The Experiences of Women Entrepreneurs in the English Language Education Sector: Understanding Cross-Cultural and Cross-Linguistic Implications Through a Multiple Narrative Case Study

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Abstract

This research investigates the cross-cultural and cross-linguistic experiences of women

entrepreneurs operating businesses in the English language education sector. The study is a

multi-narrative case study with qualitative data collected through self-assessment tools,

narrative interviewing, critical incident responses, cultural artefact stories, and an asynchronous

focus group in response to a mini-lecture on culture and its relationship to language. There are

six participants, operating businesses in Algeria, China, Colombia, Egypt, and Canada. The

methodology yielded rich, multi-layered data and revealed unexpected significant variation in

the participants' cross-cultural and cross-linguistic experiences. It also yielded unexpected and

equally varied data on their experiences as entrepreneurs, as women entrepreneurs, and as

entrepreneurs in the English language education sector. The conceptual framework of multiple

conceptualizations of culture and its relationship to language proved useful in interpreting the

data on the participants' cross-cultural and cross-linguistic experiences; however, given the

unexpected data on the participants' entrepreneurial experiences, it did not prove adequate for

the interpretation of the entire data set. As an exploratory study, the research yielded multiple

areas for possible future research. Prime among these is the use of the conceptualization of

complex dynamic systems as a way to understand the variation seen in the participants'

experiences as entrepreneurs, women entrepreneurs, and entrepreneurs in the English language

education sector as well as their cross-cultural and cross-linguistic experiences.

Acknowledgements

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List of Acronyms and Terms

Agent	A business person who recruits international students on behalf of schools.
C1, C2, C3	First Culture, Second Culture, Third Culture
L1, L2, L3	First Language, Second Language, Third Language
Marketing	The sum of all activities that a business does in order to promote their products or services.
Marketing Channel	A route through which a business can communicate with potential customers; for example, marketing channels could include a printed brochure, a website, or social media.
Marketing Mix	The different marketing channels that a business selects to use in order to communicate with potential customers.
Operations	The activities that people within a business perform on a daily basis in order to accomplish the business' goals. In the English language education sector, this includes scheduling classes, scheduling teachers, collecting student payments, registering students, managing the quality of classes, and developing and maintaining the curriculum.
Trade Mission	A trip, usually to another country, to promote the products and services of a sector or individual businesses within that sector, to the corresponding potential clients in that other country.

Chapter 1: Introduction

Invictus

Out of the night that covers me,

Black as the pit from pole to pole,

I thank whatever gods may be

For my unconquerable soul.

In the fell clutch of circumstance

I have not winced nor cried aloud.

Under the bludgeonings of chance

My head is bloody, but unbowed.

Beyond this place of wrath and tears

Looms but the Horror of the shade,

And yet the menace of the years

Finds and shall find me unafraid.

It matters not how strait the gate,

How charged with punishments the scroll,

I am the master of my fate,

I am the captain of my soul.

-William Ernest Henley

The four-week international project was drawing to a close. My team of eight had provided teacher training for ninety-eight English language teachers in an immersion setting, twenty-four hours a day, six days a week, with Sundays off for us all to escape to the city to decompress. We had survived food poisoning, an eye infection, one trainer going rogue over the schedule, very basic accommodations, repetitive cafeteria food, an ancient photocopier, even more ancient computers, limited internet access, and a government spot check on our visas. We had even survived each other. And, most difficult of all, we had survived "The Dictator." The Dictator was my counterpart from the host country. He had run us all ragged with repeated last minute and illogical changes in scheduling and programming. He had barked out this order and that order, cowing everyone on the host country team, all women. Initially scrambling to make the requested changes, I had gotten to the point, after the first week, where I just said, "No. We are not making the change. This is what we are going to do." At first, he hadn't known how to respond to my drawing the line in the sand so clearly. And then, interestingly, he had just backed off and let us do what we needed to do. On the last day of the project, I noticed him waiting at the elevator as I approached it. We both silently got into the elevator and stayed silent as it rose to the next floor. As he was exiting, he turned and said, "I have never met a woman like you before." Compliment? Insult? Respect? Disrespect? I was too tired to ask what he meant. And I didn't want to know. I just wanted this project to be over so that I wouldn't have to deal with him anymore. On that last day, my criteria for measuring the success of the project were simple. We had survived everything that had been thrown at us, and we had survived him.

As the author of this research, I am not one of the participants in the study, but my experiences as a woman entrepreneur operating cross-culturally and cross-linguistically in the English language education sector serve as the motivation behind the research. I founded Advance Consulting for Education, Inc. in 2001 to deliver high quality, accredited English language teacher training across Canada and internationally. I had a lengthy employment background in education management, international management, and teacher education prior to founding the business. I had experience working in Japan, Australia, Canada, and the United States in various education management roles. I also had a corresponding educational background, having completed a master's degree in applied linguistics with a focus on English language teacher education and an MBA from one of Canada's leading business schools. In fact, I started my business immediately after finishing my MBA when I realized that even an MBA was not going

to get me into the senior management ranks in the company for which I was working at the time. Starting a company was, for me, a way around the glass ceiling, or so I thought.

As with every business venture, Advance Consulting for Education, Inc. has experienced a roller-coaster ride of upturns and downturns. The upturns have included becoming the largest provider of English language teacher training in Canada; partnering with prestigious school boards, colleges, universities, language schools, and non-profit organizations; developing a full suite of thirteen standardized accredited English language teacher-training courses for classroom and online delivery; delivering customized English language teacher training for teacher groups from China, South Korea, North Korea, and Colombia; and completing challenging consulting work in multiple sectors in curriculum development, program review, language proficiency benchmarking, and exam development. The downturns have included expensive failed projects in the United Arab Emirates; equally expensive unsuccessful attempts to break into numerous international markets (the United States, Mexico, China, Chile, and the UK); new products upon which we spent a lot of time and money that subsequently did not get market traction; sudden changes in accreditation and legislation that forced the closure of some of our locations; an inability to compete with large, government-funded competitors; and failed partnerships. Perhaps the most challenging downturn was the sudden death of my father, a prime example of how—when you are an entrepreneur—there is no separation between the personal and the professional. When a traumatic event in your personal life takes you to your knees, it also takes your business down with you.

Despite the downturns and the challenges, I have always remained driven and motivated by the personal rewards I gain from operating a business in the English language education sector. These rewards include positively impacting the lives and careers of countless English language teachers, students, trainers, program managers, business owners, and professionals; having an outlet for my creativity and sense of adventure; and having a greater degree of control over how I spend my time, energy, and money.

Along with the experiences of the upturns and downturns in my business, I also have an extensive collection of stories about my cross-cultural and cross-linguistic challenges when operating a business in the English language education sector as a woman, of which the opening story is just one. When talking with my male colleagues—who also run businesses in the

English language education sector—I have always been struck by how different our experiences are. As a woman, I have to be careful about how I dress. I have to be cautious about not drinking too much, if at all, when at business dinners or functions. I am always alert to the possibility of being sexually harassed or assaulted. In certain cultures, I am excluded from networking or socializing events. Even a handshake can present complications.

This distinctive space in which I reside as a woman entrepreneur operating an English language education business cross-culturally and cross-linguistically is created through the intersection of entrepreneurship, women's entrepreneurship, the English language education industry, and the concept of culture and its relationship to language. It is a space that requires efficiency, organization, systems, and processes, on the one hand, and an understanding and appreciation of adult learning, human interaction, cultural and linguistic diversity, and individual lives and stories, on the other hand. Balancing the tensions and complexities of these seemingly conflicting understandings and perspectives makes the space intellectually challenging and emotionally rewarding.

This research sets out to collect, analyze, and understand the experiences of women like me, who function in the same business, education, culture, and language space. Functioning in this space creates experiences that are not captured in the research in any of the separate fields. While there is a growing body of research on entrepreneurs, and a smaller but also growing body of research on women entrepreneurs, there is no research on women entrepreneurs operating in the English language sector, and there is certainly no research on the cross-cultural and cross-linguistic experiences of these women. This research fills this gap.

This research fills another important gap in the literature. Because women entrepreneurs in the English language sector function cross-culturally and cross-linguistically on a daily basis, this sector serves as a rich microcosm in which to study women's cross-cultural and cross-linguistic experiences. This is a richness not found in other sectors or professions, in which the cross-cultural and cross-linguistic experiences are less frequent and less varied. Women entrepreneurs operating in the English language education sector thus serve as an ideal participant group from which to collect women's cross-cultural and cross-linguistic experiences.

There is one final gap, a personal one, that this research fills. As an MBA graduate who has been in the for-profit world my whole career, I have been and still am a voracious consumer of business and entrepreneurship research. Even though I value the ideas found in the research, I get very frustrated reading it. An over-reliance on quantitative methodologies has created a body of research that is cold, empty, and without soul. The well-used phrase that business is not personal is completely false, as every business practitioner knows. Business is very personal and entrepreneurship even more so. Entrepreneurs put everything on the line in the passionate, all-consuming pursuit of an idea, dream, or vision. Because business is personal, it has soul. In structuring my research in such a way as to be systematic and analytical while also turning the spotlight on the personal stories of women entrepreneurs, I set out to create a piece of research that is not cold and empty, but rather one that honours the two sides of business, its reasoned and rational side and its soul.

With the stories of six women entrepreneurs running English language education businesses and operating cross-culturally and cross-linguistically as participants, this research addresses the following research questions:

1. What are the case histories of the women entrepreneurs and their businesses?
2. What personal meaning do the women entrepreneurs derive from running their English language education sector businesses?
3. What are the language proficiencies of the women entrepreneurs?
4. What are the levels of cultural awareness of the women entrepreneurs?
5. What are the stories of the women entrepreneurs as they conduct business cross-culturally and cross-linguistically with their English language education sector businesses?

