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INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS' PERCEIVED UNIVERSITY SCHOOLING EXPERIENCE IN THE FACE OF INTERNATIONALIZATION

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INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS' PERCEIVED UNIVERSITY SCHOOLING EXPERIENCE IN THE FACE OF INTERNATIONALIZATION

By

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INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS' PERCEIVED UNIVERSITY SCHOOLING
EXPERIENCE IN THE FACE OF INTERNATIONALIZATION

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ABSTRACT

In an era of widespread neoliberal ideology underpinning the organizational field of education, universities are thrust into developing revenue generating education systems. The ramping up of higher education internationalization through international student mobility is undeniable when looking at the growing number of international students on Canadian university campuses. According to the Canadian Bureau of International Education (CBIE) (2016), the number of international students pursuing academic studies has increased from 353 570 in 2015 to 438 157 in 2016. The projected increase to 450 000 by 2022 (CBIE, 2016) has already been surpassed with a total of 494 525 international students at all levels of study in 2017 (CBIE, 2018). International student expenditures will continue to contribute over $16.1 billion to the Canadian economy annually (Canada's International Education Plan, 2014). This qualitative study explores the case of 32 NNES undergraduate and graduate international students' university schooling experiences at one Canadian institution with the hope of providing insight to the complexities involved in higher education internationalization. Students' reported experiences from semi-structured interviews and one focus group are critically examined against the mutual understanding, revenue generating and skills' migration rationales of internationalization. The emergent themes revealed are discussed around three areas: *The Commonsense of English-Medium, High Quality Education; On the Periphery – Caught in a Space of In-betweenness; and Friendship Redefined – Amassing Cultural Capital*. The discussion suggests that the infiltration of neoliberal ideology in education works against the mutual understanding and skills' migration rationales of higher education internationalization whereby reproducing NNES international students' participation in their own marginalization**.** Finally, recommendations for enhancing international students' Canadian university schooling experiences are made.

DEDICATION

To my:

Mother, Francoise

Brother, Erveen

Sister, Ousha

~

Loving husband, Mark

Little girl, Yuna – always be curious.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION

Prologue - A Growing Tension

In 2007, I began teaching in a Canadian university pre-academic English language pathway program for non-native English (NNES) speaking international students. These students were conditionally admitted to an undergraduate or graduate academic program. Throughout the 10 years I have taught hundreds of students, many of whom who have kept in touch with me during their academic study and beyond. For the most part, they achieved grades they expected and were heading toward graduation; or if having already graduated, they were on the path to searching for their first Canadian employment – usually in Toronto. Despite the differences between and among international students that I met, they did share one commonality, an interest in sharing their stories.

I am not sure of exactly when I started to notice what I perceived to be reoccurring patterns in the stories about their schooling, and or job searching journeys. For example, a typical conversation with students still in school would often reveal that they either had met few, if any, students outside of their own culture. The students would tell me about encounters they had with one or two local Canadian students. From this, the international students usually felt that their limited experience served as 'evidence' that such local students were not interested in getting to know them. Other international students who developed some semblance of friendship explained how it was challenging to understand their domestic friends' way of thinking. They pointed out that it was too difficult to become a 'close' friend because of the cultural gap. Similar conversations ensued with students who had graduated. Their concerns were further amplified by the uncertainty in gaining meaningful employment. Over time, I became quite in tune with how sensitive some of their struggles were; whereby in many cases I preempted their disclosing of struggles with general advice on how to meet more people or increase employment prospects.

As time went on it seemed that such stories became typical of my conversations with international students. What started to grow in me was an awareness of the tension between being a member of an institution committed to enhancing international student experiences and at the same time feeling as though there were no real clear paths for me to help students share their experience and perspectives, or to make a difference.

I carried this tension throughout the research inquiry and wondered if it would ever be reconciled. My hope was that by providing international students with a platform to voice their schooling experiences, I would feel that I had done some service to both, international students and the university to build upon reported strengths and consider perceived challenges. As I interviewed students, analyzed their responses, identified and discussed themes and conclusions, I remain uncertain whether I have moved away from this internal struggle.

The Study

Context of the Study

Higher education internationalization has been made possible due to globalization; the global spreading and intensification of communication through rapid technological advancement (Kaspersen, 2000), as well as, the integration and interdependence of economies, political agencies and cultures (Qureshi & Jalbani, 2014). A more recent review of globalization suggests that the socio-economic and political systems, which aim to frame the blending of cultures and human interactions, do not occur as coexisting frameworks. Instead, human interactions are deeply connected in the economies of global exchange and take place "under the guise of a monolithic human experience" (Maranga et al., 2017, p.2). The ways in which the term, internationalization is used vary and therefore can be ambiguous. Knight and de Wit (1995) describe internationalization as a wide range of university policies and faculty departments, student support services and research which steer to "integrate international and intercultural dimensions" (p. 336). Additional interpretations of internationalization along with my own definition are reviewed later in this chapter.

The Government of Canada has played a significant role in redefining and rebranding Canadian higher education aimed at increasing the country's share of international students through internationalization. In the document, "Canada's International Education Strategy" (2014), the Department of Foreign Affairs, Trade and Development Canada viewed the demand for international students as the solution to "address the shortages of skilled labour that diminish Canada's long-term capacity for research and innovation" (p. 4). According to the International Education Strategy

(2014), "Canada is known for its capacity building and knowledge transfer and for close institutional linkages with industry, which help produce a highly skilled workforce" (p. 16). Beyond the short and long term economic benefits derived from international students, it is envisioned that "internationalization positively impacts Canadian universities by providing domestic students access to a variety of perspectives, languages, cultures, and experiences that foreign students bring with them to campuses" (Anderson, 2015, p. 170).

Paul Davidson, the former CEO of the Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada (AUCC) (2009), echoed the sentiments that international students greatly contribute to the sharing of diverse perspectives and skills in the classroom. The narrative of the benefits of international students reinforced in the AUCC's 2013 report, Canada's Universities: Partners for Prosperity, by stating the important "pedagogical benefits international students bring to Canadian university classrooms, labs and residence halls, [and that] Canadian students gain intercultural knowledge and skills" (p. 14). Moreover, in 2016, the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities' discussion paper, Developing Global Opportunities: Creating a Postsecondary International Education Strategy for Ontario, further roots this discourse in the commonsense understanding of internationalization by claiming, "students also value the diversity of perspectives and experiences that an internationalized student body brings to their individual learning and development" (p. 5). However, the anticipation that international student presence will diversify classrooms, campuses, communities at large and will enhance the academic experience for both domestic and international students ("The Development of Ontario's Internationalization Strategy", 2008), remains debatable. Since as early as 1998, it has

been argued that the gross economic gains from international student recruitment have been placed ahead of internationalism. Scott (1998) clarified the relationship between international student recruitment and internationalism: "It would be a mistake to interpret the pressure to recruit international students in some countries as a reinforcement of internationalism" (p. 125). At the epicenter of higher education internationalization live discussions on national revenue generating goals relying on market-forces, globalization, competition and cost-efficiency (Heller, 2002).

I understood that the University in this research study, like most other Canadian universities, had been putting forth much effort to internationalize. I recognized that the bridging program that I taught in was a part of the many mechanisms assisting the institution's internationalization initiatives. In reviewing Canada's national economic plans (Flaherty, 2013; Roslyn Kunin & Associates Inc., 2016), it is evident that higher education internationalization has been touted as a significant factor for the future of Canadian international trade. For example, back in 2006 the late Honourable James Flaherty, the federal Minister of Finance introduced an economic plan, titled *Advantage, Canada: Building a Strong Economy for Canadians* (2006) which outlined core economic principles. One key principle identified that Canada's need to attract the best and brightest international students has shaped university strategic plans on a national scale. In the follow up document, *Canada's International Education Strategy: Harnessing our knowledge advantage to drive innovation and prosperity* (2014), Flaherty's successor, the Honourable Ed Fast reiterated: "Canada's International Education Strategy, a key element of the Global Markets Action Plan, is our blueprint to attract talent and prepare our country for the 21st century" (p. 4).

Internationalization content producing bodies such as: The Department of Finance Canada (2013), Foreign Affairs, Trade and Development Canada (2014), the Association of Universities and Colleges Canada surveys (2007 a; 2007 b; 2010) the CBIE reports (2012; 2013; 2014 a; 2014 b) and the 2015 issued *Internationalization Statement of Principles for Canadian Educational Institutions* crystalized "internationalization as a high priority for Canadian institutions" ("CBIE's Internationalization Principles for Canadian Educational Institutions", 2017). Here, I provide a general overview of the claimed benefits of internationalization. Later in this chapter, I discuss in more depth the suggested positive internationalization outcomes by examining the mutual understanding, skilled migration and revenue generating rationales.

In Canada's socio-economic context, internationalization is constructed to serve as the crucial link strengthening "people-to people ties – ties proven to boost political, economic, social and developmental relationships" ("Canada's International Education Strategy", p. 12, 2014). The economic benefit of higher education internationalization has had a provincial reach. As Philp Steenkamp, former Deputy Minister, Ministry of Training, Colleges, and Universities for Ontario declared in the 2008 report, *The Development of Ontario's Internationalization Strategy*: "Diversity in the classroom enriches all student understanding of the world by allowing them to share different perspectives, approach problems from different angles, and discover different cultural practices" (p. 1). Thus, the commonsense narrative of internationalization is, "students from other countries who study in Ontario help promote our international reputation, contribute to future trade and economic development opportunities, bring expertise … and enrich the postsecondary experience for all students (Rae, 2005, p. 58). The selling

feature of higher education internationalization is that through cross-cultural exchange and international student immersion into Canadian culture, international and domestic students share ideas and learn from one another in their classes and beyond (Brown, 2009). With a specific focus on one mid-sized Canadian higher education institution – referred to in this thesis inquiry, as the University, I wanted to explore what internationalization looks like in action from the perspective of those who purchase and experience it in the era of hyper market deregulation to generate national economic growth.

I too, had wanted to buy into the pitch that through internationalization, cross-cultural interchange serves as a mutually beneficial, symbiotic relationship between international and domestic students leading to NNES international students' enhanced classroom learning, increased cross-cultural interaction and a deeper awareness of global perspectives with a view for social transformation. However, I could not ignore the many conversations I had with the international students who described a different reality. I began to wonder about their stories and the other untold stories of international students at a self-proclaimed internationalized university.

Multifaceted definitions of internationalization. In a general sense, the term internationalization is widely used to represent interrelated activities that appeal to diverse student demographics. Another interpretation of internationalization reveals a global broadening of knowledge contents, teaching pedagogies, and research initiatives (Stier, 2004). The Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada's (AUCC) 2010 brochure, *"VALUE OF A DEGREE- In a global marketplace"*, defines an internationalized campus as, "one informed by students, faculty and research from

abroad- brings new ideas, perspectives and approaches to learning and research that

generates the ideas, products, policies and services essential to improve daily lives" (p.1).

Furthermore, Ninnes and Hellstén (2005) articulate:

> The international movement of students between countries; international links
> between nation states through open learning programs and new technologies; bi-
> lateral links between governments and higher education institutions in different
> countries for collaboration in research, curriculum development, student and staff
> exchange, and other international activities; multi-national collaboration such as
> via international organizations; and export education where education services are
> offered on a commercial basis in other countries, with students studying either in
> their home country or in the country of the provider. (p. 121)

A more simplified explanation is Abbott's (2009) definition of internationalization as a

"process of integrating an international, intercultural, or global dimension into the

purpose, function, or delivery of postsecondary education" (p. 8). In a 2015 press release,

the CBIE launched its *Internationalization Statement of Principles for Canadian*

Educational Institutions to respond to the institutional need for a "clear statement

consistent with their values to navigate the fast-paced world of internationalization,

which is gaining in scope and importance every year" ("CBIE's Internationalization

Statement of Principles for Canadian Educational Institutions", 2015). The Statement of

Principles espouses:

1. Internationalization is a vital means to achieving global-level civic engagement,
   social justice and social responsibility, and ultimately is vital to the common
   good.

2. Given its importance and central role in society, internationalization aims for the
   highest quality of learning experiences as a core element of education and ideally
   should be embedded in the mission statement of the institution.

3. International students should be valued and recognized for all of their
   contributions, including enriching institutional life and the educational
   experiences of all students; providing direct economic and social benefits to local
   communities beyond the institution; and creating opportunities for long-lasting

professional partnerships and relationships that can be of national, international and global benefit.

4. Ideally, internationalization is inclusive, pervasive and comprehensive, encompassing all aspects of the work of the institution and the full range of institutional goals and actions, including: curriculum and program design; teaching and learning development; student, faculty and staff mobility; language education and training; research and innovation; projects and services; community outreach and local economic development.

5. Internationalization is important to the financial sustainability of many institutions and should not be undertaken without adequate allocation of resources; however, the financial imperatives must not dictate the internationalization agenda.

6. Internationalization that comprises capacity building across borders and cultures must benefit all parties involved; institutions should use a collegial, participatory and mutually beneficial approach to the establishment of international and global partnerships.

7. Internationalization engages a wide range of community members (including students, faculty and staff) in the design and development of activities and aims for equitable access to activities. Access need not be the same for all, or to the same extent, but internationalization should engage all members of the education community.

Informed by economic, learning and cultural aims of internationalization within the Canadian university context, in this study focusing on international students, I operationalize the term *internationalization* as, the application of a wide range of activities for the purpose of (a) broadening English communication skills and cultural awareness for Canadian workforce preparedness, (b) integrating global perspectives in curricula for enhanced student responsiveness and (c) offering cross-cultural interaction for meaningful relationship building.

A focus on people mobility. Flowing from globalization, economic globalization refers to the proliferating interdependence of world economies arising from growing "cross-border trade of commodities and services" such as, higher education (Shangquan, 2000, p. 1). Such expansion in international economic cooperation has increased access

to postsecondary education, turned higher education into a competitive market and is a key factor driving international student mobility (Marginson, 2006). Consequently, internationalization of higher education is a response to economic globalization and depends on international student recruitment from emergent countries, which tend to be NNES countries, whereby "global markets, politics, and education ideology" exist at its core (Stier & Borjesson, 2010, p. 337). The growing trend of higher education internationalization induces global competition among universities to enroll international students, intensifies competition among international students themselves for acceptance to universities and could also result in inequitable opportunity to access higher education (Giroux & Giroux, 2006). From a critical perspective on education "as a system of knowledge production and distribution" (Waters, 2012, p. 123), higher education internationalization through student mobility is explicitly concerned with the reproduction of social advantages and disadvantages.

Cross-border or also known as, transnational education is the main feature of internationalization and is carried out through three forms of mobility: people, program, and institutional (Larsen & Vincent-Lancrin, 2004; Abbott, 2009; Sauvé, 2002). First, people mobility includes two subcomponents of mobility: student and academic. Student mobility refers to students leaving their home country to study abroad, whereas academic mobility refers to the presence of persons, such as faculty and/or staff who travel abroad to work on a temporary basis to provide services. People mobility, in the form of international students is a major focus of Canada's International Education Strategy (2014) and is understood as "foreign students studying in Canada for any length of time" (p. 9). Second, program mobility refers to the provision of a service in another country

that does not necessitate movement from the consumer. Third, institutional mobility

occurs when an educational service provider physically establishes itself in another

country and has commercial presence (Larsen & Vincent-Lancrin, 2004; Abbott, 2009;

Sauvé, 2002). Figure 1 summarizes the three modes of internationalization and highlights

that this research study focused on people mobility; international students at the

University. A major criticism of any form of cross-border education is that it is structured

according to the academic cultures and social values of dominant countries (Kehm &

Teichler, 2007). Waters (2012) notes, "the opportunities and rewards associated with

formal education are unevenly distributed (p. 123), because academic norms that are

valued favour those who already have experiences and skills more consistent with the

host society.
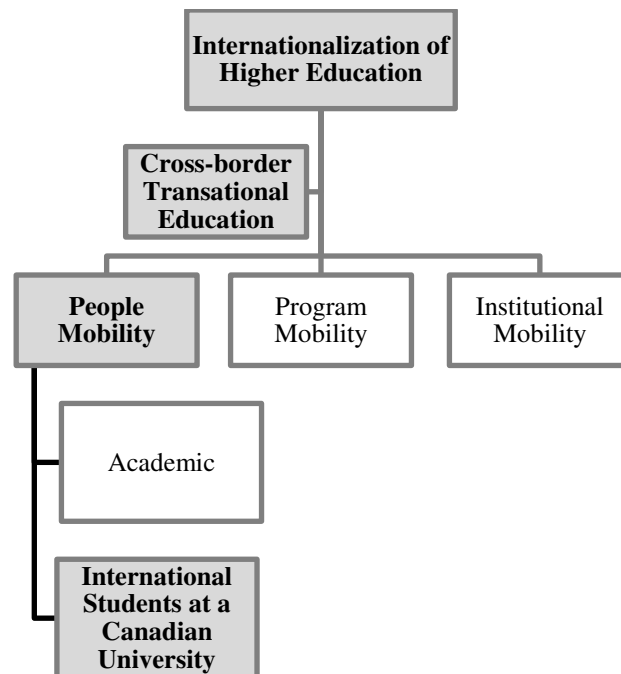
Figure 1. Internationalization of Higher Education. This figure illustrates three modes of internationalization.

Mutual understanding, skilled migration and revenue generating rationales.

Four rationales act as pillars supporting the aims of internationalization (*mutual understanding, skilled migration, revenue-generating,* and *capacity-building)*. First, the mutual understanding rationale is rooted in "political, cultural, academic and development aid goals" (Larsen & Vincent-Lancrin, 2004, p. 4) with the aim to increase international dialogue and cooperative exchange. The anticipated cross-cultural interplay is understood as the door for Canadians to gain worldly views: "If Canadians want to play a role in the world, they need to have a better understanding … and the presence of international students is helpful in achieving such understanding" (Li, 2013, p. 3). What is uncertain however, is how the practices aimed at achieving this rationale are actualized.

Abbott (2009) suggests that higher education internationalization has been counterproductive and "has resulted in the loss of cultural identity, homogenization of curriculum, and intensification of elitism in access to international education opportunities" (p. 11). Mckinley et al. (2007) define identity as "a social process in which individuals mutually constitute each other in and through their relationships with others ... and incorporate notions of how community and society play into the discussions of who individuals are" (p. 179). Schooling as agency, is central to promoting dominant commonsense knowledge. Then, it is important to consider how higher education internationalization:

> Through explicit and implicit policies, closet and tamp down some identities while
> promoting others ... seek to make all the students abide by the same rules,
> protocols, standards, and so forth ... fail to recognize the unique abilities of all
> learners and force some students to abandon aspects of their identity that are central to
> their being. (p. 167)

Higher education internationalization has also led to the favouring of "particular groups, whilst devaluing the skills and qualifications of others, particularly in relation to the opportunities cultural capital acquisition" (Waters, 2012, p. 126). The extent to which the host society extends opportunity for NNES students to acquire social capital may be largely tied to students' race, culture and linguistic abilities. In turn, lack of support to assist NNES international students to navigate through and gain familiarity of relevant institutional expectations and skills to engage in social contexts (Edgerton & Roberts, 2014), prevents them from developing social capital and disadvantages them in building cultural capital with the aim to attain economic capital in Canada.

Second, the skilled migration rationale is driven by the national economic objective to remain globally competitive by marketing to and attracting perceived talented international students to study and later possibly work in Canada. It builds upon the mutual understanding rationale and executes aggressive international student recruitment by using strategies such as, abroad commercialization of a country's higher education institutions (Larsen & Vincent-Lancrin, 2004). Arguably, it has been the middle-class of NNES emergent countries who have been targeted and lured with the proposition of "opt[ing] out of competitive domestic education systems, in favour of overseas alternatives" (Waters, 2012, p. 124), and "in search of better working and living conditions" (Beck et al., 2013, p. 84). However, international student reporting ("Long Odds for International Students to Land a Job", 2016), suggests that upon completing their Canadian university education and spending tens of thousands of dollars in differential tuition fees, many international students struggle to land gainful Canadian employment. In considering my definition of neoliberalism, as the dominant political

practices in accelerated global capitalism that serve the economic interests of the English-speaking world, the reality of scarce employment opportunity for international students appears to go against the narrative of a skilled labour shortage (The Department of Foreign Affairs, Trade and Development Canada, 2014) and the neoliberal rhetoric of the demand for international student participation contributing to knowledge creativity for propelling the Canadian economy.

Third, the revenue-generating rationale encompasses both the previous rationales. The focus here is on the shift away from relying completely on public subsidies to a greater dependence on revenue generated from international student tuition. Under this rationale, higher education institutions have greater autonomy in setting differential tuition fees and working toward securing their position in the transnational education market (Larsen & Vincent-Lancrin, 2004). The principles of neoliberalism legitimize the commoditization and intensive international exportation of higher education. Higher education as sellable good, results in the growth of ancillary industries such as, "recruiters, counselors, testers, credential evaluators, and a huge English-language industry to provide the language skills needed for international study" (Altbach, n.d., p. 2). Through internationalization, universities essentially function as a revenue generating agent stimulating economic growth to meet the socio-economic demands of the dominant society (Giroux, 2010).

Lastly, the capacity-building rationale promotes transnational education by building an emerging country's capacity through human capital investment. Typically, this involves government regulated, World Bank funded projects, which identify a country's economic agenda, and includes temporary movement of personnel, such as

teachers, abroad. Contrary to the capacity-building rationale, it is reported that such activities have no significant impact on a country's overall development (Hunter & Brown, 2000). NNES international students' Canadian university schooling experiences are checked against three of the four internationalization rationales (mutual understanding, skilled migration, and revenue generating).

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this research is to explore NNES international undergraduate and graduate students' Canadian university schooling experiences and gain insight on the complex and contradictory implementation of internationalization by looking at the reported opportunities and challenges not as individual entities, but rather as phenomenon existing in relation to each other. This thesis inquiry is critically situated in advocacy; intended to provide international students with enhanced opportunities to "succeed and socialize within their local communities and discourse practices" (Anderson, 2015, p. 178). The research study is driven by an "action agenda for reform" (Creswell, 2003, p. 9), regarding the application of a wide range of internationalization activities to: (a) broaden English communication skills and cultural awareness for Canadian workforce participation, (b) integrate global perspectives in curricula for enhanced student responsiveness and (c) offer cross-cultural interaction for meaningful relationship building.

Focus of the Study

Employing research methods grounded in qualitative methodology, the goal of this research study is to explore NNES international undergraduate and graduate

students' perception of their university schooling experience at one mid-sized Canadian university.

Research Questions

To explore the application of internationalization against the mutual understanding, skilled migration and revenue generating rationales, the primary research question is:

What are NNES international undergraduate and graduate students' university schooling experience at a mid-sized Canadian university?

The sub-questions are:

1. How do students perceive their in-class learning?

2. How do students describe their cross-cultural interaction?

3. How do students understand the purpose of cross-cultural engagement?

Significance of the Research Study

From 353 000 international students studying in Canada in 2015 to 438 157 in 2016 and with the formerly projected ten percent yearly increase until the year 2020 (CBIE, 2015; Roslyn Kunin & Associates Inc., 2012, 2016), the 2017 international student count of 494 525 has surpassed expectations making the topic of international students' Canadian university schooling experiences both timely and important. Certainly, discussions about internationalization of Canadian higher education continue to typically occur in the context of student mobility where "recruitment slightly edges out other areas of internationalization" (CBIE, 2016, p. 11). International student perspectives surveyed (I-Graduate International Insight Services, 2013) are typically used to understand and advise on student recruitment, but not used to understand

internationalization itself (Beck, et al., n.d.). Consequently, large and generalized surveys fall short in capturing "intimate details" (Dei, 1992, p. 5) of international students' university schooling experience.

The mid-sized University of interest in this research study is in the province of Ontario. Ontario remains the top province in total number of international students at over 187 000 in 2016 (Roslyn Kunin & Associates Inc., 2012), and with 60 000 international students at its university institutions (Council of Ontario Universities, 2017). Positioned as a revenue generating mechanism, universities have rebranded their internationalized image by making international student recruitment the focal point and a symbolic marker of internationalization in action. For many institutional and government leaders, "international student mobility is often seen as the cornerstone of the growing internationalization of Canadian universities" (Guo & Chase, 2011, p. 309) and having international students simply present on campus is enough. In this study, I define and use the term commonsense, to refer to the internalized and unquestioned knowledge and practices in everyday life. The limited and commonsense understanding of internationalization implementation thus requires further critical investigation of international students' lived Canadian university schooling experiences.

The pitfalls around international student recruitment in relation to Canadian higher education internationalization raises disconcerting views. Few studies explore the implementation of internationalization vis à vis its rationales. Although the extent of gray literature on internationalized dimensions of higher education has expanded, a large portion have been driven by practical concerns resulting in highly pragmatic objectives pertaining to stimulating national economic growth. Some examples include, *Jobs,*

Growth and Long-Term Prosperity (Department of Finance Canada, 2013), *A World of Learning: Canada's Performance and Potential in International Education* (CBIE, 2012) and *International Education: A Key Driver of Canada's Future Prosperity* (Advisory Panel on Canada's International Education Strategy, 2014). Overall, academic papers on higher education internationalization tend to correspond to topics such as institutional frameworks (Bartell, 2003), performance indicators (Gao, 2017) and targets "the practitioners and policy makers in higher education more strongly than the higher education researchers" (Kehm & Teichler, 2007, p. 261). Thus, minimal exploration of internationalization at Canadian universities beyond policy briefs and enrolment plans to further internationalize campuses have occurred (Yeravdekar & Tiwari, 2014; Larsen & Vincent-Lancrin, 2002). Hoare (2012) and de Wit (2013) both attest to the slow growing research and lack of international student voices in studies exploring their on-the-ground realities. Beck (2012) further confirms a gap exists in Canadian research on "perspectives, practices, and experiences of participants engaged in internationalization" (p. 136). As the German philosopher Hegel (1969 [1812]) argued, in any critical exploration: "The genuine refutation must penetrate the opponent's stronghold and meet him on his own ground; no advantage is gained by attacking him somewhere else and defeating him where he is not (p. 581). In other words, education researchers need to look at narratives of those who are actually experiencing it. If international students' experience of an internationalized education is to be investigated, then it needs to be checked against the underpinning rationales of internationalization; "the grounds and assumptions which have already been established and set in the position of scrutiny" (O'Regan, 2014, p. 534). It is therefore, worth exploring international students' everyday

schooling experiences on Canadian university campuses against the mutual

understanding, skilled-migration and revenue generating internationalization rationales

(Yeravdekar & Tiwari, 2014; Larsen & Vincent-Lancrin, 2002).

Institutional documents tend to speak to internationalization implementation as a

priority and report on its success in general terms with limited scope to which

international student experiences are examined. In the Ontario Ministry of Training and

College's 2016 discussion paper, *Developing Global Opportunities: Creating a*

Postsecondary International Education Strategy for Ontario, internationalization is an

institutional priority to position "Ontario as a destination and partner of choice" (p. 4).

What is also known about Canadian university internationalization is: (a) a majority of

institutions agree that internationalization is a priority (Association of Universities and

Colleges of Canada, 2007b; Knight, 2000b); (b) internationalization is now commonly

integrated into institutional mission statements and strategic plans (Hénard et al., 2012);

(c) over 200 higher education institutions participate in internationalization (Association

of Universities and Colleges of Canada, n.d.); and (d) the number and range of

international activities and programs have dramatically increased (Savage, 2005; CBIE,

2016). The Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada Survey (2007b) findings

on internationalization at Canadian universities showed, "universities readily

acknowledged that providing students with international and intercultural skills is a core

mandate" that can be achieved through internationalization (p. 3). The CBIE's 2016

discussion paper, *A World of Learning: Canada's Performance and Potential in*

International Education, revealed its membership survey results on internationalization at

Canadian institutions. In line with findings from the Association of Universities and

Colleges of Canada (2007b), 95 % of institutions view internationalization as a priority

and include it "as a part of their strategic planning" (p. 11). For CBIE member

institutions, the top three internationalization priorities were: international student

recruitment, domestic student engagement in education abroad and curriculum

internationalization (CBIE, 2016). However, a common missing thread in most

publications on higher education internationalization is an honest review of international

students' actual university schooling experiences and perspectives (Anderson, 2015).

From a global perspective, not all research on internationalization that is available

is relevant because it addresses various countries, including non-English speaking ones.

Kehm and Teichler (2007) estimate "the majority of studies on internationalization are

not available in the English language" (p. 267). As a result, it is difficult to confirm

whether the overall, available literature in English representatively characterizes

internationalization aspects of higher education. Because continued focus on

multifaceted, thematic range is needed (Kehm & Teichler, 2007), this research study will

contribute to the collection of higher education internationalization studies written in the

English language and reflected in the Canadian context.

This thesis inquiry is important for four key groups. First, it is significant for

international students because it serves as a platform to voice their perspectives of being

an international student at a Canadian university actively participating in

internationalization. Second, by gaining an understanding of international students'

schooling realities, faculty, administrators and staff can build upon campus

internationalization initiatives to enhance international students' university schooling

experience. Third, the findings of this study may inform policy makers to respond

meaningfully to international student needs and advise on internationalization practices that advance the implementation of internationalization nationally. Fourth, the study will contribute to the collection of research studies on international students' Canadian university schooling experiences; in turn, supplying researchers with information from which to base their future research.

Definition of Terms

- Canadian student: The University uses this term to combine the two definitions, *citizen* and *permanent resident* ("Information on Legal Status Affecting Tuition", 2012) who does not need to obtain a permit to study in Canada. The term *domestic student* may be used interchangeably with *Canadian student* throughout this study.

- In-class experience: Experiences related, but limited to: student-professor communication, student-student interaction, classroom involvement, teaching strategies, curriculum/ content

- Intercultural Competence: A dynamic process through which individuals develop attitudes such as respect, openness, and curiosity, as well as, cultural self-awareness to achieve "effective and appropriate communication and behaviour in an intercultural situation" and developing an "informed frame of reference to exhibit adaptability, flexibility, and empathy" (Deardorff, 2009, p. 11).

- International perspective: Faculty and student driven international examples, issues, situations, or events connected to the academic field of study for deepening knowledge, broadening global awareness, and developing appreciation for diversity.

- International student: "Those who are not permanent residents of their country of study" (Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, 2010), but are

"temporary residents who are in Canada principally to study and have [been] issued a study permit" (Citizenship, Refugees and Immigration Canada, 2009)

- Internationalization: The application of a wide range of activities for the purpose of: (a) broadening English communication skills and cultural awareness for Canadian workforce participation, (b) integrating global perspectives in curricula for enhanced student responsiveness, and (c) offering cross-cultural interaction for meaningful relationship building.

- Internationalized curriculum- Course content and teaching approaches that incorporate global perspectives.

- Non-native English speaking student (NNES): A student whose first language is not English.

- University generated social engagement: Out of class activities related to social interaction which may or may not shape the academic experience. Some examples include, but not limited to student-student interaction, volunteer opportunities and extracurricular activities.

The Thesis Blueprint

This thesis dissertation is organized into six chapters. The introductory chapter provides a contextual background on the narratives of the benefits derived from higher education internationalization in the form of international student recruitment. In broad strokes, the mutual understanding, skills' migration and revenue generating rationales constructing the commonsense understanding of internationalization is painted. The importance of exploring NNES international students' university schooling experiences is

structured in the sections: prologue, focus of study, research questions and the significance of the study.

Chapter 2 reviews literature related to the explored phenomenon. The themes surveyed through the literature include a growing body of Canadian based research on international student university experiences, study abroad motivation; the national and provincial internationalization landscape, international student reported experiences at Canadian universities and gaps between internationalization rationales and reported realities.

Chapter 3 details the methodology used; beginning with critical theory as the ontological lens through which higher education internationalization – as an organizational field – is interpreted. The role higher education internationalization plays in the reproduction of capital is thus, reviewed. Paramount to the reproduction of capital, focus is placed on neoliberal ideology to flush out the narrative of the knowledge-based economy, the commodification, consumer culture, massification and commercialization of higher education under an internationalized framework. This chapter also discusses case study as the chosen research methodology and further details the research methods, data collection, interpretation and analysis procedures.

Chapter 4 is dedicated to introducing the participant profiles and to presenting qualitative findings originating from the semi-structured interviews and focus group participant responses. NNES undergraduate and graduate international students' Canadian university schooling experiences are organized into emergent themes in relation to the three research questions: (a) how do students perceive their in-class learning experience? (b) How do students describe their cross-cultural interaction? (c) How do

students understand the purpose of cross-cultural engagement? Additional attention is given to the unanticipated themes that emerged.

Chapter 5 expounds on the major findings by critically mapping them into three themes: *The Commonsense of English-Medium, High Quality Education; On the Periphery – Caught in a Space of In-betweenenness*; and *Friendship Redefined – Amassing Cultural Capital*. Within each them, sub-themes are discussed.

Chapter 6, the final chapter included in this dissertation, summarizes the purpose, methods, procedures and findings of the study and ends with recommendations.

CHAPTER 2 - THE REVIEW OF LITERATURE

This review of the literature first establishes the context of Canadian higher education internationalization by introducing samples from the growing number of Canadian studies; presenting international student motivation in choosing Canada as their study abroad destination; identifying international student enrolment trends and discussing the internationalization landscape in driving the national and provincial economies. The review of literature then moves to identify research gaps and insights on international student reported Canadian university experiences in terms of cross-cultural interaction, perceived faculty cultural competence and curriculum internationalization. Lastly, the review of literature critically examines higher education internationalization rationales vis à vis on the ground realties in relation to: national revenue generation in response to higher education underfunding, anticipated vs. reported mutual understanding gains and skills' migration to the Canadian labour market in the face of problematic employment prospects. The overall collection of reviewed literature serves as a framework to link the findings of NNES international undergraduate and graduate students' perceived university schooling experiences to a body of knowledge related to higher education internationalization.

A Growing Number of Canadian Studies

Research investigating international students' schooling experiences in the context of internationalized Canadian universities is growing (Guo & Guo, 2017; Viczko & Tascon, 2016; Larsen, 2015). While some research focus on approaches or strategies common to Canadian higher education internationalization (Larsen, 2013), much of the current research on international students' Canadian university schooling experiences

discusses the issues and challenges for international students in generalized ways; with a greater focus on English language barriers and/or cultural adjustment issues. The lack of interrogation in how internationalization policies are played on the ground has led to gaps in understanding the "perspectives, practices, and experiences of participants engaged in internationalization" (Beck, 2012, p. 123). To introduce Canadian based research studies of international students' experiences at Canadian universities, we can take the following studies as examples.

Moores and Popadiuk's (2011) qualitative study of seven international students at a mid-sized Canadian university investigated the positive aspects of international students' transition into Canadian academic life. Moores and Popadiuk examined the tremendous personal and academic growth students underwent as well as the heightened sense of independence they gained. Some of the factors concluded to having contributed to these positive outcomes were: a supportive living and learning environment, access to a cultural guide who helped them navigate through ambiguities presented in Canadian culture and having a sense of belonging. However, with this research study focusing only on the positive aspects of international student transition, simplistic, generalized and common understandings of the types of supports international students need are highlighted as findings. When considering how the participants in this study persevered through difficult times such as, "experiences of depression, culture shock, self-doubt, cultural differences, and the demands of independent living and foreign academic environment" (p. 299), the findings described they were "persistent despite the obstacles, and learning to believe in oneself, demonstrating considerable determination" (p. 299). The superior emotional strength and internal locus of control which these students appear

to embody positions international students as being the most responsible for their successful cultural adjustment despite existing gaps in institutional support.

Second, a Canadian based research paper critically exploring the role of internationalization in education concluded, "internationalization of higher education not only bypass[es] and disregard[s] inequities but reproduces them in many ways" (Beck et al. 2013, p. 85). The English language barriers international students experience coupled with limited institutional support challenge students in gaining the intercultural literacies pertinent to successful cultural adjustment and academic transition (Beck, et. al., 2013). These discoveries are consistent with other research study findings (Calder et al., 2016; 2017; Li, 2013; Martirosyan, et al., 2015; Scot et al., 2015) and suggest the need to refocus on the excluded voices of international students in examining internationalization in higher education.

Moreover, Grayson's (2008) large scale Canadian research study of international and domestic students included four Canadian universities, (University of British Columbia, York University, McGill University, and Dalhousie University). The findings from the 1 415-participant completed questionnaire revealed a strikingly different and unpopular reality about international student experiences. Grayson claimed, "class experiences of domestic and international students vary little" (p. 219) and that "international students report making roughly the same number of friends as domestic students" (p. 219). The findings from this study are unique in that "international students had more contact with faculty outside of the classroom than domestic students" (p. 219). However, through a deeper look at the participant demographic of the 1415 international student participants, it becomes clearer why such findings were possible. I suggest the

primary reason influencing such results stems from the fact that the majority, 65 % of the participants were domestic students and 43 % of the international students were those who were originally from the United States. The reported accounts from the overwhelming large student population who have a similar cultural and linguistic background to that of the host country presumably skews the results and overshadows the schooling experiences of those who have met a different reality. While these studies provide insight into the international student experiences, none of them have explored their schooling experiences in relation to the three rationales of internationalization: revenue generating, mutual understanding, and skilled migration.

When it comes to exploring internationalized postsecondary institutions, academics working in the United States have produced more research studies on factors such as, English language barriers (Wu et al., 2015; Zhen Li et al., 2017), perceived racism (Kim & Kim, 2010; Lee & Rice, 2007) and their overall impact on international students' academic and social integration (Hechanova – Alampay et al., 2002; Hendrickson, et al., 2011; Kim, 2011; Lee, 2010; Trice, 2007). This is not surprising, as it is host to the most number of international students across western democracies. Eighteen percent of international students globally enroll in U.S. tertiary educational institutions (Advisory Panel on Canada's International Education Strategy, 2014; Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, 2011). Due to some political, economic and social commonalities between Canada and the United States and with parallel higher education structures, as well as, comparable internationalization strategies, research about international student experiences on American campuses can provide some insight regarding present day realities of international students on Canadian campuses. Australia

and the United Kingdom are the second and third geographic regions with the highest number of international students (Education at an Advisory Panel on Canada's International Education Strategy, 2014; Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, 2011). These two additional regions are alike in relation to Canada in that they are democratic, industrialized, and largely Anglophone. In turn, references will be made to studies conducted in Australia and the U.K. when there is an identified gap in Canadian and U.S. literature.

Three Domains of Motivation to Study in Canada

Motivating factors influencing international undergraduate and graduate students to pursue academic studies in Canada vary. Despite ranking sixth behind the US, UK, Australia, Germany and France as a preferred study destination (CBIE, 2016), Canada retains its global attractiveness as a study destination. International students are attracted to study in Canada for it is "a developed country where English is spoken, considered safer than the United States, and [is] less expensive than the United Kingdom" (Li, 2013, p. 3). According to Chen's (2008) research findings, overall international student motivation for selecting a Canadian post-secondary institution can be summarized into three overlapping domains: individual goals, family encouragement, and globalization.

A common individual goal for international students is to be proficient in English. This goal draws both undergraduate and graduate international students to Canada with the aim to enhance their English language skills through in-class and social interaction requiring English language use (Chen, 2008). In an interview regarding the state of higher education internationalization, Philip Altbach, a leading expert on higher education notes, "the large majority [of students] come from Asia and go to the main

English-speaking western countries" (Todd, 2013, para. 10). NNES international students are particularly aware of economic and political advantages that the English language as the global lingua franca brings (Altbach, 2004; Flowerdew & Peacock, 2001; McKay, 2003). As an example, a British Council report titled, *The Benefits of the English Language for Individuals and Societies* (Euromonitor International, 2012) confirmed that gaining English language proficiency among non-native English speaking speakers from developing countries can increase their earning potential in their home country by 25 %. From a neoliberal perspective, the individual economic advantage of learning English certainly explains why "more people than ever want to learn English" (Graddol, 2006, p. 10).

Access to and opportunity for international students to participate in the western labour force is the second motivator propelling parents to encourage their children to study abroad (Chen, 2008; I-Graduate International Insight, 2013). Family encouragement often occurs in the form of a long-term process that begins by parents sending their children to "international or joint-venture elementary/high schools" (Chen, 2008, p. 21) that channel students to Canadian institutions for undergraduate study. For example, in Chen's (2008) investigation of international students' choice of Canadian universities, a Chinese undergraduate student reported:

> I came to Canada because my high school which is called "Beijing Concord College of Sino-Canada" has some connections with Canadian government. Students in the whole school were planning to come to Canada. This high school is more designed for people like me, want to study in Canadian universities. (p. 21)

In this case, family investment in students' at-home, high school education seems to guarantee seamless access to Canadian postsecondary education. In this example, the

Canadian government's alliance with a high school from which Canadian universities recruit, is facilitated by economic globalization and can be critically understood as higher education commodification.

The third domain of study abroad motivation relates specifically to economic globalization and is known as, push-pull factors (Chen, 2008, p. 11). Push factors refer to elements of a home country that motivate students to leave that country, and pull factors are perceived positive qualities of a host country that encourage students to mobilize to that country (Eder, Smith & Pitts, 2010). A common push factor for Chinese students is the highly competitive nature of being accepted to a tier 1 Chinese university. China's continued economic growth has resulted in both "aspiration for higher education and the demand for graduates" (Li & Bray, 2007, p. 796); however, its postsecondary expansions fall short in meeting such demand (Li & Bray, 2007). On the other hand, a pull factor may include any type of positive characteristics such as, the host country's physical geography, or the host institution's academic reputation, as well as, perceived future employment opportunities. An example of a pull factor is the view that studying abroad gives students an employment advantage when returning to their home country. For instance, in the news release titled, *Ontario Tops Country in International Students*, an international student from Denmark explained "having a Canadian university on your resume is highly regarded by employers, and can lead to more job opportunities" (Callan, 2012, para. 1). Additionally, undergraduate students from China, Hong Kong, Korea, and Taiwan reported they were influenced by Canada's general characteristics such as internationally recognized education, competitive costs, as well as, safe living

environments and work opportunities (The Councils of Ministers of Education, 2009; "University Leaders Woo Students", 2010).

International student motivation to study in Canada is promoted, supported and facilitated through scholarships or memorandums of understandings between Canadian and country of origin universities. Universities function as companies "developing structures in the form of binding rules and agreements which give them access to the services of other countries to be opened up as markets" (Connors, 2010, p. 5). Examples of scholarship programs that have mobilized international students to Canadian campuses include: the King Abdullah Foreign Scholarship Program (2009); the Libyan-North American Scholarship Program (2010); and the Canada-Brazil Science without Borders Scholarship Program (2012) (CBIE, 2014b). Whether international students' choices are shaped by push, pull, or other motivating factors, increased international student mobility to Canada is expected to continue to increase.

Trends in International Student Growth

The number of international students studying in Canada continues to grow rapidly. Countries collaborating through the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) receive 85% of the world's international students; making them, the nexus at which international trade in education services take place (Larsen & Vincent-Lancrin, 2002). When compared to other OECD regions such as, the United States, United Kingdom and Australia where there had been between 250-350% growth in international student enrolment in each country from 1980 to 2001, Canada continues to lag with approximately 100% in growth (Larsen & Vincent-Lancrin, 2004). Having said this however, Canada has experienced a dramatic growth in the total number of

international students. The CBIE (2016) reports a 92% growth in international student enrolment between 2008 and 2015. In 2015, there were 353 570 international students pursuing academic studies in Canada (CBIE, 2016). According to the 2016 report, *Education Indicators in Canada: Fact Sheet*, international students account for 11 % of Canadian university student population. Overall, from the 1990s to 2016, international student enrolment has increased from approximately 158 000 to 438 157; and was projected to increase to 450 000 by 2022 (CBIE, 2016; Lu & Hou, 2016). In fact, the latest figures from the CBIE (2018) confirms that there were 494 525 international students at all levels of study in 2017. Such an increase will sustain over 173 000 new jobs, of which 86 500 being new, and will contribute over $16.1 billion in international student expenditures to the Canadian economy (Canada's International Education Strategy, 2014). In terms of demographics, international students come from 187 nations (CBIE, 2016). Half of international students are from East Asia; with the clear majority from China (28%) and India (25%) (CBIE 2016; CBIE 2018). Between 74% and 80% of international students are under the age of 25; and an increasing proportion are between the ages of 18 and 24 (CBIE, 2016). The number of Post-Graduate Work Permits (PGWP) issued in 2008 was 15 600 compared with 101 000 in 2016 (CIC News, 2017). Moreover, from 1990 to 2014 an estimated 19% of international students became permanent residents in Ontario (Lu & Hou, 2015, p. 1).

