you didn't write anything about new friends, did you? Oh you're right, you wrote friends, so what was the thing that they- you didn't write?
15	Holly [T-6INT-1]	Seeing the different part of the world.
16	All	'Seeing historical places'
17	Researcher	Ok, group purple what did you write?
18	Sabrina [T-5INT-1]	We wrote Abalooboo has lots of shopping centers where we can go to shopping
19	Lili [T-5INT-1]	New friends
20	Sabrina [T-5INT-1]	Ee... Abalooboo is a new country for us, being in a different part of the world