Based upon my personal experiences, which serve as the driver for this research, I had the following assumptions about my research:

1. There would be significant similarities among the case histories of the participants. A major theme in the participants' case histories would be their cross-cultural and cross-linguistic experiences.
2. The participants would derive significant personal and professional meaning from running their English language education businesses and from their cross-cultural and cross-linguistic experiences.

3. The participants would have proficiency in more than one language.
4. The participants would have high levels of cultural awareness developed through their cross-cultural and cross-linguistic experiences.
5. The participants would perceive the fact that they were women as significantly impacting all aspects of their work as entrepreneurs, particularly when they were functioning cross-culturally and cross-linguistically. The participants would also perceive being women as adding an extra barrier to their work, once again particularly when they were functioning cross-culturally and cross-linguistically. There would be one or several conceptualizations of culture and its relationship to language that would be the most fruitful in interpreting and understanding the participants' cross-cultural and cross-linguistic experiences.

In order to answer the research questions and investigate the assumptions, the research starts with a review of the literature in the four fields that intersect to create the distinct space in which the research resides: entrepreneurs, women entrepreneurs, the English language education sector, and cross-cultural and cross-linguistic entrepreneurial interactions. The research then introduces multiple meanings of culture and its relationship to language as a conceptual framework through which to analyze and interpret the cross-cultural and cross-linguistic experiences of the participants. The methodology describes the steps through which the participants were recruited and the qualitative data collected and analyzed, as well as the limitations of the study. There are two data chapters. The first data chapter presents the participant business case histories, including the meaning they derive from these businesses. The second data chapter presents the participants' cross-cultural and cross-linguistic experiences and their understandings of the multiple conceptualizations of culture and its relationship to language. The next chapter synthesizes the data. It relates the data to the literature and interprets it through the conceptual framework. The final chapter identifies the significance of the research, revisits the research limitations, and suggests areas for future research.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

"There is nothing more difficult to take in hand…than to take the lead in the introduction of a new order of things."

-Machiavelli

2.1 Introduction

This chapter critically analyzes the existing research on the topic of women entrepreneurs operating cross-linguistically and cross-culturally in the English language education. It first presents definitions of the term *entrepreneur* and models for entrepreneurship for evaluation, comparison, and contrast. It then surveys the research and narratives exploring the characteristics and experiences of women entrepreneurs. It moves on to validate the English language education sector as a fruitful sector in which to explore the cross-cultural and cross-linguistic experiences of women entrepreneurs. Finally, it discusses research focusing on women entrepreneurs operating cross-culturally and cross-linguistically, and it presents categories of cross-cultural and cross-linguistic entrepreneurial interactions. Figure 1 below illustrates how the current research relevant to this study is critically analyzed in this literature review.

Figure 1: Critically Analyzing the Research Literature
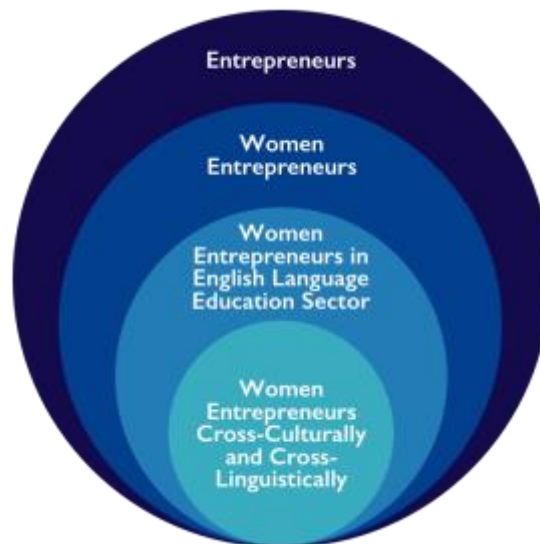
It is important to note in the discussion in this chapter that the terms *business*, *enterprise*, *company*, and *organization* are all used interchangeably to denote the entity that an entrepreneur creates. It is also important to note that the definitions and models presented in this chapter represent only a selection of the definitions and models available on the topic. These definitions and models were selected based on their relevance to this study, on the understanding that other definitions and models exist.

2.2 Entrepreneurs

This section builds a multi-layered perspective of entrepreneurs. It critiques, compares, and contrasts definitions of *entrepreneur* and models of *entrepreneurship*. It identifies the motivations of entrepreneurs and puts them into different visual representations. Finally, it places the concept of entrepreneurship within the larger concept of national economies to emphasize its importance.

2.2.1 Defining Entrepreneur

Dictionary definitions provide a starting point in understanding the term *entrepreneur*. Random House (entrepreneur, n.d. b) defines an entrepreneur as "a person who organizes and manages any enterprise, especially a business, usually with considerable initiative and risk." The key words in this definition are *organize*, *initiative*, and *risk*. Entrepreneurs create or organize a structure where one didn't exist before. Entrepreneurs take the initiative to do this of their own accord. And entrepreneurs assume risk in this endeavour. The Collins English Dictionary (entrepreneur, n.d. a) adds an additional key word, *profits*, to its definition: An entrepreneur is "the owner or manager of a business or enterprise who, by risk and initiative, attempts to make profits." The purpose of the actions of an entrepreneur, then, is to make money or profit.

Researchers have attempted to more deeply understand what makes entrepreneurs unique to answer the question of why some people start businesses and others do not. Gartner (1988) contrasts two approaches to answering this question: trait definitions and behavioural definitions of *entrepreneur*. Trait definitions of *entrepreneur* focus on features that make entrepreneurs different from non-entrepreneurs. Behaviour definitions of *entrepreneur* focus on what entrepreneurs do rather than who they are.

Gartner's (1988) work summarizes the trait research completed up to that point in time. Features of entrepreneurs Gartner identifies as being of interest to researchers include the need for achievement, internal locus of control, comfort with risk, creativity, self-discipline, perseverance, energy, initiative, previous experience, level of education, and age. While Gartner feels that the trait definitions used by researchers vary widely, are vague and contradictory, and often paint an unrealistic and somewhat heroic picture of entrepreneurs, the trait definitions do add a layer of understanding to the term *entrepreneur*.

Ray (1993) provides a useful model to sort the traits of entrepreneurs into three categories: attributes/characteristics (personality), skills/competencies, and experience/background. According to Ray, it is not enough to have a specific personality in order to be a successful entrepreneur. In fact, entrepreneurs have quite varied personalities, with both strengths and weaknesses. Entrepreneurs thus need skills and experience to complement their personality strengths and offset their personality weaknesses. Ray's three categories of traits are illustrated in Figure 2.

Figure 2: Ray's (1993) Categories of Entrepreneur Traits
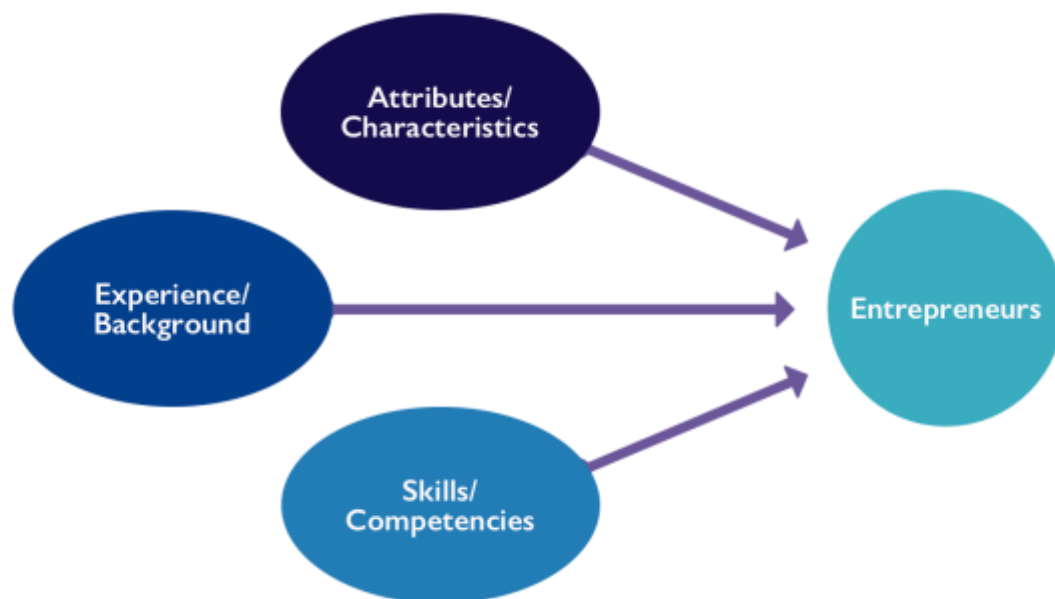
Ray's (1993) model allows for the traits identified in Gartner's (1988) research summary to be sorted. The need for achievement, internal locus of control, comfort with risk, creativity, self-discipline, perseverance, energy, and initiative are all attributes. Previous experience, level of

education, and age fall under experience. This then leaves the category of skills and competencies to be researched. Another strength of Ray's model is that, by including skills and competencies, there is the assumption that at least some aspects of being an entrepreneur can be learned.

Gartner's (1988) analysis of trait definition research led him to believe that behaviour definitions of *entrepreneur* are a more useful avenue for researchers to pursue than trait definitions. Gartner suggests that entrepreneur research should follow managerial research in asking questions about the daily activities and actions of entrepreneurs: What do entrepreneurs do on a daily basis? How do they make decisions? How do they negotiate? How do they form and manage teams? Mueller, Volery, and von Siemens (2012) agree with Gartner that research of behaviour is central to understanding entrepreneurs. However, they also indicate that research on entrepreneur behaviour is fragmented and inconclusive.