Canada's Foundation for its Higher Education Internationalization Landscape

Internationalizing universities has become a crucial part of Canada's international education plan and is a major revenue generating agent. Indeed, Canadian universities have come a long way from the concern that they have "been losing market share as

universities around the world respond to the internationalization agenda and seek to

attract more international students" (*International Student Recruitment Report*, 2012, p.

4). The 2008 AUCC document entitled, *Why universities' connections to the world*

matter put forward:

> There is a growing pool of international students around the world. Nevertheless, to ensure that Canada remains a destination of choice for the top talent looking to study abroad, we will have to compete more vigorously with a growing number of competitor nations which are increasing their recruitment efforts. Canada needs to be positioned as a place where top international students can pursue the highest quality of education and improve their economic opportunities. (p. 2)

In turn, Canadian higher education internationalization has become firmly rooted in

facilitating international student mobility with the aim to "support the excellence and

innovation of Canada's education and cultural landscape" (CBIE, 2016, p. 15). The

report, *International Education: A Key Driver of Canada's Future Prosperity* written by

the Advisory Panel on Canada's International Education Strategy (2012), advised that an

international education strategy "can help Canada in addressing labour market issues" (p.

6; Citizenship & Immigration Canada, 2012). In terms of developing national economic

"growth, and long-term prosperity" (Department of Finance Canada, 2013, p. 3),

university internationalization is a strategic pathway for recruiting international students

and retaining the "best and the brightest" (Department of Finance Canada, 2013, p. 3) to

participate in the Canadian labour market for immediate and long-term economic

stimulation. The Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade commissioned an

assessment of the economic impact of international education, and concluded, "the

economic benefit of international students studying in Canada is substantial" (Roslyn

Kunin & Associates, Inc., 2012, p. 43). The report went on to warn that, "to remain

competitive in the global economy, Canada needs to attract the best to contribute to our talent pool" (p. 1).

Among all types of internationalization initiatives, the greatest focus is on international student recruitment. The CBIE's (2012) document titled, *A World of Learning: Canada's Performance and Potential in International Education*, reported that university internationalization is typically pursued through international student recruitment, followed by curriculum internationalization and establishing international leadership positions. To take as an example, over 90% of Canadian institutional leaders claimed the primary reason for international student recruitment is to develop an internationalized campus (Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada, 2007b). On national average, international student enrolment has increased by 85% from 2006 to 2015 (CBIE, 2016); whereby, the top three source countries have been China, India and Korea (The Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, 2011; Roslyn Kunin and Associates Inc., 2012). In more recent years, efforts to strengthen the Canadian education brand has resulted in accelerated marketing with targeted recruitment from emerging markets including Brazil, China, India, North Africa, the Middle East and Vietnam (Anderson, 2015; Foreign Affairs, Trade and Development Canada, 2014).

For individual provinces and the country at large, internationalization of universities is an avenue toward economic recovery. As noted in *Canada's International Education Strategy* (2014), "international students in Canada provide immediate and significant economic benefits to Canadians in every region of the country" (p. 7). The revenue generating contribution from international students has grown from $9.3 billion in 2014 (Roslyn Kunin and Associates, 2016), to approximately $11 billion in 2017

(CBC, 2017). The substantial economic value of international education has continued to fuel government investment in internationalization to further "create new jobs" (Council of Ontario Universities, 2011, p. 2), and "enrich our own economy" (Council of Ontario Universities, 2017, p. 12).

The Emergence of University Internationalization in Ontario

At the onset of higher education internationalization in Ontario, the February 2005 report titled, *Ontario: A Leader in Learning* and authored by former Premier Bob Rae (1990-1995) recommended increased attention to the recruitment of international students. As far as international students were concerned, Rae (2005) suggested the Ontario government "[p]ursue marketing efforts, jointly with the sector and the federal government, to ensure that Ontario remains an important 'educational destination' for international students. Encourage the federal government to allow international students in Ontario to obtain off-campus work permits" (p. 57). The Rae report also strongly suggested financial investment in the postsecondary education system. Considering Rae's recommendation, the Dalton McGuinty led Ontario government launched *The Reaching Higher* (2005) plan. From 2006, a $6.2 billion-dollar investment would be made aimed at advancing Ontario's postsecondary education to gain a stronger position against other provinces in an increasingly competitive higher education market. Clearly, from universities to provincial governments, the internationalization of universities has become increasingly important for their financial well-being.

Ontario continues to enroll the highest number of international students in Canada (Minister of Industry, 2016). The province's geographic size and abundant number (21) of higher education institutions (Council of Ontario Universities, 2017) are primary

reasons for making it the leading study destination for international students (Calan, 2012; Roslyn Kunin and Associates, Inc, 2012). In 2015, 43% of all international students in Canada studied in Ontario (CBIE, 2016). This translated to 143 428 international students studying at all education levels in Ontario (CBIE, 2016); and generating a total revenue of 3.5 billion dollars (Canada's International Education Strategy, 2014). Keeping it as the leading study destination province, 187 925 international students (45.4%) chose Ontario in 2016 (The Canadian Magazine of Immigration, 2017). Based on the most recent available data, Ontario universities specifically, increased their international student enrolment by 88.5% between 2010 and 2016; resulting in approximately 60 000 international students studying at Ontario universities (Council of Ontario Universities, 2017).

The recruitment of international students to Ontario university campuses demonstrates the transformation of higher education from a provincial affair to a national economic phenomenon. Initially, Philip Steenkamp (2008), former deputy minister of Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities for Ontario claimed, "each international student is estimated to contribute more than $25,000 to the economy, making education for international students a $900 million industry in Ontario" (p. 1). According to the latest available figures, international students in Ontario contributed $4.4 billion to the GDP (Roslyn Kunin & Associates, 2016). The high financial gains from differentiated international tuition fees keep Canadian university internationalization as an important topic among governments, policymakers and institutional leaders (CBIE, 2016). With anticipated international student enrolment growth in sight, Ontario's universities will

continue to position international student recruitment as a major piece in its work toward reaching economic sustainability.

University Internationalization Processes in Ontario

Ontario universities commit to internationalization by developing their own institutional definition of its meaning. Universities use their definition to anchor strategic action plans. As an example, the University in this study defines internationalization as follows:

> At the heart of international engagement is a long-term commitment to the movement of people and ideas. It occurs most visibly when students from abroad come to study here or students from here study abroad. It occurs when education and research programs are developed in partnership with institutions in other countries, to create outcomes that are broader than those derived from individual collaborations between scholars in different parts of the world. And it occurs when institutions within Canada align themselves in ways that strengthen their global reach. A commitment to international engagement means a commitment to provide international students with the very broadest global perspective possible. It means a commitment to apply our creativity to global challenges, large and small.

To increase international student enrolment at their respective institutions, many Ontario universities have developed individualized, yet similar strategic action plans. For example, Western University, aimed at having a 20 % undergraduate international student enrolment by 2017 (University of Western Ontario, 2011). Another example is The University of Waterloo planned, to "enlarge and enhance Waterloo's presence in the international arena … by attracting the best and brightest … students" (University of Waterloo, 2013, p. 30). The University of Toronto also noted the importance to "aggressively pursue a higher profile in international student recruitment" and include internationalization as one of the key principles underlying the academic programs (University of Toronto, 2007, p. 13).

Since Ontario universities have placed international student recruitment as a priority, there has been a shift in institutional ideology from aid to trade (Smart & Ang, 1993). In this context, universities are moving away from grounding themselves as the primary social actors responsible for advancing civic engagement, to becoming revenue generating agents. With trade at the root of higher education internationalization, institutions are governmentally supported to mass market their product. This includes institutions attempting to manage their "brand" (Mount & Belanger, 2004, p. 125). This is precisely why The University of Western Ontario changed its name to 're-brand' itself to the generic name, Western University; an effort to appear less local, and more global. To compete in the global market for international students, universities employ differentiated marketing strategies such as, "student market segmentation, institutional/ country image, and positioning and branding" (Chen, 2008, p. 7). Such strategies are further supported and reinforced by the Canadian government. To position international education at "the heart of Canada's current and future prosperity" (Canada's International Education Strategy, 2014, p.4), a budget of 10 million dollars was allocated to further build Canada's international brand, 'Imagine Education au/in Canada' and target prospective students (Canada's International Education Strategy, 2014) by advertising the "high quality of Canada's universities" (Leclaire, 2013, para. 2). Neoliberal forces and corresponding national economic interests expressed in a market driven commonsense understanding of higher education, position Ontario universities to capitalize on and place international differential tuition fees ahead of exploring international students' schooling experiences

The Poverty of Internationalization Rationales Vis à Vis Reported Realities

There is something troubling about the internationalization rationales in that they appear to reflect or consider NNES international students' actual Canadian university experiences in limited ways. While the document, *Canada's Performance and Potential in International Education* revealed 95% of international students recommended Canada as a study destination (CBIE, 2016), and 91% reported they were pleased with their Canadian experience (CBIE, 2016), the negative reported schooling realities of some international students revealed a more unsettling side of internationalization. International students face steep financial burden (Calder et al., 2016), barriers to academic adjustment (Gopal, 2011; Grayson, 2008; Guo & Chase, 2008) and social integration (Aune & Hendrickson, 2011; Hendrickson, Rosen & Aune, 2011) and access to Canadian employment upon graduation (Arthur & Flynn, 2011). Therefore, this thesis inquiry is in line with Calder et al.'s (2016) stance that:

> Raising the awareness of international students' unique challenge seems to be an important step to initiate the support from university faculty and staff members, who have a longer connection with the university and, by extension, provincial and federal structures than do international students and so might be better positioned to make changes that influence policies and practices. (p. 102)

Revenue Generation as a Government Response to Higher Education Underfunding

Situated in the centre of national higher education internationalization (Viczko & Tascon, 2016), the revenue generating rationale is a key driver of Canada's international education and economic plans (Council of Ontario Universities, 2010; Department of Finance Canada, 2013; Foreign Affairs, Trade and Development Canada, 2014). As its name suggests, this rationale is aimed precisely at national economic stimulation and bringing about revenue from international student enrollment at Canadian universities

(Larsen & Vincent-Lancrin 2004). Referring to Canada's economic landscape, the

Federal Minister of Finance at that time, James Flaherty's, described it in 2008 as,

"fac[ing] extraordinary difficulties, the likes of which have not been seen since the end of

the Second World War" (Department of Finance Canada, 2009, p. 13). In 2013, Flaherty

further reinforced Canada's economic priority in his introductory remark in the position

paper, *Canada's Economic Action Plan* by stating, "we will remain focused on what

matters to Canadians- jobs and economic growth" (Department of Finance, 2013, p. 1).

With the passing of time, generating jobs and economic growth remains prime concerns

for the Canadian government. Such economic concerns positioned the recruitment of

international students as an untapped market and propelled the search for more

international students to respond to Canada's national economic needs. Thus, the reality

that "international education is taking a more economic focus" (Trilokekar, 2010, p. 131),

and "has evolved into a major business" (Naidoo, 2006, p. 334) is more prevalent now

than ever before.

International student recruitment has become a successful revenue generating

mechanism because of collaborated efforts from multiple agents supporting education as

an arm of international trade and creating pathways for Canadian immigration (Viczko &

Tascon, 2016). Bolsmann and Miller's (2008) point that internationalizing universities is

a "part of a broader shift in policy and discourse towards neoliberalism where universities

are seen as contributors to the national economy and are expected to compete globally for

students who would pay fees" (p. 76). Because economic factors are central elements that

determine change in higher education, the revenue generating rationale grounds higher

education institutions as primary economic generators of the national economy (Bocock,

1986; Sears, 2003; Giroux, 2010). In turn, the revenue generating rationale of university internationalization underscores the shift away from institutional reliance on public subsidies to a greater dependence on private funds from international student tuition and related discretionary spending.

Situated in a "lean state" (Sears, 2003), the primary reason for international student recruitment is money: quite simply, international students pay significantly more in tuition than domestic students, and as a result, are becoming an indispensable source of revenue for the universities. Traditionally, the two main funding sources for universities have been government grants and individual fees. However, to respond to Canada's economic challenges, the federal government cut public spending on postsecondary education; thereby creating greater dependence on private tuition funding. While in the 1960s and early 1970s the federal government funded approximately 90% of postsecondary costs, this has been reduced to 57% (Canadian Federation of Students, 2012a) and to as much as approximately 34% in 2018 ("Operating Budgets, 2018-2019", n.d.). In the face of significant decreases in federal funding, universities have been forced to increasingly rely on differential international tuition. Differential tuition fees for international students were introduced in the mid-1970s as a method for provinces to produce additional revenue (Canadian Federation of Students, 2012a). In 2012, the Canadian national average for undergraduate tuition per year for domestic students was $5 581 compared to $18 641 for international students (Canadian Federation of Students, 2012a). The international student differential tuition fee in Ontario ranged from $22 886 for undergraduate to $16 606 for graduate students (Canadian Federation of Students-Ontario, 2013). Graduate or professional programs can cost international students from

$25 000 to $50 000 a year. To take the University in this research study as an example, the international tuition for an undergraduate arts and humanities academic program ranged from $19 699 to $21 500 in 2017 and 2018, compared with an average of $6 134 for domestic tuition (Universities Canada, n.d.). The trend in government funding has continued to decline since the 1990s, compelling "cash-strapped university administrators to increasingly turn to tuition fees to cover operating expenses" (Canadian Federation of Students, 2012b, p. 1). As precisely summed up by de Wit (2002), "The more foreign students there are paying high tuition fees, the higher the economic return and the less the national government needs to invest in higher education" (p. 91). To put differently, decreased government funding to manage university operating costs coupled with unregulated differential international tuition have led universities to depend on internationalization through international student recruitment as a source for generating revenue.

There are however, negative consequences resulting from placing international student recruitment for revenue generation at the heart of university internationalization. If universities overlook NNES international students' schooling experience, they lose sight of their role in supporting such students at Canadian universities. This can have detrimental implications for international and domestic students, as well as the institution. For example, if international students' English language obstacles are not paid attention to in academic classes, then little support can be offered (Tian & Lowe, 2009). Aside from academic issues, barriers emerging out of the social world also surface. As far as possible, there should be as few instances as possible when international students are left with frustration regarding why they have not made friends with domestic students, or

worse, why they have not even talked to a domestic student (Harman, 2005). In addition, domestic students too, need an avenue to start interacting with their international counterparts and tear down barriers so that they can engage with the "cultural other" (Sanderson, 2003, p. 1). When universities take these complex yet very real issues for granted, they fail not only international students, but also the nation, as they have not delivered the internationalization rationale promise of developing much needed interpersonal and intercultural connections required for effective participation in a globalized economy (Canada's International Education Strategy, 2014). Essentially, universities must be committed to going beyond promoting the cultural richness rhetoric associated to the value of international students on campuses. Instead, practical applications are needed for developing intercultural diversity and ensuring that international students' schooling needs are not put aside as soon as they pay their differential tuition fees.

Anticipated Gains from the Mutual Understanding Rationale

The mutual understanding rationale has roots in political and development aid goals. It is claimed that through internationalization, "current and future generations of Canadians [will] acquire a global perspective, thus helping them to become citizens of the world" (Advisory Panel on Canada's International Education Strategy, 2014, p. 6). Proponents of internationalization believe Canadian and international students benefit equally from studying within an internationalized university context because students are more likely to engage in understanding one another's cultures and perspectives (Larsen & Vincent-Lancrin, 2002). Ideally, the mutual understanding rationale can be understood as an attempted stance against the reproduction of systems of class and thus, places

universities at the forefront in equipping students to become "politically committed to achieve transformation of individuals and society through action" (Jessop, 2012, p. 3). Through such perceived empowering experiences, students develop skills and values that transcend university walls for purposes of confronting and working toward diminishing social injustices (Bennet Cattaneo & Chapman, 2010).

A closer review of the mutual understanding rationale reveals a second purpose. With its aim to increase cross-cultural dialogue and cooperation among and between international and Canadian students, the rationale endorses that internationalization provides significant gain for Canada's relation with other countries by "foster[ing] an environment in which contact between the host society and international sojourners can be made" (Brown, 2009, p. 439). Future leaders who are international alumni of a Canadian university will, perhaps, become key figures to "form the foundation for meaningful bilateral relations between Canada and their home countries" to build foreign policy alliances (Advisory Panel on Canada's International Education Strategy, 2014, p. 9). Ed Fast, the Minister of International Trade echoed this sentiment by noting: "Perhaps most importantly, international education fuels the people-to-people ties crucial to long-term success in an increasingly interconnected global economy" ("Canada's International Strategy, 2014, p. 4). As a result, this rationale positions international students as key players in assisting Canada to develop future international trade relationships.

However, political and socio-cultural unification through internationalization may only be "imaginary" (Doll, 2002, p. 168) because it only provides the perception that all countries involved in education internationalization benefit equally. In fact, it is only those countries that are in power, set curriculum policies and standards that benefit

because they have authority to claim what becomes a representation of real and acceptable knowledge (Doll, 2002). The historical influences of western domination on the rest of the world cannot be denied. The longstanding critique of higher education internationalization is "the role it plays in the spread of neocolonial and neoliberal discourses from the west outwards" (Anderson, 2015, p. 176). Akena (2012) remarks:

> European colonizers have defined legitimate knowledge as Western knowledge, essentially European colonizers' ways of knowing, often taken as objective and universal knowledge. Arriving with the colonizers and influenced by Western ethnocentrism, Western knowledge imposed a monolithic worldview that gave power and control in the hands of Europeans. It delegitimized other ways of knowing as savage, superstitious, and primitive. (p. 600)

In David Bell's (1980) commentary report, *Brown v. Board of Education and the Interest of Convergence Dilemma*, he introduced the term, 'interest convergence' which inherently holds the loss and gain binary; whereby the dominant group negotiates and weighs their interests against those of inferior groups. In this view, the interests of a minority group – international students' desire to study in Canada – is facilitated and even sought out, because it specifically aligns with the national economic interests of the dominant society.

Whether for student self-empowerment or Canada's international development, it is unclear how the mutual understanding rationale is achieved through international students' everyday university schooling experiences. Internationalization advocates simply presuppose meaningful connections are established between NNES international and Canadian students throughout their daily university experience (Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada, 2007b; Grayson, 2008). However, a critical review of the mutual understanding rationale brings into question international students' university schooling experiences and the manner through which cross-cultural exchange

between international and domestic students occurs (Brigham, 2011). Intercultural or social relations between NNES international and Canadian students have been described mostly as a failure (Brown, 2009). Although both sets of students may work near one another, limited interaction takes place (Li, 2013, Scott et al., 2015). International students expressed great disappointment in not having opportunity to meet (Guo & Guo, 2017) and ultimately foster friendships with their Canadian counterparts (Brown, 2009; Harman, 2005). It is therefore questionable how the internationalization objective "to integrate domestic and international students in and out of the classroom" (Knight, 2000a, p. 5) is realized. International students reported "disappointment and even discouragement when [they] were seeking, were open, or were expecting more social contact with [non-international] students" (Klineberg & Hull, 1979, p. 178) seem to have been overlooked throughout the decades. Findings from other studies suggested that international students simply did not have access to students from the host country (Brown, 2009; Harman, 2005; Myles & Cheng, 2003). Without access to Canadian students, it is uncertain how international students develop the type of relationship put forth in the mutual understanding rationale. Raising the awareness of international students' continued struggle to foster meaningful relationships appear to be a key step to initiate institutional discussion to close this gap.

International and domestic student interaction. Specifically, international students' intercultural exchange and social relationship building with domestic students are mostly described as challenging. Gareis' (2012) research study findings pointed out that international students repeatedly expressed great dissatisfaction with not having opportunity to meet, and ultimately foster, friendships with their domestic counterparts

(Brown, 2009; Harman, 2005; Myles & Cheng, 2003). Similar conclusions were made in Myles' and Cheng's 2003 study of the social and cultural life of 12 NNES international graduate students at a mid-sized Canadian university. For example, one of the participants, a Taiwanese female commented, "Canadians [are] very nice, but you always feel you are an outsider" (Myles & Cheng, 2003, p. 258). A Bulgarian male noted, "I don't really have Canadian friends. I am having trouble like getting close to Canadians" (p. 258). Unfortunately, international students' perception of not being accepted or valued by their domestic counterpart is not new. Although international students' overall English language communication skills have been reported to affect their sociocultural adjustment (Martirosyan, 2015), even those who are proficient experience difficulties in accessing local students. The international students in Guo and Guo's (2017) research study revealed that despite having a strong command of the English language, international students still found it challenging to develop friendships with local students.

Although Stahl's (2012) research study finding indicated that host national students like having international students on campus, the positive attitudes toward international students did not seem to translate into friendships between these two groups. From the results of a research study of 454 undergraduate and graduate international students, approximately 55% reported they had 1 or no close domestic friends (Gareis, 2012, p. 316). A total of 49 % of students commented they were not satisfied with either the quantity or quality of their domestic friendships (Gareis, 2012). Although the mutual understanding rationale of internationalization aims to promote meaningful interaction opportunities between international and domestic students, international students experience limited cross-cultural interaction with domestic students (Brown, 2009). It is

naive to assume that the mere presence of individuals from global regions on campus is enough to activate intercultural communication.

Moreover, Li and Tierny's research study, *Internationalization in Canadian Higher Education: Experiences of International Students in a Master's Program* (2013), explained the increasingly popular international program option whereby some "programs are established particularly for them [international students]" (p. 6). In describing the context of the study, Li and Tierny detailed that the International Student Program targeted students outside Canada. Of the 38 survey respondents, 18 students "indicated that they did not know they could apply to the regular program, or they did not know the difference between the international program and the regular program" (p. 6). While students strongly agreed that the program enhanced their understanding of Canadian education, other responses suggest conflicting views. For example, there was an overall sense that the program did not contain clear objectives; and one student commented, "Some courses needed to connect with Canadian education closely" (p. 7). Some students did not believe that the program included "culturally enriching experiences" (p. 7) and wished for more "field experience" (p. 7). Despite the internationalization "aim to foster an environment in which contact between the host society and international sojourners can be made" (Brown, 2009, p. 439), little is still known about how such environments are fostered; hence, warranting an additional exploration of international students' university schooling experiences at one mid-sized Canadian postsecondary institution.

Perceived faculty cultural competence. The way in which faculty interact with NNES international students affects students' learning. When considering teaching

pedagogy from an internationalized perspective, faculty cross-cultural competence is crucial (Gopal, 2011). Intercultural competence can be understood as a dynamic process through which individuals develop attitudes such as respect, openness, curiosity, and cultural self-awareness to achieve two desired goals (Deardorff, 2009). The first goal is, the external outcome and means "effective and appropriate communication and behaviour in an intercultural situation" (Deardorff, 2009, p. 11). The second goal is, an internal outcome and refers to having an "informed frame of reference to exhibit adaptability, flexibility, and empathy" (Deardorff, 2009, p. 11). Both outcomes contribute to creating a positive learning environment.

Increased faculty awareness of the varying types of NNES international students they teach leads to diversified teaching approaches employed. While some faculty perceived overlooking NNES international students' English language errors in work submitted, providing course notes, or giving time extensions for exams as behaviours demonstrating cultural sensitivity, other faculty paid little attention to how their own interaction with each NNES international student took place (Leki, 2006). One argument made in attempt to explain decreased overall teacher-student interaction time is that growing class sizes make it difficult for faculty to interact with and learn about their students (Ontario Confederation of University Faculty Associations, 2012a) and has washed out the quality of classroom education (Maru, 2018). Limited opportunity to learn about both common and differing characteristics and needs of their NNES international students resulted in a tendency for faculty to "treat international students as a homogenous group ... and ignore issues of gender, culture, and power" (Popadiuk & Arthur, 2004, p. 128); leading to the marginalization of international students. This issue

can be compounded by faculty's "lack of awareness of problems, lack of willingness to make adjustments, or lack of ideas about how to do so" (Leki, 2006, p. 142).

Houshmand et al.'s (2014) research study on racial macroaggressions targeting Asian international students at one Canadian university discussed three categories of macroaggressions: microasssults, microinsults and microinvalidations. This aggression taxonomy ranged from the most overt, defaming and hurtful actions to indirect, subtle communication that invalidated ones' ideas, feelings or experiences. As an example, from Houshmand et al.'s findings (2014), "a Korean man described feeling embarrassed when an instructor repeatedly responded to his comments with 'Pardon, pardon, pardon. What did you say? What did you say?'" (p. 381). This common approach in seeking clarification can embarrass international students and contribute to their heightened self-consciousness when it comes to international students' English language use. The internationalization framework outlined in the *Internationalization Statement of Principles for Canadian Educational Institutions* stated: "Given its importance and central role in society, internationalization aims for the highest quality of learning experiences as a core element of education…" (CBIE, 2015, p. 1). However, quality-learning experiences are built upon emotionally safe learning environments. Therefore, the onus of acculturation and adjusting to the academic environment cannot be placed solely on international students and requires active faculty participation in contributing to a positive classroom climate.

An internationalized classroom must include cross-culturally competent faculty to prevent misunderstandings and refrain from what may be viewed as derogatory or culturally insensitive remarks. For instance, in a study exploring the social and cultural

life of NNES international students at a Canadian university, a Taiwanese female shared, "Like one Prof., it's a joke among international students here and he says, 'I went to the conference. We have planners from all over the world, Los Angeles, Vancouver, Toronto, Chicago, New York.' Actually, all the cities he mentioned are U.S. and Canada. That's all over the world to them" (Myles & Cheng, 2003, p. 252). As a second example, a U.S. study exploring international students' experience with their professors and the challenges they faced (Leki, 2006) highlighted the case of a Japanese female, Yuko. Yuko explained that the instructor in her American history class referred to the derogatory term, "Japs" (p. 144) and appealed to "us and them" (p. 144) discourse. To regain footing and recover from embarrassment, the instructor asked Yuko for her "Japanese perspective" (p. 144). Yuko felt that this question merely reduced her to having one dimension; she stated that she "had gone from being invisible to the teacher to being cast as The Japanese Person in class" (p. 144). In the book *Curriculum Visions*, Doll (2002) uses the imagery of ghosts to metaphorically illustrate the illusive, "hidden" (p. 24) components of curriculum. The metaphor centres on the fluid characteristics of a ghost and its ability to be simultaneously seen and not seen. Just as the ghost is a vision rooted in past, present or future occurrences, curriculum is also "haunted by our past" (p. 24) and has residue of historical tensions and prevailing ideolog. Learning about students' cultures and cultural differences can aid faculty to "become more aware of their ethnocentric behaviour" (Myles & Cheng, 2003, p. 252). This necessary step of developing intercultural understanding is the base upon which an internationalized curriculum can be built.

Curriculum internationalization. Among universities, internationalizing the curriculum is an area that remains underdeveloped. Knight (2003), an extensively cited scholar in the field of international education explained that internationalization of higher education is the "process of integrating an international, intercultural or global dimension into the purpose, functions or delivery of postsecondary education" (p. 2). One aspect of curriculum internationalization relates to developing programs or courses with an international focus (Knight, 1994; Knight 2004). With limited guidance on how to structure such programs effectively, higher education institutions have developed their own, different interpretations as to what internationally focused programming should consist of. This approach has led to targeted international student recruitment and resulted in creating mono-cultural academic programs segregating an international cohort from domestic students (Li, 2013) and limiting access to exchange of global perspectives (Guo & Guo, 2017; Li, 2013; Knight, 2011).

While university administration and academics embrace the idea of internationalized curriculum, this component of internationalization has been difficult to implement because it lacks clarity in definition and application (Leask, 2013). The ambiguous meanings of curriculum internationalization have enabled some universities to create academic programs with an international cohort focus under the guise of curriculum internationalization. Without appropriate consideration to pedagogy and focus on faculty-student and student-student relationship building strategies (Calder et al., 2016), the rolling out of institutionally proclaimed internationalized curriculum warrants to be challenged.

While an easy way to internationalize curriculum is to sprinkle examples of international cases throughout topics studied, a more meaningful approach is to provoke students' critical thinking. An effective internationalized curriculum is one, which "empowers all those who comprise it to both shape and participate within it" (Dunne, 2011, p. 617). In this study, I define *curriculum internationalization* as course content and teaching approaches that incorporate a broad range of global perspectives. I further operationalize the term, *global perspectives* to involve both faculty and student driven international examples, issues, situations, or events connected to the academic field of study to deepen knowledge, broaden global awareness, and develop appreciation for diversity. These qualities prepare graduates for life beyond university and equip them with the ability to "contribute to the nation's economic, social, and political life in an increasingly interdependent world" (Lunn, 2008, p. 232). In this sense, the purpose of an internationalized curriculum is a starting point for a lifelong critical dialogue with others and oneself.

In the Canadian context, an effort to frame the structure of curriculum internationalization was witnessed through the 1997 document *Best Practice Guidelines for Internationalizing the Curriculum,* authored by three Canadian academics. They identified three major aspects needed for an internationalized curriculum: (a) global skills objectives, (b) course content, (c) instructional resources (Whalley, Langley & Villarreal, 1997). Based on these three aspects, effective curriculum internationalization occurs when students are involved in tasks that require some comparison or reflection in aspects of life between countries, or when cultural dimension in the form of historical differences are brought forward to provide background to course content (Crichton & Scarino, 2007).

Although these are examples of ways to internationalize curriculum, academic heads rarely outline steps to facilitate practical implementation of internationalized curriculum within their own departments (Dunne, 2001). For example, McMaster University's position paper on curriculum internationalization noted, "as far as we are aware, internationalization of the curriculum has not been actively promoted as an institutional objective to date" (Baumann *et. al*., 2012, p. 12). Without concrete review of the purpose and ways to develop internationalized curricula, curriculum internationalization in specific academic disciplines will remain on the periphery.

Moreover, ambiguities and resource constraints further inhibit the development of internationalized curricula. Uncertainties regarding the design of learning objectives, inclusion of types of course content, and implementation of teaching strategies have posed as challenges in the implementation of internationalized curriculum (Crichton & Scarino, 2007; Dunne, 2011; Hanson, 2010). For example, a UK study investigating higher education global perspectives benchmark statements found most statements "do not make explicit how the global dimension in a student's subject knowledge would be transferable to developing the skills for work in an international context" (Lunn, 2008, p. 243). The same study identified "pressures of time and funding often mean a gap between the perceived importance of global perspectives activities and the actual activities carried out" (Lunn, 2008, p. 246). These factors have become barriers for some universities to achieve their internationalized curriculum mandate. Universities have fallen behind in developing internationalized curricula and need to refocus on this dimension to provide international students with enhanced learning experiences.

Migrating Skills to Canadian Economy

There has been a growing dependence on the skilled migration rationale of internationalization to "seek more immigrants to complement its … small population … which needs more skilled workers (Duff-Borown, 2005) because it is "well aligned with immigration and labour market strategies [that] can help Canada in addressing demographic and labour market issues" (Advisory Panel on Canada's International Education Strategy, 2014, p. 6; Larsen & Vincent-Lancrin, 2002). According to this rationale, international students further benefit the Canadian economy if they participate in Canada's labour market upon graduation. Shaped by neoliberal principles, the skilled migration rationale is aimed exclusively at stimulating Canadian economic growth (Abbot, 2009; Giroux, 2010). Embedded within this rationale is the commonsense view that international students will seamlessly enter the Canadian workforce.

International students are often touted as the saviours of the Canadian economy. The Canadian government warned that by the year 2020, there would be a drastic shortage in labour for a range of "managerial, professional, technical and skilled trades positions" (Advisory Panel on Canada's International Education Strategy, 2014, p. 13) and thus, "recruitment and retention of international talent is an increasingly important component of building a modern society" (p. 10). The Off-Campus Work Permit Program, enabling international students to work and immerse in the Canadian working culture while studying, was a shift in Canadian immigration policy to attract and retain international students (Citizenship and Immigration Canada, 2012). The Canadian Experience Class offered exclusively to recent international student graduates from a Canadian postsecondary institution further facilitates international students' transition to

permanent resident status. In addition, the Provincial Nominee Program is another streamlined pathway for international students wishing to live in a specific province upon graduation (Canadian Federation of Students, 2012b). International students, among entrepreneurs and skilled workers, with demonstrated skills, education and work experience relevant to a province's economic need may be nominated to receive permanent residence status (Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada, 2018). Lu and Hou's (2015) Statistics Canada issued report title, *International Students who Become Permanent Residents*, revealed that more than 270 000 international students obtained permanent resident status between 1990 and 2014. According to Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada's (IRCC) (2018) most recent available data, the number of individuals awarded permanent resident status through the Provincial Nominee Program increased from 13 338 in 2006 to 44 5234 in 2015. While these figures include immigrant categories other than international students, it still provides a glimpse into the incremental overall increase in international student transition from temporary to permanent resident status. In turn, provincial and federal collaboration supports the demand for international students and sets it as a key component to the economy. However, mechanisms aimed at facilitating immigrants' labour market outcomes at entry may not work as well as what has been previously conceived. New research on international students' post-Canadian education earnings in Canada from 1991 to 2006 (Hou & Lu, 2017) have disrupted the position that "higher educational levels allow immigrants both to bring the skills needed in a knowledge-based economy" (Picot, Hou & Qiu, 2015, p. 73). Hou and Lu (2017) reported that Canadian educated (CE) immigrants (i.e. international students), earned less than their Canadian-born counterparts

in both the initial and long-term years after immigration. For example, in 1991, CE immigrants earned 50% less (women) and 60% less (men) than Canadian-born workers. After ten years of immigration, the gap seemed to narrow but remain constant at earning gaps of 20% among women and 31% among men.

Summary of internationalization narrative gaps. The mutual understanding rationale through the diversity narrative encourages universities to diversify the ethnic origins of its student body with the goal to increase cross-cultural understanding, enhance classroom dynamics and better prepare students for a diverse workplace (Yosso, et. al., 2004). The ongoing consensus is that international students "enrich the learning environment [by adding] diversity of perspectives and experiences in the classroom and enhance the broader cultural diversity on campus" (p. 2). This discourse pattern is also found in the Association for Universities and Colleges of Canada (2010) brochure statement: "International students enhance the experience of Canadian students by bringing new perspectives to the classroom" (p. 2). Broad claims that the presence of international students in Canadian classrooms fosters cross-cultural interaction, improves cultural understanding and is a platform for innovation has gained momentum throughout the years ("Advisory Panel of Canada's International Education Strategy", 2014; Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada, 2007a; CBIE, 2013; Leask, 2015; "University Leaders Woo Students", 2010). Although true that international students bring different perspectives to the classroom, it appears this idea has become a dominant and unchecked rhetoric used in efforts to recruit students from diverse demographic regions.

In addition, the proposed benefits of international student mobility to Canadian classrooms insidiously entwines the revenue generation rationale with the mutual understanding rationale of internationalization. At the centre of it all is the goal to leverage institutional efforts that generate and maximize revenue from international student differential tuition to stimulate national economic growth (Beck et al., 2013; Burbles & Torres, 2000; Callan, 2012; Giroux, 2010). Regardless of marketed benefits of internationalization to university campuses, the interwoven and underpinning thread to internationalization is the reality that western governments play a compelling role in placing their priorities ahead of those of other countries. What constitutes as student experience, "academic standards and the measurement of education quality is argued to be a form of western domination because it is created by and in the West" (Abbott, 2009, p. 12). Without creating dialogue around this foreseeable issue and creating potential remedies, there exists opportunity for internationalized university policies to attempt to "be everything to everyone, and yet consequently becomes nothing for anyone, allowing the status quo to prevail" (p. 62).

Internationalization to reform Canadian higher education is a method embedded in neoliberal virtues to both deal with and divert from the current economic reality of employment deficit. Instead, it promotes values which are in-line with neoliberal assumptions that "the more skills one has, the more productive one becomes, and the higher one's income" will be (Brown & Tannock, 2009, p. 378; Sears, 2003). Sears (2003) maintains that credential inflation is concealment for the real education-job gap based in the reality that many of those who are highly skilled are unemployed, while those who are employed are over-qualified. The highest unemployment rate peaked in

2010 at 15% for 'very recent immigrants', a term used to characterize those immigrants who have landed in Canada 5 years or less earlier. In 2017, the unemployment rate for the same group was 9.7% (Statistics Canada, 2018). 'Recent immigrants', is defined as those who have landed more than 5 to 10 years earlier, had an unemployment rate of 10% in the same 2010 (Yssaad, 2012) and 5.4% in 2017 (Statistics Canada, 2018). Compared with very recent and recent immigrants, Canadian born university graduates experienced an unemployment rate of 2.9 % in 2017; increasing from 2.8 % in 2013 (Statistics Canada, 2018). The disconcerting trend in the unemployment gap between the groups has led to additional research that concluded that "education might have become less indicative of the earning potential" of Canadian educated immigrants (Hou & Lu, 2017, p. 29). Certainly then, there is a cause for concern for international students who graduate from a Canadian university and pursue Canadian employment upon graduation.

In critically considering the skilled migration rationale in relation to preparing international students for participation in Canadian employment, two glaring gaps exist. First, there is a disconnect between the conjured up available Canadian employment opportunity and unemployment reality for international students (Calder et al., 2016; Scott et al., 2015; Wall et al., 2017). Second, many international students are ill prepared to find meaningful employment in their field after graduation (Scott et al., 2015). Inadequate socio-cultural opportunities for international students to adjust to and integrate into the host culture impedes their overall confidence to practice English communication skills, deters their engagement with their domestic counterpart and prohibits the development of building valuable social networks (Aune et al., 2011); Guo & Guo, 2017; Li et al., 2010; Li, 2013; Martirosyan et al., 2015).

Summary

To recap, the review of literature critically positions this research inquiry of NNES international undergraduate and graduate students' perception of their university schooling experience highlighting the complexities involved and often neglected in internationalization of higher education. Specific attention is drawn to international students' reported challenges in terms of cross-cultural student interaction and faculty cross-cultural competence. The difficulty in defining and providing clarity on effective curriculum internationalization design and implementation practices may have resulted in creating culturally segregated academic programs counterproductive to the overall vision of higher education internationalization. With government forces shaping higher education internationalization implementation through purposeful international student recruitment to stimulate the national economy, more focus is needed on understanding how such students experience their international education beyond being physically present at Canadian campuses. Moreover, additional international student struggles seem to continue after graduation beginning with the lack of ability to land academic subject related employment. This evident hurdle then becomes the primary barrier to securing Canadian permanent status; thus, leaving many students in a state of limbo. All these factors play significant roles in the quality of international students' university schooling experience; in turn, substantiates the need for further exploration of international undergraduate and graduate students' schooling realities in Canada.

CHAPTER 3 - METHODOLOGY

This chapter provides an account of my ontological and epistemological beliefs, which are then connected to methodology to form the underpinning framework for this exploratory study of NNES international undergraduate and graduate students' perceived university schooling experience.

Paradigm Rationale

Ontology includes the range of diverse paradigms in which to interpret the nature of reality. What is usually referred to as science's "objective" world is "but an interpretation of the world of our immediate experience" (Angen, 2000, p. 386); which is none other than subjective (Lerum, 2001, p .480). Our perception of the world leads to epistemological beliefs that shape the way in which we come to know about reality. Such beliefs in turn affect overall methodology and subsequently instrumentation and data collection (Creswell, 2003; Krauss, 2005). Figure 2 illustrates the conceptual mapping.
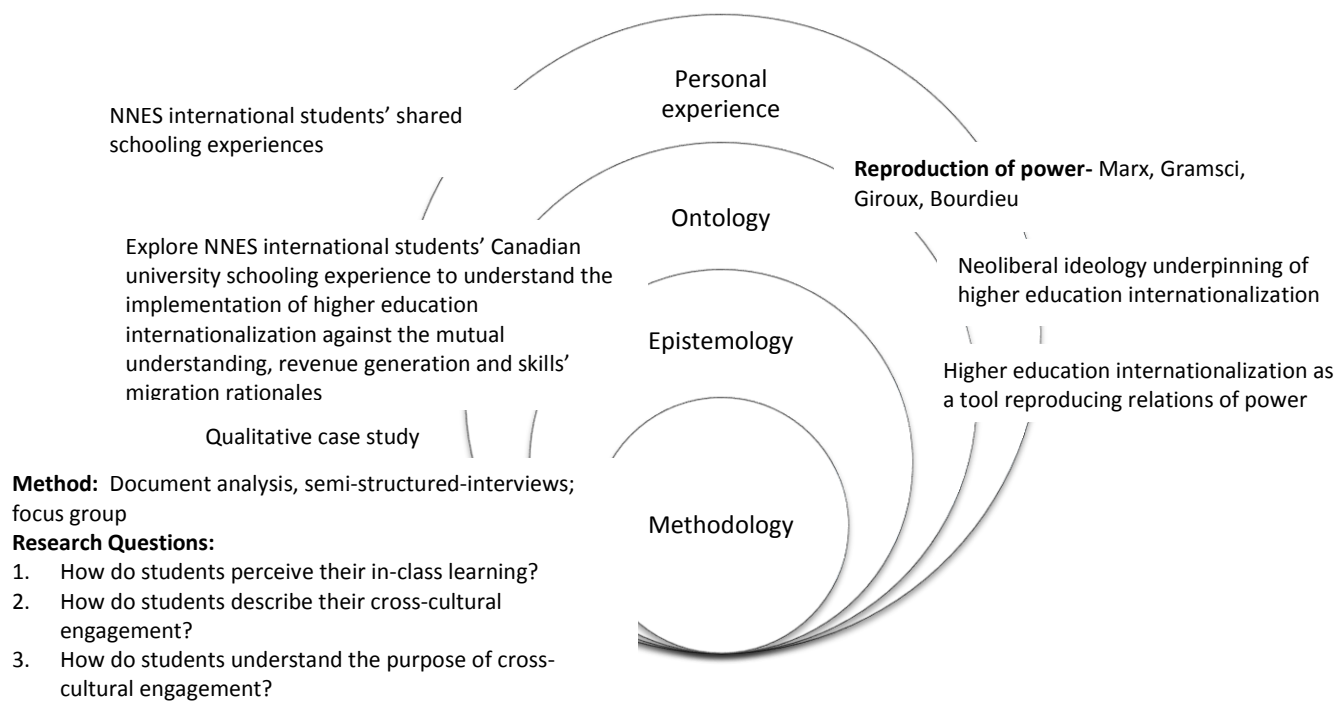
Figure 2. Research paradigm concept mapping.

Critical Theory

        Critical theory is the ontological lens through which I explore NNES international undergraduate and graduate students' Canadian schooling experience. Principally, this research is concerned with examining the power relations upheld by neoliberal ideology and worked through the field of higher education internationalization, which incidentally marginalize groups (Ingram & Simon-Ingram, 1992; Ingram, 1990); and in this case, marginalize NNES international students during and post their Canadian university study. O'Regan (2014) explains that immanent critique is the definable core of critical theory and can be understood as:

> A type of close reading whose purpose is to highlight the inconsistencies and contradictories issuing from the self-representations of an object of knowledge, and may take the form of a textual as well as philosophical interrogation of an object, whether a philosophical argument, an ideology, a theoretical concept, a discourse, an individual text, or a combination of these. (p. 535)

My goal is to unravel the layers of international students' transnational education by subjecting it to a theoretically grounded immanent critique of its internationalization rationale claims.

        This research aims to destabilize established knowledge surrounding the benefits of internationalization through international student recruitment and uncover the economic realities that strengthen neoliberal ideology (Horkheimer,1972; Corradetti, 2011; Sherman & Webb, 2005); which in turn, support higher education's position as an agent for reproducing relations of power (Kim, 2012). Critical theory focuses on investigating specific group experiences to improve a situation (Kincheloe, McLaren & Steinberg, 2011). Because utilizing critical theory to investigate a phenomenon can result in transformative societal impact (Horkheimer, 1972), scholars who adopt a critical stance are committed to examining the practices, "contradictions and omissions of a

particular social world from within to reveal other possibilities and new ways of being"
(Jessop, 2012, p. 5). Applying critical theory to educational research aims to challenge
the commonsense understanding that schooling is a mechanism producing democratic
and egalitarian societies (Giroux, 2005). Through this theoretical perspective, schools are
understood as "agencies of socio-cultural and economic reproduction" (Giroux, 2005, p.
202). Thus, in this study, I employ a critical stance to explore international students'
perceptions of their Canadian university schooling experiences for discovering
opportunities and challenges students encounter; thus, leading to information for an
enhanced transnational study experience.