Through their research observing the behaviours of entrepreneurs starting enterprises (start-up phase) and growing enterprises (growth phase), Mueller, Volery, and von Siemens created a taxonomy of entrepreneur behaviour to try to provide an underlying structure for entrepreneur behaviour research. Their taxonomy has four levels, moving from high level actions, labeled *Galactic*, down to minute, discrete activities, labeled *Atomic*. A simplified and paraphrased version of their taxonomy is given in Table 1.

Table 1: Mueller, Volery, and von Siemens (2012) Taxonomy of Entrepreneurs' Behaviour

Level	Definition	Example Behaviours
Galactic	Behaviours that increase efficiency and productivity through exploitation (selection, implementation and decreasing variance) or exploration (research, experimentation and increasing variance).	- Exploitation example: purchasing a new piece of equipment to improve the quality of production. - Exploration example: developing a new product or service in response to market demand.
Molar	Behaviours that occur within a specific organizational function or department.	- Human resources behaviours. - Marketing and sales behaviours. - Product development behaviours. - Administration behaviours. - Finance behaviours.
Molecular	Behaviours that are not related to specific subject matter or expertise.	- Exchanging information. - Thinking critically or analytically. - Building relationships. - Maintaining relationships. - Monitoring work.
Atomic	Discrete, daily, individual behaviours.	- Writing an email. - Reading a report. - Preparing a report. - Meeting a client.

Mueller, Volery, and von Siemens' (2012) taxonomy is important for defining *entrepreneur* and for entrepreneur research because it captures the complex range of behaviours in which entrepreneurs have to engage. They must engage in global and strategic thinking at all levels of their organization, down to detail-oriented activities and actions. There is no aspect of running an organization with which entrepreneurs do not have to be familiar.

The final definition of *entrepreneur* in this critical analysis comes from Goffee and Scase (1985). They identify four categories of entrepreneurs based upon the roles the entrepreneurs play within the enterprises they have created:

1. *A self-employed entrepreneur* is an entrepreneur in a single-person organization; the entrepreneur does everything in the organization.
2. *A small employer entrepreneur* is an entrepreneur with a minimal number of staff; the entrepreneur still has a large span of control over everything that happens in the organization.
3. *An owner–controller entrepreneur* is an entrepreneur with direct responsibility for the day-to-day operations of a larger organization.

4. *An owner–director entrepreneur* is an entrepreneur with greater distance from the day-to-day operations of the organization but still significant ownership.

These four categories from Goffee and Scase are useful for highlighting that there are many different ways to be an entrepreneur, from running a single-person operation to running a large multi-million dollar one, to working on the ground, to playing a behind-the-scenes role.

2.2.2 Models of Entrepreneurship

Although entrepreneurs are the key ingredient in any entrepreneurial venture (Mueller et al., 2012), entrepreneurs do not act in isolation. Entrepreneurs follow a process to create an enterprise, and that process takes place in a context or environment. A critical analysis of entrepreneur research therefore has to include the domain of entrepreneurship, which is the process of creating a business within a specific context or environment (entrepreneurship, n.d.; Eckhardt & Shane, 2003).

Gartner (1985) provides a model that is a good starting point in understanding *entrepreneurship*. Entrepreneurship results from the interaction of the entrepreneur, the environment or context, the organizational building process, and the organization being built. These interactions are illustrated in Figure 3, adapted from a basic diagram by Gartner.

Figure 3: Adapted from Gartner's (1985) Model of Entrepreneurship
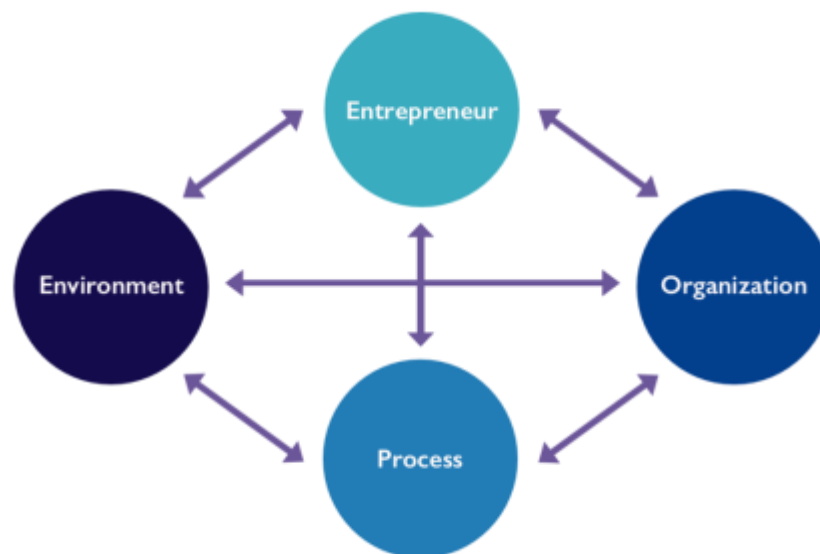
Not only does this model place entrepreneurs in a context, but it also acknowledges that all factors in entrepreneurship mutually influence each other. This then paints entrepreneurship as a dynamic process in which ongoing influence and change are central characteristics.

Venkataraman (1997) proposes quite a different model of entrepreneurship that focuses on opportunity. In order for there to be new products and services, there need to be opportunities to create these new products and services and to create the mechanisms for delivering them. Shane and Venkataraman (2000) further refine this idea into a four-step model: the existence of opportunities in the context, the recognition of the opportunities by an entrepreneur, the exploitation of the opportunities by the entrepreneur and the organization, and the resulting creation of new goods or services. Figure 4 is a visual representation of Shane and Venkataraman's model.

Figure 4: Shane and Venkataraman's (2000) Model of Entrepreneurship

The model from Shane and Venkataraman (2000) points to important skills or competencies that entrepreneurs need to have: opportunity recognition and opportunity identification. This model has spawned research on how opportunity is recognized and exploited and whether the ability to recognize opportunity can be learned. Peiris, Akoorie, and Sinha (2013) completed a summary of entrepreneur factors influencing opportunity recognition that researchers have identified. These entrepreneur factors include alertness, personal and environmental circumstances, prior knowledge, creativity, self-efficacy, social networks, entrepreneurial competence, cognitive processes, experiential learning, and human capital. An opportunity-based model of entrepreneurship is therefore valuable in filling out the picture of the skills and competencies that entrepreneurs require.

Ucbasaran, Westhead, and Wright (2001) provide a model of entrepreneurship that differentiates factors internal to the organization from those external to the organization. The internal factors are further divided into organizational factors and temporal factors. The internal organizational factors are the entrepreneur, the entrepreneurial process, and the organization. The internal

temporal factors are the antecedents (prior knowledge and theory) and the outcomes achieved. The external factor is the environment or context. This model delineates factors that an entrepreneur can control, the internal factors, and those that an entrepreneur cannot control, the external factors.

Ucbasaran et al.'s (2001) model illustrates that extensive variation is possible in entrepreneurship. There are different types of entrepreneurs, entrepreneurial processes, and entrepreneurial organizations, all of which interact to create unique entrepreneurship experiences and outcomes. Types of entrepreneurs identified in the model include nascent, novice, serial, and portfolio entrepreneurs. Types of entrepreneurial organizations include start-ups, corporate ventures, franchises, and family businesses. An additional value of this model is that it links the outcomes back to the entrepreneur through a learning process to illustrate that the entrepreneur is in a continuous cycle of learning throughout the entrepreneurship process. Figure 5 is an adaptation of how Ucbasaran, et al. (2001) visually depict their model.

Figure 5: Adapted from Ucbasaran, Westhead, and Wright's (2001) Model of Entrepreneurship
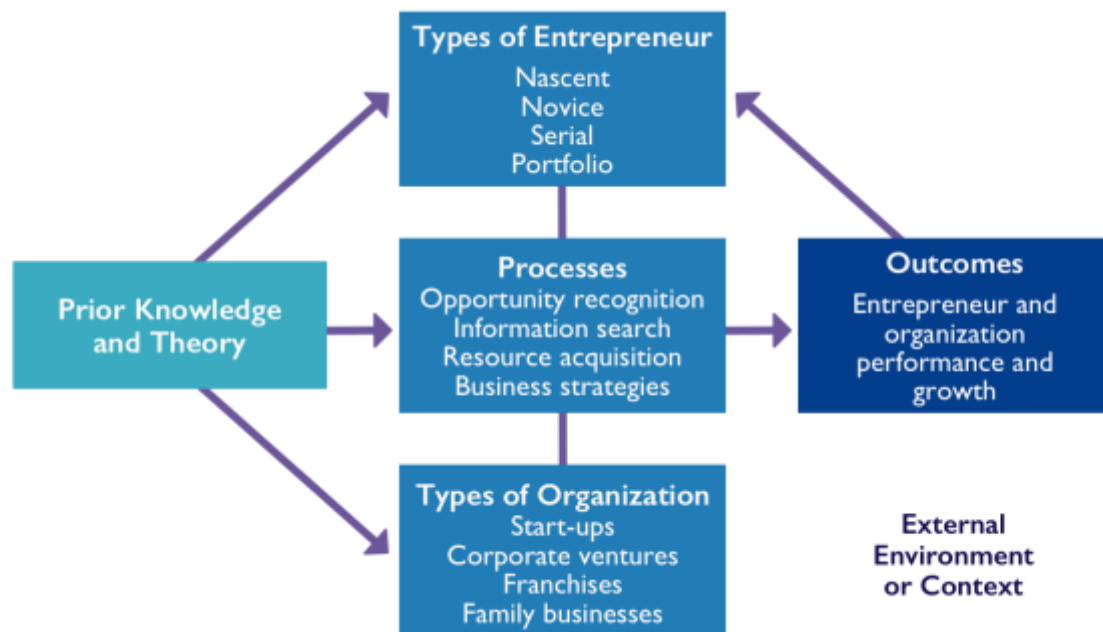
The final model of entrepreneurship presented in this section, from McKenzie, Ugbah, and Smothers (2007), shifts the focus of entrepreneurship back to the entrepreneur and introduces the concept of intention. In this model, entrepreneurship results from the interaction of four

factors: opportunities for innovation, the capacity of the entrepreneur, the intentions of the entrepreneur, and the exploitation of the opportunities, all taking place in a specific environment. The factors in this model are all familiar and have been discussed in other models, except for the intentions of the entrepreneur. Figure 6 is an adaptation of McKenzie et al.'s (2007) visual representation of their model.

Figure 6: Adapted from McKenzie, Ugbah, and Smothers's (2007) Model of Entrepreneurship
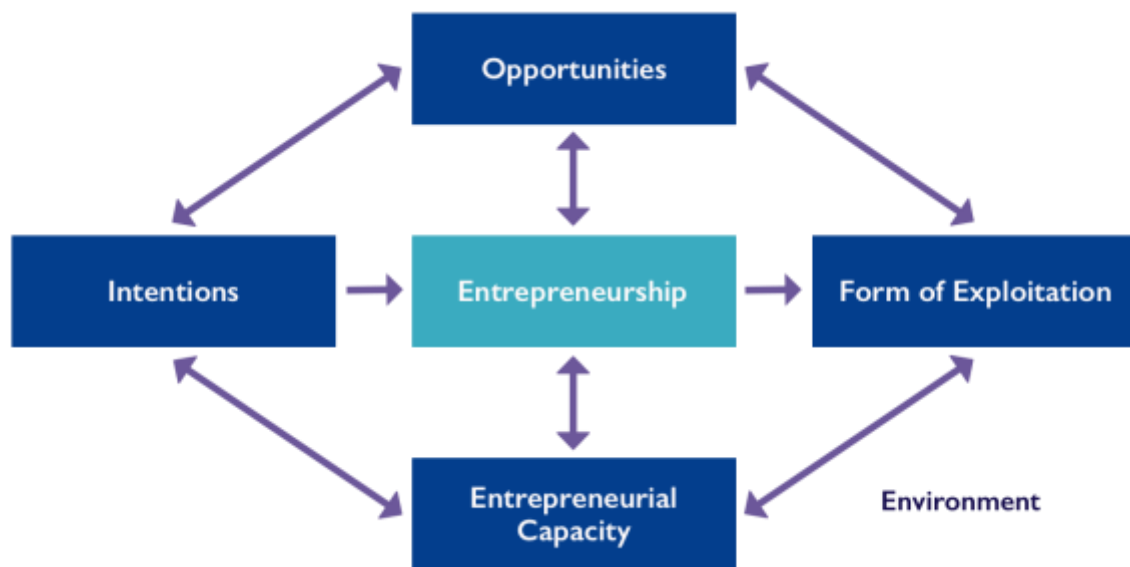
The intentions component of McKenzie et al.'s (2007) entrepreneurship model encapsulates the dual nature of entrepreneurship: it is both creative and logical. The intentions of entrepreneurs are their vision for what they are creating as well as their logical plan for making that vision a reality in a specific context. The intentions result from the entrepreneurs' intuitive, holistic, contextual thinking on the one hand and their rational, analytical, cause–effect thinking on the other (Bird, 1988). With the intentions component of this model, entrepreneurs can be positioned as visionaries; their goal is to craft something unique that previously didn't exist. The entrepreneurs' intentions guide everything they do in this crafting process (Bird, 1988). The intentions of entrepreneurs allow for two productive avenues of research, particularly from the point of view of educating entrepreneurs. One avenue is focused on creativity in entrepreneurship (see for example Fillis & Rentschler, 2010) and one is focused on planning (see for example Krueger, Reilly, & Carsrud, 2000).

To conclude this survey of models of entrepreneurship, it is important to reiterate that there is no single model of entrepreneurship that fully captures the concept. Collectively, the models presented provide a rich, multi-perspective understanding of entrepreneurship.

2.2.3 Stages of Entrepreneurship

The term *start-up* used for an organization that is at the beginning of its life cycle (start up, n.d.) is commonly associated with entrepreneurship. However, entrepreneurship is a process, and as such has more than one step or stage. Just as there are many different models of entrepreneurship, there are also different ways to delineate and name the stages of entrepreneurship. Two practical ways of categorizing the stages that businesses go through are presented below.

Scott and Bruce (1987) use a widely cited problem-solving approach with five stages of entrepreneurship. At each stage of development, an organization has different key issues or problems to solve. If those issues aren't solved, the organization will not be able to progress to the next stage; it will either remain at that same stage or it will close down. Table 2 briefly summarizes Scott and Bruce's five problem-solving stages.

Table 2: Scott and Bruce's (1987) Problem-Solving Stages of Entrepreneurship

Stage	Key Issues
1. Inception	Developing a product or service that meets a need in the market.
2. Survival	Growing revenue while managing expenses.
3. Growth	Ensuring the organization has the required resources (people, finances, technology) to manage growth.
4. Expansion	Financing growth while maintaining control of the processes.
5. Maturity	Controlling expenses, maintaining productivity, and finding additional growth opportunities.

Global Entrepreneurship Monitor (GEM), an organization that tracks entrepreneurial activity internationally, uses four stages that can be identified with trackable data (Kelley et al., 2015) as summarized in Table 3.

Table 3: GEM Stages of Entrepreneurship

Stage	Tracking Data
1. Entrepreneurial Intentions	This stage is identified through surveys in which individuals indicate whether they plan to start a new business within the next three years.
2. Total Early Stage Entrepreneurship Activity	This stage is identified through activities such as incorporating the business and securing financing.
3. Established Business Ownership	This stage is identified through regular business activities such as annual corporate tax filings.
4. Business Discontinuance	This stage is identified through the closing of a corporation.

Other models for the stages of entrepreneurship exist. However, the two models introduced here adequately demonstrate how the models vary depending upon the purpose of identifying the different stages of entrepreneurship. Using these models, researchers try to identify how entrepreneurs move from one stage to the next, with a particular interest in getting entrepreneurs to the growth stages as quickly as possible. For example, Mueller et al. (2012) identify multiple macro- and micro-level entrepreneurial behaviours that are used to grow an organization, and they also investigate how these behaviours differ at start-up and growth stages. The growth of entrepreneurial ventures is assumed to be beneficial for economies (Acs, 2007) and is tracked by governments (for example, Innovation, Science and Economic Development Canada in Canada) and other entrepreneurial tracking organizations (for example, the international organization Global Entrepreneurship Monitor). These models of the stages of entrepreneurship are therefore useful in tracking the growth trajectories of entrepreneurial ventures.

2.2.4 Motivations for Entrepreneurship

All the above models of entrepreneurship and the stages of entrepreneurship assume that the motivation for starting a new enterprise is profit. In the definitions of *entrepreneur* introduced at the beginning of this section, it was stated that the goal of an entrepreneur is to generate profit. Entrepreneurs may differ on how much profit they feel is acceptable for their investment of time, energy, and money, but regardless, the profit outcome is central to the motivation in these definitions. For many entrepreneurs, however, profit is not the only desirable outcome of entrepreneurship. Other motivations for engaging in entrepreneurship may include the following: building social value; having independence and autonomy; having influence and

prestige; being able to exercise creativity; having a more flexible lifestyle; being without any other employment options; having the opportunity to work with a spouse or other family members; and having supplementary income as an individual or a family in addition to salaried employment (Mair & Marti, 2005; Carter, Henry, Cinnéide, & Johnston, 2007; Halkias, Thurman, Caracatsanis, & Harkiolakis, 2011; Boluk & Motiar, 2014; Sastre-Castillo, Peris-Ortiz, & Danvila-Del Valle, 2015).

Social entrepreneurship is a category of entrepreneurship that focuses on the first of these additional goals: that of building social value. Social entrepreneurship is "a process that catalyzes social change and addresses important social needs in a way that is not dominated by direct financial benefits for the entrepreneurs" (Mair & Marti, 2005). Social entrepreneurship addresses a specific social problem or changes existing social structures by building a self-sustaining organization (Sastre-Castillo et al., 2015).

The difference between entrepreneurship and social entrepreneurship is one of emphasis or priority. Entrepreneurship places more emphasis on building economic value; social entrepreneurship places more emphasis on building social value (Mair & Marti, 2005). However, economic value and social value building do not have to be mutually exclusive. The line between entrepreneurship and social entrepreneurship can be seen as a continuum, with economic value building on one side and social value building on the other. Entrepreneurial organizations can then strategically place themselves somewhere on the continuum, based upon the goals or motivation of the founders (Sastre-Castillo et al., 2015). Figure 7 illustrates this continuum.

Figure 7: Economic Value Building/Social Value Building Continuum

Another motivation for entrepreneurship that also attracts research attention is lifestyle entrepreneurship. Lifestyle entrepreneurship is defined as developing a business which closely aligns with personal values, preferences, interests, and passions (Marcketti, Niehm, & Fuloria,

2006). While lifestyle entrepreneurship is one way that entrepreneurs can balance family responsibilities such as childcare with earning income, it is also used to achieve a desired lifestyle. The entrepreneur strategically shapes the new enterprise in terms of location, focus, structure, size, and hours of operation in order to live a specific way and with a specific quality of life.