Influenced by the work of Karl Marx, critical theory is a theoretical approach used
to help unmask 'false-consciousness' (Berger & Luckman, 1967). It is the theoretical
position which is used in this study to "highlight the inconsistencies and contradictions"
(O'Regan, 2014, p. 535) inherent in the phenomenon of higher education
internationalization. Although the concept of a 'false consciousness' is no longer a
tenable position to hold as it suggests the possibility of 'true consciousness,' the concept
has helped critical theorists develop a better and more sophisticated perspective that
emphasizes the importance of understanding the everyday life experiences of relations of
power and how 'commonsense' understanding of knowledge, truth and reality are
constructed (Berger & Luckmann, 1967). Berger and Luckmann (1967) further discuss
that language and time are two important components – which can be interpreted to serve
as distractors – to maintain constructed social structures. First, language is the signifier
that gives meaning to concepts; which is then used to describe, organize, characterize
ideas and beliefs. Second, time is crucial because it keeps society focused on the finite

amount of time to accomplish personal and professional goals. To understand the

symbols and meanings reproduced through higher education internationalization, the

notion of capital requires attention. Termed as Marx's classical theory of capital (Lin,

1999), this theory places economic targets and the mode of production as central

elements determining the conditions for social change (Bocock, 1986). It is understood as

"a theory based on the exploitative social relations between two classes" (Lin, 1999, p.

29) whereby a cyclical relationship exists between bourgeoisie control over producing

and processing commodities in the consumption market and labourer participation in the

workforce, which is then rewarded through a paid wage (Lin, 1999). However, Marx's

version of capital mistakenly isolates economics from culture and politics (Sears, 2003).

Because of its shortsightedness in examining the interconnection between economics,

politics and culture, I further turn to the contribution of Antonio Gramsci to extend the

Marxist standpoint.
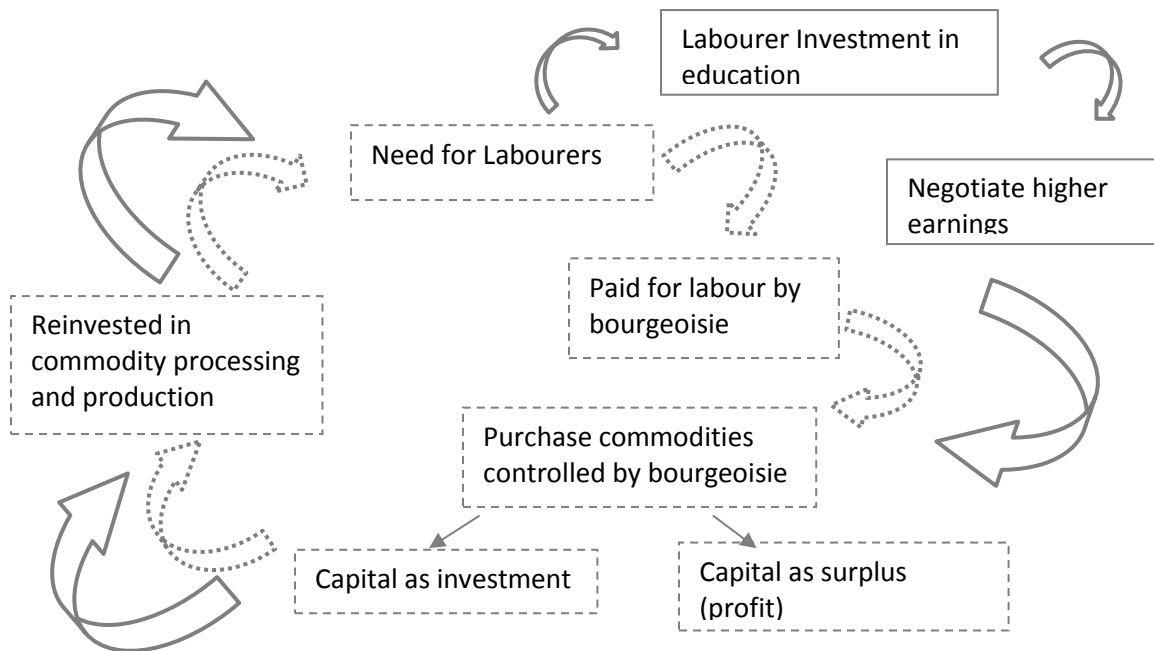
F*igure 3.* An Overlap of Classical Capital [------] and Human Capital [——] Theories in Power Production.

Gramsci's concept of 'cultural hegemony' provides insight into how dominant class power and interests are exercised through "commonly held conceptions and ideological underpinnings" (Stier, 2004, p. 84). Specifically, they are reinforced through daily lived experiences and accomplished through the backing of institutions, such as higher education and civil society. Hegemony, through its power of persuasion rather than through the threat of physical force, serves to keep individuals consenting to and participating in their own exploitation through their commonsense understanding and acceptance of reproduced world views (Gill, 1993; Golding, 1992; Hill, 2007). Human capital theory (Johnson, 1960) adds to Marx's classical capital position by drawing attention to current or future labourers' deliberate investment in education to advance their "skills and knowledge so they may negotiate with those in control of the production process" (Lin, 2012, p. 29) (figure 3). In terms of higher education, "academic power relations largely depend on who produces how much of the recognized academic capital" (Kim, 2012, p. 457). Despite intense transnational competition in higher education, "it remains the case that an English-medium education, with all the colonial baggage that implies, retains to a large degree its 'value' in a global HE market" (Waters, 2012, p. 127). Thus, higher education internationalization legitimizes the global manifestation of western university hegemony as: (a) the centre of research; (b) the hub for knowledge exchange due to English as the lingua franca; (c) the destination for global talent; and (d) the standard of practice to be emulated globally (Kim, 2012). The institution of higher education is a key site whereby hegemonic values are reproduced through "systematic knowledge generation, preservation, and dissemination" (Kehm & Teichler, 2007, p.

260). Such values tend to reproduce established order of classes with resulting power differences in social relations among nations and between classes (Rasmussen, 1996).

Referring to Henry Giroux, the purpose of higher education serves to empower students whereby, "individual powers must be linked to social democracy in the sense that social betterment must be the necessary consequence of individual flourishing" (Giroux, 1992, p. 11). Considering higher education internationalization, socio-cultural global relations have transformed significantly (Findlay et al., 2012). It is therefore appropriate to use a critical approach to "dissolve the rigid, unhistorical, natural appearance of social institutions" (Lukacs, 1968, p. 47), like higher education in the context of transnational education. Researchers with a critical perspective are driven to not only question the beliefs of others, but also, their own. We learn about our "deeply held beliefs about ourselves and others ... about the universe in general … based upon assumptions that are complacently accepted and culturally produced" (Phillips, 2000, p. 101). As a student investigating higher education internationalization through international students' schooling experiences and also, as a university member who plays a part in the rolling out of higher education internationalization, I wanted to cherish the fairytale that universities are neutral places that are first and foremost devoted to nourishing students' criticality, so they may engage in civic duty – in addition to the market economy. However, global hegemony of western higher education is reinforced through the close link between higher education internationalization, international student mobility and the "ways it may favour particular groups, whilst devaluing the skills and qualifications of others, particularly in relation to the opportunities for embodied cultural capital acquisition" (Waters, 2012, p. 126). Then, I critically accept that although not ill

intended at the core, universities are what Giroux (1992) refers to as, social forms, that

reflect and reproduce perceived human needs and ideologies that serve economic

interests.

The Search for and the Reproduction of Capital

Higher education internationalization, if this is understood as an organizational

field that is mutually beneficial for both domestic and international students in that it

broadens access to a "variety of perspectives, languages, cultures and experiences"

(Anderson, 2015), is then a culturally neutral mechanism that situates everyone on an

equal footing. However, this is not the case and the marketers of higher education

internationalization wish to ignore that it is neoliberal-bound and geoculturally situated in

the power relations derived from Eurocentric ideology (O'Regan, 2014). The influential

French social theorist, Pierre Bourdieu's philosophical perspectives of social and cultural

reproduction is used to link the robust alliance between neoliberal ideology and higher

education internationalization in reproducing social inequality for NNES international

students in English-medium university schooling. Bourdieu (1997) contends that social

and cultural reproduction is built upon three forms of capital: economic, social, symbolic

and cultural. First, economic capital is that which can be converted into real money.

Second, social capital is understood as trusted network groupings embedded in

relationships that provide access to resources. Third, symbolic capital is the social

prestige one holds. Regarding education as a medium through which cultural capital is

enhanced, Bourdieu (1986) argued:

> Capital is accumulated labor (in its materialized form or its "incorporated,"
> embodied form) which, when appropriated on a private, i.e., exclusive, basis by
> agents or groups of agents, enables them to appropriate social energy in the form
> of reified or living labor. (p. 241)

However, there is little promise that education credentials, as an institutionalized practice for acquiring cultural capital, will result in the same outcomes for all holders (Gribble et al., 2015). In fact, there is increasing agreement that university credentials alone do not result in employment (Gribble et al., 2015). Bourdieu (1986) maintains "as in the case of educational credentials, it confers entirely original properties on the cultural capital which it is presumed to guarantee" (p. 241). Bourdieu's thought on cultural capital has been criticized for being overly abstract, vague and therefore an inadequate theoretical apparatus to explore educational inequality (Kingston, 2001). I therefore, turn to Lareau and Weininger's (2003) interpretation who expand upon Bourdieu's understanding of cultural capital.

Lareau and Weininger (2003) believe that cultural capital includes context specific knowledge of culture, vocabulary and practices. They put forth that cultural capital – in an institutionalized form – is infused with academic skills and cannot be separated as it is the way to impose, preserve and justify interests that reinforce relations of power. In this sense, cultural capital refers to the cultural competencies, skills and knowledge to successfully adapt to and function within a context. In line with Lareau and Weininger (2003), Bourdieu (1997) sees the forms of capital as being interconnected. Economic capital provides access to resources to invest in education to develop one's cultural capital; which is aligned with future academic and employment success. In turn, cultural capital broadens social networks resulting in increased possibilities to generate economic capital. Unfortunately, many international students studying in western countries not only struggle with acquiring cultural capital, but also "start to perceive themselves as inferior" (Kim, 2012, p. 461). Bourdieu claims, the 'dominants always tend

to impose the skills they have mastered as necessary and legitimate and to include in their definition of excellence the practices at which they excel' (quoted in Lareau and Weininger, 2003: 582), "and moreover, to define excellence in these practices as deriving wholly from individual merit – independent of social status" (Edgerton & Roberts, 2014, p. 196).

Higher education internationalization would not be possible without a strong alliance between structure and agency (Connors, 2010). In the Canadian context, "internationalization at Canadian higher education institutions emerges in relation with national policy discourse" (Viczko & Tascon, 2016, p. 3) and changes the expectations of the education from a universal notion of knowledge as a public good, "deeply bound up with human needs and human rights" (Connors, 2010, p. 5), to a purchased capital "sold to the highest bidder" (Connors, 2010, p. 5). Neoliberal ideology presupposes that if a free market does not exist, such as in education, then one must be created. This rationality authorizes the framing and construction of "power relations and particular ordering of social positions, which mark out social inclusions and exclusions" (Seddon, 2009, p. 260). Therefore, the field of internationalization, referring to both the informal attitudes toward education and formal neoliberal economic reform (Olssen & Peters, 2005) driving higher education institutions to internationalize through international student recruitment, is systemically designed to give advantage to those equipped with the cultural "tool kit" (Swidler, 1986, p. 273) associated with the social structure and economic interests of the host society.

Neoliberalism. Popularized by the writer Ayn Rand in her 1943 *The Fountainhead* and later in her 1957 work, *Atlas Shrugged*, and drawing from the work of

economic theorists Friedrich Hayek (1944), and Milton Friedman, neoliberal theory is a political and economic system which claims that human well-being is best accomplished through free, unregulated markets, which emphasize unfettered competition and maximum entrepreneurial freedom (Hayek, 1944; Friedman, 1962; Harvey, 2005). Although capitalism remains at the root of neoliberal ideology, market deregulation, competition and privatization are its predominant features (Touraine, 2001). Milton Friedman (1962), a key figure in the development of neoliberalism, claims neoliberal policies benefit society at large because they generate economic growth through market deregulation and service privatization in ways that government intervention cannot. This approach helps provide a context that encourages competition in the market place (Clarke, 2005). Taxes and government regulations are viewed as stifling competition and as antithetical to helping people live lives that flourish. Neoliberal economic ideology permeating higher education pedagogy promotes the need for individual productivity, industriousness and entrepreneurship (Harvey, 2005). Neoliberal ideology includes beliefs that: (a) society consists of isolated individuals whereby individuals have equal ability and opportunity to compete and pursue their own self-interests; (b) consumers and producers benefit the most when free exchange without state interference occurs; and (c) free-trade restrictions reduce individual opportunity to improve their situation and overall well-being (Hayek, 1944; Canterbury, 2005).

Pointedly, Harvey (2005) gives a sense of the types of so called freedoms embedded within neoliberal ideology:

> Neoliberalism is a theory of political economic practices that proposes that human well-being can best be advanced by liberating individual entrepreneurial freedoms and skills within an institutional framework characterized by strong private property rights, free markets and free trade. (p. 2)

Within this economic framework, the role of governments is to 'get out of the way of the free market,' by helping to create, maintain, promote and maximize markets for goods and services (Harvey, 2007; Mukherjee, 2003). The neoliberal economic platform encourages initiatives supporting and improving market competition in higher education (Eecke, 1982). In the context of higher education internationalization, the Department of Foreign Affairs, Trade and Development, the International Development Research Centre, the Department of Citizenship and Immigration Industry Canada, Employment and Social Development Canada take a coordinated approach in collaboration to advance Canada's international education strategy (Canada's International Education Strategy, 2014). Canada's International Education Strategy is a crucial part of the larger *Global Markets Action Plan* aimed to "help Canada become more prosperous, innovative and competitive by capitalizing on opportunities that currently exists … [whereby] the Action Plan weaves the education sector and the Strategy into Canada's economic diplomacy and trade promotion activities" (Canada's International Education Strategy, 2014, p. 9). Viczko & Tascon (2016) suggest: "it is clear there is an overlapping of actors, spaces, and knowledge among these policies" (p. 11).

Four tenets of neoliberalism. Neoliberal ideology includes four tenets: (a) economic efficiency, (b) desirable human virtues, (c) freedom of choice and (d) relationship between economic and political domain (Eecke, 1982). These tenets act as reasons for supporting and protecting the free market. The first claim is the free market encourages economic efficiency because it rewards those who are most efficient at producing what is in demand (Eecke, 1982). Second, it promotes certain desirable human virtues such as, "industriousness, responsibility, reliability, and initiative" (Eecke, 1982

p. 152). However, it misleadingly suggests that humans will be the most satisfied through

selective labour oriented virtues (Brown & Tannock, 2009). The third argument is that

the very existence of a free market instantiates freedom of choice. This tenet overlooks

the reality that 'choices' are shaped and sometimes determined by forces outside of

individual power. The fourth tenet upholds the interdependent relationship between the

political and economic domain by holding political agencies responsible for

implementing strategies, such as an international education plan, that stimulate economic

growth.

Hayek (1978) claims economies require parallel political positions and plans,

resulting in the stance, "if one wants a democratic government, one has to accept and

defend the free market system" (p. 153). In this instance, the virtues of democracy

become wrongly equated to an open market system whereby international tuition

deregulation, international education market competition impedes the practice of

democracy (Shin & Harman, 2009). To that end, neoliberalism is a mechanism that uses

the free market to push forward political ideologies that pit one version of social justice

against economic efficiency; and in turn, creates conditions for growing inequalities

(Touraine, 2001; Saad-Filho, 2005).

Through a critical review of university internationalization, the role that

neoliberal ideology plays in the shaping of higher education as a revenue generating

mechanism can be further understood. Friedman (1962) advocates for neoliberal policies

and suggests they benefit societies at large by generating economic growth through

market deregulation, competition, privatization and service commodification (Touraine,

2001). The principles of neoliberalism legitimize the commodification of Canadian

higher education; in turn, situate universities as "pillar[s] of national economic development and a major contributor to a nation's GDP" (The Illuminate Consulting Group, 2009, p. 29). According to this stance, the Canadian government's International Education Strategy (2014) produces a competitive international education market and facilitates the commodification of higher education to maximize revenue generation (Harvey, 2007; Mukherjee, 2003). The relationship between the agents, the Canadian federal government, ministries of education and higher education institutions "involves collusion, often reflecting deeper economic interests" (Connors, 2010, p. 4).

Neoliberal economic values are reflected in university institutional efforts to create and maintain a market-oriented institutional reform which have received limited critical interrogation. Casting scholars, for instance, as "key players in the knowledge economy" reflects the increasing corporate nature of universities along with showing how it emphasizes "instrumentalism and marketability" (Berg & Seeber, 2016, p. 53). Tom Pocklington and Allan Tupper (2002), two political science professors at the University of Alberta and the authors of, *No Place to Learn: Why Universities Aren't Working,* bring attention to the lack of critique on the business model of Canadian universities and argue that "universities have been seduced by the modern world's admiration of business" (p. 139), resulting in distorted university priorities.

A knowledge-based economy. With Canadian economic growth goals in sight, both government and universities focus on the need to recruit and retain international students with market-based skills. This shift in the purpose of higher education utilizes a postindustrial economic paradigm known as the knowledge-based economy (Stukalina, 2008). Education, as the organizational field (Jakobi, 2007) from which the knowledge

society rises out of, serves as "the rationale for a country to develop policy which is in line with the premises of the field" (Connors, 2010, p. 8). The knowledge-based economy functions as neoliberal rhetoric claiming that world economies are "entering the creative age because the key factor propelling [them] forward is the rise of creativity" (Florida, 2005, p. 9); in turn, resulting in greater economic dependence on knowledge and information production (Harris, 2011). Altbach and Knight define knowledge economy-centric conditions as:

> Economic, political, and societal forces pushing 21st century higher education toward greater international involvement. Global capital has, for the first time, heavily invested in knowledge industries worldwide, including higher education and advanced training. This investment reflects the emergence of the "knowledge society," the rise of the service sector, and the dependence of many societies on knowledge products and highly educated personnel for economic growth. (p. 290)

According to the Honourable Ed Fast, the Minister of International Trade: "In a highly competitive, knowledge-based global economy, ideas and innovation go hand in hand with job creation and economic growth. In short, international education is at the very heart of our current and future prosperity" ("Canada's International Education Strategy", 2014, p. 4).This economic paradigm utilizes international students to address the "shortages of skilled labour that diminish Canada's long-term capacity for research and innovation" (Canada's International Education Strategy, 2014, p. 9); as well as, compels universities to supply students with labour market targeted skills believed necessary for economic participation (Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, 1996; Burbles & Torres, 2000; Powell & Snellman, 2004); which is anticipated to address "looming skills and labour shortages" ("Canada's International Education Strategy, 2014, p .4).

With knowledge identified as the 'new' driver of productivity and economic growth, it is believed that "economic wealth is now attained through creation, production, distribution and consumption of knowledge-based products" (Harris, 2001, p. 22). Built upon a neoliberal platform, discussions of the knowledge-based economy drive Canadian universities to essentially become exclusively committed to preparing students for the workforce and generating revenue (Giroux, 2010). The emphasis on 'workforces' and 'entrepreneurial talent' is directly aligned with neoliberal assumptions that "the more skills one has, the more productive one becomes" (Brown & Tannock, 2009, p. 378). These rationales for pursuing higher education can "undermine civic education and public values, treat knowledge as a commodity, promoting a neoliberal logic that views schools as malls [and] students as consumers" (Giroux, 2010, p. 5). As the argument goes, since there will not be enough workers to replace "the highly qualified professional and skilled trades that sustain a technologically-driven modern economy … attracting the best and the brightest students through a robust international education strategy will help secure Canada's long-term prosperity and economic success" (Canada's International Education Strategy, 2014, p. 9). In this instance, higher education is simply a systematic means to produce an economic outcome.

Higher education commodification. Hundreds of thousands of international students participate in reproducing the commonsense benefits derived from transnational education. The commodification of higher education has transformed the relationship between students and universities from one of social to commercial (Berg & Seeber, 2016; Cote & Allahar, 2007). Canadian higher education commodification can be observed through the increased dependence on private, differential international tuition;

whereby "developed countries welcome foreign students to expand the service industry and ensure the security of their financial resources" (Kim, 2012, p. 456). The General Agreement on Trade and Services (GATS) is a framework for the World Trade Organization (WTO) aimed at tertiary education and supports the commodification of education by removing trade barriers on international education service providers (Abbot, 2009; Knight, 2006). The assorted international bilateral agreements resulting from the GATS have driven the creation of structures that facilitate the neoliberal agenda (Connors, 2010). A major criticism of GATS is that it perpetuates existing economic imbalances between industrialized and emerging countries. For example, an industrialized country such as Canada becomes a stronger exporter of knowledge than emerging countries such as Bangladesh and Malaysia (Morshidi et. al., 2011). The liberalized market access to higher education triggers a unidirectional flow of exports from industrialized to emerging countries; resulting in advantages for industrial countries (Waters, 2012).

International students, their parents, and society at large view higher education internationalization as "an opportunity to develop a global vision" (Guo & Guo, 2017, p. 861). For those who participate in transnational education, obtaining western education credentials is the first step on the path to becoming an economic subject. Individuals base their sense of self achievement and worth upon the value of the services and goods produced by their labour (Marx & Engles, 1848). In this case, students become a "class of labourers, who live only so long as they find work, and who find work only so long as their labour increases capital. These labourers, who must sell themselves piecemeal, are a commodity" (Marx & Engles, 1848, p. 8). When students enter the labour market post

university study, they subsequently become the goods, or commodities produced by universities (Berg & Seeber, 2016). Productivity, efficiency, and competitiveness (Harvey, 2005) are the key values promoted in international higher education discourse which students strive to achieve.

Consumer culture of higher education. The consumer culture of capitalism has accelerated higher education commodification. In their 1944 work, *The Culture Industry: Enlightenment as Mass Deception*, Max Horkheimer and Theodore Adorno argue that culture is analogous to a factory producing standardized goods. Referring to higher education in the postindustrial age, socially perceived economic and educational needs become the framework, or culture of university institutions and position them as knowledge factories producing standardized goods – students (Aronowitz, 2000). Students are positioned as consumers when they purchase their education from the producers – universities. The outbreak of transnational education "pulls in large numbers of people and thus influences them around the practices which share particular ways of doing things" (Connors, 2010, p. 6). International students as consumers, subscribe to western higher education to obtain cultural capital (Bourdieu, 1977) through educational credentials. Bourdieau (1977) explained that both cultural capital and educational credentials are symbolic markers that open student access to employment positions of favourable social status. In the same vein, higher education institutions must then find ways to affirm their social capital building abilities.

Internationalization ideologies introduce policy changes to university faculty, administrators and ancillary staff, and students to redefine university education expectations. For example, Steir and Borjesson (2010) claim "there is an increasing

ideological convergence in the world's higher education systems, where [terms] 'global competitiveness', 'benchmarking' and 'sustainable development' are part of the nomenclature" (p. 335). In turn, to market their appeal, Canadian universities, among others, have begun to discursively transform themselves through discourse aligned with neoliberal values and through self-presentations created in the public domain.

Neoliberal economic forces propel higher education institutions to take the shape of knowledge factories to "teach entrepreneurs" (Coates & Morrison, 2011, p. 46) and focus on "training and careers preparation" (p. 44). Giroux (1992) articulates, "what the dominant educational philosophies want is to educate people to adapt to those social forms rather than critically interrogate them" (p. 11). This would be especially true for international students as they are the group the least likely to contest the dominant norms which may reproduce inequities, even if they are the ones experiencing the inequities. Under this pedagogical approach, students are deprived of opportunities to develop independence of thought and intellectual autonomy. Such conditions are unspoken higher education schooling realities taken for granted because they are embedded in the everyday experiences (Berger & Luckmann, 1967) of many international students.

Massification of higher education. The massification of higher education is sustained by an economically competitive based consumer culture in overdrive to acquire economic capital to amass an increasing amount of goods. Higher education Massification is carried out by way of international students' participation in transnational education. Here the work of Marcuse is helpful. In his work, *One-Dimensional Man*, Marcuse (1964) critiques capitalism in modern society. Specifically, he argued that as citizens take part in massification of goods, they develop values born

out of 'false needs', which draw them further into a production and consumption commonsense of everyday life. Marcuse (1964) exclaimed:

> The intensity, the satisfaction and even the character of human needs, beyond the biological level, have always been preconditioned. "False" [needs] are those which are superimposed upon the individual by particular social institutions in his repression: the needs which perpetuate toil, aggressiveness, misery, and injustice. (p. 15)

Today's context of false needs is constructed upon the commonsense understanding that citizens exercise their right as free economic subjects only when they can compete in the market economy. As the argument goes, only free economic subjects can truly compete to acquire maximum economic capital (Knight & Altbach, 2007; Yeravdekar & Tiwari, 2014). When amassing economic capital, individuals are at liberty to purchase the goods they desire. This argument suggests that when individuals, as economic subjects, fulfill their need to participate in the culture of consumption, they will achieve happiness (Horkheimer & Adorno, 2007).

The massification of Canadian higher education can be further understood by noting the widespread international student recruitment from emerging global regions. For instance, a large scale of international student migration tends to originate distinctively from non-English speaking Asian countries to western countries where English is the medium through which education is carried out (Waters, 2012). As an insightful critique of higher education internationalization is its characteristic to appear as a "neutral experience within normalizing conceptions of internationalization" (Madge et al., 2009, p. 35). As an example, when international students of lower socioeconomic backgrounds pay their differential tuition, it creates a perception of equal access to education; and furthermore, an "equalization of classes" beyond national borders (Marcuse, 1964, p.1 7). The 'buying in' of differential tuition represents the extent to

which members of stratified economic classes willingly participate in an economic ideology that serves the interests of the dominant class. In this instance, it is suggested that higher education internationalization symbolizes the uncontested commonsense that "the formal education system is a primary mechanism in the perpetuation of socioeconomic inequality" (Edgerton & Roberts, 2014, p. 193; Bourdieu, 1997). Therefore, internationalization does not indicate "the disappearance of classes, but the extent to which the needs and satisfactions that serve the preservation of the establishment are shared by the underlying population" (Marcuse, 1964, p. 17).

In their critical work on internationalization, Kumari Beck, Roumiana Illieva, Ashley Pullman and Oliva Zhang (2013), from the Faculty of Education at Simon Fraser University, address the inequities related specifically to differential tuition:

> The inequities reflected in differential tuition fees prompted by universities' efforts to generate revenue from international students in the context of marketization of higher education have concrete impacts on the everyday lives of international students as they strive to gain cultural capital. (p. 88)

Internationalization, through the massification of western higher education creates the illusion that increased international student recruitment represents an increase in equitable access to higher education. To take as an example, 25-year-old Howie Chan, an international student from China who applied to a graduate program at Memorial University in St. John's Newfoundland, explained the financial burden a differential tuition fee places on his family. Chan explained in an interview: "We don't go to fancy restaurants, we don't have a car, and we lived in a humble apartment, and we tried to save money by all means in order to get me ... a better education" (White, 2013). Although this example disrupts the common perception that most international students have an abundance of funds to finance their international education, it does suggest that the 25-

year-old international student, Howie Chan would likely be a middle-class citizen in China. Based on this account, higher education internationalization offers the middle-class choices around education to "ensure the reproduction of their advantage within local contexts" (Waters, 2012, p. 124).

Higher education commercialization. In the context of neoliberal economic practices, international education affords both international students and universities with opportunities to build social capital (Bourdieu, 1986). For universities, social capital is developed "via networking of alumni in key source countries" (Gribble et al., 2012, p. 402). In this regard, the commercialization of higher education is seen as a necessary step toward university internationalization. In the document, *Branding Canadian Higher Education*, Kizilbas (2011) discusses the global higher education branding trend as evidence of "national higher education systems compet[ing] against one another in a high-stakes battle for international students by attempting to differentiate themselves" (p. 1). The problem here is that education branding coupled with marketing is confused with an internationalization plan; "a strategy to integrate an international, intercultural, and global dimension into the goals and teaching…and service functions of a university" (Knight, 2011, p. 15). In the account of internationalization as a promotion exercise (Knight, 2011), Canadian universities are service providers selling education as a product to students who are the consumers and become the medium for mass international marketing of the product.

Much attention has been paid to marketing Canada's higher education internationally. Specifically, to remedy the "identity crisis the country has had on the international education state" (Tibbets, 2008, p. 1), the DFAIT called for a unified higher

education vision. The 2008 document entitled, *Canada's Competitive Challenge: International Promotion of Education*, claimed: "We can't afford to *not* do something in a collective manner" (DFAIT, p. 9). This notion gave rise to the Strategic Mandate Agreement that colleges and Universities have had to use as a framework upon which to build their institutional identity. In turn, this postsecondary framework vision constructs higher education institutions as drivers of "creativity, innovation, knowledge, skills development and community engagement through teaching and learning, research, and service" (Strategic Mandate Agreement, 2017, p. 2). The Advisory Panel on Canada's International Education Strategy (IES) affirmed that an effective, long term marketing plan "is needed to ensure that Canada maintains and increases its market share of the best and brightest international students and researchers" ("Canada's International Education Strategy", 2014). The 2014 IES report articulated new branding guidelines whereby:

> Branding materials will be developed, and activities undertaken in conjunction with key partners in priority markets will include:
>
> - Market plans focused on, and tailored to, each priority education market;
> - Ensuring all marketing materials – both digital and traditional media … are customized to resonate with each key market and audience at home and abroad;
> - Improved coordination of marketing efforts and objectives among governments and stakeholders;
> - Ensuring resources are allocated primarily to priority markets; and
> - Re-allocating resources to key posts in Canada's diplomatic network, including economic diplomats dedicating to achieving Canada's key education objectives within those markets. (p. 10)

Such coordinated marketing depends on the Canadian government's cooperation along with educational association and university institutional coordination. The relationship between structure and agent in the global education environment has grown in complexity. Connors (2010) points out that "the changing of the structures give rise to new possibilities" (p. 5). For example, the Department of Foreign Affairs and

International Trade and the Council of Ministers of Education Canada support

internationalization by allocating funds to expand embassy and consulate services to

further promote the 'Imagine Education au/in Canada' marketing campaign globally

(Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada (AUCC), 2007a). An additional

effort to market postsecondary universities, is seen through Ontario's continued

partnership with umbrella organizations such as, the Association of Universities and

Colleges of Canada to develop and execute marketing strategies centered around

promoting "quality, reputation, accessibility and the value of qualifications obtained at

Ontario's institutions" (Rae, 2005, p. 57). Also, university alliances with educational

institutions abroad are marketing tools to recruit international students (AUCC, 2007a).

Under the mandate to increase international student recruitment, national associations,

postsecondary institutions, the provincial, and the federal government work together to

aggressively sell the value of a Canadian university education. Thus, the business model

of higher education (Figure 4), is the hub around which Canadian university

internationalization is assembled. It is where wealth and national economic prosperity

take priority, become an embedded commonsense and reproduce relations of power.
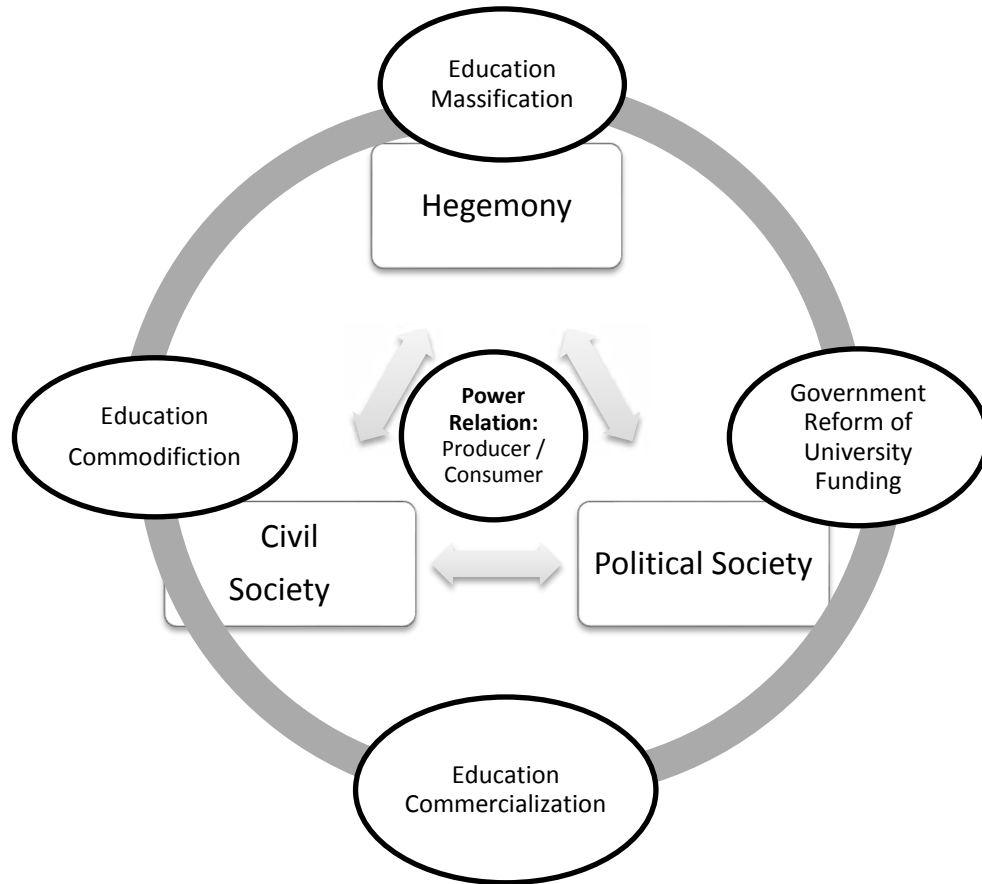
Figure 4. Depiction of university internationalization business model in relation to relations of power.

Adopting an Appropriate Investigative Research Approach

Relationship between the Investigator and the Investigated

As an educator in a pre-academic English language pathway program at a mid-sized Canadian university, I have engaged in discussions with international students in their academic study who report frustration with their perceived limited opportunity to talk about their schooling experiences. As an educator with a role in preparing NNES international students for English for academic purpose use and as an educational researcher with the responsibility to "extend free discourse and democracy in public and

private life" (Sherman & Web, 2005), I hold a privileged position and therefore, feel compelled to provide international students with a forum to voice their university schooling experiences. My philosophical assumptions are epistemologically grounded in advocacy to strengthen international student empowerment. Giroux (2003) emphasizes the role of higher education institutions as:

> Sites of possibility, as places where forms of knowledge, social relations, and values can be taught in order to educate students to take a place in society from a position of empowerment rather than from a position of ideological and economic subordination. (p. 203)

As a result, this research study is driven by what Creswell (2003) terms, an "action agenda for reform" (p. 9) objective. The desired reform in this study is with regard to enhancing the application of a wide range of activities for the purpose of (a) broadening English communication skills and cultural awareness for Canadian workforce preparedness, (b) integrating global perspectives in curricula for enhanced student responsiveness and (c) offering cross-cultural interaction for meaningful relationship building.

Researcher Bias

All persons embarking upon a research study hold personal values on the topic to be explored. Rose (1985) states, that there is no neutrality in research; what exists, is just greater or lesser awareness of one's bias. Addressing researcher bias is necessary in qualitative inquiry because the researcher is the primary tool of data collection (Creswell, 2007). The intent here is to make my implicit assumptions, interests, and views concerning the research explicit (Diefenbach, 2008). To approach this study openly and increase intellectual rigour, I distance myself from personal convictions to gather information with "eyes open" (Asselin, 2003, p. 100).

The biases that fuel my interest in this research topic are related to the three

higher education internationalization rationales: (a) revenue generating, (b) mutual

understanding and (c) skilled migration. First, I view the revenue generating rationale as

a form of economic exploitation of international students. In terms of higher education

internationalization through intensive international student recruitment to generate

revenue for the Canadian economy (CBIE, 2013), high differential tuition fees have

become the commonsense pricing of education (Larsen & Vincent-Lancrin, 2002).

However, differential tuition fees have not guaranteed enhanced international student

schooling experiences.

Second, it seems unclear how the mutual understanding rationale is translated into

practical schooling experiences for international students. The purpose of this rationale is

to stimulate cross-cultural dialogue to support both international and domestic students in

enhancing knowledge and developing skills to "read the world critically" for self-

empowerment and active socio-economic, political participation (Sherman & Web, 2005,

p. 205; Bennet Cattaneo & Chapman, 2010). I question the effectiveness of the methods

used to spur dialogue among international students and between international and

domestic students within and outside of the classroom. I am also uncertain how

transformative educational assumptions are infused into curriculum (Aronowitz &

Giroux, 1985).

Third, I regard the skilled migration rationale as another layer of exploitation of

international students that occurs post Canadian university education study and when

they are in search of landing gainful Canadian employment. Despite the existence of the

international student part-time work eligibility license, the Off-campus Work Permit, and

the initiative to streamline the immigration process for certain international students through the Provincial Nominee Program (Government of Canada, 2012), landing employment related to their academic field of study remains to be a challenge for international students in the face of Canada's unemployment landscape (Yassad, 2012) even though the January 2018 national unemployment rate was recorded at 5.9%; an all-time low since 2002 ("Labour Force Survey", 2018). I am unsure how international students are supported to obtain employment. For those who seek to remain in Canada upon graduation, I fear that the employment successes of a few international students are evidenced through testimonials and used for student recruitment purposes and may not represent the lived experiences of international students at large. The tendency for institutions to safeguard their image by selecting international students to document and present to the world is a form of censoring international student voices.

Qualitative Work

Studies on international student adjustment factors commonly employ quantitative methodology which at times can result in: discussing "pragmatic solutions" (Kim, 2012, p. 456); only, overlooking "the power relations in higher education" (p. 456); and in turn, failing "to show how the global academic system and its hierarchy affect international studies" (p .457). Compared with the quantitative approach to research, qualitative methodology is the unfolding and discovering of multiple meanings and interpretations (Lincoln & Denzin, 1994; Merriam, 1998; Weiss, 1994). As a result, the qualitative approach was used in this research study to explore international students' schooling experiences at a mid-sized Canadian university. The term, qualitative, "implies a direct concern with experience as it is 'lived', 'felt', or 'undergone' (Sherman & Webb, 2005,

p. 18). Despite criticism that qualitative research can be overly narrow in focus (Smith, 2007), it is still concerned with the way in which the world is "understood" (Mason, 1996, p. 4) by people's lives, behaviours, and interactions (Strauss & Corbin, 1990, p. 17). Because the qualitative approach is interested in the actors' "perspectives on their own worlds" (Marshall & Rossman, 1999, p. 7) and rooted in learning about individual's perceptions of a social phenomenon (Creswell, 2007), it was an appropriate approach for exploring international students' multidimensional university schooling experience in an internationalized education context.

Qualitative inquiry positions the researcher as the key instrument of data collection. Information is gathered through an up-close, face-to-face format such as, an interview (Creswell, 2003) because "qualitative researchers want those who are studied to speak for themselves" (Sherman & Webb, 2005, p. 16). The nature of the topic of NNES undergraduate and graduate international students' perceptions of their Canadian university schooling experience is exploratory and laden with multi-faceted layers of experiences; thus, the qualitative method of data collection was preferred.

Purposive sampling

Purposive, criterion sampling was used to identify potential participants for this study. The purposive sampling technique is well aligned with the qualitative research approach because the technique is concerned with the "aim of qualitative research to understand experiences as unified" (Sherman & Web, 2005, p. 17). The criterion-based participant selection method was used to consider individuals who met specific criteria for the study (Given, 2008). In qualitative research, more data does not equate to more information. Qualitative research is primarily concerned with uncovering and

understanding the meanings behind a topic and not developing generalized statements (Crouch & McKenzie, 2006). Qualitative research guidelines suggest fifteen to be the smallest sample size (Guest et al., 2006). This research study included 32 participants.

Focusing on who the participant is and how the participant is positioned within the phenomenon under exploration is a significant consideration (Creswell, 2007) and in need of attention. The participants in this study met the following criteria: (a) a NNES international undergraduate or graduate student, (b) enrolled full-time in a degree program and (c) has completed at least one semester (minimum 4 courses) at the selected University. The purpose for leaving open a broad scope of international students was to capture rich data as students from different countries, academic disciplines, and level of study may have polar experiences; and thus, have relevant stories in informing the study.

Case study

The case study methodology was an appropriate investigative approach to examine international students' transnational higher education experience to gain insight into the complexities (Stake, 1995) concerning internationalization. A case study is understood as, "an empirical enquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context especially when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are blurred" (Yin, 2009, p. 18). This methodology is concerned with "how the phenomenon actually occurs within a given situation" (Creswell, 2007, p. 6), and "draws attention to the question of what specially can be learned about the single case" (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005, p. 443). Exploring NNES international undergraduate and graduate students' perception of their Canadian university schooling experience could not be understood separately from the embedded dimensions of the phenomenon (Richards,

2005; Sherman & Webb, 2005); which in this study were international students' in-class learning experience, cross-cultural interaction and understood purpose of cross-cultural engagement. This methodology is appropriate for discovering contemporary and less well-developed research areas (Creswell, 2003; 2007). Overall, research on NNES international students' perceived university schooling experiences at Canadian university campuses checked against the revenue generation, mutual understanding and skills' migration internationalization rationales is limited; and therefore, warrants additional exploration.

This study employed a single case which was embedded in nature. First, a single case study enables the researcher to investigate one phenomenon. NNES international undergraduate and graduate students' perspective of their Canadian university schooling experience was this case under study to explore the phenomenon of higher education internationalization. Case study is effective when examining the phenomenon from the perspectives of different groups (Baxter & Jack, 2008). The two primary participant groups in the study were, NNES international undergraduate and graduate students. Second, the study is embedded because each of the two primary groups contained subunits (Meyer, 2001). Within the category of NNES international undergraduate students, the sub-groups: sex, country of origin and academic program exist. Figure 5 illustrates the embedded quality of this case study and displays the layers within each main participant group.

This single, embedded case study was both exploratory (Yin, 2003), and instrumental (Stake, 1995; Denzin & Lincoln, 2005). On the one hand, it was exploratory because the study investigated a phenomenon that had no single set of outcomes (Yin,

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2003). On the other hand, it was instrumental because the research aimed to provide

insight into activities to facilitate understanding of something else. The aim is that the

insights into international students' university schooling experience at one Canadian

University would advance awareness of the University's application of

internationalization.

Phenomenon: Interntional students' Canadian university schooling expereince in the face of internationalization

Case: What are NNES undergraduate and graduate international students' Canadian schooling experiences?

3 areas of inquiry: In-class learning experience; Cross-cultural interaction; Understood purpose of cross-cultural engagement

2 student groups:

a. Undergraduate ; b. Graduate

3 embedded layers: Sex / Country of origin / Academic program

Figure 5. Embedded characteristics of the case study.

Context of Selected Site

The postsecondary institution in this research study was in a highly multicultural

Canadian city. From this point forward, the term *University* is used to refer to the selected

higher education institution in this study. In 2017, the proportion of international students

at this mid-sized University was 17% ("Fast Facts", 2017.). The University's growth in

total international student enrolment can be observed when comparing the 2012 calendar

year enrolment of 1 582 undergraduate and graduate international students with 2016's

total enrolment of 2 536 students (Common University Data Ontario, 2017; Common

University Data Ontario, 2013e; Ontario Undergraduate Student Alliance, n.d.). The University's *Internationalization: 2014-2015* (n.d.) report articulated its mandate is to continue developing "international collaborations with universities abroad and to increase international recruitment efforts … to diversify the [University] student population by attracting students from countries that have been historically underrepresented." The first reason for selecting this site was because the University is like other Canadian universities that position internationalization as a pillar of their institutional strategy. The second reason was because of my readily available access to NNES international students at the University.

Since 2009, the University has been redefining itself on several fronts to achieve Ontario's vision for postsecondary education internationalization as the driving force central to "bolstering the provinces competitive advantage and global leadership" (Council of Ontario Universities, 2011, p. 1). Stier and Borjesson (2010) claim "internationalization is both an empirical and analytical category and a rhetorical resource for actors [and] is integral to the discourses in narratives on the demands knowledge society places upon its citizens and higher education systems" (p. 337). The internationalization process places demand on higher education institutions to build relationships with other universities in emerging nations. The University holds over 130 institutional agreements globally, with the highest concentration in Asian countries ("International Development", n.d.). Such collaboration is seen as a productive way to form "trade, commerce and innovation links between countries, strengthen foreign aid policy and enhance international relations" (AUCC, 2010, p. 3) between higher education institutions.

As the framework universities use to rebrand and differentiate themselves, the

Strategic Mandate Agreement (2017) suggests the institutional priority of putting

"students first by providing the best possible learning experience for all qualified learners

in an affordable and financially sustainable way, ensuring high quality and globally

competitive outcomes for students and Ontario's economy" ("Strategic Mandate

Agreement", 2017, p .2). According to this vision, the University established its brand as

the following:

> The [University] is a progressive institution that offers a purposeful and enriching experience. We take responsibility for delivering change in the community and the world that surrounds it. We are proud of our accomplishments and of providing the environment and support to develop our current students and future alumni to their full potential. ( )

The University frames student experience as being "unique"; to which, "we provide

international engagement for all those who choose to study at [the University]." ("Our

Student Experience is International", n.d.). It is further explained that:

> The [University] is committed to ensuring that its graduates have an exceptional international experience; be it while on an international exchange or co-op, in the classroom with students from around the world or while engaged in out-of-class activities. The difference here is that our commitment to internationalization is embedded in the [University's] spirit. It is, in a way, what makes [this University] experience distinctive. ( )

A rising number of international students. The University enrolls a total of

approximately 15 500 fulltime undergraduate and graduate students with 17 percent (2

536) of those being international students ("Fast Facts", 2017). It has the highest

proportion of international graduate students (57.2%) of all Ontario universities (Dwyer,

2017) and has experienced a steady incline in international student enrolment from 2007

to 2016. Throughout these years, international graduate student enrolment increased from

367 to 1 747; compared to international undergraduate enrolment decreased from 1 044

to 878 (Office of Institutional Analysis, 2016). Comparing 2010 to 2014, the proportion

of international undergraduate students increased from 7% to 9%; whereas, the

percentage of graduate international students increased from 29% to 51%

(Internationalization, 2015).

      International student recruitment markets and considerations. One of the

ways by which the University committed to internationalization is through international

student recruitment to, "compete effectively at a global level to attract and retain the best

international students [and] to manage international student enrolment opportunities

sustainably" ("Thinking Forward Taking Action", 2010, p .20). Regarding the

University's primary markets, the top source global regions were: Asia (43%), South

Asia (23%), Middle East (12%), and Africa (11%) ("International Student Country of

Origin", n.d.). In 2015, the top ten source countries were: China (1 162), India (580),

Nigeria (254), Saudi Arabia (159), Pakistan (64), USA (50), Bangladesh (40), Iran (33),

United Arab Ghana (37), Emirates (24) and all others (284) ("Internationalization",

2015). Some of the reported conditions impacting the University's recruitment were

outlined as follows in the *International Student Recruitment Report* (2012):

- Given China's focus on increasing study abroad opportunities for its students, much potential exists for the development of undergraduate and graduate transfer articulation agreements that will lead to considerable [University]-based enrolment of students from China. There is also a growing amount of media attention on Canadian institutions running into trouble in China because of poor student selection and, in particular, admitting students with weak academic credentials. It is imperative for us to communicate clearly with our recruitment firms the importance of maintaining our reputation and integrity through standardized admission criteria and transparent processes. (p. 5)

- India is an ultra-competitive market where [the University's] returns remain relatively strong. Very large numbers of undergraduate engineering students are recruited here, easily leading Canada in this regard … India has many important centres and requires constant media exposure. (p.5)

- Pakistan's flooding continues to impact student mobility … [the University] is one of the more successful Canadian universities operating in Pakistan during the past decade. In 2011, we have observed a growing interest in Canada given the perceived and real problems for Pakistani students in the UK, Australia and the US. (p. 5)

University brand promotional channels. Beginning in 2009, the University has taken significant measures to increase internationalization efforts. This led to a 2014 review of existing promotional campaigns aimed at refining marketing approach to advance international recruitment in regions traditionally underrepresented ("2015-2016 Internationalization Report", n.d.). Institutional branding, as forms of discourses, are "social structures which do things to people's way of organizing their knowledge in line with the agenda of the creators of the discourse" (Connors, 2010, p. 7). The *2015-2016 Internationalization Report* (n.d.) identified, "One of the most notable trends in higher education branding and marketing is that institutions are dedicating more attention to these functions than in previous years" (p. 7). The University's brand marketing is summarized in table 1.

Table 1
University brand marketing summary

Promotional channel	Target
Online marketing	Partnership with global online advertisers to utilize: email campaigns, international language translations, nurture campaigns, banner ads, featured scholarships and newsletters
Web	Redeveloped international website
Redesigned material	Redesigned the University's international print materials to ensure consistency in

	positioning, identity, strategy, stated goals and communications
Global print hub	A centralized global print hub used to facilitate printing and distribution of marketing materials; low cost to ensure increasing marketing and promotion return on investment
Building relationships	47 recruitment activities undertaken in 7 countries
International Student Ambassadors program	A pilot to raise program awareness by engaging current international students to share their own experiences with international applicants
Pre-arrival webinars	The University developed and delivered online webinars to all incoming undergraduate and graduate students
Customer relationship management platform	The piloting of a management system to build, track, monitor and report on personalized relationship with potential applicants to increase conversion
YouVisit campus tour	Plans to transform the existing online campus tour into an interactive, virtual reality experience
Agent network	Utilization of 186, third party educational representatives in 101 countries

Differential tuition fees. The total number of undergraduate and graduate international students enrolled directly translates to tuition revenue contributed to the University. From the years 2010 to 2014, the total international tuition contribution jumped from $24 239 803 to $43 015 853 positioning differential international tuition fees as one third of the total revenue the University received (Internationalization, 2015).

Data Collection

The study included three data collection methods: (a) document analyses; (b) semi-structured open-ended interviews; and (c) one focus group. The first set of data resulted from document analyses of varied University internationalization documents. For logistical purposes, document analyses occurred first, and the discovered themes informed the semi-structure interview question framework. The second set of data stemmed from semi-structured, open-ended interviews carried out with 32 NNES international students. The third set of data came from one participant focus group. In this focus group, 12 of the 32 interviewed participants provided additional perspectives on questions based on the themes which emerged from the semi-structured interviews.

Document Analysis

Document analysis often functions as means of triangulation in qualitative research. It complemented and was applicable to this case study aimed at producing rich international student descriptions of their university schooling experiences in the wider examination of higher education internationalization (Stake, 1995; Yin, 1994). The documents under analyses in this educational research can be understood as official documents produced by institutions for either internal or external use (Bodgan & Biklen, 2007). In this study, the University's institutional documents such as, the President's Updates, Internationalization reports and media publications were analyzed to: (a) track institutional internationalization vision and development (b) develop a framework for semi-structured interviews, (c) provide supplementary research data, and (d) corroborate findings across data sets to minimize potential biases.

By analyzing a range of University documents, I was able to scan the University's policy landscape to provide background information which served as a starting point to help me begin to understand the positioning of international students within the context of internationalization at the University. In this process, I considered the University's policies, statements, plans, reports, websites, newsletters, and media publication. The iterative process I followed was a back-and-forth interplay of determining document relevance by reading and re-reading for information that could be interrogate relationally, content and thematic patterns. The document type, nature of document and data analyzed were organized in table format, (Table 2).

Table 2

Analyzed University Documents

Document type	Nature of document	Data analyzed
Media publication	The University's Master's Biotechnology Program Targets Foreign Students (studymagazine.com, 2011)	International students (Chinese and Indian) targeted
	International Students Enriching Campus Culture (Alumni Magazine, 2011)	Compilation of international student success
		Message to domestic Canadian student to interact with students from other cultures
Newsletter	President's update #15 (June 28, 2012)	The University prepares to respond to MTCU request for articulation of strategic goals/directions
	President's update #16 (September 11, 2012)	Introduction of MTCU's "Strengthening Ontario's Centers of Creativity, Innovation, Knowledge" and new funding regulations
		"The pressure on the operating budgets at universities in Ontario has taken on a relentless feel to it. Aligning revenues and expenses, focusing on

		enrolment … are options we can control"
	President's update #32 (March 9, 2017)	Renewal of SMA- The University to differentiate itself; describe steps to meet objectives of enhancing student experience, innovation in teaching and learning excellence
		New funding formula for universities
	President's update #33 (June 1, 2017)	Enrolment data is central to fiscal planning
		Enrolment swing in decrease of 1 415 domestic full-time undergraduates, and counter-balancing increase of 1 350 international graduate students
		Creation of the position, Associate Vice-President, Enrolment Management (domestic and international)
	President's updated #34 (October 25, 2017)	Increase in domestic/ international undergraduate enrolment
		Final version of Strategic Mandate Agreement complete
Website	International Development	The University's commitment to internationalization; primary internationalization goals; list of international institutions with University agreements
	Our Brand	Articulation of the University brand identity
	Our Student Experience is International	Outline of the University's commitment to student engagement
	University Site Project	Software infrastructure to support day-to-day operational functions as well as method to achieve key strategic initiatives
Plan/ Mapping	Thinking Forward … Taking Action (April 2010)	Establishment of strategic plan outlining the risks and challenges the University faces: enrolment, resources,

		the economy, government policy, competing institutions
	Institutional Vision, Proposed Mandate Statement and Priority Objectives (n.d.)	Alignment of the University's goals with Ontario government priorities; "The [University] strongly embraces the principles of putting students first, meeting the needs of the creative economy and focusing on productivity, innovation and sustainability" (p.1)
	Strategic Mandate Agreement: [The University], Ministry of Advanced Education and Skills Development 2017-20	"Outlines the role the University performs in Ontario's postsecondary education systems "(p.1)
	Curriculum Mapping (Centre for Teaching and Learning, 2017)	Curriculum mapping resource to develop course and program structure that meet national/ international outcomes
Report	Comprehensive International Student Recruitment Report (2009-2010) (n.d)	Overview of international student recruitment model, highlights, initiatives and future goals
	Developing an Enhanced Sense of Community: Primer for 2011 Student and International Affairs Summer Retreat (2011)	Defining, 'community' in the postsecondary environment; key factors in developing community; strategies to enhance community; strategic enrolment management strategies to impact community development
	International Student Recruitment Report, 2010-11 (2012)	Sizeable increase in pre-academic English pathway program; changes in recruitment model; external challenge of the Ontario provincial government endorsing the increase of international students by 50 % by 2016
	Internationalization Report, 2011-12 (February 2013)	Elaborated on the University's progress in moving toward internationalization: student recruitment and retention, student support services

	Internationalization, 2014-2015 (n.d)	International student revenue; development of marketing and promotional materials; international student enrolment trends (2010-2014)
	Internationalization, 2015-2016 (n.d)	Purchase of Constituent Relationship Management (CRM) to manage international student leads and international agreements; increase in course based graduate programs

Semi-structured Interview

Semi-structured, open-ended interviews were used to explore NNES international undergraduate and graduate students' perception of their Canadian university schooling experience. This interview method is appropriate when investigating a complex topic that cannot be restricted by a set of responses (Creswell, 2007). The interviews provided participants with an opportunity to share their beliefs and attitudes in their own words which provided a great depth of information (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005). The interview questions were both semi-structured and open ended because they were, "structured in terms of the wording of questions" (Turner, 2010, p. 756); however, "the questions are worded so that responses are open-ended" (Turner, 2010, p. 756). The interview included core questions that all participants were asked (Table 3). These were divided into three categories: (a) background, (b) academic opportunities and challenges and (c) University generated social opportunities and challenges (Appendix A). Through this data collection approach, I had flexibility to ask subsequent questions based on participant responses; in turn, I was able to probe for further information (DiCicco-Bloom & Crabtree, 2006). Probing for additional information was especially important in this study due to NNES international students' potential English language communication limitations. In some

instances, I needed to probe for more detailed explanations as some participants tended to

answer questions in the shortest way possible. Such openness permitted participants to

share as much information as they desired.

Table 3
*The fracturing of core, semi-structured interview questions from primary and secondary
research questions*

Primary research question	Secondary research questions	Core interview questions
What are NNES international undergraduate and graduate students' schooling experience at the University?	1. How do students perceive their in-class learning experience?	Describe what it feels like to be an international/exchange student in your classes.
		What types of skills and knowledge do you feel you are learning in your program?
		How do you think the skills and knowledge you are learning will transfer (connect) to your future professional work?
		How do your classes include international examples in course material?
		Is it important for the University's professors to have international experience? Why is this important to you as a student?
		How do you feel about your classroom interaction (ask question/ advice/ help/ work with) with: (a) Professors (b) Classmates from the same country as you (c) Canadian classmates

	2. How do students describe their cross-cultural interaction?	(d) International or exchange students from other countries
		Explain the types of relationships you have been able to build with the following groups of students: (a) International/ exchange students from the same country of origin (b) Other international/ exchange students (c) Canadian students
	3. How do students understand the purpose of cross-cultural engagement?	How important is it for university students to: (a) build friendships with students from other countries? (b) share cultures/ traditions (c) exchange political viewpoints (d) develop professional networks
		Describe the types of social activities that you usually take part in.

Participant profiles. Participant voices are central to qualitative research, as it is such which allow the researcher to study the role internationalization plays in the Canadian schooling experiences of international students. Profiles of the 32 participants were created to enable readers to develop a vivid image, a life-drawing (Lawrence-Lightfoot & Davis, 1997), of the individuals whose stories were recreated in this research study. Each participant profile begins with a background that provides my initial or overall impression of the participant. I identify the participants' demographic information, summarize the participants' general perceptions of what they felt it was like

to be an NNES international student at the University. The purpose of this open-ended question was to illicit initial perspectives.

Thirty-two participants from nine countries and across nine academic programs participated in this study (table 4). There was a total of 10 females and 22 males. The majority (20) of the participants were between the ages of 20 and 24. The participants were from the following nine countries of origin: Albania (1), Bangladesh (1), Belarus (1), Brazil (3), China (17), India (4), Mexico (2), Palestine (1), and Saudi Arabia (2). Of the 32 participants, 11 were undergraduate and 21 were graduate students. Four of the 32 participants were on an exchange program. The undergraduate participants were from the following academic disciplines: engineering (mechanical (2), civil (1), and environmental (1)); social work (1); nursing (1); business administration/accounting (2). The graduate participants were from the following academic disciplines: human resources management/ Master of Management (4); engineering (industrial (2), automotive (2), electrical (2), mechanical (2) and electrical and computer (1); master of education international stream (5); accounting and finance (1); medical biotechnology (1); environmental science (1). Twenty-three participants identified Canada to be their country of preference they hoped to work in upon graduation. Twenty-two participants relied solely on family to pay their international tuition fees. Eight participants had government scholarships and two participants either relied on mixed funding sources or were self-funded. Of the 32 participants, 17 were previous students whom I taught in a pre-academic English language pathway program at the University.

Table 4
Participant Background

Pseudonym	Sex	Age	International [I] or Exchange [E]	Undergraduate (U)/ Graduate (G)	Academic program	Length of time at the University (months)	Country of origin	#1 Choice country to work in
Alice	F	24	E	U	Industrial Engineering	12	Brazil	Brazil
Darrel	M	24	I	G	Accounting / Finance	3	China	Canada
Carlie	F	30	I	G	Human Resources Management	8	China	China
Don	M	22	I	G	Engineering	7	India	Canada
Bob	M	20	I	U	Mechanical Engineering	7	China	Canada
Catherine	F	24	I	G	Industrial Engineering	6	China	Canada
Derek	M	24	I	G	Automotive Engineering	6	China	Canada
Dale	M	23	I	G	Electrical Engineering	7	China	Canada
Brian	M	21	I	U	Business Administration	18	China	Canada
Daren	M	25	I	G	Electrical Engineering	12	China	Canada
Drake	M	24	I	G	Master of Management	8	China	Canada
Brad	M	24	I	U	Accounting	23	Saudi Arabia	Saudi Arabia
Amber	F	20	I	U	Social Work	12	Albania	Canada
Dominic	M	25	E	G	Mechanical Engineering	12	China	Canada
Carry	F	25	I	G	Human Resources Management	9	China	Canada
Bill	M	19	I	U	Mechanical Engineering	6	Palestine	Canada
Ben	M	21	I	U	Industrial Engineering	24	Saudi Arabia	Saudi Arabia
Barry	M	22	E	U	Civil Engineering	9	Brazil	Brazil

Bart	M	24	E	U	Environmental Engineering	8	Brazil	Brazil
Connie	F	25	I	G	Education – Administration	12	China	Canada
Clair	F	24	I	G	Education	9	China	China
Carol	F	24	I	G	Human Resources Management	4	China	Canada
Daniel	M	24	I	G	Electrical and Computer Engineering	2	India	Canada
Dylan	M	23	I	G	Medical Biotechnology	5	Mexico	Canada
Dean	M	27	I	G	Education-Thesis	16	Chinese	Canada
Dexter	M	25	I	G	Mechanical Engineering	3	India	Canada
Christine	F	26	I	G	Education – Curriculum	4	China	USA
Dennis	M	42	I	G	Environmental Science	63	Mexico	Mexico
Duke	M	21	I	G	Automotive Engineering	2	India	Canada
Amanda	F	27	I	U	Nursing	24	Belarus	Canada
Bruce	M	27	I	U	Business Administration	10	Bangladesh	Canada
Danny	M	43	I	G	Education	5	China	Canada

Approaching participants.

Four steps were implemented to ensure organization in recruiting participants. In the first step, I sent the 'Request for Permission-ISC' email (Appendix A) to the International Student Centre (ISC) to seek permission for the department to send the 'Call for Participation' email (Appendix B), on my behalf, to international undergraduate and graduate students registered in a full-time academic program. This satisfied the first purposive sampling requirement. In the second step, I sent the 'Call for Participation' email to ISC to be forwarded on my behalf to international undergraduate and graduate students registered in a full-time academic program. The 'Participant Request' email included a 1-week timeline for which individuals interested in participating in the research may reply to me.

In the third step, I tracked participant interest. Upon receiving participant interest via email reply, I added the participant to the Participant Pool list. In the 'Participant Pool' list, I recorded the interview planning details along with students' demographic information of: sex, age, country of origin, first language, undergraduate or graduate status, major, number of months studying in Canada, number of months studying at the University, number of courses completed at the University, funding source, and the country in which they plan to work upon graduation. This step was ongoing from the time I received replies from the 'Participant Request' email. Through this process I identified individuals who met the remaining two purposive sampling criteria of being a NNES undergraduate or graduate student who had completed a minimum of 4 courses.

The fourth step involved confirming participant selection and establishing a meeting. Through email, I confirmed participant selection and scheduled a meeting time and location. I provided two possible dates with times for the meeting. I also indicate that if the two suggested dates and times did not work for the participant, then the participant was to provide two additional dates and times. A mutually agreed upon setting was decided with the consideration of factors such as: noise level, privacy, and participant comfort.

Interview process. McNamara (2009) underscores the importance of interview preparation. This process can prevent problematic circumstances from occurring. I followed McNamara's eight principles of interview preparation and took the following steps. Step one: I selected a location with minimal distraction. Both on and off campus locations were considered, providing that the location was conducive to audio recording and maintaining participant confidentiality. Step two: I explained the purpose of the

interview to participants. Step three: I explained the terms of confidentiality. Step four: I

explained the format of the interview. Prior to recording the interview, participants

completed the 'background' questions. By having participants complete these questions

prior to starting the interview resulted in reduced total interview time and allowed

participants to focus on the questions about their university schooling experiences. Step

five: I indicated the interview would take approximately 90 minutes. Step six: I provided

my email to participants if they wished to contact me in the future with additional

information. Step seven: I asked participants if they had any questions before getting

started. Step eight: I started audio recording the interview and took notes on noteworthy

information.

  Interview audio recording. NNES international student participants may

experience some difficulty in expressing their ideas; and thus, may need to explain their

ideas in varied ways. Capturing participant responses in audio format enabled me to

replay the interview as required to obtain clear understanding to ensure accurate

transcription of participant reported experiences. Second, not having to focus on

producing detailed hand-written notes of participant views throughout the interviews, I

was able to focus on participants' responses and develop further follow-up interview

questions. Lastly, by audio recording the interviews, I captured the nuances such as,

feelings of joy, or worry, as they shared their perspectives.

Focus Group

  Focus groups can directly indicate the similarities and differences in opinions and

experiences (Morgan, 1997), that international students hold about their Canadian

schooling. Further to employing document analysis and semi-structured interviews, one

focus group of 12 individuals, composed of seven males and five females, was

conducted. Nine of the 12 focus group participants were previous students of mine. As a

self-contained method, the purpose of implementing a focus group was to explore

additional details related to some of the discovered themes stemming from the interviews.

Focus groups have long been expressed as a special form of interviewing that aids in

confirming that participant voices are heard (Krueger & Casey, 2000). In relation to

qualitative research, a focus group is effective in "capturing people's responses ... in the

context of face-to-face interaction [and concentrating] on themes that are generated in

these interactions" (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005, p. 899).

  After having identified emerging interview response themes, I sent an email to all

32 participants requesting for their participation in a focus group to discuss additional

questions (Table 5). Of the 32, 12 participants replied. The focus group session included

seven questions and lasted for approximately 2.5 hours. To provide an additional layer of

anonymity, participant pseudonyms are not used, instead participants were given a

number from 1 to 12; this numbering is used in the Results and Discussion chapters.

Table 5
*The fracturing of focus group questions from semi-structured interview, and primary and
secondary research questions*

Primary research question	Secondary research questions	Core interview questions	Focus group questions

What are NNES international undergraduate and graduate students' schooling experience at the University?	1. How do students perceive their in-class learning experience?	Describe what it feels like to be an international/exchange student in your classes.	Why did you choose Canada as our study abroad destination?
		What types of skills and knowledge do you feel you are learning in your program?	Why did you choose to attend this University?
		How do you think the skills and knowledge you are learning will transfer (connect) to your future professional work?	How can NNES international students overcome their fear to communicate more in class?
		How do your classes include international examples in course material?	How can professors develop a positive relationship with their international students?
		Is it important for the University's professors to have international teaching experience? Why is this important to you as a student?	Can you give an example of when you felt you learned a lot in class?
		How do you feel about your classroom interaction (ask question/ advice/ help/ work with) with: (e) Professors	Can you give an example of when you felt you did not learn much in class?
	2. How do students describe their cross-cultural interaction?	(f) Classmates from the same country as you (g) Canadian classmates (h) International or exchange students from other countries	What types of support should the University offer to help international students find Canadian employment? Should international students communicate only with students from the same country as them?

		Explain the types of relationships you have been able to build with the following groups of students: (a) International/ exchange students from the same country of origin (b) Other international/ exchange students (c) Canadian students	Why do international students tend to interact mainly with students from their own country?
	3. How do students understand the purpose of cross-cultural engagement?	How important is it for university students to: (a) build friendships with students from other countries? (b) share cultures/ traditions (c) exchange political viewpoints (d) develop professional networks	
		Describe the types of social activities that you usually take part in.	

Data Analysis

Data Management

All data collected were securely stored on my personal computer with password protection. Audio recordings of individual interviews were first transferred from the recorder to the laptop and saved as individual files. Each file was labelled based on the given participant number codes, 1 to 32. Participant coding ensured anonymity and

confidentiality were maintained. Participant codes were then assigned a pseudonym. The

pseudonyms are what appear in the Results and Discussion chapters to represent

participant interview responses. The audio recording for the focus group was also

transferred from the recorder and saved onto the same computer. Since the focus group

included 12 participants, a different method was to be able to identify participant

responses while maintaining anonymity. The 12 focus group participants were given a

number from 1 to 12 and were required to state their number prior to responding. For

both, the interviews and focus group, I transcribed the audio recordings in the format of a

word template consisting of line numbers and a side column for entering codes (table 6).

Table 6
Excerpt of individual interview transcription

5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26	R- What do you feel you're learning? I can't think about any different skills; of course speaking English with someone that is a native English speaker is something that I learned here and not to be that afraid and also one thing that I learned is that sometimes we feel afraid to speak in English because we don't know all the vocabularies and we prefer to not talk because we think that the other person will think that person, she doesn't know how to speak, I'm not going to talk to her, but they actually doesn't analyze you, they don't care you know. R- So why do you feel that? In the beginning I was feeling that, but then I realized that no one really cares if I speak the bad English or the words and sometimes they don't know that I'm from another country because there's so many like Canada has so many people all around the world, they are really receptive and they don't analyze you.	

Coding Method

This study utilized conventional qualitative content analysis whereby categories were developed from the analysis rather than through applying preconceived categories on the data (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005). The process of recognizing thematic "patterns within the data, where emerging themes become the categories for analysis" (Fereday & Muir-Chochrane, 2006, p.4), involved "careful reading and re-reading of the data" (Rice & Ezzy, 1999, p. 258), and re-linking to the literature. Thus, the process was iterative and required me to continually make sense of what had been discovered (Creswell, 2007).

Data analysis was achieved through effective coding. A "good code, is one that captures the qualitative richness of the phenomenon" (Boyatzis, 1998, p. 1). Coding is an analytical technique that goes beyond labeling, and links meanings by "lead[ing] you from the data to the idea, and from the idea to all the data pertaining to that idea" (Richards & Morse, 2007, p. 137). Although there is "no best way to code qualitative data" (Saldana, 2008, p. 2), it was necessary to develop a process that allowed data to be "segregated, grouped, regrouped and re-linked to consolidate meaning and explanation" (Grbich, 2007, p. 21). The codes in this study were developed throughout the following three stages: (a) pre-coding, (b) descriptive coding, and (c) code categorizing. Even though the three stages are described as systematic, subsequent steps the process was non-linear and cyclical (Miles & Huberman, 1994). The line between each step is blurred, whereby some steps occurred simultaneously.

First, the pre-coding stage occurred after each interview was transcribed. In this stage, I read and highlighted comments and passages that sparked my attention which could be later retrieved and possibly used to support propositions based on findings and

interpretations (Boyatzis, 1998; Creswell, 2007) (Table 6). Second, the descriptive coding

stage involved summarizing the primary topic of the excerpt. Boyatzis (1998) notes,

"encoding the information organizes the data to identify and develop themes from them"

(p. 4). For example, this occurred through a line-by-line fashion, where each line of an

interview transcript was summarized into a code. Subsequent transcripts were read and

checked against the first, as well as, the master code table to determine if these categories

applied (Table 7). Merriam (1998) supports the merging of lists into a master repository

where it "constitutes a primitive outline or classification systems reflecting the recurring

patterns" which then creates the "themes into which subsequent items are sorted" (p.

180).

Table 7
Excerpt of individual interview transcription with pre and descriptive coding

5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25	Q. B2- What do you feel you're learning? I can't think about any different skills; of course [**1**- speaking English with someone that is a native English speaker is something that I learned here and not to be that afraid] and also one thing that I learned is that [**2**- sometimes we feel afraid to speak in English because we don't know all the vocabularies] and we **3**- prefer to not talk because we think that the other person will think that person, she doesn't know how to speak], I'm not going to talk to her, but [**4**- they actually doesn't analyze] you, they don't care you know. R- So why do you feel that? In the beginning I was feeling that, but then I realized that no one really cares if I speak the bad English or the words and sometimes they don't know that I'm from another country because there's so many like Canada has so many people all around the world, they are really receptive and they don't analyze you.	[1] opportunities to speak with native [2] fear to communicate because of limited vocabulary [3] belief that others will judge English speaking ability [4] realization of perception that English speaking is not judged

Third, in the code categorization stage, I created the master code table, (Table 8).

Here, I arranged the thematic codes so that that the code labels appropriately represented

the content within each code group (Grbich, 2007). I clustered reoccurring and related

codes categories together (Table 9). In turn, through this "coding, categorizing and

analytic reflection" (Saldana, 2008, p.13) (Figure 5), I discovered themes which were

then analyzed.

Table 8
Excerpt of master code table with pre, descriptive, and categorical coding

P1- Alice	Interview question	Line #	Pre-coding	Descriptive code	Code categorization
	B2. What types of skills and knowledge do you feel you are learning?	7-9 10-11	-speaking English with someone that is a native English speaker is something that I learned here and not to be that afraid - sometimes we feel afraid to speak in English because	[1] opportunities to speak with native [2] fear to communicate because of limited vocabulary	Cross-cultural interaction Fear of communication

		12-14	we don't know all the vocabularies	[3] belief that others will judge English speaking ability	
		15	-prefer to not talk because we think that the other person will think that person, she doesn't know how to speak	[4] realization of perception that English speaking is not judged	Reconciling fear of communication
			they actually doesn't analyze		
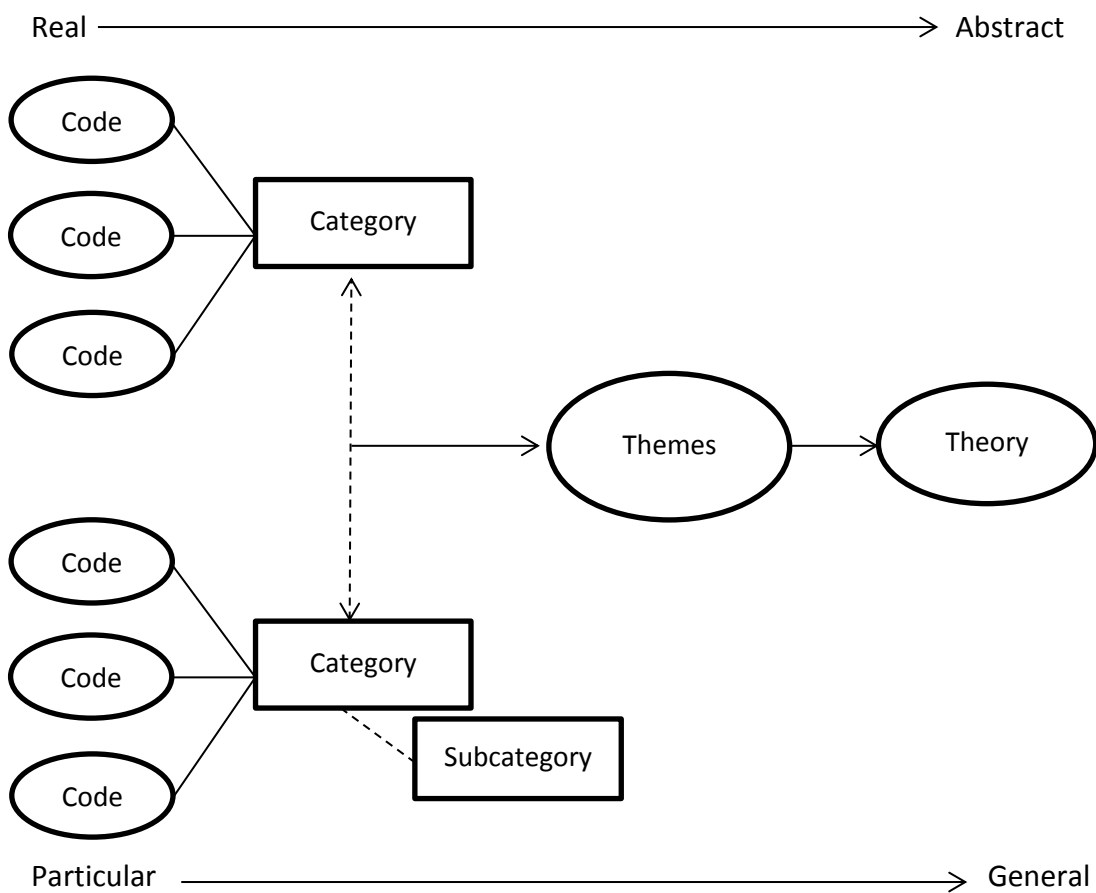
Figure 5. A streamlined codes-to-theory model for qualitative inquiry
Source: Saldana, 2009, p12

Table 9
From code to theory progressive inferencing

Real				Abstract
Code	**Category**	**Sub-category**	**Theme**	**Theory**
Job search	Establishing professional networks		*Friendship redefined – Amassing cultural capital*	
Job leads				
Job requirements				
Work culture				
Academic English	Improving academic success			
Think differently				
Problem solve				
English practice	Optimizing cultural functioning			
Culture				
English barrier	Inability to find field related jobs	Fear of not securing Canadian permanent	*On the periphery – Caught in a space of in-betweenness*	**The infiltration of neoliberal ideology in education works against the mutual understanding and**
Personal job search				
Experience through friends				
Suggested support				
Canadian preference				
Employment to immigrate				
Plans to live in Canada				
Tuition – family dependence				

Immigration status – key for family to come to Canada		residency status		**skills' migration rationales of higher education internationalization whereby reproducing NNES international students' participation in their own marginalization.**
Professor: teaching method	Access to expert knowledge		*'The commonsense of English-medium, high quality education*	
Professor: international experience				
Resources				
Technology				
Knowledge application				
Classroom equipment/ technology	Infrastructure and Technological expansion			
Campus/ buildings				
Communication	Investment in self for future participation in the Canadian economy			
Teamwork				
Credentials			*Differential tuition as the praxis of migration to Canada*	
Job expansion	Investment in the Canadian economy for self-benefit			
Infrastructure				

Trustworthiness

Triangulation combines several lines of sight to acquire a deeper perspective of the phenomenon under exploration (Berg, 2001). This study established trustworthiness by employing a cross method triangulation of themes from three data sets: document analysis, semi-structured interviews, and a focus group (Denzin, 1978; Denzin & Lincoln, 2005). Triangulation broadens and strengthens thematic linkages; in turn, enhancing the overall rigour of a study (Golafshani, 2003). Across method triangulation combines at least two different data collection methods in one study, and results in producing a minimum of two data sets (Denzin, 1978).

Summary

This chapter began with my ontological position of grounding higher education internationalization in the critical theory paradigm; which in turn, informed my epistemological beliefs. Second, the qualitative, case study methodology was presented as an appropriate investigative approach to explore NNES undergraduate and graduate international students' perception of their university schooling experiences. Next, participant selection along with their profiles were introduced. Last, data collection methods of: document analysis, semi-structured interviews and focus group was used to triangulate data and was then aligned with the data analysis process. Subsequently, pre-coding, descriptive coding and code categorization was addressed to establish the themes to be analyzed.

CHAPTER 4 - FINDINGS

With a qualitative methodological approach, this research inquiry set out to explore NNES undergraduate and graduate international students' schooling experience at a mid-sized Canadian university, referred to as, the University to understand the complexities and contradictions in implementing internationalization through international student recruitment. My position is to understand and critically interrogate internationalization implementation realities by mapping out NNES international students' Canadian university schooling experience vis a vis the mutual understanding, revenue generating, and skills' migration rationales discursively produced. This research study offered an in-kind incentive only in the form of snacks and beverages at interviews and the focus group session. The fact that 32 international students wanted to meet considering the minimal compensation suggested they valued this opportunity to share their schooling experiences. The participant responses were transcribed verbatim. Their use of the English language was neither corrected nor altered so that a representative characterization of participants could be presented. This chapter begins with a Participant Profile of the 32 participants in the study. Following this section, emergent themes are detailed in relation to the three research questions investigated.

For the first research question of: *how do students perceive their in-class learning*, four dominant themes emerged. These were: Self-perception of English Language Communication Ability; Language as a Barrier to Canadian Employment; Nice, Friendly, Kind Professors; Faculty with International Experience Valued; and Class Structure. The second question of: *how do students describe their cross-cultural engagement*, four themes were revealed. These were: Interaction with Students from the Same Cultural Background; Interaction with Students from Other Cultural Backgrounds;

Interaction with 'Canadian', Local Students; and University Generated Social Engagement Opportunities. For the third question of: *how do students understand the purpose of cross-cultural interaction,* the one theme revealed was: Willingness to Discuss Global, Socio-economic and Political Affairs. Last, three unanticipated, but important additional themes emerged. These were: Concern about Canadian Employment; Interest for Choosing Canada as the Study Abroad Destination; and Interest for Choosing to Study at the University. Many of the dominant themes include subthemes which discuss either participant reported suggestions, preferences and dislikes, or other pertinent details.

Participant Profile

1. Alice – (Alice started the interview somewhat emotional. As we progressed, she shared how her personal and family struggles were weighing heavily on her. The first thirty minutes of the interview consisted of her expressing how difficult it was to be far away from family, especially when she knew there were family related problems at home. She was confused about the range of emotions she felt about her personal life and about her study abroad experience. Alice was a previous student of mine.)

Alice, 24, was an exchange student from Brazil in the industrial engineering program at the undergraduate level. She felt somewhat indifferent to be an exchange student. She did not feel there were any challenges or benefits to be an exchange student. Although Alice believed she had learned new skills, she could not definitively pinpoint them or relay how such skills would connect to her future employment prospects. Alice enjoyed the smaller classes that she had and felt it encouraged more contact between professors and students.

2. Darrel – (Darrel was determined to find someone to practice his English communication skills with. Darrel's question at the end of the interview was, "do you know where I can find a girlfriend?" Although he mentioned he was joking, he added that he would prefer a 'Canadian' girlfriend, so he could practice his English. Darrel was a previous student of mine.)

Darrel, 24 was an international student from China in the accounting and finance program at the graduate level who viewed his English language skill to be the most important skill he was developing.

3. Carlie – (Carlie was a sophisticated middle-aged woman who spoke with a strong sense of confidence. She spoke in a soft and somewhat sensuous tone; often chuckling after responding to a question. At times, this left me wondering why or what she was chuckling at. Carlie was a previous student of mine.)

Carlie, 30, was an international student from China in the human resources management program at the graduate level who felt excited to be an international student. She discussed that through the courses she took, she improved her study skills. Carlie explained:

> I learned some ways to learn here. I realized that studying by myself was very important. I need to prepare before the class, and go to class every week, and after that I need to follow up and practice for exam so I can get good grade. If you find the way how to learn you will be successful in every course.

4. Don – (Don was very talkative and is characterized as a real go-getter. Throughout his seven months on campus, he became the vice president of a student run AIDS awareness program, an executive member of the Indian Students Association, and an international student liaison for newly arrived international students.)

Don, 22, was an international student from India in the Engineering program at the graduate level who shared how proud he was to have the opportunity to serve as the vice president of the AIDS awareness program. He explained, "I joined the club because AIDS in India is a huge problem and it's a taboo; my parents never allowed me to talk about it."

5. Bob – (Bob struggled to communicate his experiences with his limited range of English vocabulary. I reworded almost each question. After his responses, I explained what I thought to have understood to ensure that indeed I was recapturing accurately what he shared. At times his answers were contradictory, and I wondered if the language barrier was posing a problem. But, whenever I summarized his response, he confidently replied "yes, yes" or corrected me. Despite this struggle, I could tell that Bob was very happy to be speaking to me by the smile he carried throughout the interview. Bob was a previous student of mine.)

Bob, 20, was an international student from China in the mechanical engineering program at the undergraduate level who despite struggling to express his ideas, observed an overall improvement in his English communication skills. Bob noted that he felt comfortable to talk to anyone in his classes. However, he preferred to ask professors questions during their office hours rather than in class. He emphasized he really liked the fact that he could sit anywhere and talk to anyone in class. However, he then suggested that for group projects, it would be better for professors to place students into groups instead of letting students choose because students only chose to go into groups with people they knew.

6. Catherine – (Catherine is soft spoken and appears to me to be somewhat timid. Because of her continual commitment to improving her English-speaking skills, Catherine expressed one of the reasons why she participated in this interview was in fact to create an opportunity to practice speaking. Although she admits it to be a difficult task, she is focused on finding ways to meet people to speak in English. Catherine was a previous student of mine.)

Catherine, 24, was an international student from China in the industrial engineering program at the graduate level who summed up her experience as an international student as though she were, "a stranger" navigating through unfamiliar systems.

7. Derek – (Derek was unsure whether he had made the right choice to study a master's degree in automotive engineering. After many of his responses, he followed with, "I don't know, maybe it'll get better". Derek was a previous student of mine.)

Derek, 24, was an international student from China in the automotive engineering program at the graduate level who was unsure whether to date and whether he has learned any new skills. He worried that he was "wasting time" in the program and would not be adequately prepared to meet the technical skill demands in a "real job." A stress compounding factor was that he did not want to talk to his family about his thoughts as it may "worry them" or lead to their "disappointment."

8. Dale – Dale had many questions about my own opinions on the interview questions. In fact, I jotted down each of his questions and after the semi-structured interview concluded, we spent an additional 45 minutes chatting. He was most

interested in why I was studying NNES international students' university schooling experience since I was never an international student. Dale was a previous student of mine.)

Dale, 23, was an international student from China in the electrical engineering program at the graduate level who eagerly spoke about his aspirations of completing his degree, finding a "high" paying job in Canada, buying a house and "maybe" getting married. It seemed that Dale had been dreaming of working as an engineer since he was in high school. Coming from a family of engineers, Dale could not imagine pursuing a different career.

9. Brian – (Brian was all around Mr. Confident. He spoke with passion and was slightly blunt in his responses. It seemed that Brian wanted me to know how well he was doing in school and that he was equipped to overcome challenges; except when it came to finding a girlfriend. Brian was a previous student of mine.)

Brian, 21, was an international student from China in the business program at the undergraduate level who felt he developed leadership and accounting related skills. He anticipated he would utilize these skills in future managerial positions. Brian noted his level of comfort to ask and respond to questions was determined by the subject matter.

10. Daren – (Darren described he had grown accustomed to the "Canadian way" of life. Grocery shopping was no longer an anxiety causing event. However, Darren did his best to buy and prepare traditional Chinese food because this was the one aspect of Canadian culture that he was not able to get used to. For Darren, Canadian food meant dishes such as, "pizza, fries, hamburger, hot dog, ham sandwich." Daren was a previous student of mine.)

Daren, 25, was an international student from China in the electrical engineering program at the graduate level. Although Daren indicated Canada as his country of choice to work in after graduation, he explained that in the long-run, "maybe, 10-15 years later", he would prefer to return to China. He believed that amassing extensive Canadian work experience would provide him with an "untouchable" advantage.

11. Drake – (Drake was very soft-spoken and was very curious about my opinion about China. He wanted to know what my perception was of the Chinese culture and Chinese students in general. Drake was a previous student of mine.)

Drake, 24, was an international student from China in the master of management program who planned to look for work in Toronto after graduation. Most of his friends had made the same move. He was excited to move as there would be a lot more "entertainment" options compared the current mid-sized city. However, he was slightly concerned about being able to afford to live in Toronto.

12. Brad – (Brad had a great sense of humour. Throughout the interview he often joked about his experience. Brad was eager to meet as many native English speakers as possible to practice his English communication skills.)

Brad, 24, was an international student from Saudi Arabia in the accounting program at the undergraduate level who perceived the benefits of being an international student as opportunity to be immersed within the culture and learn how "locals live." He noted his future aspiration was to be in a managerial role at a company in Saudi Arabia. Brad never considered staying in Canada for employment. Brad noted, "I'm not interested to work in Canada … I get benefits from Canada and bring back to my country."

13. Amber – (Amber was very bubbly and outgoing. She sat leaning forward and appeared very excited to share her experience. Throughout the interview, Amber laughed and smiled; even when she talked about the challenges she faced.)

Amber, 20, was an international student from Albania in the social work program at the undergraduate level who wanted to emphasize how difficult her first semester of schooling was because she felt, "completely isolated." Amber described how she tried but couldn't make friends, particularly with "Canadians." She remarked that after a few terms she developed friendships; but she highlighted, "not with Canadians". She elaborated upon the unbearable burden of international tuition and noted, "tuition for the program is approximately $10 000 per semester … not worth what I'm paying." Her perceived imbalance between the program cost and value caused her stress because she was worried about how her parents could continue to afford paying her tuition. Amber believed she learned English communication and interpersonal skills in her program which she believed were necessary qualities to be a social worker.

14. Dominic – (Dominic described himself as a world traveler. He lived in China, Italy, Germany, France, England and Japan. He was fluent in Chinese, English and Italian. His English pronunciation had traces of Italian influenced intonation patterns.)

Dominic, 24, was an exchange student from China in the mechanical engineering program at the graduate level who had an impressive international academic portfolio. Dominic's charisma coupled with his research and professional interests made me feel as though I were talking to someone who would likely be nominated for a global student

accomplishment type of award, 'Top 30 under 30' . I truly would not be surprised if he were to become the CEO of a multinational corporation soon.

15. Carry – (Carry was best described as a leader. She spoke of her experience with great enthusiasm and turned the challenges she faced into opportunities with the end goal to improve herself. She made it very clear throughout her responses that she took full ownership of her successes. Carry was a previous student of mine).

Carry, 25 was an international student from China in the human resources management program at the graduate level who was committed to gaining practical experience to apply theory learned. Carry noted, "I have a lot of theory in my mind, and sometimes there is a gap between theory and practice." Carry's long-term goal was to excel in her future career aspiration of being a human resources manager. She understood that a person in this role should be able to, "build relationships … motivate people to achieve high performance." However, she felt disadvantaged because she predicted that it would be difficult for her to build such relationships because of her poor English communication skills.