These different motivations for entrepreneurship, from profit to social value to lifestyle, will vary from one entrepreneur to the next, and they will also vary for the same entrepreneurs over time, depending upon their previous experiences, careers, and personal lives, as well upon the development stage their businesses (Jayawarna, Rouse, & Kitching, 2011). Given the dynamic nature of the multiple motivations for entrepreneurship, a dichotomous continuum used to distinguish entrepreneurship and social entrepreneurship, while a useful starting point, does not suffice when fully exploring the motivations of an entrepreneur (Boluk & Mottiar, 2014). A model is needed that allows for the complexity of the motivations to be captured, with different weightings for the motivations for each entrepreneur at a specific point in time.

2.2.5 Entrepreneurship and Economic Development

Entrepreneurship as a concept has wider significance beyond the endeavours of individual entrepreneurs. There is a well-established and mutually beneficial relationship between entrepreneurship and economic development (Acs, 2007; Halkias et al., 2011), placing the discussion of entrepreneurship in a much larger national and global context. Societies experience long-term economic gains from entrepreneurship (Rumelt, 1987), and entrepreneurship drives indicators of economic strength such as innovation, productivity, and job creation (Fisher & Reuber, 2010). Tracking entrepreneurship is therefore crucial to economic governance. This tracking, however, presents two challenges: differentiating entrepreneurs from small business owners and differentiating necessity entrepreneurship from opportunity entrepreneurship.

Governments track the number of incorporated businesses operating within their economies through data collected in corporate tax filings. They then differentiate small and medium enterprises, or SMEs, from large ones based upon the number of employees and/or revenue. For example, in Canada, Innovation, Science and Economic Development Canada (2016) classifies any business with fewer than 500 employees as an SME. Statistics Canada adds a financial

aspect to the SME definition: SMEs have less than $50 million in gross revenue (Innovation, Science and Economic Development Canada, 2016). Innovation, Science and Economic Development Canada further breaks SMEs into three categories: micro, small, and medium as presented in Table 4.

Table 4: Categories for SMEs

	Micro	Small	Medium
Number of Employees	1 to 4 employees	5 to 99 employees	100 to 499 employees

Additional categorizations for Canadian SMEs include sector, geographical location, ownership structure, owners' gender, and revenue from international business. Finally, the Canadian government tracks the number of businesses that are newly incorporated (called *births*) and those that are shut down each year (called *deaths*), as well as the year-over-year revenue and employee growth of existing incorporated businesses (Innovation, Science and Economic Development Canada, 2016).

Using Canada once again as an example, the tracking of SMEs highlights their potential importance to an economy. The latest Canadian statistics available (Innovation, Science and Economic Development Canada, 2016), with data up to the end of 2015, show that of a total of 1.17 million incorporated businesses with employers, there were 632,460 microbusinesses, 511,170 small businesses, and 21,415 medium businesses. The microbusinesses and small businesses employed 8.2 million people, or 70.5% of the private labour force, and accounted for almost 87.7% of private jobs created in 2015. The medium businesses employed 2.3 million people, or 19.8 percent of the private labour force, and accounted for 7.7% of private jobs created in 2015. Depending upon how a small business is defined (number of employees versus revenue), the contribution of small businesses to the Canadian Gross Domestic Product (GDP) ranges from 27% to 30%. All of these numbers indicate the significant contribution of SMEs to the Canadian economy.

The challenge with the above statistics in tracking entrepreneurship is that while the statistics relate to SMEs—and entrepreneurial activities take place within SMEs (Fisher & Reuber,

2010)—an SME may or may not be an entrepreneurial venture. Differentiating an entrepreneur from a small business owner is therefore key in determining the value of statistics on SMEs for tracking entrepreneurship. Carland, Hoy, Boulton, and Carland (1984) provide the most cited distinction between an entrepreneur and a small business owner, as summarized in Table 5 below.

Table 5: Entrepreneur Versus Small Business Owner

Entrepreneur	Small Business Owner
- Is motivated by profit and growth. - Engages in innovation. - Manages strategically.	- Is motivated by personal goals. - Engages in the day-to-day running of the business. - Earns income through the business. - Manages the business as an extension of his or her personality, and as intricately bound with family needs and desires.

Carland et al. (1984) further elaborate: "The critical factor proposed here to distinguish entrepreneurs from…small business owners is innovation. The entrepreneur is characterized by a preference for creating activity, manifested by some innovative combination of resources for profit." Stewart, Watson, Carland, and Carland (1998) agree with Carland et al. (1984), characterizing entrepreneurs as having higher achievement motivation, risk-taking propensity, and preference for innovation than small business owners. Problematically, these differentiating factors are all internal to the entrepreneur or small business owner; there are no external, trackable manifestations of these differences that allow the entrepreneurial ventures within the SME category to be identified.

The other challenge with tracking entrepreneurship in an economic system is that not all entrepreneurship is good for an economy. Acs (2007) differentiates opportunity entrepreneurship from necessity entrepreneurship, with the former being beneficial to an economy and the latter not. Opportunity entrepreneurship is a result of a conscious choice made by an entrepreneur to exploit a recognized opportunity. This type of entrepreneurship drives

innovation, is growth oriented, and adds jobs to an economy. Necessity entrepreneurship is a result of the entrepreneur having no other option because there is no stable employment available in the economy. This type of innovation is characterized by limited growth and innovation, and it adds few or no jobs to an economy. Necessity entrepreneurship is actually a sign of an economy that is struggling. Once again, differentiating these two types of entrepreneurship in an economic system with data and statistics is challenging.

Given that the only reliable tracking data available in an economic system relate to SMEs—and given that there is no clear way to identify the entrepreneurial ventures within the SMEs or opportunity entrepreneurship from necessity entrepreneurship—direct tracking of entrepreneurship in economic systems is ambiguous at best (Ahmad & Hoffman, 2007). Indirect tracking, however, is possible. Ahmad and Hoffman cite the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD)'s indirect indicators of entrepreneurship. These indicators can be tracked at three levels: Determinants of Entrepreneurship are characteristics in an environment or context that are seen to facilitate entrepreneurship; Entrepreneurial Performance provides trackable statistics on individual business performance; and Impact of Entrepreneurship comprises economy-wide statistics (Ahmad & Hoffman, 2007). The framework is shown in Figure 8.

Figure 8: The OECD Entrepreneurship Indicators Framework

Determinants of Entrepreneurship	Entrepreneurial Performance	Impact of Entrepreneurship
▸ Regulatory framework ▸ Market conditions ▸ Access to finance ▸ Knowledge creation and diffusion ▸ Entrepreneurial capabilities ▸ Culture	▸ Business birth rate ▸ Business death rate ▸ Growth in employment in a business ▸ Growth in revenue in a business	▸ Job creation in the economy overall ▸ Economic growth ▸ Poverty reduction in the economy overall

A complete analysis of the entrepreneurial activity in an economy using the OECD framework is beyond the scope of this critical analysis. However, to see the Determinants of Entrepreneurship segment of the framework in action for an analysis of the Canadian economy,

see Industry Canada (2015); to see the Entrepreneurial Performance segment of the framework in action, also for the Canadian economy, see Fisher and Reuber (2010).

There are other frameworks and indices that are also used to indirectly evaluate national economies with respect to factors that facilitate entrepreneurship. These include the World Bank Doing Business Survey, the Global Entrepreneurship Monitor Country Reports, the Heritage Foundation Index of Economic Freedom, and the Fraser Institute Economic Freedom of the World Annual Reports. While tracking entrepreneurship in an economy indirectly, as is done through the OECD framework and the different indices, is not ideal, it does allow governments to identify areas of strength and weakness in their economies with respect to entrepreneurship.

2.2.6 The State of the Research on Entrepreneurs

The process of reviewing the research on entrepreneurs for this section involved exploring the concepts of *entrepreneur* and *entrepreneurship* from multiple perspectives at individual, organizational, and economic levels. The research process also involved comparing and contrasting relevant definitions and models in order to identify areas of ongoing discussion and significance. Key areas for ongoing research include the attributes, competencies, behaviours, and roles of entrepreneurs; the interplay of entrepreneurs with their environments, organizations, and processes; the role of opportunity identification; the role of entrepreneurial learning; the role of intentions; accelerating entrepreneurial ventures to the growth stage; social entrepreneurship; and tracking entrepreneurship at the economic level. This ongoing research can be conducted on the solid, multilayered foundation of research built to date. The next section of this chapter discusses a subset of research on entrepreneurs and entrepreneurship related to women entrepreneurs.

2.3 Women Entrepreneurs

Men entrepreneurs outnumber women entrepreneurs in every country for which statistics are available (Kelley et al., 2015). The most recent statistics for Canada—for example, from 2014—show that 15.7% of SMEs were majority owned by women and 19.7% were equally owned by women and men, for a total of 35.4% (Innovation, Science and Economic Development Canada, 2014). Note that these statistics assume that an SME is the same as an entrepreneurial venture, as per the discussion in the previous section. For the statistics on women entrepreneurs, there is also variation in how women entrepreneurs are defined. Some statistics include only women

with 50% or more ownership, whereas others include women with lower ownership percentages. This variation does not change the significant difference between the number of men running businesses and the number of women.