16. Bill – (Bill was vibrant, positive and had a strong personality. Bill was a previous student of mine.)

Bill, 19, was an international student from Palestine in the mechanical engineering program at the undergraduate level who valued meeting other people. Unlike most participants, he was able to build many friendships with international students from other countries, as well as, domestic students. Bill explained the skill area he felt he greatly improved was English communication skills, specifically his ability to explain ideas in detail. He viewed this skill to be very important and felt more confident to communicate.

Bill hoped to combine business with engineering in his future employment and therefore, reaffirmed the importance of effective English communication abilities.

17. Ben – (Ben had originally decided to study in Canada with the hopes of later immigrating to Canada. However, with his increased knowledge from friends who have graduated and continued to search for long-term employment related to their academic program, Ben decided that returning to his home country would be the best choice for him. Ben was a previous student of mine.)

Ben, 21, was an international student from Saudi Arabia in the business administration program at the undergraduate level who planned on returning to Saudi Arabia for employment to be close to family. Ben acknowledged: "It's not easy to find a job in Canada." Throughout his classroom experience, Ben valued group work the most because he was able to speak and work with people from different cultures.

18. Barry – (Barry was having the time of his life as an exchange student. He was not concerned about his academics. Barry talked about all the Canadian and American destinations he planned on visiting. He understood this exchange opportunity as an, "extended vacation." Barry was a previous student of mine.)

Barry, 22, was an exchange student from Brazil in civil engineering at the undergraduate level and viewed the study exchange as an opportunity to experience a new culture. Compared to international students, he felt he had less responsibilities. He explained, "I'm here for the experience, not for a degree, less academic pressure." Barry perceived one of the advantages for international students was that they had more time to develop friendships. He noted, "I have a lot friends, but not deep." When it came to

future employment, Barry was confident that Brazil was the location where he would like to be. As he put it, "best market, good pay and hot."

19. Bart – (Bart was absolutely enthused to be studying in Canada. He felt that he learned a lot about Canadian culture and other cultural groups. He enjoyed learning from his roommates who were from England, Australia and Nigeria. Bart noted that living with individuals from different countries was extremely valuable to him. Bart was a previous student of mine.)

Bart, 24, was an exchange student from Brazil studying environmental engineering at the undergraduate level. He felt he made the most of his experience and had a great time as an exchange student. Like Barry who emphasized how much "fun" he was having, Bart commented, "I didn't come for a degree, but for experience." Because of this, he devoted a lot of time to pursue leisure activities and worked to dedicate himself to doing "fun" activities.

20. Connie – (Connie was soft spoken, however very articulate in describing her experiences. She relied closely on her network of Chinese friends. She used their shared stories of studying and living in Canada to help her navigate through her own experiences.)

Connie, 25, was an international student from China in the master of education – international program at the graduate level who believed that although her prospects of finding employment related to educational administration in Canada were minimal, she still had a better chance of finding a more suitable job in Canada than in China. For this reason, she was dedicated to persevering though any challenge.

21. Clair – (Clair was one of the few students who had a clear aim of returning to China upon graduation. Clair explained, "I'm here to get the knowledge and come back to my home." She discussed there was nothing that would make her change her mind because she would never move away permanently from her family. Clair was a previous student of mine.)

Clair, 24, was an international student from China in the Master of Education program focusing on educational administration. Clair planned on using her newly learned knowledge to "improve the school system in China." She was passionate about educational leadership practices that supported new teaching methods. She felt that both the primary and secondary schooling system in China was "stuck in old traditional teaching styles" that were becoming increasingly disconnected with the analytical skills students need in "the real world and university, especially if going abroad."

22. Carol – (Carol was very outspoken despite her timid demeanor. As a newly married graduate student, Carol envisioned her future in Canada with the hope to raise a family. She spoke of her two cats as children. It was apparent that her goals were to complete her degree, find a job, and start a family. Carol wanted to be able to balance the responsibilities of parenthood with pursuing a career.)

Carol, 24, was an international student from China in the human resources program at the graduate level who felt that compared to China, where students were expected to remember information rather than discuss or share their ideas, she was developing her thinking and argumentation skills. She believed these skills contributed to enhanced problem-solving skills which were crucial when adapting to a new cultural environment.

23. Daniel – (Daniel identified himself as being "antisocial." He was not sure why he felt this way, but he knew that he had been like this for his entire life. He shared he did not have difficulty making friends, but he was not able to maintain friendships because he often became "bored" with them.)

Daniel, 24, was an international student from India in the electrical and computer engineering program at the graduate level who appeared to feel indifferent about most questions asked throughout the interview. Daniel demonstrated to be highly proficient in his overall English language conversational skills and attributed his limited interaction with all types of students to his own character traits. However, he did acknowledge that this may disadvantage him in establishing professional networks. Daniel planned to work and live in Canada permanently after graduation and explained that he was aware of the challenges in finding "meaningful" employment for international students; so, networking was a priority for him.

24. Dylan – (Dylan was the most vibrant, energetic student interviewed. His charismatic nature and passion for his academic program was evident throughout the interview. The reason he decided to participate in this interview was because he saw it as an opportunity to voice his involvement in the 'fight the fees' for international students' initiative. He exclaimed, "I cannot sit back, international students pay three to four times more than domestic students and our experiences is the same or less." At the end of the interview, Dylan gave me a 'fight the fees' badge.)

Dylan, 23, was an international student from Mexico in medical biotechnology at the graduate level. He felt "very good" about being the only Mexican student in the program

because this forced him to communicate in English only with classmates. Dylan felt a sense of responsibility to represent his country positively by achieving high academic standards and by "being on time to break the stereotype that Mexicans are always late."

25. Dean – (Dean was very outgoing and enthusiastic about completing his graduate degree at the University. His next step upon graduation would be to move to the United States to pursue a PhD. He lived with his girlfriend and noted that she was his main source of emotional support as she had already completed her graduate degree.)

Dean, 27, was an international student from China in the Master of Education program at the graduate level. Dean first started in the international cohort program but did not feel that he was benefitting from the course for a few reason including the fact that all his classmates were also Chinese. After investigating the "value" of the Master of Education International cohort degree, he found that he would not qualify to apply to a doctoral program. It was at this point that he decided to transfer into the thesis bound option. He did not regret this decision one bit and valued the close working experience he had with domestic students and the education faculty.

26. Dexter – (Dexter stood at almost seven feet. His towering presences, deep and loud voice was somewhat intimidating. He seemed frustrated with his overall schooling experience and perceived this interview as a chance to air his concerns. Dexter's interview can be summed in his own words: "I'm here to get knowledge, not just to fulfil the country's economy, it is very clear we're just paying for the economy.")

Dexter, 25, was an international student from India in the mechanical engineering program at the graduate level whose first statement was, "there's an inequality of fees". We pay three to four times more than domestic students." He also firmly believed there should be less of a communication gap between international and domestic students.

27. Christine – (Christine was very shy, soft spoken, and struggled to both understand and answer questions. She often asked, "is my answer related to your question?" When I asked for clarification of words or ideas, I couched it with encouragement.)

Christine, 26, was an international student from China in the education program at the graduate level who felt "a little nervous" as an international student. She felt that she never felt confident in any situation, whether in the classroom. She was worried that she would never truly gain an understanding of Canadian academic and social cultural expectations or practices.

28. Dennis – (Dennis was an established professional in Mexico. He left his government position to purse his doctorate degree at the University. He talked about working with national and international leading researchers, developing grants and was most passionate about the undiscovered potentials related to unleashing groundbreaking technology to enhance environmental sustainability.)

Dennis, 42, was an international student from Mexico in the environmental science program at the doctoral level. He has been studying in Canada for 9 years and was a seasoned international student. He reflected upon the changes he underwent throughout these years and acknowledged that the confidence he now possesses was not so when he had first started his academic studies. Dennis anticipated his future employment will be

grounded in a few countries, including: Mexico, Canada, Germany, Singapore and possibly, the United States.

29. Duke – (Duke was always on the search to find ways to become involved on campus and beyond and this was the main reason he decided to take part in this interview. He regularly participated in University generated workshops about different topics. Duke viewed participating in workshops as a way to diversify his resume.)

Duke, 21, is an international student from India in the automotive engineering at the graduate level. Duke believed he has learned the most from course projects that required the use of practical skills, such as teamwork. He perceived to have developed better problem solving, English language communication and team working skills.

30. Amanda – (Amanda was best described as a survivor. She had been sponsored by a Canadian family since she was 14 years old. For ten years, she traveled to Canada each year and stayed with her sponsor family. Amanda embraced challenges because to her, there was no challenge like living in a communist country where she would not have had the opportunity to pursue education.)

Amanda, 27, was an international student from Belarus in the nursing program at the undergraduate level who was sincerely and simply thankful to have the opportunity to be studying in Canada. Aside from the technical and theoretical skills and knowledge of nursing that she learned, Amanda believed the greatest skill she learned was to be "open minded" something she noted was very different from her "communist based family."

She further explained: "I don't have to believe people's belief, but I respect them – respect clients in nursing, how to get along with 4 generations of nurses" was crucial.

31. Bruce – (Bruce was very articulate and from the beginning of the interview wanted to talk about his negative co-op application experience. Bruce felt that international students are at a disadvantage when it comes to landing employment related to their field of study. Bruce was previous student of mine.)

Bruce, 27, was an international student from Bangladesh in the business accounting program at the undergraduate level and was gravely concerned about future job prospects. Bruce described his professors as being "good, really helpful", and noted that "a few looked out for me." He admitted he was "not sure about current professor's teaching experience", but felt they were "all competent … every prof brings something new."

32. Danny – (Danny was older than most of the students interviewed. He has 17 years of education related work experience in China. Danny's goal was to return to China and open an international high school offering all academic subjects. He perceived that his experience of living in Canada would inform how to structure his school.)

Danny, 43, is an international student from China in the education administration program at the graduate level. Danny believed that the main skill he was learning was how to communicate with people from different countries. Considering his aspiration to develop an international school, he viewed effective communication skills as the means to achieving professional success. He also felt that he significantly developed his team working and researching skills.

Emergent Themes

How Do Students Perceive Their In-class Learning Experience?

Self-perception of English Communication Ability

Consistent with Guo and Guo's (2017) findings that international students reported English language skills as a major communication obstacle, participants in this study also revealed they believed they had low English level communication ability and that they were often uncomfortable to communicate in English in class. In some cases, their perceptions derived from how they felt about using the language, and in other cases from observing the way in which others – native and other or non-native English speakers – responded to their attempt to communicate in English.

Carlie described the time when she needed to go to talk to a professor during office hour to discuss a grade she received. Carlie noted that the experience was "the first time I feel my English was so good." She set the scene:

> A lot of people grade is C … so a lot of people came to his office and surround and argue about their grades. I stood there for half an hour, silent. And then, courage comes and I come talk to him. They [classmates], say it's the first time I have effective communication with my professor, and one of my [male] classmates said to me – Carlie, you are so sexy when you speak English (laughs out loud). It's true. From then, I will talk … and ask for help.

Carlie's experience shows that international students, may experience a deep sense of nervousness in the face of institutional power embodied by the professor-student relationship. It takes courage, as Carlie's example shows, to overcome this power imbalance. And, unfortunately Carlie's colleague's comment about being 'sexy' when she speaks English, reminds us that patriarchal relations and sexist attitudes are practiced across cultural contexts.

Amber described that in class, she was "comfortable asking questions, but not answering questions." Amber mentioned that she became "really nervous" and was "afraid my English is not that good" even though, as far as she could remember, none of her professors had ever commented on her English language skills. As shown in this case, NNES international students "recognition of themselves as inferior students begins in lectures" (Kim, 2012, p. 461). They develop a sense of deficiency resulting from their self-perceptions in comparison to domestic classmates, and possibly to faculty. Amber "didn't want anyone to talk about her behind her back" about mistakes made; as she had witnessed students doing to her Nigerian friend. Amber retold how she had noticed smug grins and quiet laughter when her Nigerian friend answered questions. She recalled:

> When my friend would talk, I could see the face of other students, especially white students – I think they're Canadian, but I don't know for sure. Anyway, I know that they're laughing at her; you know, you can see them whispering, or they roll their eyes and I don't know why, because her answer is always almost right. Maybe they're jealous? I don't understand why these people have to do that.

The most interesting fact in this instance is that English is indeed, Nigeria's official language and is listed as one of the countries for which the University's applicants may be exempted from demonstrating English language proficiency ("University Senate Policy", 2015). Anderson (2015) states: "Dialectical hierarchies that favour standardized forms of English over non-standard varieties may also serve as barriers for some foreign students who speak English as a first language but do not speak the dialect of preference in their university setting" (p. 178). Alternatively, the domestic students' response may also have been motivated by the salient tension race plays in cross-cultural exchange. Race is a value laden, socially constructed concept situated in relations of power functioning to maintain structures of social, political and economic inequities which is often neutralized in institutional internationalization (Guo & Guo, 2017; Ladson-Billings,

1998; 2005). Race and everyday racialized meanings play a key role in everyday human interaction, shaping the lived realities of racialized international students (Milner, 2007). While policies to build respectful interracial and intercultural learning communities may exist, there rests an ethical responsibility for administrators to examine and re-examine if and how institutional internationalization efforts tend to overlook the racial hierarchies it reproduces.

Ben, who was from Saudi Arabia, explained he was "uncomfortable" to communicate with professors because his "language barrier" impacted communication. Although he did not recall having a specific negative encounter with any professor, he felt a general sense of uneasiness and that an uncomfortable distance existed between him and faculty. Ben suggested professors "could talk more to different international students to learn how [we] pronounce words instead of asking 'can you repeat' so many times." Ben's picking up on the "uneasiness" taps into a larger conviction among some Canadian faculty who are utterly frustrated with the English language deficit of NNES international students. NNES international students' English language proficiency has been at the core of a highly charged claim that the challenges of their overall underperformance is greater than any imaginable benefits (Friesen & Keeney, 2013):

> There is no sugar-coated way to say this: many of those who are welcomed at our universities are simply unprepared for the rigours of the university classroom … Instead of engaging students in disentangling the nuances and subtleties of a particularly important passage from the assigned readings, one begins speaking to the class as one might speak to academically challenged teenagers … Qualified students can hardly be blamed if they slouch in their seats and study their shoelaces, as the professor iterates, yet again, something they learned in grade school … Given our experience, we believe that Canadian universities need to rethink their enthusiasm for non-English-speaking students. (n.p)

While at times it is difficult to delineate acts perceived as unfair treatment or cultural intolerance, "subtle communications that negate or invalidated the targets thoughts,

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feelings or experiential reality" (Houshmand et al., 2014, p. 378) is counterproductive to cultivating an effective learning environment. Such encounter suggests to Ben that he has no place in sharing his ideas if he does not articulate them in the manner which the receiver expects. Limited and or awkward everyday student-faculty academic interactions reduce the quality and quantity of academic capital made available to international students (Kim, 2012). For Ben, this means that his sense of being "uncomfortable" may persist because there is no direct approach he may take to address his concern without being fearful it may have negative implications.

Christine discussed the role her English communication skills played in how or when she communicated with professors. Existing research reveals that English proficiency is a vital factor for NNES international students' academic success in English-medium universities (Li et al., 2010; Martirosyan et al., 2015). Christine reported, "if I have some questions, problems I can ask professors' direction, but sometimes if I met somethings I don't, I can't ask directly because it's a little shame about me because I think everyone knows this question." Christine's sense of shame and lack of confidence to use English disadvantages her whereby answers to questions which may advance her understanding will not be addressed. Many NNES international students speak "English as a second, third or even fourth language" (Martirosyan, 2015, p. 67). In terms of the English language as an embodied form of cultural capital, the dominant host society discounts international students' existing cultural capital attained through their multilingualism. Thus, institutions reinforce the English language as the only status-marker of cultural capital (Martirosyan, 2015); which then serves as a prerequisite to academic success.

Darrel echoed his perception of having limited English language capacity and added:

> Actually, I never ask questions and answer questions because if I don't understand what the professor is talking it must be because of my language … and when the professor asks some questions I don't want to answer it because actually this is our Chinese culture.

Darrel automatically assigned his English language proficiency as the main culprit for his lack of understanding and absolves persons of authority from potentially playing a role in the communication gap. Darrel's comment, "I don't want to answer it because actually this is our Chinese culture" further compounds the complex NNES international student-professor classroom interaction by their overlaying prior experience of a culture specific classroom style onto the current context. According to Darrel, there is no denying there exists pedagogical differences between the Canadian Chinese schooling system; whereby, both contexts are shaped by their respective political ideologies. Darrel's reported Chinese classroom culture of not raising questions directly impacts his Canadian university classroom experience. In this case, Darrel's practice of accepting – without questioning – a condition that does not address his learning needs, prohibits his in class struggles from being addressed and contributes to the construction of the hegemony of Canadian classroom culture.

Dean also referred to his English communication barrier as a factor resulting in his limited classroom interaction. Among all the comments surrounding the use of English communication skills relating to classroom interaction, probably the most illustrative response came from Dean who said, "because of language barrier, I sit silently and watch." Self-perceived weak English language ability tends to isolate international students from interacting with local students and faculty and indirectly impacts their

overall socio-cultural integration into the university system (McKenzie & Schweitzer, 2001 & Trice, 2007). Through this example, the English language no longer functions as a device for communicating rich ideas and experiences among students to build their global perspectives. Instead, it silences the voices of NNES international students and reaffirms the power of western culture as the catalyst to remove from conversation those who do not appear to fit within the dominant norm.

Participant 6 acknowledged: "Every international student has the same stage that is facing horror to speak English in public." In most cases, international students internalized their self-perceived English proficiency as the sources for such fear or discomfort. Thus, most participants positioned themselves as being principally responsible for reducing their sense of fear or discomfort to participate in class. Participant 2 acknowledged that making language mistakes was a part of learning English and that she should not feel embarrassed. However, she attributed her fear to a lack of courage. It is surely burdensome for NNES international students to come up against situations which discourage them from participating in class. It seems that it is palatable for her and other participants in this study to adopt the stance that because English is not their native language, they are inferior to domestic students. Participant 2 noted:

> Courage is an essential of overcome the fear to communicate more in class. Every students would make mistakes, especially international students. Students should believed that those mistakes facilitate them acquire more English knowledge because students will accumulate the mistakes and prevent do that again.

Participant 2's modest belief of needing to be courageous depreciates her demonstrated bravery to study abroad in the first place. International students see themselves as the ones who need to somehow change – be more courageous in their English language use – in order to feel more accepted. Courage is not a skill or attitude plucked out from thin air.

Rather, it is best derived from participation in occurrences that build confidence to execute an act; which in this case, is to communicate in English with faculty and peers. NNES international students look like they undergo in-class experiences contradictory to confidence building encounters as is anticipated in the mutual understanding rationale.

For example, Participant 8 noted:

> English learners should try their best to communicate with others because it is the only way to overcome the fear to communicate more in class. Most of English learner are afraid of being refused by others. Part of them are shame to talk with others because they think their English is poor.

NNES international students' feelings of exclusion from the dominant culture, coupled with beliefs that "their domestic White peers did not care about or want their presence on campus" (Houshmand et al., 2014, p. 381) drive international students to regularly seek to be involved with "one's own racial and cultural group" (p. 382).

Participant 5 said:

> If you want to improve your spoken English and feel shame to speak with native speakers, try to speak with your classmates from the same country can reduce you stress. Don't be afraid of ask questions to the professor because of you don't ask him/her, you will never know which part you wrong or right.

As another example, Participant 3 advised:

> Try to practice more is a good way to cover the fear of talk with others in the class. Like every skill, only practice more can develop the English skill. If students don't worry about communicate with others, they will be good at English.

Unfortunately international students do have to worry about how they are perceived. This worry is indeed a significant contributing factor to whether international students take the leap of faith to communicate in class. Perceived difficulties in communicating in English is understood as the leading contributor to the extent to which international students are accepted by local students (Guo & Guo, 2017). For many participants, overcoming their

fear to communicate in English required increased opportunity to use English frequently

either in a group or in a one-on-one format. Participant 4 further added:

> There are many ways to help an English learner overcome the fear to
> communicate more in class. The first is group work. In the group work, every
> member have to talk about his viewpoints, in this process, the learner can learn
> many new words and practice their communicate skills. Especially in the two
> people group, they have no choice but to speak with other, nobody can keep
> silent. The other way is to have many times presentation.

The unstated but alluded to commonality underlying participants' views about enhancing

their English communication skills is having access to established contexts; whereby they

feel safe from being embarrassed, and that require interaction between NNES

international and domestic students. Houshmand et al. (2014) found that international

students of Asian backgrounds have reported experiencing "covert forms of inhospitality,

cultural intolerance, and unfairness" (p. 377) when communicating with their domestic

counterpart or even faculty. Although the subtle acts of intolerance can be challenging to

articulate, they can be perceived to be connected to NNES international students' English

language use. This remains to be a major obstacle in establishing cross-cultural

engagement (Aune et al. 2001; Scott et al. 2015); especially as they compare themselves

to native English speakers (Kim, 2012). The gap between NNES international students'

desired and actual in-class participation signals that the English language serves as barrier

to amassing social capital.

While Participant 12 did not appeal to needing more courage, he identified a more

concrete area that he perceived to be lacking in. Participant 12 pointed out the important

role vocabulary played in his overall English communication ability:

> There are three kinds of ways to improve the language for international students.
> Vocabulary is the most essential one. Using sufficient vocabulary can improve
> students' capacity. Enlarging the vocabularies not only can reduce communication

barrier but also can learn easily. Besides, don't be shy in the class. Asking any questions, you have, it help you to make up for shortcomings in the study. The last but not least is practice. It is hard for students can improve their communication and learning skills without the practice.

As a former student of mine in a pre-academic English program, I immediately

recognized his response. It was the same advice I had provided him with to improve his

English proficiency to advance from one program level to another. In the English pre-

academic program, much consideration is given to the in class learning environment so

that it is conducive to English language skills' development. Students are encouraged to

test out their newly learned vocabulary, ask as many questions as needed to solidify their

understanding, and use English to create, exchange and challenge ideas. Clearly,

Participant 12 believed the same approach could be applied to his in class, academic

learning context. However, unless course curricula create focused opportunities dedicated

to developing English skills, it may be difficult for international students to carve out

class time to engage in English. Participant 12's point of: "it is hard for students can [to]

improve their communication … without practice" is particularly noteworthy.

Opportunities to "practice" English cannot be left to a serendipitous fate like outcome.

From my own teaching experience, I see it as requiring two key elements. The first

element is deliberative curriculum and lesson planning that permit students to showcase

their viewpoints. The second element is, purposefully cultivating a frame of mind open to

appreciating that which is shared.

Language as a Barrier to Canadian Employment

The same English communication challenges international students face in

academics follow them in the labour market; whereby language proficiency directly

relates to employability (Scott et al., 2015). Participants repeatedly commented on their

perceived relationship between their English communication ability and the prospect of obtaining Canadian employment. The struggle for international students to obtain employment appears to be real in both on and off-campus contexts. This struggle is compounded because international students must not only compete with other international students, but also with domestic students (Calder et al., 2016). Many participants, like Christine, recognized that they lacked a strong command of the language; which was a necessity to obtain a job within their field of study in Canada. For example, Christine viewed her language skills as a shortcoming in the competitive nature of the Canadian labour market:

> Sometimes I can't use fluent English. I need to compete with other international and domestic students … need strong communication skills, I don't have this yet. If I would like to work in Canada I will need to use these skills. There is difference in communication, common sense … culture barrier.

Christine's opinion speaks to the capital value simultaneously extracted from and placed upon the English language. Christine understands that English to be a rigid condition to employment. She internalizes her perceived English communication shortfall as a normalized quality of her international student identity. This permits the dominant shared beliefs which define and ascribe cultural capital to the English language to go unchecked while reproducing inequitable international student access to Canadian employment.

Dennis echoed the same concerns as Christine and plainly stated, "writing in English is the most required skill. If you don't have this skill, you're screwed." Xu's (2008) cross-cultural study of international students studying in different countries including Canada, reported English academic writing as one of the main difficulties for students. However, it is also true that a vast number of international students who have high English reading and writing proficiencies gravely struggle in listening and speaking

skills due to limited previous practice (Martirosyan et al., 2015). Curriculum catering to an international audience should consider infusing additional teaching support, such as mentoring, to enhance students' overall English language output.

Carry explained that she had the opportunity to review more than 100 job descriptions in a volunteer position. She described the volunteer experience as being positive and a chance to learn new technical skills found in software programs such as Excel. However, through this review it became evident to her that, "high level of communication" was a requirement for many of the positions. She further reflected, "what I learned is not enough if I want to work in Canada. Language is still most important barrier for international students to find a job in Canada." She felt her "limited language" ability prevented collegial communication with the staff. Carry described her experience with the staff as:

> Friendly, but difficult to involve with them. Sometimes I feel confused and a little bit upset because I think English is the main cause even though they don't say it, but you can feel it. I want to live here, not just be a guest here.

Lee & Rice (2007) report that indirect or unintended forms of racial discrimination is present for international students, especially when they fail to demonstrate the workplace norms of the dominant culture. Wall et al., (2017) discuss that examples of such norms comprise of "how people should relate to one another and therefore provides a framework to understand how some groups can exert power over other groups in ways which can exclude … other groups from certain activities" (p. 144). Carry's experience signifies the English language as a form of discourse that sets "up a distinct ideological mechanism affecting the ideas that people hold, the way they think about the world, the way in which they categorize what they find around themselves" (Connors, 20120, p. 7)

and functions as the gatekeeper to access cultural capital and social status among domestic peers. In this case, the powerfully ideologizing subtext is that the exclusion of NNES speakers is enacted through unspoken and subtle ways.

In frustration, Carlie asked, "can we find a job? I don't know. My major is HR, so language must be very good, if you are not good enough … you know, we are international student we can't speak so frequently like the native." Language communication obstacles play a heavy role in fostering international students' confidence level to perform well in interviews (Scott et al., 2015). When employers compare international and domestic students and use English language proficiency as the determining factor of employment suitability, international students are disadvantaged; and will continue to struggle to secure ideal employment.

Connie commented that, "an international student is officially, totally different from native students … no one wants to hire a person who is speaking language as their second language. If you speak a standard [as opposed to fluent] English, it is very difficult to get any job". What was particularly interesting for me to observe as an educator teaching English for academic purpose courses was that almost all 32 participants perceived themselves to have an overall low English proficiency level. Although I did not assess their general English speaking, reading, writing or listening skills, I would argue that most of the participants demonstrated adequate English verbal proficiency; sufficient to hold an extensive conversation. By no means do I suggest their language use was free of syntactical, lexical or pronunciation errors. However, they were able to understand and respond effectively to the interview questions. The idea of using "perfect" English is virtually an impossible feat for NNES international student and

"captures the sense of higher education as a force that mediates, and at the same time reproduces, fundamental principles of social classification" (Naidoo, 20014, p. 458). Holding NNES international students to a constructed standard of a nearly perfect English proficiency level discounts a vital component of their identity as international students.

Nice, Friendly and Kind Professors

Warm and friendly greetings from professors go a long way for many international students. The Korean students in Kim's (2014) study often "place[ed] most weight on the professor's personality" (p. 463). In this study, the reoccurring words participants used to describe their professors were: nice, friendly and kind. Their perceptions of overall friendliness were based on the verbal and non-verbal communication styles their professors exhibited in the classroom. A gesture which made students comfortable was the extent to which professors smiled. Alice commented "they are all very nice. Some smile a lot. They are friendly and warm people. Smiling is good. It shows openness attitude." In addition, Carry observed that most of her professors have a "happy face." She explained:

> They usually smile when teach about anything. Even when students make mistake they correct with a smile. I think because in Human resource you have to show you can handle many situations which a smile. I think they want us to see it, not just talk about customer service.

On the contrary, Clair recounted that one of her professor's lack of smile made her feel uneasy and unwelcomed in one of her graduate education courses. Clair disclosed, "I don't know why he never smile. Every class he looks [Clair makes a grumpy face]. I think maybe he is too old now and doesn't want to teach anymore." A smile crosses all cultural boundaries and is the global symbol that induces emotional warmth. While this

research study did not attempt to pursue further understanding of the implications of professors' smiles to participants' perceptions of teaching quality or their own learning outcomes, what was revealed is that perhaps a genuine smile from professors may function as a key beginning step in creating positive dialogue with international students.

Carlie described her professors as "nice … if you ask questions, they will answer you with patience." She continued:

> At the beginning I was always scared to talk to the professor. I worry very much they won't understand me and think I am stupid. Step-by-step, I see they are good people, they want to help me and they spend time to know my meaning.

Dylan also appreciated the time his professors took to answer his question: "I like my professors very much. I can ask question any time. I like to talk so sometimes I think I drive them crazy, but they don't mind, I think. They make me feel comfortable."

Moreover, Catherine stated:

> Sometime I don't understand vocabulary in article. I feel frustrate and I ask my professor for help. Because of me, he start give our all class key words' meaning for each article. This help us to learn and understand article. I feel he really want us to success.

In turn, displaying patience may be an important factor in building trust and an enhanced learning environment.

Interestingly, other participants related kindness with how knowledgeable they believed their professors were. For example, Amanda stated: "They are kind. I like to listen to their knowledge, experience, everything. They have a lot of information that I'm eager to learn about. The professors I had are doing a great job, in my opinion." In the same vein, Carry noted: "All, mostly nice and friendly. I think only one teacher usually in bad mood. But he knows his stuff, it's OK." It seems quite fitting that in an era when neoliberal ideology is driving higher educational shifts from knowledge as a public good

to a form of marketable capital (Viczko & Tascon, 2016), a simple desirable human virtue (Eeck, 1982;) such as kindness, is blurred with the degree of knowledge one demonstrates. In addition, Daniel described: "Professor are top notch. Speak clearly, know a lot of good, useful information. I understand them and they understand me." Lastly, Alice described her classroom interaction with professors as being "very friendly, open and they have many ideas about the future of engineering industries. This is helpful for me when I go back to Brazil." Drawing information from knowledge producing, industrialized countries to be applied to emergent countries drive the "international knowledge system" (Altbach, 1989, p. 126) and places many nations, especially developing countries, on the periphery (Waters, 2012). Thus, institutionalized education hegemony circulates through attaining an international education.

Faculty with International Experience Valued

While almost all participants did not know whether their professors had international teaching experience, a reoccurring theme was that participants believed they benefitted more from faculty with international teaching or work experience. Considering this perspective, I suggest that faculty international experience is more important than the number of international students in class to produce more internationalized class cultures and curriculum. It was perceived that when faculty integrated their own culturally rich, diverse teaching or working backgrounds in class, participants were better able to understand information and participate in class. Participants appreciated when professors connected content to a familiar aspect of participants' home countries. The participant excerpts show interesting points about their in-class learning when global examples were included in the curriculum. For example, Derek noted:

I feel good, good connection with one prof who work in China for some years. Even though he not Chinese, I feel he know me. What's more, he use a lot of examples that I know knowledge about. So, it's so easy to understand.

Brian also acknowledged he was more interested in classes that included international examples by looking "at differences between Eastern and Western business practices", because he could relate to the scenarios and in turn, better understood content. Amanda noted that her Global Health Issues class incorporated many international examples, some of which she could relate to. As an international student, she explained:

Sometimes you can relate to certain issues like global health in developing countries. Sometimes I share my perspective based on my experience because [textbook] publishers are biased which bothers me to be honest, but what can you do? So, I provide different perspectives [as] person who lived there.

In addition, Christine witnessed, "some examples from other countries used in class and Canadian and Chinese share experiences, it seems very interesting when Canadian listen to my story." In addition to contextualizing information to increase student comprehension, what is perhaps taking place here is demonstrated openness and the valuing of other cultures (Gopal, 2011). These attitudes are key elements to developing intercultural competence (Deardorff, 2009).

On the other hand, Bruce observed that "most of the examples used in classes were from the Canadian context and suggested that professors "use example from different, other cultures … encourage students to talk." Ben also noted that most content and examples were North American based, which at times was difficult to relate with. Similarly, Brad shared that in one of his business classes most of the examples and surrounding discussion were of Canadian companies. He appreciated becoming familiar with such companies, but at the same time he had difficulty connecting the examples to the content taught. These participant observations are in line with what a Chinese student

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in Guo and Guo's study noted: "I don't see there are many materials on my international experience. They [instructors] seldom talk about things happening in China" (p. 859). Limited internationalization of the curriculum does not seem to support the University's position on ensuring an exceptional international experience (Our Student Experience is International, n.d.). The gap between curriculum internationalization policy and reality is also observed in Guo and Guo (2017) findings. They noted: "At the policy level, the university emphasized the internationalization of the curriculum … in practice, however, international students reported that they felt there were few teaching and learning resources that were related to their experiences (p. 859).

Brad was the only participant who reported taking initiative to discuss the concern of lack of international examples. Brad stated, "I explained this to the professor and he added more international examples. He went further and provided access for us to subscribe to a newsletter that sends information on international companies." Without interviewing this faculty member, it is impossible to say the reasons for which information about international companies were omitted originally. However, what can be said is that teaching international students requires faculty to interrogate their own cultural self-awareness and the forgotten ethnocentric views which they carry into their teaching (Gopal, 2011).

Suggested importance of faculty cultural awareness. For most international students, two overall dominant reasons were expressed indicating the importance of faculty cultural awareness. The first reason centered on the idea that this methodology would assist faculty in using effective teaching; in turn, advance international students' academic capital. The participants strongly believed that faculty with international

teaching experience, would better understand NNES international student needs, communication challenges, and cultural differences or barriers that prevented cross-cultural classroom interaction between them and domestic students.

Alice explained it was important for professors to have international teaching experience because "there are so many groups of students in Canada" and through their international teaching experience, professors would better understand "how it works in another country and use that experience to connect to information as examples." Guo and Guo (2017) concluded that at their selected Canadian university site of study, internationalization was "dominated by the global advantage of English and Anglo-Canadian culture" (p. 861). The importance in understanding the ways in which teaching unfolds is a neglected aspect of internationalized educational in need of review.

Amber explained it was significant for professors to have an international teaching background because, "if they've been somewhere, he'll experience other cultures … better to understand students from other countries." Although Bill described he was comfortable to ask his professors questions and discuss ideas with them, he still believed it was important for professors to have international teaching experience and said, "they would know how to deal with other students beside Canadians", and share their knowledge about possible future work destinations. In addition, Christine affirmed the importance for professors to have international teaching by noting, "teacher have more perspective to share knowledge differently ... better way to eliminate barrier between Canadian and Chinese students."

Moreover, Ben believed professors with international teaching experience would better "understand students' accent, and how they think." Brad noted, "wouldn't hurt" for

professors to have international teaching experience because it would provide them with "more interaction with different culture", and potentially lead to a "better general understanding" of students. Danny reinforced the participants' comments by saying, "of course, profs must know how to teach students of different backgrounds … [teaching] will be better especially when teaching international students. It would be easier for profs to understand students, know their weaknesses." Critically interpreting participants' overwhelming desire to change some aspects of observed faculty teaching approaches that the current teaching methodological scope needs to be broadened to fit the needs of an increasing international student classroom audience. To take as examples, participants' comments that professors need to "better understand", "know how to deal with [international] students", indicate a cultural imbalance in teaching pedagogy whereby Anglo-Western culture and English language universities "exercise a special power expressed through cultural colonization" (Marginson, 2006, p. 25); resulting in the "displacement of other languages and the intellectual traditions they support" (p. 25).

Amanda stated, "it would be great for professors to give synonyms for exam purposes." Despite this request, she described the interaction with her professors as being, "very good" and having received, "accommodating support." She reported, "ample opportunity to ask questions during break and office hour." Amanda explained it is important for professors to have international teaching experience because it "increases student trust." By building trust, students would be more likely to "open up to teachers." She felt that teachers who "were not culturally sensitive push students away" and this "stresses students." Furthermore, Danny noted, "it would be better" for professors to have international teaching experience so they may "better understand students, their

weaknesses and learning barriers." Bart affirmed, "yes, with this [international]

experience they'll know [student] needs, professor needs to know the class better, not just

enter room, give class, go home. [They need to know] how to manage differences

[learning needs] (e.g., Chinese vs. Brazilians). [And not only have] class geared to

Canadian students." Dennis further explained:

> It makes a world of difference. Professors who don't have international
> experience they have a tendency to complain about what other countries are doing
> … not the same to read text, compared to living or teaching in a country to
> understand. Read it vs. live it.

This example references international students' feeling that "professors needed to be

more culturally sensitive and more aware of what they were saying" (Myles & Cheng,

2003, p. 252). An important aspect of teaching in a cross-cultural environment is the skill

of being "open to other cultures by suspending their own judgements" (Gopal, 2011, p.

375). Equally important to suspending personal judgements, taking time to learn about

the rich backgrounds international students embody is reported to be a valuable method

to establishing positive student-professor rapport. Participant 12 suggested:

> Having international teaching experience, knowing more about the culture to
> understand international students from other countries are the most essential and
> effective way to develop a positive relationship with international students.
> International teaching experience are important for teachers to know how to deal
> with other students beside Canadians. Knowing more about customs and cultures
> for different country are regard as a useful tool to eliminate barriers between
> professors and non-local students.

Participant 2 remarked, "an active communication is helpful for professors to develop a

positive relationship with their students." Participant 7 added:

> Comprehending students from other countries and understand students' accent
> and thinking can help professors create an active relationship with their pupils. If
> teachers have the experience of international teaching, they will comprehend their

students and prevent sensitive cultural problem, then create a great relationship between students and teachers.

The issues that arise for NNES international students studying in an unfamiliar cultural context range from general culture shock, to English language communication difficulties, to not knowing academic expectations. Unfamiliar classroom norms prevent meaningful interaction among peers. Lack of support to develop the cultural and social skills relevant to the institutional contexts (Edgerton & Roberts, 2014), denies international students access to build their cultural capital.

Unlike most participants, Bob did not perceive it was important for professors to have international teaching experience and claimed, "each country have own teaching style." Yet, in the example he gave of a time when he felt the professor did not demonstrate cultural sensitivity, he described: "I felt uncomfortable and sad because the professor don't includ Hong Kong as a part of China." Bob explained, the professor asked "which country most economically advanced? All Chinese students answered China, but answer is Hong Kong, made me sad because Hong Kong belongs to China, but prof. apologize, but didn't change answer." This example unveils the complexities in balancing the versions of knowledge that international students bring based upon what they learned in their own country of origin and impacts the way in which they understand their national identity. A similar example can be drawn from Guo and Guo (2017) whereby "the current practice privileges Eurocentric perspectives as some international students did not see teaching materials that reflected their experiences" (p. 864). One South Korean student reported:

> One of the videos she [the instructor] showed last week is about Korean surgery … It said that Koreans want plastic surgery because they want to be Caucasian, they want to look like White people. It is not true … Because everyone wants to be pretty in Korea, not look like Caucasian. (p. 860)

Faculty cross-cultural awareness and sensitivity to students' country of original experience is a crucial part to curriculum internationalization. While the professor's suggestion that there exists a deep relationship between the commonsense notion of beauty and race is quite valid, this student had not considered the link between the perception of beauty, race and power reproduction. In this scenario, the professor could have assisted the student to interrogate socially constructed meanings of beauty. The professor's comment is an attempt to critically interpret the symbolic-maker of beauty. However, at the same time, she reproduces the belief that beauty indeed is whiteness and perhaps would require to understand "one's ethnocentric assumptions" (Gopal, 2011, p. 375). The student did not understand the basis for the statement because the professor did not attempt to explain beyond the blanket statement she made. Anderson (2015) asserts: "Pedagogically, an inclusive adaptive approach can lessen potential tensions and misunderstandings by encouraging greater reflexivity, understanding, and communication" (p. 178) between instructors and international students.

Another student from Iran shared her classmates' perceptions about what it is like to live in Iran (Guo & Guo, 2017). She retold:

> They are so afraid to come to Iran. They said, 'oh everyday people kill you or arrest you.' No, many people live there and many of them have very luxury life. We have poor people as well. In many aspects, they are even more progressive than here. (p. 860)

Some international students are forced to deal with different forms of microaggressions (Houshmand et al., 2014) that challenge their "understanding of themselves as being an international student" (Wall et al., 2017, p. 141).

At the root of participants' perceived importance to be taught by internationally experienced faculty was their desire to feel that their learning needs were being met. Participant 10 noted: "The teacher need to treat every student in diversity by using different methods." In the same way, Participant 11 specified:

> Professors must know how to teach students of different background. A large number of students choose to study abroad. Students who from different countries have diverse cultural backgrounds and native languages, therefore, professors should have to be prepared. First of all, professors should learn more about the needs of their students. Each of student has a unique personality and learning method therefore, students also have a variety of difficulties in their studies.

In addition, Participant 3 explained:

> Knowing about cultures and communicating with students have a positive influence for professors to develop relationship with their students. Being knowledgeable about diverse cultures of different countries is an advantage because students have their own learning style to study. It is important for professors not only to understand the cultures but also to communicate more with students. It is easy to know about the weakness of students when have a communication so that professors can help them to deal with the difficulties.

According to these views, participants interpreted that professors were responsible to learn about the international students in their classes, so that differentiated teaching strategies may be used to facilitate student learning. Cultivating a meaningful learning environment begins with the contact between students and professors. For international students, the difference between how faculty should engage with them and their actual experience with professors suggests that a gap in student-professor contact. Scott et al., (2015) recognizes that the importance of contact in developing a sense of belonging necessary to facilitate intercultural learning. Within this theme, international students were aware of and accepted the gap between their personal expectations and their interaction experiences with faculty as a normalized relationship.

For some international students, their encounters have resulted in feeling as though they were students with substandard knowledge and skills. Participant 5 shared his encounter with a professor in one of the first courses in his master's program whereby he perceived the professor to have diminished his prior knowledge. Participant 5 reported:

> I couldn't believe I was in a master's program where the professor would actually say "forget everything that you've learned, this is what you need to know now." Why and how should I forget what I learned?! This is the reason why I'm doing this [master's program], to-build-on-what-I-learned-before [said loudly, slowly, with arms in the air while shrugging head]

Faculty responses to international students may leave them feeling as though their "capabilities or contributions [are] unimportant" (Houshmand, et al., 2014, p. 382). This example illustrates the discretionary power which faculty hold to validate and reproduce certain types of knowledge over others. Wall et al., (2017) acknowledged that "international students can experience a position of relative disadvantage in relation to their status as a foreign student" (p. 149). These experiences are not unique to one-to-one encounters and can occur in group settings. Such brute situations can have a lasting impact on international students. Participant 4 described her experience in a business ethics class with "many Canadian students". She recalled:

> We had to tell what we think, why we think the company did not follow good ethics. I build my confidence in the semester. I think it was end of semester and I raise my hand to answer. The professor look at me so I give my answer. She said something like "Uh …I'm not sure I agree with you." So I ask why and I say my answer again, I try to paraphrase. She pause and just shake her head "no". I think I'm wrong – it's ok. Next, a Canadian student give his answer and I think it's same as mine. So I think she's going to say "no" again. I'm so surprised, she said "exactly!" I feel my heart go fast and I want to cry. Why my answer wrong?

Such a response to NNES international students is an added obstacle preventing them to adjust to the classroom discussion culture. With no room to tweak their own communication through trial and error, international students are "forced to accept the fact that they cannot express themselves as natives do" (Kim, 2012, p. 462). The authority that faculty embody in validating international students' academic capital sets the tone by which other students in the class come to assess them. In addition to struggling to communicate in class, international students' English proficiency can also gravely impact the way in which they are perceived by their professors and peers. Negative classroom experiences weigh heavily on their overall academic performance, motivation for future class participation and plays a central role in "their socio-cultural and psychological adjustment" (Martirosyan et al., 2015). Furthermore, in Guo and Guo's (2017) study, one international student from China reported:

> One of the instructors gave me a C on my paper. I never got that in my entire life. I don't think my writing is so bad … I emailed the instructor, 'as an international student, I came here to learn academic content as well as to learn English, you are the instructor, it is your responsibility to help me with English, but not to punish the student with a very low grade.' I went to see the director of student services. Although the director raised my mark to B, she told me my email message is unprofessional (p. 859)

In this case, "both students and teachers can achieve greater degrees of understanding and cooperation by being receptive to each other's' perspectives…while co-constructing what types of academic expectations are typically preferred" (Anderson, 2015, p. 178). If such consideration is not made, international students may experience a "deskilling" (Wall et al., 2017, p. 148) of the academic capital they have acquired. The feeling that international students must abandon the knowledge and skills obtained prior to studying abroad also emerged in Guo and Guo's (2017) study. One student from China reported,

"It is more like I need to adapt myself to fit into the program. I feel like there is less understanding education student from China" (p. 859). The "rejection of the personal resources" (Wall et al., 2017, p.148) that international students bring to their transnational study experience legitimizes their knowledge inferiority and reaffirms the dominant position higher education holds in validating what knowledge or experiences can be valued.