Given these percentages, it is not surprising that entrepreneurship is perceived as a male behaviour and not a female behaviour (Bruni, Gherardi, & Poggio, 2005; Ahl, 2006; Shaw, Marlow, Lam, & Carter, 2009; McAdam, 2013). The marked terms *female entrepreneurship* and *women's entrepreneurship* are used to distinguish what women do as entrepreneurs from what men do as entrepreneurs. Research of men entrepreneurs is used to establish the norms of entrepreneurship; further, when women entrepreneurs exhibit different behaviours and outcomes from these norms, they are judged as being deficient (Watson & Newby, 2007; Ahl & Marlow, 2012; Marlow & McAdam, 2012). Yet while entrepreneurship is still a male dominated arena, women's entrepreneurship is growing, both in Canada (Industry Canada, 2015; Jung, 2010; Hughes, 2012) and worldwide (Mitchell, 2011; Kelley et al., 2015). These growth numbers point to the importance of research on women entrepreneurs.

Before proceeding further with a discussion on women entrepreneurs, there needs to be clarification on the use of the terms *female*, *male*, *women*, and *men* (Watson & Newby, 2007). The terms *female* and *male* are traditionally used to indicate the biological differentiation between the sexes, as the two versions of a human being with their respective reproductive capabilities. *Sex* is also a biological term. The terms *women* and *men* are used to indicate the socially constructed differences between the genders. *Gender* is also a socially constructed term. When gender is defined from a social construction perspective, it refers to the roles, behaviours, activities, and attributes that a given society and its corresponding culture consider appropriate for males and females or men and women (Weatherall, 2002; Bruni et al., 2005). These roles determine how men and women dress, speak, think, and interact as well as how they are permitted to contribute to the society's economic activity. Socially constructed gender roles can be prescriptive (what members of the two genders must do) or descriptive (what the members of the two genders actually do). In common usage, there is often no differentiation made between a biological sex or socially constructed gender usage.

Research on women entrepreneurs assumes a socially constructed usage (Bruni et al., 2005; Ahl, 2006). The research also currently assumes that both *sex* and *gender* are binary. It does not

examine entrepreneurship experiences related to the full spectrum of possible chromosomal characteristics, gender preferences, and gender identities, with corresponding roles beyond the binary female/woman and male/man. These spectrums constitute a whole other area of entrepreneurship research that is beyond the scope of this study; it is, however, an area recommended for future research.

Research on women entrepreneurs asks two main questions: Are women entrepreneurs different from men entrepreneurs? And do women entrepreneurs have different experiences from men entrepreneurs? The first challenge in answering the two questions above is that women entrepreneurs are not a homogenous group; there is enormous variation within the subset of women entrepreneurs (McAdam, 2013). It is this variation among women entrepreneurs that is most striking, particularly in the research that cuts across national, societal, and cultural boundaries. Research findings thus have to be distilled through an understanding of the individual and contextual variables that contribute to the research outcomes.

The second challenge in answering the two questions above is to resist the temptation to find differences where none exist (Ahl, 2006). If a researcher's assumption is that there are differences between women and men entrepreneurs, but the data do not show differences, this is not a failure of the research. It simply means there are no differences and the assumption has been proven incorrect.

Finally, the third challenge in answering these questions is the current state of research on women entrepreneurs. Ahl (2006) offers a summary of recent critiques of research on women entrepreneurs. The critiques have found that the research is not grounded in theoretical frameworks and models, does not factor in contextual characteristics, and does not address issues of power. Methodologically, the research uses measuring tools designed by men and for men (Stevenson, 1990). The research instead focuses on proving or disproving popularly held perceptions of women entrepreneurs in contrast to their male counterparts. To critically analyze the perceptions of women entrepreneurs, the corresponding research has been clustered around five themes in this section: whether women entrepreneurs fit the definition of entrepreneur; the performance or underperformance of women's businesses; the competencies and capital of women entrepreneurs; the effect of the environment on women's businesses; and women entrepreneurs and family. Relevant definitions and frameworks on entrepreneurs and

entrepreneurship presented in the previous section will be referenced, and two additional relevant models will be introduced. Connections among the research findings can then be drawn and gaps in the research identified.

2.3.1 Women Are Real Entrepreneurs

The most dominant perception of women entrepreneurs addressed in the research is that women are not real entrepreneurs. They are not perceived to have two fundamental attributes of entrepreneurs introduced in the basic dictionary definitions of *entrepreneur*: risk taking and profit motivation. The research on each of these perceptions will be presented in turn.

Initial statistical data collected on women's businesses indicated that women used less financing to start and grow their businesses than men; they either did not seek financing, or they were not successful in securing financing. The perception then formed that women were less comfortable taking risks with their businesses, particularly financial risks (Ahl, 2006; Jung, 2010). Risk-taking research therefore focuses on how and when women entrepreneurs access and use financing, including family financing, venture capital, and institutional financing options. The research confirms that women entrepreneurs are generally more financially conservative than men entrepreneurs (Ahl, 2006; Watson & Newby, 2007; Marlow & Swail, 2014; McAdam, 2013). Women actually request lesser amounts when seeking external financing, and so receive less (Jung, 2010). The research also confirms that women entrepreneurs make extensive use of personal and family financing (Halkias et al., 2011), as well as bootstrapping or using the revenues from the business to finance growth (Brush, Carter, Gatewood, Green, & Hart, 2007), rather than external financing. These findings align with research that indicates women entrepreneurs tend to undercapitalize their entrepreneurial initiatives (Shaw et al., 2009).

However, there are more factors at play in these financing decisions and outcomes than just the women entrepreneurs' risk taking. In Canada, for example, lack of access to collateral for securing short-term debt financing (e.g., lines of credit or credit cards) leads to women being approved for less financing than men (Jung, 2010). Lack of approval from financial institutions is also a factor in many of the women entrepreneur case studies from around the world that are featured in Halkias et al. (2011). Finally, Brush et al. (2007) cite a lack of access to venture capital and angel financing as a factor in women entrepreneurs' financing choices. The financing picture is thus far more complex than the single factor of risk taking.

In exploring the risk taking of women entrepreneurs, researchers also ask questions about fear of failure and confidence (Halkias et al., 2011), on the assumption that the greater the fear of failure and the lesser the confidence, the lesser the risk-taking behaviour. While the possibility of failure is inherent in entrepreneurship for both women and men, the women in Halkias at al.'s (2011) case studies did not indicate any great degree of fear of failure. The majority also expressed confidence in their abilities to be successful entrepreneurs. When women are lacking confidence in their abilities, they rely on their networks for support, including family, friends, and women's entrepreneurial networks (Hampton, Cooper, & McGowan, 2009). Thus, the link between fear of failure, confidence, and risk taking is not significant.

There exists a perception that women are not real entrepreneurs because they are not taking as many financial risks to grow their businesses as men and are therefore not as motivated by profit as men. The research on this perception therefore focuses on the motivations of women entrepreneurs for starting their businesses. As mentioned in the previous section on motivation, there are many reasons that entrepreneurs start businesses: profit, autonomy, influence, the opportunity to exercise creativity, lifestyle (e.g., flexible work hours or working from home), and social value. The research convincingly indicates that women have multiple and complex motivations for starting businesses; while profit is a motivation, it is not the only motivation (Ahl, 2006).

The research has identified women entrepreneurs' varied motivations. Women have stronger lifestyle motivations than men. For instance, they want flexible work hours in order to accommodate childrearing and other household responsibilities, or they may have a particular passion that they want to pursue (Marlow, 1997). Women may engage in necessity entrepreneurship to support their families with a second income or in the event of a divorce (Patrick, Stephens, & Weinstein, 2016). Some women start their own businesses to escape the frustration and discouragement of the glass ceiling in the private sector (Marlow, 1997). Finally, women also have stronger social value motivations than men and are more likely to be social entrepreneurs (Harding, 2004). That women are not solely motivated by profit does not mean that they are not entrepreneurs. It means that they fit the current understanding of entrepreneurial motivation as being multifaceted and unique to each entrepreneur.

2.3.2 Women's Businesses Do Not Underperform

In addition to the perception that women are not risk-takers and are not profit-motivated, there is the perception that their businesses do not grow and thus underperform (Cliff, 1998; Ahl, 2006). The previous section on entrepreneurs explained that there are three categories of SMEs, based on size: microbusinesses, small businesses, and medium businesses. According to the perception of women entrepreneurs as having underperforming businesses, there should be more women with microbusinesses than men. The statistics, however, do not support this. In some economies, there are more women with microbusinesses, and in other economies, the numbers for men and women are the same (Kelley et al., 2015). Using Canadian data as an example, the differences between the percentage of women majority owned businesses and men majority owned businesses in each of the SME categories are not statistically significant (Jung, 2010). There are just as many microbusinesses owned by men as women. Further, approximately 80% of the total number of businesses in Canada are microbusinesses. Being anything other than a microbusiness in Canada is the exception not the rule. There are other factors at play, other than gender, in the development of a microbusiness rather than a small or medium business. One of these factors is the entrepreneur's motivation; entrepreneurs with growth and profit motivations build larger businesses, while entrepreneurs with lifestyle motivations build smaller businesses (Marlow, 1997). In other words, some microbusinesses are small because that is what the entrepreneurs want them to be for the entrepreneurs to have the lifestyle they want.

Another factor that may affect business size is how woman entrepreneurs balance ethics and profits. An entrepreneur's ethical decisions may affect profits negatively if profits are turned down for ethical reasons or positively if an organization's ethical reputation attracts business. Research to date on gendered ethical differences in entrepreneurship and business is inconclusive. Some research indicates that women are more ethical, and some research indicates no gender differences (Bampton & Maclagan, 2009; Lourenco, Sappleton, & Cheng, 2015). The relationship between gender and ethics requires further research, as does the connection between ethical decision making and profit making.