Class Structure

Participants described what they liked and wished could be changed about in-class university schooling experience. Their responses are organized around the two themes class structure preferences and dislike.

Preferences. Participants indicated they preferred in-class learning environments that encouraged them to be involved beyond reviewing textbook chapters. Participant 9 identified; "It's good when professor talk something that is not in book. I can read the book, I don't need PPT with chapter summary. If you give me summary, why I have to buy book?" Their class involvement took shape through different forms such as, whole class or small group discussions, case or journal article analysis, group work and presentations. Amanda explained how several of her nursing classes used case studies to examine nursing practices that required "ethical considerations." She described how this learning method further developed her "critical thinking skills." Amanda noted:

> When I worked on my first case study, I was so scared because I never did something like this. Actually, I didn't really understand what I really have to do at first. But then my professor explained the steps; first read, then answer questions. But what was little different was that we have to use other research, literature to support our answers and prove what why we think it. It was hard at first and it took a very, very, very long time. Slowly I got the hang of it and now I see that this helped my thinking and prepares me to respond to a situation instead of reacting.

It is understandable that international students who often face adversity in meeting other students to engage with, would appreciate classroom learning tasks that foster interaction the exchange of ideas. Li (2013) identified that the international students in his study reported that critical thinking and collaboration were skills they believed to have developed through in-class participation in their graduate courses. Particularly, case studies seem to be perceived as an effective teaching tool to help international students advance their understanding and application of concepts. For instance, Participant 3 also valued the use of case analysis and commented:

> He include case studies that we have to give our ideas about different ways to fix a problem. We have to use knowledge we learn to make recommendation. This is very good because it helps me develop my problem solving skills.

Participants felt strongly that they solidified their understanding of key, complex ideas through such activities which made them further value in-class learning experience.

Effective in-class peer-to-peer discussions help ease international students' stress of communicating by taking them out of the spotlight. For Amber, although she felt nervous to respond to professors directly, she enjoyed engaging in group discussions in her social work classes. Specifically, she viewed this as an opportunity to "test" her own ideas or seek clarification from her peers. Such communicative experiences can also help enhance international students' overall skill of presenting ideas.

Dislikes. Despite some of the reported positive approaches to learning, a stronger sense of participants' overall disappointment with in-class experience was present throughout the research investigation. Participant 1 remained positive with the hope that in-class learning would be enhanced and stated, "most classes are just 'OK'. Nothing special. May be it will get better." Other participants did not feel engaged in the learning. As an example, Participant 4 stated: "Class a little boring. I like professor very much but

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he don't excitement too much about what he talk about." Another student identified

minimal interaction with the professor and described feeling there was limited time to

discuss assigned readings. Participant 5 noted:

> We don't have time to talk about what we read. I have a lot of journal article to read and professor tell us to prepare to talk next class. But we only spend 20-30 minutes maximum. Participant 5: "We can participate in a different approach about how to learn."

Participant 12 mentioned, "sometimes I feel boring. Every class same thing, sit and

listen." Participant 6 explained:

> No point to go to boring classes. I sit in front so I can pay more attention. Watch PPT, take notes. I feel sleepy so I take coffee. I never drink coffee before I study in University. My parents worry about this (laughs).

Another student was disappointed with the fact that there was no internship, as had been

otherwise originally promoted in the program descriptions she had read prior to choosing

this study exchange. As an example, Alice revealed:

> I thought I was going to have a real internship. Now I'm just working with professor about his research. It's interesting but I don't feel I'm benefit. I ask this question because my friends from Brazil in similar situation – we all think the same thing. The professor told us we do work with professor now. Future students will have internship because department could not organize it in time for us. Oh great for next students [eye roll].

The disjuncture between an advertised international university experience and schooling

reality suggests an unsettled dilemma in keeping up with ensuring that which is marketed

is delivered.

The major concern for most participants was the lack of contact with Canadian

students in general; and especially in the study programs designed for international

students only. Many students appeared to be perplexed by the international cohort

arrangement in their program of study. Universities seem to implement international

cohort programs to mass recruit international students. This program structure is typically

designed for graduate level programs whereby international students complete a series of

courses arranged specifically for them (Li, 2013). Derek, a graduate student studying

automotive engineering was concerned and noted:

> I'm not in a real master class, I just feel I stay in a group. That group is just set-up
> for Chinese or the Indian students. They just come to learn something and they
> give money to University. I'm not feel I'm in the real academic courses.

International students studying in international cohort programs not only feel cheated, but

also that they are in some way substandard knowledge seekers compared with domestic

students. In this instance, it appears that internationalization moves in opposite direction

to the mutual understanding rationale and demonstrates that "implicit assumptions have

developed about internationalization, myths perhaps, which need to be exposed and

discussed" (Knight, 2011, p. 14). Chinese students' bewilderment around the

monocultural ethnic make-up of academic programs was not unique to Carry's

experience in the human resource management program. Carry, who was studying human

resources management was also confused by the single culture phenomenon of her class.

She described:

> It's so strange why we don't have foreigners in our class. We always talk about
> this phenomenon with each other. I don't know why. I come here to learn about
> another cultures, but I don't feel like I'm in Canada – only when I have to pay the
> money for something.

> Christine believed that she was disadvantaged by studying in an all Chinese

graduate education program. She felt that she was "locked in", with "no chance but to

continue" as she felt it would be too difficult to change programs and was uncertain how

it might affect her study visa. Christine shared:

> It is very annoying to study in this program because we are all Chinses. I don't
> feel free to practice my English. Chinese students don't want to use English in
> front of other Chinses because we think it's a type of show-off. It's not true, but
> that's how many Chinese think – it's our culture. When more students from

another countries in class, this will help us to communicate in English, because we have to, have no choice. But now I don't need to use English. I'm really angry about this.

A frankly put comment by a faculty who spoke of an international student targeted master's program acknowledged: "It's open, I'm not saying Canadians can't take it, but we're not expecting Canadians to take it" ("[The University's] master's Biotechnology Program Targets Foreign Students", 2011). Such a learning environment simply neither carries out the higher education internationalization aim of engaging students in activities that promote the understanding of cross-cultural perspectives (Larsen & Vincent-Lancrin, 2002); nor, meets the internationalization principle of providing the highest quality learning experiences ("Internationalization Statement of Principles for Canadian Educational Institutions", 2015).

International Tuition. International tuition was an essential topic which almost all participants addressed from the interview question, *do you have any additional experiences about studying at the University that you would like to share?* Table 10 indicates that 22 of the 32 participants depended on family solely to fund their international education and eight participants were funded by scholarships. Like Guo and Guo's (2017) study participant demographic, the participants in this study appeared to represent "two groups of elites in the source country; the socio-economic elite (self-funded) and the educated elite (funded by scholarship)" (p. 861). The prevailing perception of international students is that they are affluent (Waters, 2012). However, the reality is that international students are not "inherently wealthy because they are able to study abroad in the West" (Houshmand, et al., 2014, p. 382). In general, "most international students are self-supporting, paying university fees and their own living expenses" (Altbach, n.d., p. 2). Currency fluctuations in countries of origin is a

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dimension of overall study abroad affordability that is often overlooked. Calder, et al.

(2016) state: "Issues affecting all students, such as inflation or tuition increases, might be

compounded for international students by factors such as currency exchanges" (p. 100).

For example, Dominic pointed out:

> I think my academic tuition fee is a little bit expensive. I'm an international
> student and I'm from China. Per one Canadian dollar can exchange about 5.5
> RMB, and when the exchanging improve, my family have to pay more money for
> my academic.

Despite the financial advantage international students seem to have over their lower

economic-status counterparts in their home country – as they demonstrate by providing

proof of a minimum income of $10 000 as a part of the student visa application process

(CIC, 2012), – it is not uncommon for some students to fake their proof of income. One

student in Calder et al.'s (2016) study revealed the detailed process:

> When they give you the Visa they ask you do you have this much money,
> whatever it is, ten thousand dollars…Who in [participant's home country] has ten
> thousand dollars?...What do we do is…put money into an account from different
> people, provide the paper that says you have it, and then everybody takes it away
> so when you come here, you actually don't have the money. (p. 101)

Considering that international students may not have the necessary financial backing to

fund their international study, it becomes even more evident that unregulated differential

tuition is an unethical fee system for international students. The participants in this study

reported the financial toll that differential, international tuition places on them and their

families.

The rising tuition revenues derived from the influx of foreign students wishing to

study at Canadian universities have legitimized the skyrocketing differential tuition. On

average, international students pay "three to four times that of domestic students"

(Anderson, 2015, p. 168). Depending on the academic program and level of study,

international fees can double or quadruple that of domestic fees. For example, the University's tuition fee for full-time Canadian students in an undergraduate arts and humanities program is estimated at $6 134 between the years 2017 and 2018; compared to a range of $19 690 – $21 500 for international students (Universities Canada, n.d.). Despite the considerable gap between domestic and international tuition, Participant 10 stated: "Compared to other university, [the University's] fees are more cheaper than another universities I was searching." But for Catherine, the University's tuition was still considered expensive. Catherine, a graduate student from China explained:

> I think my academic tuition fee is very expensive. I have paid 30 000 RMB deposit, but it is not enough. The deposit only make sure that I can have a seat in my academic program. Each term, I would pay 5 thousand dollars on major.

As another example, an Indian student in Houshmand et al.,'s (2014) study indicated that Universities "should not expect the just filthy rich people from other countries to come and study here. There are people like me whose parents are spending everything on them just to get them educated" (p. 382). In the neoliberal imagining of university education, hyper-internationalization reveals the ongoing commodification of education (Anderson, 2015) as it induces competition among international students and forces them to dish out deposits to secure access to international education.

Table 10
Funding Source for Participants

Pseudonym	International [I] or Exchange [E]	Undergraduate (U)/ Graduate (G)	Country of origin	#1 Choice country to work in	Funding source
Alice	E	U	Brazil	Brazil	Scholarship
Darrel	I	G	China	Canada	Family

Carlie	I	G	China	China	Family
Don	I	G	India	Canada	Family
Bob	I	U	China	Canada	Family
Catherine	I	G	China	Canada	Family
Derek	I	G	China	Canada	Family
Dale	I	G	China	Canada	Family
Brian	I	U	China	Canada	Family
Daren	I	G	China	Canada	Family
Drake	I	G	China	Canada	Family
Brad	I	U	Saudi Arabia	Saudi Arabia	Family
Amber	I	U	Albania	Canada	Family
Dominic	E	G	China	Canada	Scholarship
Carry	I	G	China	Canada	Family
Bill	I	U	Palestine	Canada	Family
Ben	I	U	Saudi Arabia	Saudi Arabia	Scholarship
Barry	E	U	Brazil	Brazil	Scholarship
Bart	E	U	Brazil	Brazil	Scholarship
Connie	I	G	China	Canada	Family
Clair	I	G	China	China	Family
Carol	I	G	China	Canada	Family
Daniel	I	G	India	Canada	Family
Dylan	I	G	Mexico	Canada	Scholarship
Dean	I	G	Chinese	Canada	Family
Dexter	I	G	India	Canada	Family
Christine	I	G	China	USA	Family
Dennis	I	G	Mexico	Mexico	Scholarship
Duke	I	G	India	Canada	Family
Amanda	I	U	Belarus	Canada	Family/ Self
Bruce	I	U	Bangladesh	Canada	Scholarship
Danny	I	G	China	Canada	Self

For Connie, studying abroad meant that her parents had sacrificed a lot. She noted that although both her parents have "normal", decent paying jobs, it was difficult for them to pay her tuition and living expenses. Many international students like Connie worry that they are burdening their parents financially (Houshmand, et al., 2015). To offset some of the costs, Connie took up a night job bussing tables at a local restaurant. She was frustrated with this situation because she felt she was paid less than a local person would be paid. The Immigration News entitled, *Working in Toronto "Under the*

Table" (John, 2016), reveals the increase in under-the-table jobs geared to international students especially. Because such jobs are unregulated, employers have full liberty to set wages leading to potential inequitable wage payment among staff who do the same work. Connie accepted this reality because her chances of qualifying for financial support in the form of scholarships were limed. She shared:

> Compared with local students, international students pay almost twice times academic tuition fee, which is far higher than local students cost. Besides, academic tuition fee is increasing often. International students have few chance to get scholarship. That also add stress to international students.

Considering the differences in standards of living and middle-class income earnings between Canada and that of emerging countries such as China or India, many international students who study abroad struggle to secure enough funding throughout their study to pay for their academic program. In Calder et al's., (2016) study, one student reported a failed attempt to negotiate paying tuition by instalments because administrators had no "power" (p.98) to approve such an accommodation. Financial hardship, especially for international students from less affluent families drive them to search for employment. Part-time jobs with long hours or scheduled according to shifts can places them in a situation whereby they need to choose "between earning income and studying" (Calder et al., 2016, p. 99). International students loaded with part-time employment to fill their financial gap likely feel even more overwhelmed than non-working foreign students. With economic capital as an essential condition to enter university, higher education as a social field (Naidoo, 2004) institutionalizes a hierarchy to achieving academic capital depending on the "amount of specific resources" (p. 458) – in this case, funding for differential tuition – "that are possessed in relation to other occupants" (p. 458).

How Do Students Describe Their Cross-cultural Interaction?

Participants identified a distinctive sense of discomfort, or complete frustration with the lack of opportunity to engage in cross-cultural communication with students in general. Unanimously, participants felt deep seated connections with international students from the same ethnic or cultural background. Most participants perceived it was easier to meet, talk to and develop friendships with international students from other countries than with domestic students.

Home Sweet Home: Interaction with Students from the Same Cultural Background

Peer relations are significant for students, especially when studying abroad. In general, peers from the same cultural background support one another in several areas from navigating through campus services, to providing emotional and academic support (Kim, 2012). The participants in this study preferred to interact with peers from their own cultural background. Alice reported, "it's really easy" for her to strengthen relationships with other Brazilian students. Alice valued the interaction with other Brazilian students because they communicated easily in Portuguese. Participant 8 added:

> Mutual understanding is able to create a comfortable environment for
> international students to interact with each other. They can understand what others
> do and what others express instead of misunderstanding. Also, sense of belonging
> is a necessary reason for international students to only interact with compatriots.
> International students feel lonely when they contact an unfamiliar circumstance.
> Students want to encounter some people who are the same as them.

Communicating in their native language alleviates NNES international students' frustration of having to decipher other NNES students' accents when speaking in English (Myles & Cheng, 2003). Being able to use her native language was also important to Alice. She explained, "since they think the same like me … and other cultures sometimes

not easy to understand, it easier for me to understand … they will give me an example from my country to make it easier."

Students from China make up the largest proportion of international students in this study. NNES students of "an ethnic minority has a large representation on campus and a strong sub-culture … is very likely to feel drawn to membership in that group" (Myles & Cheng, 2003, p. 257). Carlie also valued her interaction with classmates from her home country of China. She noted, "we are a group, we help each other in academic, we often socialize … they make me feel like no so lonely here." The presence of people who are like ourselves provides a sense of emotional security, comfort and a feeling of belonging (Houshmand et al., 2014). Don further elaborated on the significance of support derived from his own cultural group:

> We are like a family. We hang out together, cook together … basically for us we know we are far away from our families, that we left everything back in India, we came and met those new Indians here, but we are kind of family. If somebody's tense, we say it's ok, if something good happens, we all party.

It is easy to understand the connection international students from the same cultural background have with one another. Christine said, "we have very good relationship, we share easily together, we're happy with each other."

International students regard their cultural network as a support system to provide information on how to best steer through the range of socio-cultural and academic adjustment obstacles they face in their Canadian schooling realities. Brian recalled his interaction with other Chinese students as being positive. He said, "it's good, we study together." Bruce referred to the students of the same background as him as, "my brothers." He acknowledged the importance for students from the same country to reach out to one another. Bruce noted, "we need to be together because of homesick … be with

people who are the same." Second, connecting with students from the same cultural background functioned as a form of academic support. He further added, "we get help each other in academics." For instance, even though Bob met some individuals from other countries, he mainly relied on his Chinese friends. Bob explained that his interaction with classmates from China was very natural. He explained:

> We eat together, help each other about questions from class or other problems. One time I go to Co-op office to ask a question and they gave me the official answer, I didn't understand. I asked my Chinese friends the same question and they explained in detail what I need to know.

Unlike most participants, Connie admitted that although she had "very good relationships with most Chinese" students, she was uncertain whether such close relationships were beneficial. Connie explained, "I'm not sure if it is good or not. If we come from the same country we share the knowledge in Chinese, I'm not sure if it limit our thinking." Connie's concern raises the issue that when international students limit their communication to only those friends with the same cultural and linguistic background, they bar themselves from gaining knowledge from students with different global perspectives. Additionally, Ben's closest friends were from Saudi Arabia or of the same cultural background. However, Ben also discussed that although it was easy for him to connect with and work with students from the same cultural background as him, he preferred not to. He commented, "I don't prefer to work with people from the same country because we think the same way. I want to learn how other people from other cultures think."

Cultural similarity functions as support and deficiency. Despite the participants' reported linguistic, social, and academic support they perceived to gain from interacting with students from the same cultural background, many participants also

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reported difficulty in breaking out of their cultural groups and the associated drawbacks.

Carlie observed that other international students typically stayed together with students

from the same socio-cultural. She noted: "They have their group. Maybe you will find 1

or 2 students when we are doing group presentation. You have a nice talk … when we

come across in the street we talk but we have our different, separate groups." The ease

with which students communicate with one another is witnessed through Bruce's

comment. Bruce described his interaction with other Saudi students was, "like drinking

water." However, he found it difficult step outside of the Saudi student group. Bruce

explained, "many students from Saudi make group and don't mix with students from

other countries, but I guess this is normal, Chinese students make own group too." It is

natural for international students to prefer to socialize within their own cultural

groupings. Don's comment provides a vivid picture:

> The main problem that I think there is like Chinese students stick to their own part
> and all the Southeast Asians stick to their own group and little bit of Middle
> Eastern guys, they have their small group and few African guys. The reason I feel
> it is because we know we are more comfortable with the Southeast Asians so
> that's why we stick there, we have no other options. Chinese are more
> conservative; that's what I observed. They want to stick to their own kind, they
> don't come out much.

To socioculturally adjust to the requirements of the host country, international students

depend on one another to navigate through the dominant norms with the purpose of

"acquiring local attributes necessary to psychological well-being and academic success"

(Marginson, 2014, p.8). Such same-culture encounters helped Carlie and Bruce ease the

sociocultural adjustment difficulties they face during their English-medium university

schooling.

However, it looks as if the participants in this study simultaneously endured tension between keeping to their cultural group for a range of support and venturing to establish cross-cultural relationships. Participant 4 said:

> For instance, Chinese students always choose to work together, they do not like talking with other students. But in lots of western countries, students like group work with different people. They study with their classmates and discuss problems and learn from each other, so they have effective study skills.

In this instance, international students devalued their strong dependence on their co-nationals as they not only believed that it hindered their cross-cultural adjustment, but also believed it was of lesser benefit compared to communicating with domestic students. In international education, "the host country culture is normalized…and the international student is seen as in deficit in relation to host country requirements" (Marginson, 2014, p. 8). Thus, an international educational system in which access to social capital operates within an organizational field with multiple power relations, situates NNES international students to experience continuous "ambiguity…and in-betweenness" in their identity construction (Kim, 2012, p. 471).

Other participants feared that if they communicated in English, their peers would perceive them to be pretentious. As an example, Dylan stated: "My previous Chinese classmate told me not to answer questions in English because everyone will think you show off and hate you." This prevalent view was reiterated and expanded upon. Dexter explained:

> I use English with South Indians, Punjabi with those from the same country. If speak in English, they will think I'm trying to show off – that is what they think, if person is using English they're show off or that person is trying to hide something.

International students' reported hesitations to use English because of how they will be perceived by peers of the same cultural background exposes how some NNES international students internalize and reproduce the position of English as the language of superiority compared to their own first language. The English language as the "defacto first language of globalization" (O'Regan, 2014, p. 534) is value laden and functions as a symbol of knowledge and cultural capital. Thus, for many NNES international students to use English seems to be related to demonstrating a form of power over their co-nationals.

In participants' accounts of the events surrounding their intercultural interaction with students outside their cultural background, an interesting undertone of internal conflict surfaced around the themes: language, culture/friendship and study method (Table 11). Particularly, it seemed that participants' motivation to interact with students of other ethnic backgrounds simultaneously functioned as a deterrent preventing such interaction from taking place.

Table 11
Participants' internal conflict regarding cross-cultural interaction

	International student motivation to interact cross-culturally	Deterrent factors prohibiting international students from cross-cultural interaction
Language	• To practice/ improve English language skills	• To communicate in first language is easier
Culture/ Friendship	• To learn about cultural differences • To overcome culture shock	• To decrease/ avoid cultural misunderstanding • Natural sense of mutual understanding • Sense of belonging due to shared experiences
Study Method	• To learn new ways of studying	• Language barrier • Fear of misunderstanding

NNES international students seem to be caught in a vicious cycle whereby they are presented with few instances to communicate in English. Because most of them are not confident about their English proficiency to begin with, they tend to gravitate toward speakers of their first language. In turn, NNES international students further limit the opportunity to practice English. Participant 5 explained:

> International students are fearful to make friends with students who come from different country. They don't know who those students like. They aren't sure to make new friends with international students is right or wrong. It is hard for international students to make friends in short time. At that time, they can only interact with students from their own country because they can find some topic to discuss which can't happen between two students who come from different country.

Other focus group participants also shared their frustrations. Participant 9 described, "I am comfortable to speak familiar language. When an international student speak another unfamiliar language [English], students have to change a new thinking method. It is hard for international students to turn into Canadian's thinking method."

Participant 3 added:

> It's easy for international students to communicate in their mother language. When international students study abroad, they will encounter problems such as language obstacle. They are not likely to communicate with other country's student. For example, they rather rent house with own country's agency rather than directly communicate with foreigners.

Participant 10 further noted:

> We have less opportunities to practice English speaking and listening skills. It is difficult for us to improve so we need to communicate more with other students from other countries. For example, students from China always speak Chinese with their friends so they think about in Chinese and they can't use English flexibly.

When it comes to NNES international students' English language development, it cannot be presumed that their needs will be met if they are left to their own devices. At the

institutional level, "implementing activities that provide opportunities for international students to meet with domestic students and develop relationships will not only contribute to their adjustment process but will have a positive impact on their language skills" (Martirosyan, et al., 2015, p. 68).

Better than Nothing: Interaction with Students from Other Cultural Backgrounds

To be noted, is the keystone idea that higher education internationalization functions as the backdrop in equipping graduates with multicultural competencies to operate successfully in the global economy. It is then, "no surprise that cross-cultural proficiency is fast emerging as a recognizably important part of career preparedness" (Yeravdekar & Tiwari, 2014, p. 205). In this study, most of the international students noted they valued cross-cultural interaction with other international students of other origins. This finding is analogous to Khawaja & Stallman's (2011) findings whereby the participants suggested that international students should avoid loneliness by seeking the company of other international students if friendships with the domestic students were absent.

According to the participants in this study, their overall interaction with students from other cultural backgrounds was perceived to be positive. However, many participants had neither developed deep meaningful relationships with international students from other countries, nor had cultivated additional skills to nurture existing relationships. For some participants, they had not even increased their appreciation of other cultures. In some cases, cross-cultural relationships were not fostered due to the limited number of international students from cross-cultural backgrounds in courses. For example, both Carol and Connie admitted to not ever meeting international students from

other countries. Carol said, "No experience to communicate with other international students." Connie echoed the above and noted, "Actually in this program, I never met some other international students." By the end of the end of the interview Connie remembered and corrected that in fact there were two Arabic international students in her class, but she then described them as being "silent" and never having had a conversation with either of them. On the other hand, Alice did meet students from other cultural backgrounds but was not motivated to develop friendships because of her initial experience. Alice explained that her classroom interaction with international students from other countries was "frustrating" because "in the beginning, people don't know much about Brazil" which resulted in her having to give information which she thought was basic information that should be known.

The bond and connectedness that most students spoke of rose by being international students and for the most part, seemed to operate in shallow depths. Kim (2012) commented that "other international students, who are considered marginal when compared to their [domestic] classmates, form a fellowship … with whom they have met for the first time" (p. 464). Talking about this issue, Carry who was from China, expressed: "It's good, I have a wonderful friend from India … we have coffee together, we have a long talk. She likes reading and she shares with me. I like painting so if she finds a reading about art she tells me. She is a very good friend." Amanda felt even closer to other international students than Canadian students. She claimed: "I think I can relate to them because I went through culture shock … completely new world" which took approximately "2 years" to get used to. Amanda agreed that it is important for students to build friendships with other students to "connect for support', having someone to talk to

and share "how crappy you feel". She added how connecting with others, and in her case, a student from India, "adds variety to life"; and in a burst of joy claimed, "I love curry chicken." According to what Carry and Amanda reported, it is also difficult to understand whether deeper cross-cultural exchanges took place. Participant retelling of their cross-cultural exchange encounters give the impression that they concluded to have had such exchange based merely on talking to someone of a different culture periodically about class content clarifications or other general topics.

Work based reforms to higher education (OECD, 2015) emphasize sets of cross-cultural skills applicable and responsive to the increasing transnational flow of potential labourers. As cited in Yeravdekar & Tiwari (2014), the 2012 EAIE Conference highlighted key skills attained through international mobility compared with key skills required by employers (Table 12). In relation to global work readiness requirements and key anticipated skills' development through international education, it remains unclear whether participants' cross-cultural interaction experiences with other international students have enhanced their own skills such as, self-confidence, a greater interest in cross-cultural perspectives or cultural empathy. What appears to be at play and contrary to the building of such skills is a growing superficial and artificial sense of these skills.

Table 12

Key skills attained through international mobility highlighted at EAIE Conference

Key skills developed through international mobility	Key skills required by employers
• Self-awareness, self-confidence, sense of identity, and personal independence • Being informed, greater interest in global affairs and cross-cultural perspectives • Organizational skills, project management, decision-making, creativity and taking responsibility	• Self-awareness • Initiative and enterprise • Willingness to learn • Planning an organizing • Integrity • Commitment/motivation • Problem-solving • Flexibility

• Vision, independence, experience, broader outlook and attitude • Problem-solving, coping strategies and risk taking • Patience, flexibility, adaptability open-mindedness and humanity • Team work and team leadership skills • Fluency, accuracy and appropriateness of language competence • Mediation skills, conflict resolution, sensitivity, humility and respect • Forging of relationships and networks • Challenge to personal stereotypes, cultural relativism • Enhanced intercultural communication, conducting business inter culturally • Cultural empathy • Non-judgmental observation, respect for local values without abandoning one's own • Cultural understandings, ways of thinking and adaptation to complex cultural environments	• Self-management • Team work • Communication skills • Foreign languages • Networking • Leadership • Customer service • Interpersonal skills • Intercultural skills

For many participants, their perceived comfort with international students from other countries derived directly from the evident discomfort they experienced interacting with domestic students. Amber expressed a higher level of comfort to communicate with other international students than with Canadian students. This was especially true for when she had a question or needed clarification and preferred "to ask question to other international students rather than Canadian." This feeling was due to her experience of asking a question to a Canadian who answered, "I don't know" with what Amber perceived as "attitude." For Brad, it was easier to "connect" with other international students rather than "finding someone Canadian" because "of similar study abroad experiences, like living away from parents." By working with students from different cultural backgrounds, Ben believed he was able "to get new ideas … new ways to solve problem." It is most certainly understandable that international students would indeed have some commonalities amongst one another. Although Ben did not express any

significant challenge in interacting with Canadian classmates, he still considered it "easier to communicate with other international students than Canadian students or professors." Ben's preference to engage with other international students over Canadian students suggests he had not developed the ability and/or confidence to overcome perceived or real barriers in interacting with local students. A related idea to international students' lack in self-confidence, is that participants participated in reaffirming the 'us' vs. 'them' narrative by positioning international students as – in some ways – being inferior to Canadian students and thus are better suited to stick together.

Brian found international students from other countries to be "so friendly" and he had "many Indian friends." When asked to further describe the activities that he engaged in with his Indian friends, Brian responded:

> We sit together in class sometimes. One guy likes soccer like me, so we can have a talk about soccer games, or what we do at weekend. If I don't understand what professor meaning, I can ask them and I help them too sometimes.

Like Brian, Bart felt his non-Chinese friends were "nice" whereby they sat together in class and "solve questions between us." Overall, he believed it was "easier to interact with them than Canadian students." It is common for international students "to band together and ironically often have a more meaningful intercultural exchange on campus than domestic students, without having any deep engagement with the host culture" (Knight, 2011, p. 15). In terms of developing cultural empathy, participants had a strong sense of cultural empathy for other international students, but not for Canadian students. In fact, it appears they simply resented local students.

Interaction with 'Canadian', Local Students

An important finding was participants reported limited interaction with domestic students. As Daniel noted, "I have no interacted with any." At times, participants referred to domestic students as 'Canadians', 'locals', or 'natives'; therefore, these terms are used synonymously to represent individuals who participants perceived to be Canadian born or native English speakers. Participants reported two types of circumstances limiting their interaction with domestic students. The first circumstance related to the international cohort programs whereby most, if not all students were from the same country; usually China. The second circumstance revolved around participants' observation of domestic students' unwillingness to interact with them. In both circumstances, participants reported discontent and frustration with the limited to no opportunity to interact with domestic students.

Buyer Beware: International Cohort. Regarding the experience of being in an international cohort program, Dale explained: "Basically all Chinese and one or two Indian in program. I want to make native, Canadian friends". Dale's feeling is very much in line with Li's & Tierny's (2013) findings from most international students in an international cohort program; whereby, 28 out of the 31 participants wanted to be in classes and to study with Canadian students. The quick and easy way to implement "a deepening and broadening of activities to integrate an international dimension" (AUCC, 2007, p .3) by creating courses that are composed of international students simply, negates the opportunity for cross-cultural interaction to develop global perspectives (Advisory Panel on Canada's International Education Strategy, 2014). Similarly, Duke reported, "I don't have Canadian classmates. I'm not feeling too much international, most

of students are Indians and Chinese." Such participant reports suggest the lack of intercultural contact with domestic students make it challenging for NNES international students to generate meaningful social interaction conducive to facilitate cross-culture sharing (Scott et al., 2015). The distribution of cross-cultural sharing, to cultivate cultural capitals, with the host society is positioned as a limited and privileged commodity reserved for those international students in non-international streamed programs.

A major point of concern for many participants was the purpose of the academic programs intended only for international student participation. In describing her perception of studying in an all Chinese master's program, Carlie leaned toward me and in a secretive manner stated, "You know, we are all Chinese in our program. What do you think about this? A little strange?" This sentiment is also reflected in Li's (2013) findings of international students studying in a program designed specifically for international students; whereby, one respondent claimed that a more suitable program name was the "Asian program" (p. 6) because there were no students outside of China. Students in this study suggested classes with Canadian students should be offered (Li, 2013). Danny viewed the international cohort structure of his master of education as, "a strange existence." He felt uncomfortable and was sensitive to the name of the program because it made him feel, "second class." Institutionalized academic program structures surely play a role in reinforcing the power differential between what is perceived to be standard and substandard spheres for knowledge creation and the associated knowledge capital it embodies. Danny was frustrated with the lack of cultural diversity; especially with the fact that there were no domestic students. He commented, "That's why we came to Canada right? To meet Canadians." Danny also pointed to that the lack of domestic

students reinforced his perception that this program was substandard to domestic student expectations. Within the design of international cohort academic programs lays an inherently systemic reproduction of social capital favouring the dominant culture. Institutional administrators and higher education internationalization policy makers overall have an obligation toward the international students who are depended upon for their differential tuition fees, to begin to pay attention to the implications of culturally isolating academic fields of study.

Carry added that she had "no Canadian classmates" as her program consisted mostly of Chinese students, where limited English communication took place. She felt deceived because she did not anticipate a mono-cultural experience of her own country when applying to the program. Carry commented, "I was surprised, I expected I can study in the English environment with local people." She added that she had shared her concern with her mother and recounted her conversations at the beginning of the term:

> I told my mother, there is no another students from Canada, everyone from China. I remember she tell me maybe other people are coming, not everyone can come at the same time, you know – Visa problem. So, think this is logical and I feel better. After one week, still only Chinese. It's a little bit joke. We all Chinese students know that this program not real program, just to make money.

What can be understood here is Carry's attempt to demystify the seemingly odd and unexpected situation she was in. The participants in this study, as did those in Guo and Guo's (2017) study, believed that the University used them to generate revenue. The neoliberal ideology underpinning the financial pressures that thrust universities towards the commodification, commercialization and massification of higher education internationalization result in the erosion of the mutual learning rationale and its assumed

benefits. Don also carried the same sentiments. He too, was confused about the purpose of such program arrangement. He noted:

> To be frank, my classes comprises of only international students, there's no Canadian students in my class we have mainly Chinese and Indian students, by Indian, you can say Southeast Asian. So, it doesn't feel like we are somewhere else because I have so many Indian students and sometimes I feel I'm still there.

Despite students' commonly held beliefs that the program was not meeting their expectations and that they were being used to generate revenue, none of the participants wanted to discuss this issue with their professor or department head. Instead, they accepted the learning condition as a purchased produce with a 'no return' policy. This reflects the "unspoken acquiescence to and default acceptance of the neoliberal status quo" (O'Regan, 2014, p. 537).

One main reason that NNES international students seek transnational academic study at English-medium universities is to enhance their overall English proficiency. It can therefore be quite unsettling for students when they are surprisingly placed in a class environment that does not require much English use. In fact, Canadian university institutions prescribe specific English language proficiency as demonstrated through internationally recognized standardized tests such as the International English Language Testing System (IELTS) or Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOFEL). It is then even more questionable why academic programs would be structured around a monolingual framework. Dylan suggested that it was unnecessary to submit proof of English proficiency as there was little overall English used in the class. He noted that although the language of instruction was in English, there were limited in-class discussions where he needed to speak in English. Dylan shared:

No domestic students in my class. At the beginning, there was one domestic student, but he left. I think it's because the class is all international students. International students pay three to four times more than domestic students and I feel the experience is less. I do not meet any domestic student. I'm very angry about this. The reason I chose to come it's to make friends with domestic students. My opinion is the system of class is a form of discrimination, doesn't allow opportunity to meet domestic students.

The exact reason for why the domestic student dropped out of the international class cannot be confirmed. However, it is plausible that he did not perceive the course to be of value and that perhaps in some ways, it was perceived to be misaligned with his learning goals. Regardless of what the reasons might have been, what is certain is Dylan's perception that the international course was not good enough "because the class is all international students." International cohort academic programming is an institutionalized hegemonic system restricting international students' knowledge flow with the dominant society. While in some cases international students compare themselves to their domestic counterparts and begin to feel inferior (Kim, 2012), in other cases, monoculturally isolated program designs may lead international students to feel as though their knowledge and experience is filled with blight; thus, needing to be quarantined so to not infect existing knowledge.

Not Good Enough for Domestic Students. The second circumstance impacting NNES international students' opportunity to engage with domestic students was students' perception that Canadian students were unwilling to put forth effort to get to know them. It is known that domestic students "resist, or [are] at best neutral about undertaking joint academic projects or engaging socially with foreign students – unless specific programs are developed by the university or instructor" (Knight, 2011, p. 14). Alice reported that she thought her academic program would have integrated opportunities to "meet

Canadians" and "put skills to use." Alice believed it was important to build friendships with students from other countries, especially Canadian students to learn about and share cultures. She explained "my way to find Canadian friend was through class project", but she was "not at all" able to build relationships with any Canadian student. Alice perceived developing professional networks was "very important especially if staying here." Guo and Guo's (2017) research study findings identified international student challenges in developing friendships with local students. Even after four years of study at a Canadian university, it was noted that for one participant, Lily, it was still difficult for her to develop beyond class work related relationships with her Canadian counterparts (Guo & Guo, 2017).

Christine commented she did not have any Canadian friends but had made friends with three other international students (England, India, and Iran). Christine added, "I would like to make friends with Canadian students, but I'm not sure if they would like to make friends with me ... didn't think this before coming to Canada." Consistent with findings from other studies (Guo & Guo, 2017; Khawaja & Stallman, 2011), many of the international students in this study felt unwanted by domestic students and believed that domestic students "don't want to understand international students" (Guo & Guo, 2017, p. 858). Khawaja and Stallman (2011) reported: "Not feeling included, accepted, or understood by the domestic students and the host society can disrupt the acculturation process and can lead to emotional problems" (p. 4). The perceived lack of domestic student understanding or lack of desire to become familiar with international students in general is an ongoing issue which certainly goes against the mutual understanding

rationale of internationalization and necessitates consideration as universities continue to recruit growing number of students from abroad.

Domestic students are often perceived as too preoccupied with other matters to make time to interact with or get to know international students. Alice noted that it seemed many domestic students were busy with work outside of school and it was therefore not easy to find time to get to know them. Guo and Guo (2017) further affirm the lack of opportunity for international students to interact with local students by highlighting one participants' claim: "I don't even see any Canadian around me except in class … after class they just leave, not much opportunity to talk to them (p.85 8). Whether domestic students are too busy for international students, this narrative seems to rationalize and help international students swallow the feeling that domestic students are not interested in them.

Another example revealing the gap between international and domestic student interaction was found in Carlie's response. When it came to her interaction with Canadian students, Carlie acknowledged, "they don't talk to me and I don't talk to them. She explained, "I don't know how to start it because we are different, we don't have time to understand each other." Like the participants in Khawaja and Stallman's (2011) study, who "revealed that it was common to have minimal interaction with the domestic students despite their desire to do so" (p. 13), Carlie along with most of the participants in this study could not overcome the linguacultural barriers. Ben commented it was most difficult to develop friendships with Canadian students. He remarked, "it's difficult, different culture, different language. I think they feel this way because I always see them with Canadian students. They want to be with people from the same culture." Within and

outside of the classroom, Bruce did not know what to do to meet more Canadians. "I want to practice English, meet more Canadian people." Bruce reported "I want to improve English communication skills but couldn't communicate with Canadians." Bruce described himself as being "shy" and "afraid" since he had limited opportunity to meet Canadians beyond classroom group work. Bruce recalled "I mix with students during group work but no interaction after." Brian felt as an international student it was hard to understand the "common sense in Canada … not much communication with Canadian students." Brian told about his relationship with one Canadian student where he checked the Canadian student's math homework and the student reciprocated by editing Brian's writing.

Although Bob believed it was "very easy" to make friends with Canadians, he did not have a specific friend as an example. Bob remarked he and Canadian students engaged in some communication "in Facebook." Students in his class know that he has straight As in math and they contact him about questions they have. He also noted that Canadian and other international students "ask about if they can come to China to work … and how much can earn, or want to know about Chinese high school." Bart "didn't interact with them … it's hard." Bart wished he had "more interaction with Canadian student about academic matters." Bart however recalled a class group project experience when he met and worked with a Canadian student who was Caucasian along with two other students with Middle Eastern background. Bart became uncomfortable with the Canadian's comment "nice to meet and work with another white person." He recalled:

> I asked, man what you mean? He told me that he don't like working another students, especially Arabic because they are lazy, they are stupid, they think they know everything, they English not so good. I told him my English is poor too. He said, no man, don't worry.

Bart further explained: "To me it seems racism, but I don't want to believe it. He called me white, I'm not white; it bothered me a lot, was disappointed with the guy, nothing can explain his behavior." In the context of Canada's strong sense of multiculturalism as prescribed by the adopted 1971 multicultural policy (Citizenship and Immigration Canada, 2008), Bart's indirect experience of racial tension is most inconsistent with his perception of Canada's cultural or racial inclusivity which may be the reason why he noted that he did not want to believe the racist view expressed. Contrary to international students' common feeling of being rejected by their White peers (Houshmand, et al., 2014), this unique example demonstrates a White peer recognizing a light skinned (almost White in appearance) international student from Brazil as 'one of his own' which resulted in racial tension because the Brazilian student did not identify with being White. Such an encounter reminds us of the "powerful role that dominant group members play in shaping students' adjustment to the campus culture" (Ladson-Billings, 1998, p. 383) and how race and racialized meanings permeate daily experiences. Subconsciously or consciously, we have developed the habit to organize people into different racial groupings, to which certain cultural, normative characteristics are ascribed. These attributes often go undetected because of society's faith in the doctrine of individualism, which "has allowed those individuals with privilege to falsely believe that their stations in society are wholly earned- that they have gotten what they deserve through talent and work" (Mckinely et. al., 2008, p. 164).

However, Bill remarked he had a large network of friends who were Canadian students. "I deal with them much better than student from country … I appreciate them, they appreciate me." In fact, Bill observed he had more Canadian friends than those from

Palestine or the same ethnic background. He did not know why this was the case, or how he was able to develop such friendships. Bill acknowledged, "I have no specific strategy … sit together, start talking, get on Facebook, that's it!" Even when he described a situation where he attempted to talk to a Canadian classmate who seemed to purposely ignore or not respond to him "at all", Bill's reaction was, "I don't care", and moved on to someone else. Brad reported his classroom interaction experience with Canadians as "OK' and further emphasized, "I'm an introvert, I don't mix too much … group work interactions are really good." Amanda did not meet any other student from Belarus and therefore relied on meeting other international and Canadian students. She felt "really good" about her interaction with Canadian students; she explained, "I feel comfortable to connect with students, no problems with meeting new people." She compared herself to when she was in Belarus and identified that she "used to be shy … in my country people are very closed, don't express feelings … rare to see people smile."

University Generated Social Engagement Opportunities

The University, like other Canadian higher education institutions with accelerated internationalization through international student recruitment designate one or a combination of departments to oversee services activities aimed at helping international student campus integration. According to the University's International Student Centre (ISC) (n.d.) website:

> The ISC team works diligently to help you achieve your academic and personal goals while in Canada. We provide professional advising services including academic support, information about health coverage and immigration information. We also provide plenty of extracurricular programming to ensure that your time at the University is not only academically fulfilling but also socially engaging.

All participants in this study knew of the University's International Student Centre.

Although almost all students were aware of the social activities available to international students, they described their reluctance to participate in them. An overwhelming majority of participants perceived that social opportunities targeting international students only further separated international students from domestic students; making it more difficult to meet domestic students because they were not likely to participate. International students felt that the ISC's emphasis on "international student events" sent a clear message that the activities were not intended for local students. Carry, from China, described: "We come here because we want to talk to locals. When I hear "for international students", I can imagine a lot of Chinese people. I don't want to speak Chinese or learn more about China." She acknowledged that "information channel is important. Let people know, if they don't know, they can't participate. But, not emphasize 'international' or 'local' event; they lose interest". Alice also recognized that the ISC planned a range of events and trips but explained she "didn't take part because not into it. Look like group of tourist." She had already visited or was planning to visit some of the locations, such as Niagara Falls and Toronto, that the trips were planned for. Alice explained:

> When I travel, I want to go with my friends. It's hard to go spend long time on bus with people you don't know. I don't think this is good way to make any friend. Maybe I have a nice chat with someone, that don't mean I'm want to spend whole day with her at Toronto.

While it is perfectly reasonable to offer travel related excursions, perhaps an overemphasis on touristic types of social opportunities may not adequately assist international students to integrate within the local community. The participants' perceived that most events seemed to be aimed at international students only. Activities which appear to exclude host nationals, signify how well intended support services may

be inadvertently counterproductive to facilitating intercultural contact between international and domestic students. Such international student targeted events further limit international students' sociocultural adjustment outcomes.

Brian explained he tried to become socially active by joining the University's intramural soccer league. The challenge was to develop those relationships off the soccer field. As Brian noted, "it's hard to meet people, easy to make friends." I asked him if he meant the reverse, that it is easy to meet people and difficult to make friends and he responded "no." He believed that he had the characteristics to be a "good friend" of local students; but the challenge was to meet people in the first place to give him a chance to show his qualities. This can be particularly frustrating because even when international students feel they put forth effort, they are unable to access local students. Amber participated in "few" social activities to "gain experience … meet new people." Despite her efforts, she noted it is easier to build friendships with other international students, "it just happens", then with Canadian students. It is widely understood that intercultural contact between domestic and international peers plays a vital role in facilitating the cultural sharing needed for building support networks (Scott, et al., 2015; Smith & Khawaja, 2011). Without adequate facilitation of such opportunities, effective integration of international students becomes a considerable challenge.