A final factor that may affect business size is the sector in which a business is operating. Businesses in the services sector tend to be smaller than businesses in the manufacturing sectors (Jung, 2010). The services sector is the sector in which women entrepreneurs predominantly build businesses (Watson & Newby, 2007; Halkias et al., 2011; McAdam, 2013). This holds

true in all economies in which women's entrepreneurship is tracked, including Canada (Kelley et al., 2015; Jung, 2010). Depending upon where the services sector boundaries are drawn, services can include health care, child care, education, administration, professional services, and information services (Innovation, Science and Economic Development, 2016). Unfortunately, the service sectors in which the majority of women entrepreneurs operate have low barriers to entry and low capital costs. The sectors are therefore crowded and competitive, resulting in low margins and slow growth rates (Marlow, Carter, & Shaw, 2008; Kelley et al., 2015). Men operating in the services sector experience the same growth challenges as women, with similar results.

One hypothesis about why so many women entrepreneurs choose to operate in the services sector despite the competitiveness and low margins is that this sector is familiar to women through their previous employment; they feel confident starting a business in a sector they know, and women are predominantly employed in the services sector (Brindley, 2007). To further understand the relationship between the sectors in which women entrepreneurs choose to operate and the amount of growth they experience with their businesses, more research on both women entrepreneurs and women paid employees in other sectors needs to be completed. As an example, Martin, Wright, Beaven, and Matlay (2015) conducted a qualitative study on the experiences and motivations of women entrepreneurs operating in the science, technology, and engineering sector. They found that women moved into entrepreneurship after extensive work experience in that sector. More research like this will uncover more on the sector choices of women entrepreneurs and subsequent business performance.

2.3.3 Women Have Varied Competencies and Capital

When investigating the perception of the underperformance of women entrepreneurs, researchers also focus on the competencies required to build successful businesses and whether women entrepreneurs have these competencies. The starting point in this research is the age, level of education, and number of years of managerial, business, and or/sector experience of women prior to starting their businesses, with the assumption being that more of each of these will equip the entrepreneur with more competency. This research trying to differentiate the genders on these criteria is contradictory at best. In some environments, women entrepreneurs are younger than men (Jung, 2010; Kelley et al., 2015), and in other environments, there is no statistically significant age difference (Kelley et al., 2015). There are similar findings with the

level of education. Kelley et al. (2015) found wide variation in the levels of education of women entrepreneurs in economies worldwide, largely dependent on their access to education. When access to education is similar, as it is in Canada, the level of education of women and men entrepreneurs is similar (Jung, 2010). There is a statistically significant difference between the previous management experience of the women entrepreneurs and men entrepreneurs, with women having slightly less than men (Boden & Nucci, 2000; Jung, 2010). This may, however, be due to the smaller number of women in management positions overall, making the pipeline from management to entrepreneurship smaller for women than men.

The real question when it comes to the age, level of education, and previous management experience of women entrepreneurs is whether these characteristics affect women's competence and performance as entrepreneurs. Huarng, Mas-Tur, and Hui-Kuang Yu (2012) found that a lower level of education decreases women's motivation to start businesses. It also creates ongoing challenges when they do start a business. They also found that previous management experience increases women's motivation to start businesses and increases their level of awareness of the business challenges they face. These findings are not surprising; however, it is difficult to see how these findings would be any different for men entrepreneurs.

Research on the competencies required to be a successful entrepreneur, woman or man, and how to teach those competencies to future entrepreneurs, is still ongoing. Some specific competencies have been identified in the models of entrepreneurs and entrepreneurship already discussed: Mueller et al. (2012) developed a taxonomy of behaviours that entrepreneurs exhibit as a starting point; Shane and Venkataraman's (2000) model of entrepreneurship includes the competencies of opportunity recognition and opportunity exploitation; and Ucbasaran et al.'s (2001) model includes opportunity recognition and prior knowledge.

A model not previously discussed that is gaining attention with entrepreneurship researchers is one based on different types of capital: economic (or financial), human, entrepreneurial, social, and symbolic (McAdam, 2013). With this model, being a competent entrepreneur means being able to fully harness all of the resources or capital available both internally and externally. *Economic capital* is exactly as it sounds: existing finances and access to additional finances. *Human capital* is defined as "the collective skills, knowledge, or other intangible assets of individuals that can be used to create economic value for the individuals, their employers, or

their community" (human capital, n.d.). *Entrepreneurial capital* is the skill set required to build an entrepreneurial venture, specifically entrepreneurial competence and entrepreneurial commitment (Erikson, 2002; Shaw et al., 2009). According to Erikson (2002), entrepreneurial competence is the ability to identify and exploit opportunities, and entrepreneurial commitment is the motivation to make those opportunities a reality; both competence and commitment are required for entrepreneurial success. *Social capital*, based on the work of Bourdieu (1977), is "the network of social connections that exist between people, and their shared values and norms of behaviour, which enable and encourage mutually advantageous social cooperation" (social capital, n.d.). Social capital can be built with personal networks or professional networks. *Symbolic capital* is an individual's status or prestige within a particular context (Bourdieu, 1993), which once again facilitates access to opportunities and resources. Figure 9 presents the different types of capital linked together as a single model.

Figure 9: The Capital Model of Entrepreneurship

The capital model of entrepreneurship allows researchers to investigate clusters of competencies, skills, and resources as different types of capital. The capital is then used in a socio-economic and cultural space in order to achieve entrepreneurial outcomes. Further, these different types of capital do not exist in isolation; they are all mutually influencing (Shaw et al., 2009, McAdam, 2013). For example, if entrepreneurs increase their human capital, they can increase their entrepreneurial capital; the more education and work experience entrepreneurs have in a sector, the more they will be able to identify and exploit opportunities. Human capital also influences social capital; the more experience entrepreneurs have in a sector, the more connected they are to the sectors' networks (Martin et al., 2015). Social capital in turn

influences entrepreneurial capital; it gives entrepreneurs access to opportunities and resources they would otherwise not be able to access to on their own (Davidsson & Honig, 2003).

Research on the capital model of entrepreneurship seeks to identify whether there are differences in the capital of women and men entrepreneurs that then influence their entrepreneurial outcomes. The relationship between social capital and entrepreneurial capital has been studied the most. McGowan, Cooper, Durkin, and O'Kane (2015) establish that social capital is not just about having networks, but it is also about the quality of those networks. They also find that women entrepreneurs need different types of networks at different stages in the development of their businesses. Sector-specific networks of both genders are useful for women operating established businesses, whereas networks exclusively for women entrepreneurs are useful at the start-up phase as a support system. Brindley (2007) corroborates these findings; she indicates that women entrepreneurs rely on networks as a source of confidence in the start-up phase of their businesses. Finally, Shaw et al. (2009) found that women entrepreneurs had different networks than men entrepreneurs. They found that women's networks were larger but more loosely connected and less durable, and they were used more for personal rather than business purposes. These networking differences may mean that women generate less entrepreneurial capital from their social capital than men entrepreneurs (Shaw et al., 2009).

Shaw et al. (2009) briefly comment on possible symbolic capital differences between women and men entrepreneurs. They point to women having less symbolic capital than men because it is more difficult for women to be taken seriously as entrepreneurs than men. Being an entrepreneur is prestigious for men but unusual for women. Symbolic capital then acts to multiply other types of capital differently. The same human capital, for example, will yield different outcomes for men entrepreneurs because they are viewed as being prestigious when compared to women entrepreneurs because they are viewed as being unusual. Symbolic capital thus warrants further research.

It is important to realize that the socio-economic and cultural space in which capital is used is not a level playing field (Shaw et al., 2009). One entrepreneur may have more capital than another before they even start their ventures simply because of their gender, their socio-economic status, or their personality. Entrepreneurs may have a famous family name with symbolic capital that allows them to then secure economic capital. Entrepreneurs may be high

up on the socio-economic ladder and have access to economic capital, which can then be used to secure entrepreneurial capital. Entrepreneurs who are outgoing and extroverted may have more social capital than reserved and introverted entrepreneurs, which can then be used to secure human capital. This interplay of the different types of capital and the inequalities inherent in the socio-economic and cultural space merits further research in order to understand whether women entrepreneurs really do underperform compared to their male counterparts. Until this research is complete, the safest statement about the competency of women as entrepreneurs and the capital they have is that both vary considerably from one entrepreneur to the next.

2.3.4 The Environment is Not Gender Neutral

Entrepreneurship is often perceived as an individual endeavour in which the success or failure of an entrepreneurial venture rests solely with each entrepreneur (Ahl, 2006). However, the importance of the environment in which each entrepreneur operates is clearly established in models of entrepreneurship in the previous section. The environment is a component in models from Gartner (1988), Ucbasaran et al. (2001), and McKenzie et al. (2007). It is also captured in the OECD Entrepreneurship Indicators Framework (Ahmad & Hoffman, 2007) under the Determinants of Entrepreneurship category with three environmental elements: the business regulatory framework, ease of access to finance, and culture. The first two of these elements will be discussed as part of a new framework introduced below. Culture will be discussed in the next section.

The influence of the environment is considerably magnified for women entrepreneurs; there are environmental elements that can either inhibit or facilitate women's entrepreneurship. These elements are identified in more detail in a framework created by the multinational computer company Dell, Inc. (2015) for its women's entrepreneurship initiative called the Global Women Entrepreneur Leaders Scorecard. This framework divides the environment into five categories: Business Environment, Gendered Access, Leadership and Rights, Pipeline for Entrepreneurship, and Potential Entrepreneur Leaders. The framework is then populated with data from the United Nations, the International Telecommunications Union (ITU), the World Bank, and the Economist Intelligence Unit to rank country environments with respect to the ease of women's entrepreneurship. For this critical analysis, the framework forms the basis of the discussion on research on additional environmental factors that affect women entrepreneurs. The categories in the framework are illustrated in Figure 10.