Unlike all other participants, Bill who was from Palestine, did not seem to have had any issue connecting with domestic students. Bill talked about his dynamic social life with his Canadian friends which consisted of: working out at the gym daily and playing multiple intramural sports including soccer, basketball and volleyball. When I asked him about what suggestion he had to offer to other international students who have not been

as successful as he was in creating what he perceived to be meaningful friendships he answered, "you have to find other friends, don't have to stay with just same people from your country. You have to change your mind." I probed and questioned what he meant by "change your mind." Bill explained that international students must be "open" to meeting people. According to this view, Bill participates in the narrative that international students are at fault for their lack of friendship building with local students. Although true to some extent, this belief steers toward a tendency to dismiss the ways in which international students are "excluded from common areas of social interaction among peers and especially White peers" (Houshmand, et al., 2014, p.381). In addition to making friends for recreational purposes, Bill viewed the more people he met was a chance to have "more experience…communication skills…how to deal with people."

International students seem to be further divided depending on whether they were in an exchange program. Participants in an exchange program reported being more socially and cross-culturally active. Bart explained: "We're like a closed group because we Brazilians, Europeans live together. The International Student Centre makes us like a group, we do activities with exchange students, go to parties. Even when they go to events they stay within exchange group. It's hard to interact with Canadian, they are shy and we are shy too." While it is positive for international students to build relationships with international students of different cultural backgrounds, the evident lack of contact with host nationals impacts international students' adjustment to their new cultural setting. In turn, this may have long lasting influences on their overall wellbeing (Scott, et al., 2015).

How Do Students Understand the Purpose of Cross-cultural Engagement?

For many participants, the primary purpose of cross-cultural engagement was a method to gain practical understanding of common, local communication etiquette and overall lifestyle norms. One of the most striking findings was participants' responses to the questions, how important is it for university students to exchange political viewpoints? Their unanimous lack of interest appears to be a contrary reality compared with the internationalization aim to support both domestic and international students to acquire global perspectives and become "citizens of the world" (Advisory Panel on Canada's International Education Strategy, 2012, p. 6).

Willingness to Discuss Global Socio-economic, Political Affairs

Many participants were reluctant to identify global affairs and or issues of concern to them. To ensure they understood the concept of global issues, I asked them to provide examples of what they believed represented global issues. Their answers included general terms such as, "government corruption", "pollution", "global warming", "poverty", "famine/food scarcity", and "limited natural resources."

> Few participants believed in sharing their views. For example, Duke explained:
>
> It's very important because Canada is a democratic. India is democratic, but not good, government is corrupt and service doesn't go to everyone. Exchanging political views is good it helps people to know, to understand how system works to change the system.

Duke sees democratic governance as a neutral system; a field free from power relations that influence access to the various modes of capital. Ben believed students should talk about their perspectives on global issues but did not give reason as to why he thought it was important. Unlike other participants, Carry viewed that being aware of socio-political

context in her country served as a guide to navigate through the "system." Carry

described:

> If you know clearly about politics, it can help you become successful. In China there is words, if you successful you must follow politics so you can follow the chain- recently China emphasize if student study [abroad] and go back they give that student more chance to create company, to have a good job, higher salary. If you know that, then go back to China is a good choice.

Dennis explained:

> It is important, but we need to know the limit because it's a very delicate matter; sometimes I put myself in bad situations. For example, I stated my opinion about guns to a classmate, but I didn't know she came from a family of hunters. I like to challenge ideas, but I don't talk about religion.

Despite Dennis' openness to "challenge ideas", there were limits to what topics he would

engage in. For Amanda, exchanging global and political perspectives amongst friends

"provides a firsthand experience to people who have never experienced what you've

experienced – what text and media says is one thing." Bill also thought it was important

for students to exchange their political ideas, but that the range of topics should be

limited.

For the most part however, participants aligned exchanging or discussing global

affairs with the act of complaining. All students stated that simply talking about global

challenges would not be beneficial to anyone because they had no power to implement a

solution. Instead, participants believed that such discussions would lead to conflict;

jeopardizing the new and fragile relationships they had built. For example, Danny who

was a graduate student in education, did not perceive much benefit in exchanging any

type of global perspectives with classmates because it only leads to, "complain about

problems in countries" with no direct solution. Danny viewed himself to be external to

the problems facing his home country, China. He also was of the mindset that his

educational and professional goals were independent and would have no bearing on any form of resolution. Rooted in neoliberal rationality of knowledge as a form of global capital, higher education internationalization has repurposed universities to shift from "a traditional notion of knowledge as a public good to capital that can be marketed and traded" (Viczko & Tascon, 2016, p. 3). In doing so, the expected outcome in gaining a university education become primarily aligned with accumulating knowledge and skills for personal capital gains.

Alice was "not interested or comfortable" to exchange political views or global perspectives on world issues. I further probed and asked why? Alice explained that she did no come to Canada to "debate with anyone." She was firm in the stance that she "came to study to get education, skills to learn and think in different way to get a job." Like many other participants, Alice disassociated the practice of engaging in discussion of past and or current global events from developing their critical thinking ability which indeed would result in achieving her desire to have the skill to "think in a different way". Bob did not believe, and in fact could not understand any benefit for students to exchange political perspectives, "I don't like to talk about this … forbidden in China, police can arrest you … I only want to show China is beautiful, not dark." For some students, their clear homeland loyalties or ideological makeup prevent them from considering the inequalities their co-nationals face. Then, it can be said that the mutual understanding rationale is deficient in that it overlooks how its requirement of being open to worldly view may situate students to feel as though they are "caught in the geopolitical cross-fire forced to choose a side or keep their heads down" (Fish, 2018, para. 8). When I asked Brian about the importance for students to exchange political viewpoints he answered,

"weird question, not important … politics not for students, for government, we're only students ... the political stuff belongs to the government." Fengming Lu (2015), a PhD student in political science discussed in an online blog that the base for Chinese students apolitical stance is rooted in their indoctrination, through curriculum of a one-party system leading students to not view themselves as having a role in shaping political structures. Also, Dexter further commented: "No, only create trouble, example, Pakistan vs. India. All politics shouldn't be communicated. We can learn about it from Google, not from people." In this case, the authentic lived human stories are invalidated and denounced in favour of consenting to and upholding corporate-based forms of knowledge dissemination.

Along with a neoliberal influenced shift in the mission of higher education comes a change in how global citizenship is internalized. Institutional leaders have commonly identified that "developing global citizens and civic engagement and enhancing diversity and global awareness" is the main driving force to internationalize their institutions (Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada, 2007a, p. 6). However, a critical stance against the commonsense understanding that schooling is a mechanism that produces democratic and egalitarian societies positions the current business model of postsecondary institutions as "agencies of social, economic, and cultural reproduction" (Giroux, 2005, p. 202). Hanneke Teekens, an international scholar studying internationalization of higher education claims, "foreign-student programs were largely born out of humanitarian urge to help the world's under-privileged" (Todd, 2013, para. 3). The transition in the mission of postsecondary education is further echoed by Jane Knight, a leading contributor to the birth of internationalization as an applicable concept.

Knight admits "the values behind the internationalization of higher education have shifted from cooperation to "competition," from mutual benefit to "self-interest," from cultural exchange to institutional "prestige-building" and "commercial trade" (Todd, 2013, para. 12).

Unanticipated Emergent Themes

The focus of the research study was to explore NNES undergraduate and graduate international students' Canadian university schooling experience. While none of the interview questions asked about international students' experiences beyond their transnational study, many participant responses led to identifying the additional dominant, emergent themes of: concern about Canadian employment; interest for choosing Canada as the study abroad destination and interest for choosing to study at the University.

Concern about Canadian Employment

Of the 32 participants in this research study, 23 (71%) planned to work in Canada after graduation; whether in the short or long term. In another study (Li, 2013), the majority (52.7%) of international students had similar employment plans. This is consistent with the 2017 figure of 51% of international students planning to apply for permanent residence in Canada (CBIE, 2018). With such high proportions of international students wanting to work in Canada past university study, it is judicious of them to begin to feel out their employment options while pursing academic studies. One prominent theme to emerge in this study was the participants' grave concern over Canadian employment prospects. Most participants stated they were frustrated with the limited employment opportunities that seemed to be open to international students and

worried that they may never start a meaningful career anywhere in Canada. This theme is consistent with Scott et al.'s (2015) research study findings of disconnect between policy makers' assumptions about international students transition to the labour force and actual barriers working against them in terms of securing Canadian employment.

A significant number of international students opt to stay in Canada to pursue employment to satisfy the first necessary step toward acquiring permanent residence status in Canada (Popadiuk & Arthur, 2014). When considering employment opportunities, Amber believed it would be difficult to find a job locally and therefore admitted that she would, "plan to live in a bigger city because finding job is most important after graduation so that I can have future in Canada." In addition to the range of challenges international students encounter while in school, to worry about finding a meaningful job after graduation is an extra stressor which they must live with (Li, 2013). Amanda was aware that landing nursing employment may be difficult as "it depends where you apply. [This city] is cutting down the number of registered nurses." In addition, Daniel in electrical and computer engineering, believed it would be "very difficult" to find a job and said, "jobs are low in [this city], I need to move to larger city, maybe Toronto or Vancouver. But still, better chances than in India." The skills' migration rationale of internationalization is built upon the narrative that international students are ideal immigrants. It is presumed they will transition effectively from studying to participating in the workforce because they would have relevant post-secondary credentials and have already adjusted to Canadian society through their academic training (Scott et al., 2015). However, employment opportunity remains fuzzy even for students in academic fields traditionally known for high employment rates.

Many participants like Bill, were concerned about the prospects of obtaining

future employment. Bill commented, "some people told me it will be difficult, priority for

Canadian." While many participants were worried about landing Canadian employment,

some indicated they neither knew, nor had the knowledge resources of where or how to

start the search for employment. Carlie was not at all confident about how to find future

employment, let alone, land a position. She explained:

> Actually, I am very confused about this. Before I came [here] I was thinking
> about this problem, by myself, I don't know how, I couldn't find a connect and I
> was considering that if we were graduate of Master of Management what do I do?
> What can I do?

It appears that such confusion is unfortunately a common conceptual footprint for many

international students. Feelings of uncertainty, skepticism and shaky employment

prospects surely pose as a burden and barrier to adequately adjust and transition into the

local labour market. I told Carlie I was slightly unclear with her response because she had

indicated her first country of choice to work in was China. She then clarified:

> I have worked for 6 years in China. I know how the system works there, so there
> is no problem, but here I'm still trying to find how the system works, I find it
> little, and it would take a lot of time to know the working system.

Such feelings are consistent with Scott et al.'s (2015) findings of international students'

strong belief in the importance of learning Canadian workplace norms so they may

engage in practices demonstrating their integration; ideally resulting in securing

employment. International students' unawareness and inexperience with the job search

methods, the local job market and work culture norms make it very difficult for them

attain meaningful work (Wall et al., 2017). This illustrates that international students'

"lack of resources is a reflection of [their] low power status in the society and job

market" (Calder et al., 2016, p. 100).

The following series of participants are grouped together because of their highly

emotional responses. These participants raised the volume of their speech or displayed

frustration through gestures such as, eye rolling, waving arms in the air, placing hands

over their face or head, looking down or beyond me in deep reflection. While throwing

his hands in the air, Bart commented, "at the same time people say it's hard to find a job,

on the other side people say Canada needs more professionals, bla...bla…bla…really

confusing." Carol reached out to friends who had graduated; some of which had found

jobs in their field and others who were still in search and had taken on a temporary job.

Carol responded, "some of my friends give me the feedback and they said it's very hard

to find a job because there's a lot of excellent students from global [globally]." Like

Carol, Dylan anticipated the challenge of not only competing with domestic, but also

other international students who were in pursuit of Canadian employment. Dylan

admitted:

> I need to go to big cities. I think it will be difficult competing with domestic,
> Chinese, Indian people. I will try here but if I can't, I won't be sad … I'll go back
> to Mexico. In Mexico, I have my family.

Dexter believed the prospects of securing field-related employment were low. He referred

to the countless number of his Punjabi friends who were disappointed after graduation. In

an angry tone, Dexter professed:

> I'm very frustrated; 90% of Punjabi students when they graduate, drive trucks.
> The school is missing teaching us the practical skills that connects to
> employment. The most important reason is to come here, graduate, get the job.

Carry described that she had become very stressed by reviewing the job descriptions in

her volunteer position and felt it would be difficult for her to find a job when graduating.

She expressed, "sure, I can find a job to become a waitress in restaurant, but I want to be

an excellent resource manager." The financial costs related to attain a university credential from a western university is tied to the commonsense that international students should surely be able to obtain desirable employment. However, employment barriers drive international students to take any job they can find. As one PhD student claimed, "I'll do it to survive but I'm not here to work in a coffee shop and do my PhD" (Calder, et al., 2016, p. 99).

Some international students who put forth additional effort to gain career related volunteer experience also meet obstacles. Bob, who lived in on-campus residence, attempted to become socially involved by attending residence floor meetings and "go [going] to International Student Centre to look for volunteering" but was unsuccessful because he did not understand what the specific volunteer role entailed. He also found that the staff were very vague in providing specifics. This uncertainty lead Bob to "give up" looking for other volunteer opportunities. Brad boldly continued in the same vein:

> There is a huge gap for work for international students. Canadian peers get co-op placement during the first round of review. Companies don't want to invest in international students because they're not sure whether they're going to stay. I had a very, very, very, very, very, very, very bad experience. I applied to approximately 80 jobs and got one interview; but my resume was supposedly stellar according to the co-op coordinator. Even the co-op coordinator had no idea with what happened, a big question mark. At one point I thought of getting out of co-op. If I left, I could graduate earlier, but I stayed with that it will help me.

In the meantime, he accepted a position with a local call centre and tried to use the practical knowledge and communication skills he developed. Transitioning from work to study through co-op seems to present issues for international students; whereby, it may be more challenging for them, than domestic students, to gain access to off-campus professional and networking opportunities (Scott et al., 2015). Professional networking relationships have become an increasingly key factor in learning about workforce

opportunities and gaining a firm footing on the path to employment. It is then not difficult

to anticipate that the lack of cooperative education options bar international students from

gaining relevant work experience and contribute to their under-preparedness for working

in Canada.

Suggested university support to secure Canadian employment. The

participants in the focus group discussed what they thought could be useful methods to

help international students gain firmer footings to participate in the Canadian labour

market. The focus of their discussion was around institutional support in the form of

expanding opportunities for international students to utilize both academic program

related knowledge and develop soft-skills. Participant 1 said:

> Universities can offer the co-op program to help international students find
> Canadian employment. It allow students to better understand about the working
> system. Beside, universities can offer some information about employment for
> students so that they have opportunities to know the recruitment information in
> time.

Participant 7 explained:

> Universities can help us find jobs by introducing international students for some
> companies in advance before they graduate. It is helpful for companies to know
> more about international students' working level. International students can also
> learn how the system works in advance so it won't take a long time to get to know
> the system.

While the University does include co-op programming, it appears that the traditional

practice of student co-op student placements may need to be reviewed to meet

international students need to better integrate within Canadian work culture. Participant 2

said:

> Universities should provide correct skills of employment to help international
> students find Canadian employment. International students lack of employment

skills which lost a number of opportunities in finding a career. The school is missing to teach practical skills of employment to international students.

The point here is the suggested gap between international student expectations of universities in employment preparation and the extent to which international students feel they are supported. However, the sub-text is that although students may benefit from soft-skills training, there is no list of "correct skills" to guarantee employment. And, if there were such a list, it is highly probable that native-like English fluency, perceived workplace fit and other qualities reflective of the dominant culture would be included that would still prevent international students from landing Canadian employment.

Participant 4 described:

> Most international students are very good because they come from different counties and learn different cultures, even more language. In order to survive in this city, they work hard, but they lack an opportunity. School should give international students more job guidance, tell them about the job market in Canada, and help them better adapt to market needs.

A predominant barrier is employers' unwillingness to hire international students. Employer hesitation to hire international students because of their assumptions that "international students have skills or communication gaps" (Wall et al., 2017, p. 143) is an issue which needs further consideration at the institutional level. When higher education is designed as a product for purchase, it positions international students – as consumers; expecting to gain the marketed and embodied feature of the product, which is Canadian employment. However, this is not the case. International students subscribe to the commonsense narrative that their international study experience is the backdrop that will better situate them to compete in the global labour market; but they are met only with a series of challenges barring entry to the Canadian workforce.

The need to gain permanent residence status. What seemed even more

burdensome for participants was a sense of family pressure for them to land Canadian

employment as this was the first prerequisite step toward obtaining permanent residency.

With permanent resident status, bringing relatives to Canada would be possible. For

many students from China, their parents selected Canada for their study destination with

the intent to eventually immigrate or live in both countries for extended months. Bob

explained that as the only child in his family, his parents invested a lot in his education

and therefore, "owed" it to them to fulfill their wish of visiting and eventually moving to

Canada. Bob remarked:

> My family give up everything for me to be here. So I must repay them. Their wish
> and my wish is to live here. If I cannot do this I will fail. I cannot fail. But I see
> my friends cannot find job when they graduate. Some go back to China and they
> tell me their parents embarrass of them. I don't think this is true for me, but I
> don't want to take a chance.

Clearly, to remain in Canada post-graduation, these students must have access to

meaningful and relevant work experience. The vicious cycle of not being able to get a job

without Canadian work experience, and not being able to get Canadian work experience

without landing a job compounds students' study abroad anxiety and leads them to

question whether they have any chance to secure Canadian employment.

Despite students' overwhelming desire to work in Canada after graduation, many

were realistic that it was highly improbable. For most participants, returning to their

country of origin seemed like a consolation prize. While moving back 'home' would be

familiar and a socially comforting milieu, it was not students' first choice. Drake

explained his worry: "I really don't want go back China. People will think I'm failure –

maybe they [long pause] will think my mark no good [and] that's why I can't find a job."

Connie also described her concern: "I think a lot about my future, especially if I come [go] back China. I will be happy because I'm with my family and friends, but I will feel like I did not reach my goal. I don't like that feeling." Participants' understood that although having a Canadian degree held great value in their country of origin, the high level of employment competition reduced this value since increasing numbers of international students obtained international degrees. Both Don and Daniel were from India and concluded they did not have any advantage over other students returning to India with a Canadian credential. Don noted, "We will all have the same thing, that doesn't make me unique." He continued:

> We all left to get foreign degree and goal to work, live, have family in Canada. Now if we all go back – oh man – we screwed even more. Companies will have the best students to choose and because of competition, salary will go down.

Like Don, Daniel believed there was "no reason to return to India for work." Daniel explained:

> You have to understand our population is out of control. It doesn't matter what degree you have, from what country or even how many degrees. There, you need connection to have a good job. So if you don't know people in the right job, you don't get the job, even if you're one of the Indian gods.

As the number of international students from emerging countries continue to pursue Canadian higher education and fail to attain post university Canadian employment, they face heightened competition to join the labour market in their home country because of the growing number of international students returning home with foreign credentials. From higher education internationalization, "the internationalization of choice was born, and privileged individuals were able to 'opt-out' of competitive domestic education systems, in favour of 'overseas' alternatives" (Waters, 2012, p. 124). However, after completing their academic studies and spending tens of thousands of dollars, many

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international students are forced to opt back into the competitive domestic labour industry with little assurance as to whether they will be successful in finding employment.

Interest for Choosing Canada as the Study Abroad Destination

In the participants' accounts of their interests for choosing Canada as their study abroad destination, three common reasons were expressed: (a) high quality education, (b) job opportunity and (c) emotional and physical safety.

High quality education. Access to the perceived high Canadian education quality is seen as a way for professional advancement and enhancing employability. All participants in this research study held a strong belief that Canadian universities deliver high quality education. As Participant 9 stated, "I am studying in Canada because Canada has highest quality of education." Many participants compared learning in Canada to learning in their country of origin and perceived the greatest differences were the range of diverse available resources, teaching methods and career related opportunities associate with a Canadian degree. Participant 8 explained:

> I choose to study in Canada because of my major. Canada is near the USA and both countries have rich industrial experience and history. Engineering students here can get more opportunities. In my original campus in China, we don't have developed teaching facilities to support our researching, so I choose to go to a developed country. Fortunately, my family can afford it.

Moreover, Participant 4 added, "Canada is developed country which have a higher education quality than China. I can experience different teaching method and use better teaching facilities in Canada, which is helpful for my future study." Participant 5 echoed, "The reason why that I choose to study in Canada because the high quality of education. The education system of Canada is more advance than other countries, professors help students to use their own thinking to solve problems." The webpage, "Why Study in Canada" on the EduCanada (2017) website persuasively states:

> Under Canada's highly dynamic and hands-on academic environment, you will not only acquire knowledge and skills in analysis and communication, but you will also learn how to express yourself, demonstrate your creativity, and develop your self-confidence! Teachers and professors are always available and eager to help with lessons, and studies fuse academic excellence with interaction and collaboration in the classroom.

Part and parcel of international students' view of 'high quality education' is the "privilege of meeting leading experts and members of the academic elite who they wouldn't' get to meet" (Kim, 2012, p. 469) in their home country. While it may be the case that Canada is a land of academic and employment opportunities, for many international students, the reality is that they are faced with several obstacles including language barrier, limited socio-cultural integration and employment exclusion.

Job opportunity. Despite their current knowledge and frustration regarding Canadian employment opportunities, the participants shared that they were originally motivated to study in Canada because of the job opportunities they had thought or "imagined" to exist. Participant 2 noted, "Canada afforded more job opportunities to international students." Participant 6 said:

> Studying in Canada can learn more and get more opportunities in the job-hunting. It is more important for graduate students to master the second language and have the master diploma. More companies focus more on their degree so candidates are supposed to have a high degree and good at speaking English. The more I can learn, the more opportunities I will get.

Participant 8 commented: "When you graduate from Canadian school you could find a job easy." Participant 1 explained, "Work in my country, China is a big competition to find a job. Even if you have already graduate from a Master, you cannot find a very appropriate job very quickly." Even though participants are now aware that the job opportunities are not as broad as what they might have previously believed, they would like to continue their studies and "try to find a job." Thus, international students accept to

continue to take on financial burden, knowing full-well that their chances of landing full-time employment related to their field of study is rather slim. Central to the reproduction of power is the reliance on actors to accept the view of the dominant (Nolan, 2012). In this case, international students are disadvantaged by the many socio-cultural and linguistic hurdles. They accept their position of being disadvantaged because it is the normalized way to attempt to gain cultural capital to acquire economic capital. Thus, "cultural capital not only shapes a position in a filed, it is also an important source of potential inequity in either privileging or excluding access to developing further capital" (Wall et al., 2017, p. 144).

Emotional and physical safety. International students tend to find comfort in racially diverse communities (Houshmand, et al., 2014). The cultural milieu of Canada in general was a motivating factor for some of the international students when determining their study abroad destination. Participant 8 said, "Canadian is friendly, there are a variety of nations located in Canada. I can feel every different culture. It is unforgettable experience. I would have chances to make a lot of friend who come from different countries." Studying in a safe environment was an important factor for many of the participants. Participant 1 noted:

> As a developed country, Canada is an ideal place to live and study. Canadian undergraduate education is similar to American, but Canadian governments ban guns to the public, which provides a safe environment to students. Fair weather is also an important reason.

Participant 2 noted, "Safety is put in the first position when international students choose to study in Canada. For example, compared with America, guns are banned in Canada. There were have less violent accidents in Canada." Participant 3 said, "Canada is safer than other countries. For example, students who live in the U.S. may worry themselves

about being shot by others because people are allowed bring guns in the U.S." Participant 5 said, "Besides, Canada air quality is much better than China and the climate is very suitable for human to live." Participant 7 added, "Canada is a more safe country than the United States. In Canada, there is no many fights and less accident about shooting." Participant 10 said, "The crime rate is lower than the US and residences are kind for international students." Participant 11 noted:

> I prefer studying in Canada which has suitable climate and comfortable environment. There are lots of trees to create fresh air and people less to see some rubbishes on the street. Canada is more safe because every American can buy a gun. Parents will not allow their children to study in America that they worried their kids will be killed by gun.

Participant 12 agreed:

> Canada is very safe country which is not support to have guns, compare with America. I don't need to worry about that I will be shot in some public place. My parents don't need to worry that if I am in danger in Canada.

With increasing cultural and racial tensions in the US, more international students are opting to select Canada for their study abroad destination.

Interest for Choosing to Study at the University

  Academic major and city benefits. Like any good shopper, international students looking for a bargain, valued the balance between reputable academic programs offered at the University and its lower tuition costs compared to other institutions. The participants were Participant 7 said, "[the University] is famous for Engineering and my major is water supply." Participant 9 said:

> I want to learn how to create a computer program, this my dream. I am an Art student in China, so I can't study computer science in China. I applied to many universities out of country, then [the University] approved me.

For some students, the hope is to combine a past area of academic study, with a perceived low economic return, with an academic program which may make themselves for appealing in the labourforce. Academic programs that fall within the faculty of engineering at the University remain to be highly sought after. For example, according to the 2017 Common University Data Ontario (CUDO), 232 of 1 186 applicants (domestic and international), selected a form of engineering as their first choice. Participant 3 noted:

> I major in Engineering Automobile design, which is the most advanced major in the University. [The University] has the best automotive engineering in all of Canada, and there are many car manufactures working with the [University]. So it is much easier to find a engineering job in [this city].

Participant 4 stated:

> The University suits me the best because my major is mechanical engineering. The engineering department is one of the strongest department in [the] University. It means that my academic ability will be well trained here.

Participant 1 noted, "I'm a student who study in biomedical [engineering], this is the great major in University that are plenty of researches was published every year."

> For other students, pre-academic English language pathway programs have become a major incentive to apply to the University as it relieves the burden of proving English proficiency through standardized tests. Participant 10 explained:

> I received the offer at first and I cannot wait for other school. At that time, I just worried about my IELTS score, but the University only gave me 2 terms [Pre-Academic English] courses, I do not have to study IELTS.

Participant 11 admitted:

> The fee of University is lower and it offers the [Pre-Academic English] education for international students. Compared with other universities in Canada, the education level is high as same as them, but studying in University costs less money. Students are provided the [Pre-Academic English] courses to improve their English skills to guarantee they can take part in the academic program.

Although institutional reputation and cost are primary factors influencing international students' decision on which school to select, overall campus aesthetics also play an important role. The University has been ranking as one of the Best Choice Schools (BCS) for its "aesthetics, useable student space, environmental friendliness and attractive mix of historic and modern architecture" ("[University] Named Among Most Beautiful Universities in Canada", 2018). Participant 2 explained, "The [University] has peaceful study environment. [This city] is a quiet and slowly city, students who study in the University live and study in this environment will pay more attention to their studying." Participant 6 said, "[This city] is a very beautiful city, silent, slow, I can experience the different lifestyle with my hometown, and it is not very cold in winter." Participant 8 commented, "[This city] is a small city so we can cost less money on life than any other cities, products here is cheaper than others." Participant 4 and 5 chose to study in this small city for its proximity to the US. Participant 5 said, "Living in small cities can help people slow down and enjoy their life. [The] University is nearby the US. It's easy to go to the US."

CHAPTER 5 - DISCUSSION

The aim of this study was to explore NNES international undergraduate and graduate students' Canadian university schooling experience through a qualitative methodological research inquiry approach. The explorative goal was to unravel the complexities and contradictions in higher education internationalization vis à vis the mutual understanding, revenue generating and skills' migration internationalization rationales.

For this study, I defined the term internationalization as: the application of a wide range of activities to (a) broaden English communication skills and cultural awareness for Canadian economic participation, (b) integrate global perspectives in curricula for enhanced student responsiveness and (c) offer cross-cultural interaction for meaningful relationship building. The research sought to answer the following questions:

1. How do students perceive their in-class learning?
2. How do students describe their cross-cultural interaction?
3. How do students understand the purpose of cross-cultural engagement?

In addressing each research question, the overlap in themes cannot be overlooked. However, to answer each question, the discussion of findings is organized according to the three research questions. The discussions are structured into following main headings: The Commonsense of English-Medium, High Quality Education; On the Periphery – Caught in a Space of In-betweenness; and Friendship Redefined – Amassing Cultural Capital.

RQ1. How Do Students Perceive Their In-Class Learning?

The Commonsense Experience of English-Medium, High Quality Education

Acceptance of fear. NNES international students accept their endured fear or discomfort in communicating in English as a part of their in-class schooling experience. English language proficiency is a typical on-going concern for NNES speaking international students regardless of being an undergraduate or graduate student (Poyrazil & Grahme, 2007). English language communication barriers can significantly influence international students' overall university experience (Batorowicz, 1999; Bretag, Horrocks & Smith, 2002; Snow-Andrade, 2006; Robertson et al., 2000). NNES international students report that their English language proficiency is a major factor in their apprehension to communicate with other international and especially, domestic students (Andre de Araujo, 2011). For example, one Malaysian student shares her anxieties and states that "I have the feeling that my English is not as good as other local students and fear that they won't understand what I mean" (Robertson et al., 2000, p. 7). Other findings suggest that NNES international students are "reluctant (or unable) to contribute to tutorial discussions" (Bretag, Horrocks & Smith 2002, p. 58); consequently, leaving such students to feel further isolated (Swagler & Ellis, 2003). However, NNES international students who are confident to engage in English oral communication with domestic students face a different type of challenge, whereby both their in and out of classroom exposure to Canadian English speakers is so limited that they do not have enough opportunity to improve their oral communication (Liu, 2011).

In this study, participants' view of holding themselves to be the most responsible for overcoming the fear to communicate in English suggests and gives a glimpse into a

potentially unfavorable learning environment. To emphasize, what participants wanted to

diminish was their sense of fear to communicate. Even though participants focused on

sharing approaches to improve English communication skills, their purpose of improving

was based on reducing feelings of embarrassment and inferiority. In most cases, it is

unrealistic to presume that NNES international students will attain error-free English

communication. The English language is a value laden symbolic marker of cultural

capital. It is suggested that because NNES international students' English communication

is known to be flawed to various degrees, the perception of their cultural capital value is

understood as being second class. In addition, when participants see themselves as the

major agents to overcoming their fear of using English, they dismiss anyone outside of

the self as a contributor to developing such fear in the first place. Therefore, the socio-

environmental makeup in which NNES international students function requires attention.

Involuntary placement in monocultural academic programs. Most

international graduate students in this study reported studying in programs whereby

almost all students were from China. Dean believed that neither the University, nor the

recruiting agent who assisted with completing the application paperwork provided

sufficient information about academic program options. As a graduate student, Dean was

conflicted about the international master of education cohort he had experienced before

switching to the mainstream program option. Like some other international students in

Li's (2013) study, Dean did not know he could apply to the mainstream, thesis program

option. Prior to studying in the international cohort program stream, Dean anticipated that

he would have been studying with peers from different global regions; hence, the title

'international'. Dean shared his dilemma:

> I started in the master of education program and I feel so strange, only Chinese. I don't feel like it is real program. My friends think this program just for university to make money- I agree with them. I had to think about my future. I want to study PhD and work in good university in my future life. I started doing some research and found that I cannot apply to PhD with this degree. I talk with my girlfriend and I switch to thesis. It was very difficult process to change, but I have to do it for my future.

The commonsense that "international students are wealthy conveyed that they were only accepted to the university for revenue and that their needs were not important to address on a systemic level" (Houshmand, 2014, p. 382). The CBC news, *Canada's Post-Secondary Schools Exploiting International Students, Says Recruiter* (Maru, 2018) reveals the claim that higher education institutions simply do not care about the quality of education service provided to international students and are focused on getting international students to study in Canada simply to generate revenue. The feeling that revenue generation is the underlying motive to enrolling international students to international cohort academic programs at Canadian universities is spreading among foreign students and causing concern over the legitimacy of internationalization beyond a revenue generating machine.

The proliferation of culturally segregated academic programs are gaining increasing attention. Canadian universities with a large proportion of "Asian students have been referred to as Asian universities in colloquial language, and typically are seen as difficult, asocial, and unattractive to White students" (Houshmand, et al., 2014, p. 377). Such international student segregated programs appear to have been replicated across academic disciplines. The 2011 news release, "[The University's] master's Biotechnology Program Targets Foreign Students" noted: "The program is, of course, open to anyone, but the curriculum was tailor-made for students from China and India." While no additional explanation detailing the "tailor-made curriculum" was provided, it

begs the question that perhaps the only tailored aspect of the program was focused

international student recruitment from the two highest population dense countries- China

and India. The extent to which universities balance their aggressive international student

enrolment initiatives with meeting international student expectations is an issue that

reflects the "broader marketization of western universities" (Anderson, 2015, p. 169). If

higher education internationalization truly aims to incorporate "international,

intercultural, and/or global dimensions into the content of the content of the curriculum as

well as the learning outcomes" Leask (2009, p. 209), this gap clearly indicates a

contradiction between internationalization policy and practice.

A quality product for consumption. International education has become a

competitive global industry driving international students to pursue Canadian credentials

and jockey for positions in the labour market upon graduation. Brad discussed:

> As we know education is very important. Nowadays thousands of students want
> to get an education in foreign countries such as Canada, USA, Great Britain, and
> etc. This is kind of invest. For the best future students especially, international
> students must spend almost ten or twenty thousand dollars per semester.

Canada's International Education Strategy (2014) states: "Canada is highly regarded for

its strong education model at all levels … And Canada has earned its place in the global

community" (p. 16). Li and Tierny (2013) note that Indians, Chinese, Saudi Arabians,

and Thais hold Canadian higher education with high regard. Participant 8 noted that

attaining Canadian education credentials means access to "technical foundation to shape

our ideas … expert education can lead to handsome salary in core field which leads to

better and successful future." According to Participant 2, Canadian universities "teach

students to do their future jobs without any mistakes." Participant 4 believed that

Canadian universities facilitate "students [to] learn with [from] good faculty and [learn]

technique which help to develop a skills for future. Teachers have good knowledge and skill about subject." The alleged need for a knowledge-based economy positions higher education at the hub around which national competitiveness is assembled and grounds it as the "pillar of national economic development and a major contributor to a nation's GDP" (The Illuminate Consulting Group, 2009, p. 29). Participant 10 stated: "Working together. One can improve quicker by working with the one who is superior." International students' normalized understanding of the "academic standards and the measurement of education quality is a form of Western domination" placed upon international students (Abbott, 2009, p. 12). Such values tend to reproduce established order of classes with resulting power differences in social relations between social classes and among nations (Rasmussen, 1996).

As conceptualized by the participants in this study, high quality education is that which leads to the development of employable skills. Participant 7 stated; "If we have high quality learning, we would get success in the future." Here, the notion of success is largely tied to obtaining economic capital. Success indicators for international students and university institutions hinge upon the extent to which graduated students as the workforce, can earn and contribute to the national economy. Such interplay between agent and structure demonstrates neoliberal rationality is embedded in the belief that when "economics drives politics" (Giroux, 2010, p. 1) and education, structures and agents will support an international education plan built upon "transforming citizens into consumers" (Giroux, 2010, p. 1). While students' perceptions of their self-worth in relation to economic values is not likely to disappear, it is more likely to be reinforced through the contemporary culture of consumership. Herbert Marcuse, a key philosopher

contributing to the work of critical theory noted: "If the individual were no longer compelled to prove himself on the market, as a free economic subject, the disappearance of this kind of freedom would be one of the greatest achievements of civilization" (1964, p. 14). In turn, higher education internationalization is "a hegemonic mode of discourse" (Harvey, 2007, p. 2) centering on the symbols and meanings ascribed to a competitive international education market, which has "pervasive effects on the ways we interpret, live in and understand the world" (Harvey, 2007, p. 2).

Desire for professor-student interaction. Interacting with professors in class was an important element contributing to a perceived positive in-class learning. In most instances participants expressed desire to spend more time with professors and wished the number of course hours were extended to enable further contact. Bill asked me, "When you present this research, can you tell them that we want more time with profs?" He further explained:

> It's not bad now, but I have a lot of students in my class and I want more time to talk prof and get more knowledge from him. It's hard to meet after class because I'm busy with other class and he is busy with his stuff. More class time would be good.

Bart also wanted more class hours. Unlike Bill, Bart felt the current number of hours was insufficient compared to the tuition fee he paid and viewed "the University is irresponsible." Bart noted:

> In my program we meet three hours every week. That's not enough. I pay a lot to study here and I can't accept three hours. I think office time is good, but not same as class time. Class time need to be double for sure. Yes, at least six hours for one course.

Another participant's wish was to develop closer learning relationships with his professors. It was noted that the perceived cultural gaps between participants and their

professors played a role in participants' less than desired interaction with their professors. In these cases, participants did not know how to address the issue for fear that it may lead to professors' perceiving them unfavourably. Participant 9 described a time when he thought he and his professor were saying the same idea, but the professor was adamant that the participant's logic was "wrong." That experience made him feel "less smart, like I'm crazy." He no longer wanted to answer questions in subsequent classes out of concern that the same interaction could take place. Participant 9 elaborated:

> Professors need to know what their students need. Experienced professors can accurately understand students' weaknesses. Then they help students to analyze and deal with this weakness. In particular, professor should be more patient for their student when they don't understand the knowledge or ask some questions.

While international student mobility is supposed to be associated with rewards (Findlay et al.,, 2012), it is common for international students to "perceive themselves as inferior not because of their abilities, but because of their transnational positioning" (Kim, 2012, p. 461). Limited or lack of faculty cultural awareness or sensitivity can drive tenuous relationships between professors and students. The everyday student-professor interactions are important to international students (Kim, 2012) because it can reduce the extent to which international students undergo academic shock derived from the necessity to grasp a different education system (Martirosyan et al., 2015). Steinman (2009) recommends that western professors should not expect foreign students to convert to the anglocentric conventions of their new academic communities. Instead, faculty should attempt to be more amenable to how they foster relationships with international students from non-western academic environments.

Differential tuition as praxis. Despite participants' acknowledgment of and frustration with high international tuition fees, an alarming majority of participants

perceived the tuition costs were justifiable. Participants believed that the revenue generated from international tuition would be directly invested into institutional resources and infrastructure. As an example, Dale said, "I pay a lot of money in my academic that mean I can enjoy the high-quality courses and teachers." He continued: "Personally, I think fees is a little bit expensive. But it's ok. Because I think the academic skill is play an important role in my Canada life." The high cost associated with employing 'quality' faculty is justified and confirmed by the University of Toronto's executive director of enrolment services: "Having the best faculty and the best programs costs money, and our students of course cover some of those costs." (Mauer, 2018). Dean also reported that his graduate program in education was "a little expensive, but useful." Bill aligned technological resources with the need for differential tuition. He stated: "The academic tuition fee is a little bit expensive for international student. It is because the University is using latest technology which helps the instructor to information in easy way to the students." Amanda also appeared to support differential tuition because she believed the funds would be used to build university resources. Amanda noted: "Tuition fees are up to the mark, not that low or not that high. Level of education is high then, academic tuition fees touch the sky. My fee can help university for better expansion." Moreover, Carry, a graduate student from China claimed:

> Although students should pay a lot of money on the tuition fee per term, tuition fee is important for the quality of education. On the one hand, the money will support the infrastructure. In the students daily study life, the variety of infrastructure is necessary. Students pay money on the tuition that is give to the government. The government will pay more attention to the education.

In addition, Clair spoke to the cost associated with retaining quality professors:

> I think the well-know universities have many famous professors, so I pay many academic tuition fee is helpful for my school's teach system. For instance, a

famous professor has many professional knowledge, we can learn many information from this teacher. In other words, the academic tuition can used to build our university and some academic researches. Pay many fees means we have more useful resources.

The sizeable educational and social capital international students anticipate gaining from pursing Canadian education (Anderson, 2015) justifies and normalizes the weighty differential tuition. The complete deregulation of international differential tuition has become a convenient way for the federal government to generate revenue at the global cost of shifting education, as a universal public good, to a marketed commodity for sale. A point to highlight, is Carry's and other participants', presumption that revenue derived from tuition will be reinvested to advance educational services. However, revenue generated from differential tuition does not translate into superior educational quality in a climate of declined federal funding and reductions in non-federal funding such as, endowments and non-governmental grants (Anderson, 2015).

High quality education standards along with claimed affordable tuition and living expenses compared with other countries such as the United States (EduCanada, 2017), attract international students to study in Canada. Gleason (1999) examines how the concept normal is illustrated and demonstrated in social institutions, such as education, and becomes the constructed commonsense knowledge of reality which then shapes and impacts our views and actions. The social conditions which construct reality are taken for granted because they are embedded in our everyday life experiences and thus, become camouflaged. Because dominant social interests are concealed, we do not see the need to neither question nor validate this reality as we come to believe that these conditions are 'true' (Berger & Luckmann, 1967). International students' approval of differential tuition becomes a part of:

> The set of core values and discourses of a social practice field that have come to be viewed as natural, normal, and inherently necessary, thus working to ensure that the arbitrary and contingent nature of these discourses are not questioned nor even recognized. (Nolan, 2012, p. 205)

This normalized understanding of the monetary value of Canadian education conceals higher education institutions as gatekeepers regulating access to capital.

RQ2. How Do Students Describe Their Cross-Cultural Interaction?

On the Periphery – Caught in a Space of In-Betweenness

Internationalization through international student recruitment begs the question whether higher education internationalization negligently marginalizes NNES international students during schooling and beyond in two main ways. First, unmonitored internationalization excuses institutions from taking responsibility for identifying gaps between the marketing of internationalization and the lived schooling experiences of international students when it comes to meaningful cross-cultural engagement. Second, internationalization contributes to NNES international student marginalization because the host society is unprepared to have such students participate socio-economically in the long term. In reviewing a range of internationalization related plans and reports, it was difficult to locate ideas related to investing in the host institution or society so that it would be better equipped to respond to internationalization. Following this section, I introduce four issues that emerged from the findings related specifically to gaps.

Issue 1 – The need to feel understood. Whether by domestic students or faculty, international students have a strong need to feel that they are understood. What is meant here includes but goes beyond considering their English language communication barriers to comprehend their ideas. It involves developing awareness of the implication of culture on their approaches to learning, relating to content and situating their experiences

within a larger and often unfamiliar educational context of the host society. Lack of

faculty recognition of the cultural differences in academic adjustment international

students are challenged with (Scott et al., 2015), leave many students feeling isolated. It

is moreover crucial to note that international student isolation is not quickly resolved by

simply having them in the same classroom as domestic students. Meaningful contact

between host nationals and international students require careful strategic planning

(Safdar & Struthers, 2003), by academic department heads and professors in different

disciplines to identify international students' needs and "provide appropriate support by

incorporating various pedagogical strategies" (Martirosyan et al., 2015).

Many international students want increased opportunity to share about their

culture. As an example, from Houshmand et al.'s (2014) findings, a Korean student

reported feeling isolated; that "her presence on campus was not visible, wanted, or

acknowledged" (p. 382). However, without careful planning around the ways in which

international students are afforded with opportunity to communicate may impact its

overall meaningfulness. For example, in an online University publication ("International

Students Eager to Share Stories of Home", 2018), international student voices from eight

countries "share about their home country with Canada." The story excerpts are:

> [India] I want to share with Canadians about the strength of faith which people
> have in my country, as huge number of religious places are situated in my
> country. Moreover, I also want to share about the colourful festival and the way of
> celebration as it is very unique and interesting.
>
> [Pakistan] People think that Pakistan is an extremist country, but we are the most
> lovable people you will ever come across. I belong to Pathan ethnicity – one
> major ethic group of Pakistan. We have our own culture and are known for our
> hospitality, and the region is known for its beauty all over Pakistan.
>
> [Iran] Even though Iran is portrayed negatively due to its authoritarian Islamic
> regime, this regime is only a small insignificant part of our history…the majority

of the Iranians oppose the clerics' brutal ruling and their archaic laws and practices.

[South Korea] I love cooking different countries' food, so I would like to share different Korean food experience at different places, like street markets or classic Korean restaurants for various kinds of food that they might not have heard of.

[Philippines] Philippines has many perfect beaches and turquoise waterfalls. It has the number-one island in world – Palawan – and 2 000-year-old rice terraces.

[Bangladesh] My country is a fast-developing country with its GDP growth around 6.5 per cent. We are a small country in terms of land area but we have been facing the problems related with over-population since independence. However, despite our own challenges of dealing with so many people and limited resources, we have given shelter to around 1 million Rohingya refugees in our country, who escaped mass murder and violence from their own country.

[Sweden] We have the same amount of snow as Canada, more coffee and a dry sense of humour. Sweden is more than just IKEA and ABBA. The countryside offers a peaceful environment with meadows, forests and class red wooden houses with white trims and is a must to visit when in Sweden.

[Nigeria] Nigeria is the country with the highest population in Africa. We are an English-speaking country. We are very hospitable and we believe in academic success. Hard work is our watch word. Every country has her own challenges. So does Nigeria, but the best thing is that I am proud to be a Nigerian.

In light of international students' perceived overall opportunity to meaningfully engage with domestic students (Guo & Guo, 2017; Scott et al., 2015), it is understandable they would want to take almost any opportunity to share about their culture; put themselves out there so-to-speak. Unfortunately, university publications aimed at promoting and potentially developing intercultural exchanges can inadvertently reinforce international vis à vis domestic student separation. The 'us' and 'them' symbolic discourse is seen in the phrase '… asked some international students what they wanted to share about their home country with Canada.' Here, the characteristics that contribute to international student identity becomes understood as elements external to the commonsense construction of Canadian identity; even though, Canada's cultural makeup is based upon

the very same cultures of international students. Second, in these brief stories, no student names are linked to a given quote. Instead, their country of origin is used and functions as the sole marker of their identity. This approach reduces an international students' unique contribution and turns them into nameless participants from faraway lands, telling stories. Moreover, the flow of cultural sharing is unidirectional from international students to what may seem like a black hole disappearing without trace. This feeling is further magnified by the lack of corollary response from their domestic counterpart.

International students struggle with the tension to integrate into the host society while at the same time wanting members of the dominant culture to develop awareness and appreciation for their cultural heritage. As an example, the University's yearly "Celebration of [Cultures]" is a platform for international students to showcase some aspects of their culture. Despite the well-intended purpose of this event, University issued communication chronicling the attempted bringing together of the campus community ("Festival Opens Eyes to Colourful Kaleidoscope of Campus Cultures", 2018) reveals the harsh reoccurring subtext of limited domestic student interest in the lives of international students. In this example, three international students (Sri Lankan, Somalian and Pakistani) are quoted. First, the Sri Lankan student noted "no one really knows about our culture…this booth will help us to spread the world about who we are." Second, the Somalian student commented this was an opportunity to counter "negative misconceptions." Both these examples suggest they feel they are unknown, unfamiliar or perhaps even metaphorically invisible to the greater campus community. However, for those international student cultures that are known, or visible, certain characteristics or values have been placed upon them.

Issue 2 – The need for meaningful cross-cultural engagement. The benefits of meaningful cross-cultural engagement are easily understood. It has been reported that "students who have received exposure to international education have wider intellectual horizons and a greater ability to appreciate other perspectives that might come their way" (Yeravdekar & Tiwari, 2014, p. 207) either in their academic or professional career. It was extremely difficult for international students, especially those from East Asia, to meet and/ or develop friendships with domestic students. Students from China have traditionally been unhappy with the inadequate opportunity to meet and interact with Canadians (Li, 2013). This suggests that in response to limited intercultural interaction with domestic students, international students from countries with greater differences from the host cultures turn to their co-nationals which further solidifies their "high identification with the home culture" (Gareis, 2012, p. 321; Popadiuk & Arthur, 2004) and lead to "reduced involvement in the new environment" (p. 321). Here I propose that internationalization, at the implementation level, is divisive and discourages meaningful cross-cultural interaction; thus, failing to meet the mutual understanding internationalization rationale.

Paying little attention to the influence of multicultural based events, some university activities may reinforce the habit of racial groupings. The concept, 'multicultural' is different in meaning from 'multiculturalism'; where the latter is a political philosophy "of many cultures existing together in an atmosphere of respect and tolerance" (Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995, p. 61), and attempts to bring together students from diverse backgrounds in the academic environment. Establishing 'multiculturalism' as one of the key goals of internationalization in higher education, tends to be showcased through

'multicultural' related extra-curricular initiatives to make university campuses appear to be diversified to appeal to student populations from international regions. It is observed however, that such "practical demonstration[s] ... often reduce it [cultures] to trivial examples and artefacts ... such as eating ethnic foods" (Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995, p. 61). The *'value'* of such events is no more than photo opportunities to be used as artifacts to substantiate higher education institutions' partial fulfillment toward internationalizing their campuses (Stier & Borjesson, 2010). There is little dialogue at the administrative level regarding actual and meaningful interaction between students from different geographic demographics; and limited discussion around possible tensions existing between and among cultural groups (Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995; Ladson-Billings, 2005).

Issue 3 – The need to secure Canadian employment.

Prior to arriving to Canada to begin their academic studies, participants indicated they held a different perspective on access to Canadian jobs than they did after beginning studying in Canada. Whether through their own job searches or through witnessed accounts of their friends' failed attempts to secure employment, participants feared that their large financial investment in a Canadian degree would not readily translate into Canadian career opportunities in the field which they studied.

For many participants who identified Canada as their first-choice country to work in upon graduation, they had started conditioning themselves for a different reality. This reality involved returning to their country of origin. For some participants, the thought of returning home permanently was disappointing and for others, it was devastating. To illustrate, consider Carry who was extremely creative in creating volunteer opportunities

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for herself to understand Canadian workplace demands and "make connections." Despite

her optimistic disposition about the volunteering choices she made she did not believe

they would lead to, or make it easier for her to find a job in human resources. She

explained that there was an "invisible wall" between her and finding a job and she was

trying to find the "invisible doorknob" on the "invisible door" to go through the other

side. Carry recalled the emotions she felt each time reading a job description:

> At first I am excited because the job title sounds good, like 'human resource manager', or 'coordinator', or even 'consultant'. Then I start reading and I start to doubt because all jobs want minim three years' experience in human resource. I usually finish reading and feel like going to bed so I don't have to think about it. But I know it's not easy so I still send resume and nothing. I keep a book to track what job I apply and I have 72 jobs, 3 response, no interview. I will work harder and keep trying. My parents taught me never give up.

The stories about working in Canada international students had come to know

from family and family friends who had immigrated to Canada in earlier years often

contributed to the reasons for why they selected Canada to study in. Participant 3

commented that his uncle, from China, studied at a Canadian university in the mid-80s

and upon graduating with a master's in engineering landed full-time employment in

Canada almost immediately. The uncle became the leading resource and Canadian

contact for all other family friends to obtain information on how to send their relatives to

Canadian schools. Participant 3 anticipated his story would be different than his uncle's:

> I don't think I am lucky as my uncle. I know I'm just as smart and can work hard, but there is no work for me. I want to work in Canada, but I prepare that I need to go back to China, disappointing. I should do more research before I come to know what is going on in Canada. I'm not regret that I come, just sad that I can't work. If somebody want to hire me, it's miracle.

What was also evident in the participants' story telling was their balancing of the

excitement of studying in Canada with a lingering sense of sadness knowing that their

stay in Canada would be short lived upon graduation and they would not fulfill the dream

of living in Canada. As described in her earlier profile narrative, Catherine described

herself as a "stranger" trying to learn the "system." Like Participant 3, Catherine studied

engineering and felt her "hands tied" and that she had limited employment options. She

expressed her confusion:

> I don't know if I won't find job because I am international student and my
> English is not perfect or because there is not enough work for students, or maybe
> both? I don't know where I can find this information. I want to know because if
> reason is there is no enough work, that's better than if because I am international
> student because then I feel tricked. I would not come. I would choose another
> country, or maybe stay in China.

While many students revealed their overall confusion about the state of Canadian

employment, Dexter was simply "disgusted" with the whole matter. Dexter had a critical

stance that international students were lured to pursue Canadian education with false

information about the Canadian economy. He witnessed a countless number of friends

from his country of origin, India, who graduated and were not able to find academic

study field related work:

> I am shocked how this great Canada actually work. In India we have major
> corruption issue, but this – this is legal corruption. I have many friends, all
> graduate with masters and they drive taxi in Toronto. I did not come here to pay
> four times fees to drive taxi. Why? I ask my professors and they just tell me the
> economy is getting better. What does this mean for me? The tuition fee is a crime.
> We are not rich people. We pay more than Canadians and we have less chance to
> find work than Canadians. By the way, when I say work, I don't mean at gas
> station or grocery store.

The shortfall in Canadian employment is not an illusion. Although some

international students appear to be doing more homework to understand the Canadian

employment landscape, many are in the dark about job opportunities. As an example, Jeff

Ryback, the author of, What's Wrong With University: And How to Make it Work for You, responds in a Maclean's post (2009) to a prospective international student's query:

> I am an international student considering education in a college in Toronto. I am also depending on part time jobs to take care of my living expenses. Now that the announcement has been made that recession is over in Canada, is the situation still the same or got better now and how do you expect it to be in the near future. Thanks in advance.

While taking a step to ask about Canadian employment trends may be useful, depending on whether the organization responding is not also rooted in neoliberal agenda, the responses provided may be of little use to international students. The participants' perspectives and concerns about Canadian employment are relevant and like the reported experiences of international students who have graduated. A CBC news report titled, *Long Odds for International Students to Land a Job* (Toman, 2016) featured Navpreet Singh, a student from India who had graduated with a master's degree in electrical engineering and hoped to work as a network administrator. He described how his family had sold all their land to pay for his international differential tuition fee – three times the per semester base tuition for Canadian students. Although Singh viewed his education being worth the $9 000 per semester cost, his concern with finding gainful employment rose after graduation. Sing reported, "I was thinking, you do the degree you get the job," he said. "Back home there is so much competition and the pay scale is not accordingly [to qualifications]. That's why people think it's better to come outside" (Toman, 2016). As another example, in April 2017 the HuffPost published a news article, *Engineering Graduates Wait Up to 1 Year to Find Work*. This news piece about Shady Hashem, revealed his gloomy outlook to find Canadian employment as a mine engineer. Hashem, an international student originally from Egypt graduated with a master's degree in

engineering was frustrated with the lack or employer responses from approximately 50

jobs applied to. Hashem commented, "I'm applying everywhere, but I haven't heard back

from anybody yet, not even an email that says: 'Sorry, this position has been filled' …

That's very frustrating." With what seems to be a pattern in international student inability

to land meaningful, long term Canadian employment, the skills' migration rationale of

internationalization is far from being neutral or equitable in its implantation form.

Statistics Canada researchers, Feng Hou and Yuqian Lu (2017) investigated

Canadian educated individuals' earnings against foreign educated immigrants and the

Canadian-born population. Hou and Lu concluded Canadian educated immigrants "had

some moderate advantages in post-immigration earnings over foreign educated

immigrants" (p. 8), however "had large earnings gap with their Canadian-born

counterparts both in the initial years after graduation and in the long term" (p. 7). More

specifically, "relative to the Canadian-born population, proportionally more Canadian

educated immigrants did not work or had low earnings in Canada" (p. 16). The leading

factor contributing to earning potential was the market value of the work experience

Canadian educated immigrants had prior to obtaining permanent resident status (Hou &

Lu, 2017). Moreover, the newly enhanced Express Entry mechanism for choosing

economic immigrants considers Canadian work experience as a crucial qualification

requirement yet does not regard Canadian study experience as a criterion, or a

differentiating factor for selection (Bonikowska, Hou & Picot, 2016). Under this

circumstance, internationalization as a key component to Canada's international

education plan, disadvantages international students by recruiting them to pay

unregulated differential tuition to attend universities, disregarding their completed

Canadian education and using the criterion of Canadian work experience as the key factor in immigrant selection. The reasons for why some Canadian educated immigrants are able to secure high market value employment, while others are not, may be complex. However, the immigrant selection process is the final stage of immigrant filtering; favouring those with qualities in line with that of the dominant societies.

RQ3. How Do Students Understand the Purpose of Cross-Cultural Engagement?

Friendship redefined – Amassing cultural capital. The process for international students to cultivate cultural capital "involves endless struggle, negotiation, and achievement, a tension exacerbated by the ambiguity that accompanies their in-between position" (Kim, 2012, p. 458) as they transition to the dominant society. It has been typically known that friendship development between international and domestic students has been problematic. While this perspective is echoed in participant responses, a different understanding from what may have been traditionally imagined surrounding the importance of friendship emerged. It appears the two main themed motives for developing friendship with Canadian students are related to establishing professional networks and improving academic success. In this instance, the concept of friendship is a general term representing a way for international students to achieve pragmatic ways to amass cultural capital.

Establishing professional networks. When it comes to finding work, the reality is that it often depends on not only what one knows, but *who* one knows. International students have quickly caught on to this notion and are scrambling to meet host nationals to gain insider knowledge to effectively voyage through the labyrinth to Canadian employment. Bob interpreted that the purpose of building friendships was solely to

expand professional networks. Such networks "can tell you about jobs, give advice, more chance to get job." Although not successful in doing so, for Brad, it was significant to meet Canadians, "any Canadian I meet is a new interaction. It's important for me to learn the culture because I plan to stay here … learn how they think, conduct themselves." Brian recognized the benefit of making friendships was important to creating "international relationships." He understood 'international relationship' in terms of employment – knowing individuals in a given country to build professional networks to gain employment. In their quest to establish 'friendships', what international students are truly seeking is developing their cultural capital. Edgerton & Roberts (2014) argue that cultural capital includes "adaptive cultural and social competencies such as familiarity with relevant institutional contexts, processes, and expectations, possession of relevant intellectual and social skills" (p. 196). Amber also strongly believed that it was important for her to build friendships with students from different cultures because she "want to learn about cultures" but felt that "Canadians don't care." Building friendships for Amber is a way for her to gain knowledge and advice from others. Amanda perceived that it was easier to "find and a get a job" through professional networks and therefore, "beneficial to meet new people." Christine believed it was important to build professional networks, to help "share information about jobs … it's better for us to find a job." Danny viewed it was "very important" for students who wished to remain in Canada post study or who aimed to build Canadian based business relationships to establish friendships for the purpose of, "improving communication, working with others from different cultural backgrounds." For the majority of NNES international students, English language communication proficiency directly relates to employability (Arthur & Flynn, 2011;

Huang, Turner, & Chen, 2014; Scott et al., 2015). Valuing English ability, employer attitudes and perceptions of international student knowledge are often greatly influenced by the degree to which international students can demonstrate English native speaker like fluency and flexibility in language use. However, communication difficulties along with low confidence in language ability to collaborate and develop team work abilities create barriers for NNES international students to find employment opportunities (Scott, et al., 2015).

Improving academic success. Achieving academic success is certainly a concern for many NNES international students who have specifically gone abroad to obtain academic credentials. Aside from the commonly reported English language barriers international students' encounter, they also often experience academic culture shock (Martirosyan, et al., 2015). To reduce such anxiety, many participants sought to establish relationships with their domestic counterparts. Academic culture shock is a reality for many international students (Xu, 2008). Those especially from countries where teaching methods, communication styles and academic expectations are vastly different from the North American approach seem to be the most impacted (Duff et al., 2004; Scott et al., 2015). Examples of such differences may include the pace of lectures, assessment practices including solo and/or group presentations, and what constitutes academic dishonesty. Coupled with academic culture shock, NNES international students predict that their overall English language ability may place them at a disadvantage, compared to their domestic counterpart, when it comes to academic success. As a result, many international students studying in English-medium contexts search for ways to leverage

their learning by developing relationships with students from the host country as a form of academic support.

Participants readily spoke of the importance of making friends with domestic students. For example, Ben believed friendship building for the purposes of cultural exchange and academic support to be very important for students. Bob explained it is crucial to have "someone there to answer my question about how study in Canada works." Don acknowledged:

> I think it enrich my knowledge and broaden my horizon. Local students know what education system is like, what professors want from students. When I have local friend, I can ask 'hey man, is it cool if I do this in my presentation?' Without this, I am in the dark.

Other participants viewed they needed to better understand "Canadian culture" to gain understanding of the academic landscape. Dylan noted, "I don't want to limit the perspective of one country, different societies have different aspects and I need to listen to different stories from other countries and share ideas." He also pointed out, "International students see the logistical value in domestic students. Domestic students' needs to see the value in us." Dylan's struggle with wanting to and actually being open to learn about different perspectives while at the same time, perceiving that no one was interested in him or even valued the knowledge and experiences he had to offer is unfortunately a common and reoccurring reality for many international students. Other research studies (Andrade, 2006; Aune et al., 2011; Scott et al., 2015) report similar findings whereby international students experience the constant burden of feeling inferior to domestic students.

Summary

When reviewing the realities of higher education internationalization as experienced by NNES international students' Canadian university schooling experience, two out of three internationalization rationales do not seem to be fully actualized. First, the mutual understanding rationale falls short in facilitating international students' cross-cultural transition and adjustment to the host society. Second, the skills' migration rationale hinges upon the dominant societies' perception of international students' English language communication ability and is the underpinning factor influencing the extent to which they are viewed to have acculturated to the prevailing social norms. The only rationale which appears to be clearly realized is the revenue generating rationale which depends on deregulated differential tuition. Institutions executing internationalization through transnational student mobility must seek to understand NNES international student needs and the gaps derived from existing practice if internationalization is truly meant to bring about the benefits it advertises.

CHAPTER 6 – CONCLUSION

Higher education internationalization, as a significant part of Canada's national economic development strategy boasts its ability to contribute to cross-cultural student engagement, learning and collaboration, stimulate the economy and introduce relevant skilled labourers to the arguably shrinking domestic labour force. NNES international students are assumed to have experienced their Canadian postsecondary schooling in ways that have enhanced their intercultural integration with host nationals to facilitate mutual understanding, helped in their adjustment to society and prepared in their transition from academic study to the labour market. This study set out to qualitatively explore NNES international undergraduate and graduate students' Canadian university schooling experiences by investigating how they: (a) perceived their in-class learning; (b) described their cross-cultural interaction; and (c) understood the purpose of cross-cultural engagement to understand the application if higher education internationalization.

Thirty-two NNES international undergraduate and graduate students at the University participated in the study by completing a semi-structured interview that ranged between 45 minutes to 2 hours; with 12 participants completing one, 2 hour and half focus group. Despite the purposefully selected case of a highly multicultural higher education institution engaged in internationalization through international student recruitment, the findings from this study are not intended to generalize or reflect the wider international student schooling experiences at other schools within Ontario or nationally. The emergent themes from this study reflect the realities of NNES international undergraduate and graduate students at one Canadian university and suggest

several gaps between internationalization rationales and the experience of international students.

The emergent themes from the present study reflect that the lived experiences of NNES international undergraduate and graduate students do not necessarily line up with the higher education internationalization rationales beyond national economic revenue generation gained through international differential tuition. First, fundamental challenges in international students' social adjustment to academic culture and the broader Canadian employment landscape reinforces the powerful role that social capital plays for international students and the difficulties they face to access it. In turn, many international students seek to develop friendships with host nationals for the purposes of establishing professional contacts, improving their awareness of the academic culture and optimizing their socio-cultural functioning.

Second, the findings of this study challenge the mutual understanding and skilled migration rationales of internationalization. The mutual understanding rationale assumes that meaningful cross-cultural exchange facilitating innovation of ideas and greater understanding and appreciation of world views occurs by virtue of international student presence on campus. However, the reality for most international students in this study is that they are caught in a cycle whereby their self-perceived English communication barriers coupled with the lack of opportunity to meet or develop relationships with domestic students perpetuate their feelings of not being understood or of inability to socially integrate. This, then feeds back into reducing their self-confidence to attempt to communicate in English with members of the host society. In addition, 23 of the 32 international students in this study plan to work in Canada upon graduation. The skilled

migration rationale encourages the import of international students and positions them at the centre of the solution to the debated upcoming Canadian workforce shortage. According to this rationale, it is presumed that international students are the ideal participants to join the labour market as they would have graduated from academic backgrounds relevant to stimulating economic growth and the necessary skills to be effective workers. Unfortunately, there is no denying that incongruence exists between the claim of providing international students "with the guidance and with the knowledge and tools" (DFAIT, 2008, p. 12) needed and what international students experience in preparation to successfully transition to and acquire employment in Canada. The great potential that many international students will not obtain any form of employment related to their academic field of study is devastating for them; especially as this is the required first step to acquire permanent residence status in Canada.

Third, the unchecked exercise of higher education internationalization hinges on the globally perceived economic capital value it presents. Despite international students' overall failure to build valuable connections with host society members, reported obstacles to integrate into the academic and social culture, and concerns over future employment, almost all the international students in this study still believed they experience high quality education. This was often defined by pointing to newly built campus infrastructure with advanced technology and to demonstrated faculty knowledge and experience in a given academic field. Although many international students shared about their frustrations regarding the steep financial commitment necessary to study abroad, surprisingly they felt the high differential tuition is justified. Thus, international students buy into the notion of international education as paid access to gain knowledge

capital; with the intention to turn it into the needed economic capital to immigrate to Canada permanently. At the same time, international students' participation in higher education internationalization by studying abroad, strengthens the market demand for additional internationalized academic programming at continued unregulated differential tuition.

Recommendations

Residence Integration & Transition to Economy (RITE)

While international students are recognized as potential citizens and contributors to the Ontario and Canadian economy at large, Ontario universities need to take a more active role in supporting international students obtain employment that meet permanent residency requirements. The reality is that students continue to struggle to land meaningful Canadian work experience. Failure to do so is the beginning of a domino effect resulting in loss of opportunity to become permanent residents and participants of the economy – one of the internationalization rationales. As a result, introducing Residency Integration & Transition to Economy (RITE) as a suggested approach to standardize Ontario universities' support services in guiding foreign students to integrate into Canadian work culture and transition to the labour market is warranted.

The proposed Residence Integration & Transition to Economy (RITE) is a set of guidelines based on information gathered. Three models may be considered.

Model A:
>Phase 1- International student survey regarding what are the challenging aspects of obtaining permanent employment in Ontario- Responses can assist university services.
>Phase 2- The Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities (MTCU) generates standardized guidelines for universities to fit their practices.

Model B:

> Phase 1- MTCU call out to Ontario universities to gather information about their current practices in assisting foreign student transition to permanent residence. Phase 2- Standardize best practices guidelines with room for internal flexibility for all universities to follow.

Model C: Universities develop individualized RITE and submit to MTCU for approval according to specified objectives.

In-class Student Cross-cultural Engagement Audit

Recognizing the need for universities to develop academic related internationalization initiatives, A University wide review of in-class cross-cultural student engagement is in order. Specifically, an examination of: faculty perceptions of currently used instructional practices and their perceived obstacles to enhance international student engagement would serve to strengthen NNES international students' in-class, cross-cultural experience. Findings from this review would also inform the University's recently proposed research study to, "explore the promising teaching practices for teaching linguistically and culturally-diverse international students by identifying the teaching practices that have high international student satisfaction … and that are associated with high international student perception levels of student learning" (Teaching International Students, n.d.).

Internationalization Statement of Principles Alignment

Well thought out plans are necessary to put internationalization principles into action throughout institutional, provincial and national spaces. Viczko & Tascon's (2016) conclusion of "a disconnected policy landscape" (p. 11) in internationalization of Canadian higher education points to a salient issue. Their findings revealed an inherent tension in the "multivoiced strategy" (p. 11) of marketing, branding and market target

approaches. It seems possible that if overarching strategic marketing plans have yet to seamlessly align provincially and nationally, even less congruence likely exists in specific objectives aimed at fulfilling internationalization principles from course to national levels. It is therefore advised that the Internationalization Principles for Canadian Education Institutions (CBIE, 2017) is used as a framework for higher education institutions to ground and develop their own interpretation of internationalization (Table 13). Institutional interpretation would then serve as a guide for academic program and course development to ensure direct fulfilment of the internationalization principles.

Table 13

Internationalization Statement of Principles: Alignment from Course to National Levels

Internationalization Statement of Principles: Alignment from Course to National Levels			
Provincial/ National	Institutional	Program	Course
1. Internationalization is a vital means to achieving global-level civic engagement, social justice and social responsibility, and ultimately is vital to the common good.			
2. Given its importance and central role in society, internationalization aims for the highest quality of learning experiences as a core element of education and ideally should be embedded in the mission statement of the institution.			
3. International students should be valued and recognized for all of their contributions, including enriching institutional life and the educational experiences of all students; providing direct economic and social benefits to			

	local communities beyond the institution; and creating opportunities for long-lasting professional partnerships and relationships that can be of national, international and global benefit.			
4.	Ideally, internationalization is inclusive, pervasive and comprehensive, encompassing all aspects of the work of the institution and the full range of institutional goals and actions, including: curriculum and program design; teaching and learning development; student, faculty and staff mobility; language education and training; research and innovation; projects and services; community outreach and local economic development.			
5.	Internationalization is important to the financial sustainability of many institutions and should not be undertaken without adequate allocation of resources; however, the financial imperatives must not dictate the internationalization agenda.			
6.	Internationalization that comprises capacity building across borders and cultures must benefit all parties involved; institutions should use a collegial, participatory and mutually beneficial approach to the establishment of international and global partnerships.			

7. Internationalization engages a wide range of community members (including students, faculty and staff) in the design and development of activities, and aims for equitable access to activities. Access need not be exactly the same for all, or to the same extent, but internationalization should engage all members of the education community.			

Mutual Understanding Based Outcomes/ Competencies

It is essential to map out the skills and knowledge in course design that foster mutual understanding competencies. If internationalization is to achieve "global-level civic engagement, social justice and social responsibility, and ultimately is vital to the common good" ("Internationalization Statement of Principles of Canadian Educational Institutions", 2015), then specific objectives must be embedded in course design. The Internationalization Statement of Principles for Educational Institutions acknowledges internationalization implementation is to be "inclusive, pervasive and encompassing all aspects of the work of the institution … and actions including curriculum and program design" (Internationalization Statement of Principles of Canadian Educational Institutions", 2015). The University's Teaching and Learning Centre developed a curriculum mapping resource to illustrate the "process of documenting and analyzing the structure of program, and how individual courses work together to support student success through each year of study" (p. 1, 2017). Curriculum mapping is an effective approach to identify program strengths as well as, gaps or trouble area that students may face. The current model for 'course level outcomes' includes three aspects: learning

outcomes, learning assessment and learning experiences. The new suggested objective is,

'global/ local development aid' (Figure 6). Since not all courses may render to effective

integration of such objective, the alternative objective which may be used in replacement

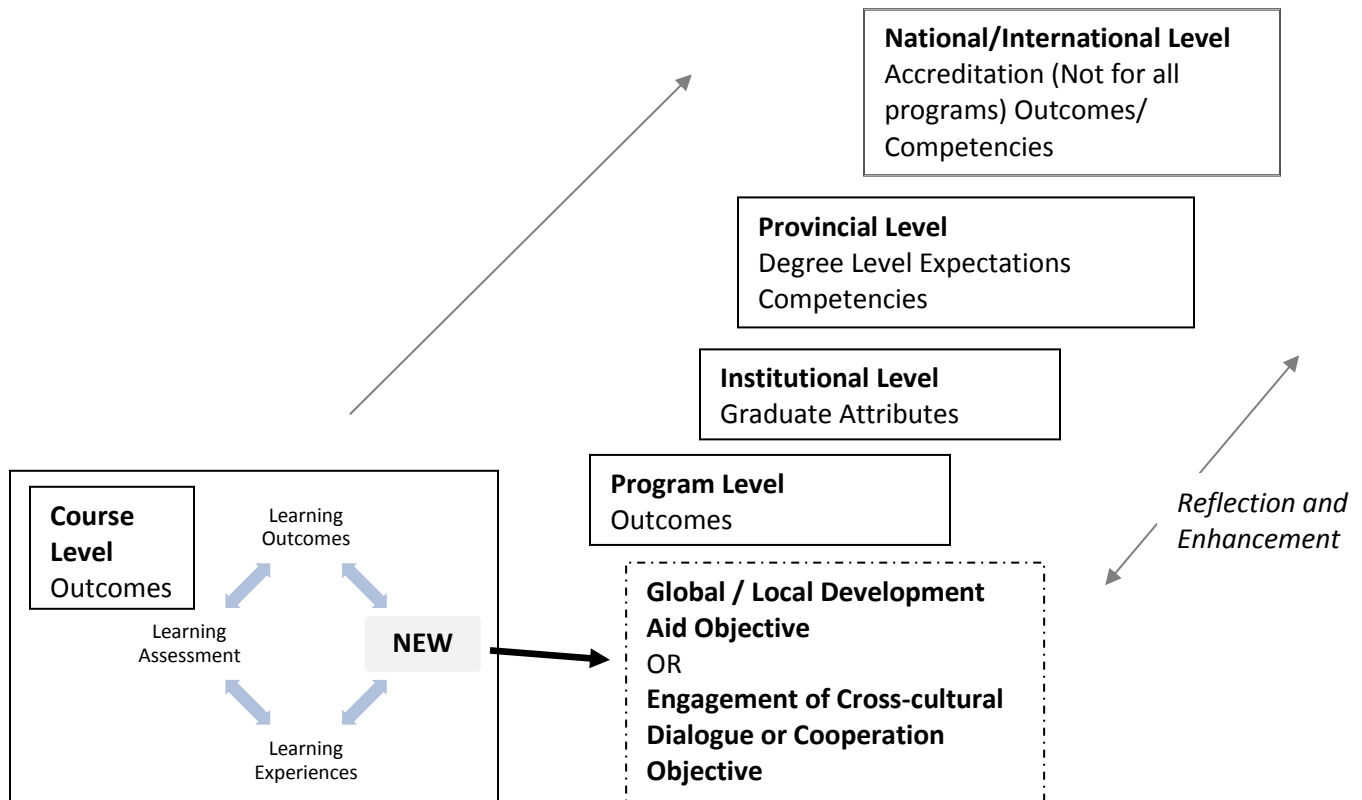is, 'engagement of cross-cultural dialogue or cooperation'.

Figure 6. An adaptation to curriculum mapping to include mutual understanding based objective. Adapted from Skene, Stewart & Kustra (2018).

The new mutual understanding targeted objectives should be aligned throughout program

design and institutional level internationalization mandates to satisfy the

Internationalization Statement of Principles for Canadian Educational Institutions.

Accessible Platform to Search Information on International Student Canadian Employment Rate

The Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade in collaboration with

the CBIE should consider designing an accessible platform to disclose the yearly

proportion of international students who obtain field related Canadian employment. The aim is to provide transparent communication on the matter of Canadian employment so that international students may make an informed decision when choosing Canada for their university education destination. Although some current tracking exists for statistical analysis, much of it is buried in reports or websites that prospective international students would not know to access.

Course Value Assessment in Relation to Differential Tuition Fees

The proportion to which international tuition fees differ from that of domestic tuition merits serious discussion. It is understandable that international students are subject to paying higher tuition fees; at the same time, there are no differentiated tuition fee capping regulations for universities to operate by. Instead, institutions rely on a supply – demand model to assess the cost value of a program. The revenue generating logic is the higher the demand, the higher the cost.

Limitations and Suggestions for Further Research

While the present research study is not without limitations, I am confident that the qualitative methodology utilized facilitated the discovery of NNES international students' perceptions of their university schooling realities (Creswell, 2001; Linclon & Denzin, 1994). The following limitations of this research inquiry may serve as a springboard for future research on NNES international students Canadian university schooling experiences.

English Language Ability

Most participants explained their experiences clearly in English. However, a language barrier impairing NNES international students' ability to express ideas existed.

To minimize this limitation, participants were provided with a hard copy of the interview and focus group questions to preview. Participants also had opportunities to ask for clarification at any time. However, it was challenging for participants to delve further into the nuances of their experiences because it required the use of a greater range of lexical and syntactical structures. If participants had had the option to use their native language, additional details could have been captured.

New University Initiatives

A few University initiatives which may have contributed to international students' overall schooling experience, and are now available, had not been implemented at the time when participants were interviewed for this research study. Participants viewed there was limited opportunity to use their learned skills and knowledge in the Canadian context. First, it would be beneficial to explore how students in the Master of Education – international cohort experienced their city-based internship component of their program.

Second, international student support services such as the International Student Centre overhauled its communication pathway by moving to the use of Blackboard Learn to send announcements to international students. This learning management system has grown significantly in course use and is therefore, a familiar platform for students to navigate through.

Third, Propel, a program of the Faculty of Graduate Studies in collaboration with Career Development and Experiential Learning offer professional development services including: workshops, resources and career counselling. The goal is to support graduate students in developing knowledge, skills and strategies to increase career success. Investigating the ways in which international students utilize this service and perceive its

contribution to job hunting would serve as valuable feedback for program providers.

Fourth, the keep.meSAFE program was launched at the end of 2017 and made available to all international students. International students may access this 24/7 services to chat, by phone or text, with an advisor about any problem they are undergoing. The highlight of keep.meSAFE is that students may connect with an advisor who not only speaks their native language, but also has extensive knowledge and experience of living in their particular culture. Understanding the role this service may play in contributing to NNES international students' range of support network would be worthwhile.

Lastly, the rolling out of the UWinsite platform with the aim, "to ensure the information and service delivery requirements of Faculty and Staff are met as they provide a purposeful and enriching experience to students and all key campus communities" (The UWinsite Project, n.d.). Based on the University's Strategic Plan, Strategic Mandate Agreement, UWindsor, 2.0 vision, the UWinsite platform aims to address the five priority areas: providing an exceptional undergraduate experience; strengthening research and graduate education; recruiting and retaining the best faculty and staff; engaging in community partnerships; and promoting international engagement. Table 14 details University use relevant to undergraduate experience, graduate education and international engagement. Exploring how this communication management system contributes to NNES international undergraduate and graduate students' schooling experience is valuable and may inform necessary University infrastructure modifications to continue to support students at the University.

Table 14

University Platform: Strategic priority and metrics

Strategic priority	Metrics
Providing an exceptional undergraduate experience	-Integrated student success measures -Better tracking of student engagement and learning -A student support network through a unified portal
Strengthening research and graduate education	-Infrastructure to track graduate student metrics -The development of metrics that track the graduate student economy -The tracking of potential burdens to graduate student successes
Promoting international engagement	-The tracking of international students' post-graduation to continue relationship building

Note: Source: University Platform, n.d.

Course Curriculum

The understanding of curriculum internationalization is founded solely on participants' experience of international examples infused within course content. Relying heavily on participants' perceptions opens the possibility they were unable to identify the internationalized pedagogical makeup of their course content because they did not develop the course. A second reason is that participants did not have a background in curriculum development to recognize salient internationalized features that may have been included. Third, because of participants' potential English language communication barriers, either explicit or implicit use of an internationalized curriculum may have been overlooked.

International vs. Exchange Experience

Participants studying under international student status were completing either an undergraduate or graduate program. However, participants studying under exchange student status were visiting students completing a set number of undergraduate or graduate courses only. Most of these participants were studying at the University of for

one year and would return to their home university to complete their undergraduate or graduate degree. For the obvious reason of completing a small number of courses compared to an entire degree, international exchange student participants appeared to have a drastically different study abroad experience than international students pursuing an entire degree.

Institutional Member Perspectives

This research inquiry did not seek the perspectives of institutional members at the University. An institutional member is defined as an individual occupying a paid position and operates within the capacity of: senior administration, department head, faculty and ancillary staff. These members would bring great value to the study. It would be worthy to investigate their views on the University's implementation of internationalization and their beliefs about NNES international students' schooling experience at the University.

Domestic Student Perspectives

This research study design did not include domestic student participation. In terms of cross-cultural interaction, it would be valuable to investigate domestic students' cross-cultural interaction experience with NNES international students. Understanding domestic students' perspectives on the nature of their interaction, as well as, potential challenges faced may provide practical recommendations on how to further facilitate meaningful interaction between these two groups.

Non-Asian NNES International Students

Most participants in this research study were from Asian countries; with the greatest proportion form China. This limitation merits an additional study focusing on NNES international students from non-Asian countries.

Final Words

In the final stages of reviewing the contents of this thesis, an unexpected visitor came to see me. One of my past students from the pre-academic English program stopped by to chit chat. The conversation began with the usual small talk. I did not want to lead the discussion by asking about her experiences, so I began with a general "how are you?" She was excited to have started her academic program and chuckled about the heavy workload. She told me that she had kept in touch with a few of the students that were in the same pre-academic English program. So, I then said, "so good, everything seems to be going well." This must have been the signal phrase because she then responded, "almost good." After asking what she meant by this, she shared that although she was extremely "happy" to have started her program, she felt isolated. Most of her graduate courses contained more than 150 students who were mostly males and from either India or China. She felt it was difficult to meet anyone and because "you just go to class, do your stuff and leave" she did not feel connected to other students. The advice I provided this time was slightly different, I encouraged her to meet with her professors to share her thoughts on her in-class experience. She said she would but seemed reluctant. Like this student, most NNES international students are not likely to voice the challenges they experience. Faculty, administrators, policy makers involved in higher education internationalization cannot afford to miss the gaps between the mutual understanding and skills' migration internationalization rationales and the lived experiences of international students on Canadian campuses. There is no turning back the hands of time. The intersection between business and education positions transnational education as a

commodified good; and therefore, warrants for a product recall of higher education

internationalization due to international students' faulty university schooling experience.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A: Participant Background - Academic and Social Experiences

Thank you for agreeing to take part in the study- *International students' academic and social experiences: Opportunities and challenges in the face of internationalization at one Ontario university.*

This research has been cleared by the University of Windsor Research Ethics Board.

A. Participant Background
Instructions
· Before we start the interview, please complete the table below.
· If you have questions about any of the words used, please let me know and I will explain using different words.

1.	**Gender**	
2.	Sex	
3.	Country of Origin	
4.	First Language	
5.	Additional Language(s) (list in order of most to least fluent)	* * *
6.	Undergraduate/ Graduate Status	
6a.	If of Graduate Status- Country where undergraduate degree(s) are were completed	* *
6b.	Indicate whether you are an Exchange (E) or International (I) student	
7.	Academic Program (Major)	
8.	Number of months/ years you have been studying in Canada	
8a.	Number of courses completed	
9.	Number of months/ years you have been studying at the University of Windsor	
9a.	Funding Source (Who is paying for your tuition?)	

10	Country/ countries you plan to work in when you graduate (list in order of time; e.g., as soon as you graduate and later on in your professional career)	*
		*
		*

B. Academic Experience
Instructions
- For this section, I will give you a paper copy of the questions that I will ask you. You will have a few minutes to read the questions first, before we start recording.
- As you are reading each question, please let me know which questions are not clear and I will explain the question using different words.
- When I begin the recording, I will read the section letter, question number, and the question. This will help me to organize your answers.

Questions
B1. Describe what it feels like to be an international student in your classes?

B2. What types of skills and knowledge do you feel you are learning in your program?

B3. How do you think the skills and knowledge you are learning will transfer (connect) to your future professional work? Please explain.
   a. How difficult to you feel it will be to find a job when you graduate?

B4. How do you feel about your classroom interaction (opportunity to: ask questions/ advice/ help/ work with) with your:
   a. Professors
   b. Classmates from the same country as you
   c. Your Canadian classmates
   d. International students from other countries

B5. How do your classes include international examples in course material?

B6. Is it important for University of Windsor professors to have international teaching experience?
   a. Why is this important to you as a student?

B7. What aspects/ areas of your academic experience at the University of Windsor do you like the most?

B8. What aspects/ areas of your academic experience do you wish you could change?

C. Social Experiences

C1. Describe the types of social activities that you usually take part in.
      a. Do you have any suggestions to increase international student participation in social   activities?
C2. Explain the types of relationships you have been able to build with the following groups of students?
      a. Students from the same country as you
      c. Canadian students
      d. International students from other countries

C3. How important is it for university students to: (*If participant doesn't mention (b) then ask explicitly)
      a. build friendships with students from other countries?
          If no, why?   If yes, how is this accomplished?
      b. share cultures/ traditions
          If no, why?   If yes, how is this accomplished?
      c. exchange political viewpoints
          If no, why?   If yes, how is this accomplished?
      d. develop professional networks
          If no, why?   If yes, how is this accomplished?

*Do you have any additional experiences about studying at the University that you would like to share?

Appendix B: Call for Participant (email)

Dear student,

By way of this email, please allow me to introduce myself. My name is Anouchka Plumb and I am a PhD candidate in the Faculty of Education, at the University of Windsor.

I am requesting your participation in my research study entitled, ***International students' academic and social experiences: Opportunities and challenges in the face of internationalization.***

This research has been cleared by the University of Windsor Research Ethics Board.

The purpose of this study is to learn about your schooling experiences. This includes your academic and social experiences at the University of Windsor.

The approximate length of the interview is 90 minutes.

During the interview you will be asked about your academic learning and social interaction experiences as an international student.

The goals of the study are to:
- gain an understanding of undergraduate and graduate international students' academic and social opportunities and challenges.
- provide suggestions to strengthen student experiences
- contribute to the collection of internationalization of Canadian higher education institution studies.

If you would like to meet with me, please **reply** to this email at your earliest convenience.

Please include the following information about yourself in your reply email.
- Undergraduate or Graduate student
- Academic major
- Male or female
- Ethnic group
- First language

Thank you,
Anouchka

Appendix C: Consent to Participate in Research

Title of Study: *International students' academic and social experiences: Opportunities and challenges in the face of Internationalization.*

You have been asked to participate in a research study conducted by Anouchka Plumb, a PhD student from the Faculty of Education at the University of Windsor. The results of the study will contribute to completing a dissertation.

If you have any questions or concerns about the research, please feel to contact Dr. Christopher Greig: Faculty Supervisor at 519-253-3000 xt.3819.

This research has been cleared by the University of Windsor Research Ethics Board.

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY
The purpose of this study is to learn about your schooling experiences. This includes your academic and social experiences at the University of Windsor.

PROCEDURES
In this study, you will be asked to:
- Complete the Participant Background chart;
- Answer interview questions about your: a. academic experience and b. social experience at the University of Windsor.
- In addition, you will have the opportunity to share any other information, experiences related to your schooling experiences.

The approximate total length of time for your participation is 90 minutes.

POTENTIAL RISKS AND DISCOMFORTS
You may at times feel uncomfortable to describe experiences that you may feel to be negative. If this situation arises, please let the researcher know and she will ask another related question. If you continue to feel uncomfortable, please tell the researcher and she will move on to the next question.

You may also feel difficulty to express your ideas in English. If this situation arises, please tell the researcher and she will reword the question to allow you to better explain yourself.

POTENTIAL BENEFITS TO PARTICIPANTS AND/OR TO SOCIETY
This research study is important for four key groups.
- First, it is significant for international students because it is a means for you to 'voice' your perspectives of being an international student on a Canadian university campus.
- Second, your experiences will help faculty, administrators, and other staff build upon campus internationalization initiatives which support international students.

- Third, policy makers can respond meaningfully to international student needs and advise on internationalization developments to enhance international student experience in Canadian post-secondary institutions.
- Fourth, the study will contribute to the collection of studies on international student perspectives in an internationalized higher education framework, and will thus supply researchers with information from which to base their future research.

COMPENSATION FOR PARTICIPATION

You will not receive any form of payment for your participation in the study. To demonstrate gratitude for you taking the time to participate in this study, a light refreshment (food and water) is being provided. You may eat/drink during the interview or take this home.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Any information that is obtained in connection with this study and that can be identified with you will remain confidential and will be disclosed only with your permission.

- To ensure participants' anonymity and confidentiality neither the names nor any identifying information will appear in any writings that will be published based on this research. The raw data will only be available to the researcher.

The Consent to Participate in Research form will be stored separately from the transcribed audio records. All records, including the transcription of audio recordings will be securely stored for one (1) year and then destroyed.

The only instance where confidentiality will be breached is if you report that you have or will commit a crime.

PARTICIPATION AND WITHDRAWAL

You may withdraw from the study at any time without consequences of any kind. The investigator may withdraw you from this research if circumstances arise which warrant doing so.

You have the right to withdraw data up to 1 month from the date of the interview.

- To withdraw your data, please email the researcher stating that you no longer wish to have your data included in the study.

FEEDBACK OF THE RESULTS OF THIS STUDY TO THE PARTICIPANTS

A reader friendly summary of the research findings will be developed. If you would like to receive this summary via email, please print your email address:

- Primary email: _____
- Alternate email: _____

Date when results are available: November, 2017.

SUBSEQUENT USE OF DATA

These data will not be used in subsequent studies.

VITA AUCTORIS

NAME: Anouchka Plumb

PLACE OF BIRTH: Rose Hill, Mauritius Island

YEAR OF BIRTH: 1981

EDUCATION: Bachelor of Liberal Arts, 2003

                           University of Windsor

                           Bachelor of Education, 2005

                           University of Windsor

                           Master of Education, 2008

                           University of Windsor