Figure 10: Dell, Inc.'s Global Women Entrepreneur Leaders Scorecard (2015)
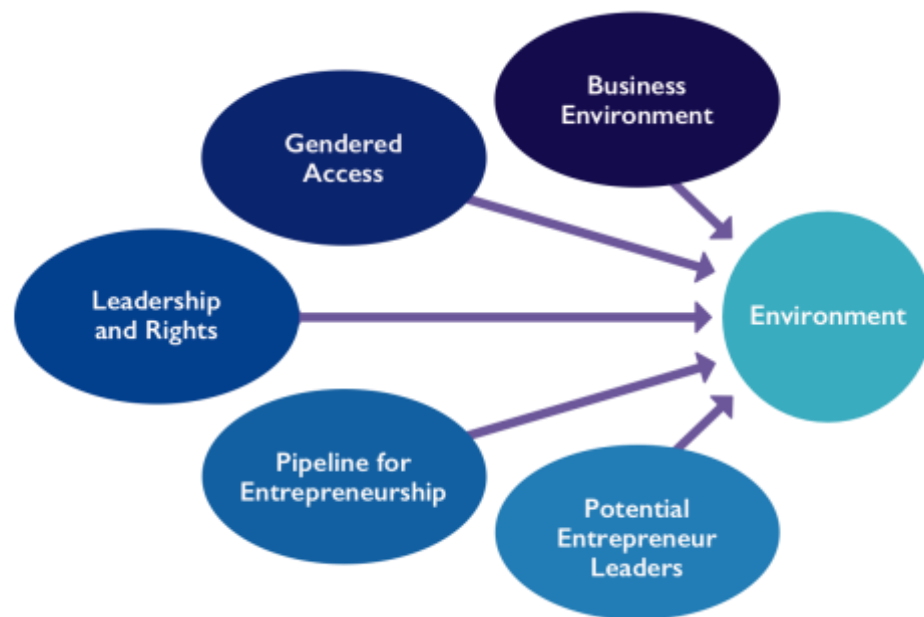
According to Dell, Inc. (2015), the *Business Environment* is the only category in the Global Women Entrepreneur Leaders Scorecard that is the same for both men and women. Entrepreneurs of both genders function in the same business context. However, while it is true that in a specific business environment, all entrepreneurs use the same banking systems, follow the same regulatory framework, and use the same communication and transportation infrastructures, the business environment is actually not gender neutral. The business systems, regulations, and norms are, for the most part, built and written by men based upon male values, perceptions, and assumptions (Marlow, 1997; Ahl, 2006; Shaw et al., 2009; Garcia & Welter, 2011). Thus, in order to build and run a business, women entrepreneurs need to adapt male values and behaviours, exploit an exaggerated version of female values and behaviours, or operate somewhere on a continuum between these two extremes (Garcia & Welter, 2011). Alternatively, women entrepreneurs can strategically choose to partner with a male entrepreneur who then interacts with the environment on behalf of the business (Garcia & Welter, 2011). The male gender bias of the business environment can prove particularly frustrating and discouraging for women entrepreneurs who left employment in a male-biased corporate world in order to escape the opportunity ceilings and career constraints of that context. These women unfortunately encounter the same ceilings and constraints when starting and running their own businesses (Marlow, 1997). It is therefore important, when evaluating a business environment,

to identify the gender-biased values and assumptions that lie below the surface of the visible business systems (Ahl, 2006; Kobeissi, 2010).

Gendered Access is a significant differentiating category between the experiences of women and men entrepreneurs. In many environments, women do not have the same access as men to education, the internet, banking, and entrepreneurship training. Globally, the education level of women entrepreneurs is very close to that of men entrepreneurs; 33% of women entrepreneurs have a secondary degree or higher level of education compared to 36% of men entrepreneurs (Kelley et al., 2015). However, considerable variance from one environment to another is hidden within this statistic. In some environments, women have limited or restricted access to primary, secondary, and/or post-secondary education (Kobeissi, 2010; Kelley et al., 2015; Dell, Inc., 2015). There is similar variation in accessing the internet, being able to open a bank account, and using other tools fundamental to starting and running a business (Dell, Inc., 2015). Beneath the visible gendered access restrictions lie the society's gender roles, norms, and expectations, which may place limitations on what men and women can and cannot do (Kobeissi, 2010; McAdam, 2013). The stricter the gender roles, norms, and expectations, the more women's access to the basic tools of building a business may be curtailed. This restricted access is a significant factor in creating differences between the entrepreneurial experiences of women and men in some environments.

The leadership variable in the *Leadership and Rights* category includes the acceptance of women in leadership positions, the acceptance of women as entrepreneurs, and the ability of women to move up within an organization. The perception of entrepreneurship as a male behaviour and not a female behaviour, as previously discussed, creates significant barriers women entrepreneurs' acceptance in some environments (Ahl, 2006; Shaw et al., 2009; McAdam, 2013) A lack of profiling of successful women entrepreneurs in public discourse in some environments, discussed in more detail below, is another environmental barrier to women's acceptance as entrepreneurs.

The rights variable in the *Leadership and Rights* category includes basic human rights, basic legal rights, the freedom of movement outside of the home, the right to drive, and the right to be employed outside the home. Without these basic rights, starting and running successful

businesses is next to impossible (Kelly et al., 2015). A set of rights that is absent in the research and discussion on women entrepreneurs is their rights to be protected against violence. Violence against women is defined by the United Nations (1993) as "any act of gender-based violence that results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual, or psychological harm or suffering to women, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or in private life." The World Health Organization (2005) has established a connection between a decrease in violence against women and increased economic and social development. An element of women's entrepreneurship that needs to be researched, then, is the degree to which women identify violence or the threat of violence within their environments and how they manage their personal safety as they operate their businesses.

The *Pipeline for Entrepreneurship* category assesses how likely women in the environment are to know an entrepreneur. Davidsson and Honig (2003) and Kelly et al. (2015) cite personal connections with women entrepreneurs as significantly increasing a woman's likelihood of being an entrepreneur herself. Also included in this factor is women's skill preparedness for identifying opportunities and for running a business. Creating a pipeline for women entrepreneurs is a priority for governments and non-profit development organizations because it is seen as a variable that they can control in the effort to increase women's entrepreneurship. This is evidenced by the numerous organizations, both government funded and independent, that have mandates to promote entrepreneurship for women through networking and training. Using Canada as an example, these organizations exist at the national level (for example, the Women's Executive Network for both entrepreneurs and executives), provincial level (for example, Alberta Women Entrepreneurs and British Columbia's Women Enterprise Centre) and local level (for example, meet ups for women entrepreneurs). These examples demonstrate the effort being put into building a pipeline for women entrepreneurs in the Canadian environment, and this effort is evident in many more environments as well (Kelley et al., 2015).

Finally, the *Potential Entrepreneur Leaders* category identifies whether there are successful women entrepreneurs visible in the environment. A lack of publicly known women entrepreneurs as leaders means there is a corresponding lack of discourse and narrative on women entrepreneurs to inspire future generations of women entrepreneurs (Dell, Inc., 2015). Baker, Aldrich, and Liou (1997) and Ljunggren and Alsos (2007) highlight the lack of women entrepreneurs in public and academic discourse. Ljunggren and Alsos (2007) also reveal the

differences in how women entrepreneurs are portrayed in public discourse—articles on men entrepreneurs discuss business performance and financials while articles on women entrepreneurs discuss their personal characteristics and their families.

On the positive side, there has recently been an increased circulation of narratives of women entrepreneurs in the public discourse. These narratives range from readers for elementary and high school students, to books for the general public, to specialized business books. Examples of these narratives include *Phenomenal Female Entrepreneurs* (Bryant, 2013), a high school level reader with stories of women entrepreneurs from different time periods; *The Inspiring Journeys of Women Entrepreneurs* (Noble Knight, 2013) and *How Women Make Money* (Watson, 2004), collections of stories for the general public about the successes and failures of women entrepreneurs; *Women Entrepreneurs Only* (Ericksen, 1999), stories about women entrepreneurs; *Persuasion* (2012), an autobiography by Arlene Dickinson, one of Canada's best-known women entrepreneurs; and *Business as Unusual* (2000) and *Body and Soul* (1992)*, autobiographies by Anita Roddick, the well-known founder of the Body Shop.

In addition to written narratives, other forums are being used to identify and promote successful women entrepreneurs so that they can become part of the public discourse. In Canada, for example, there are the Canadian Women Entrepreneur Awards, the Women's Executive Network Entrepreneurs Awards, and the Chatelaine Canada's Top Female Entrepreneurs. These awards programs are designed to bring the successes of women entrepreneurs into daily public discourse to build public profiles for women entrepreneurial leaders.

The environment is a source of the different experiences of women and men entrepreneurs. It is also a source of variation among the experiences of women entrepreneurs; different women entrepreneurs will respond differently to the environments in which they find themselves, and the factors in the above model will affect each woman differently. Given its significance, the environment will be revisited in more detail in the next section on women entrepreneurs operating cross-culturally and cross-linguistically and in the next chapter on cultural and conceptual frameworks.

2.3.5 Women and Family

The relationship between a woman entrepreneur and her family represents an aspect of the entrepreneurial experience that is researched for women entrepreneurs but not men

entrepreneurs. As was previously mentioned, articles on women entrepreneurs in the public sphere reference their personal characteristics and their families, but articles on men entrepreneurs do not (Ljunggren & Alsos, 2007). This pattern is even more evident in the research with significant attention paid to the interplay between entrepreneurship and family for women entrepreneurs. The research targets the following areas: family-based motivations for starting a business, the embeddedness of the business in the family life, and family participation in the business.

Women starting businesses to support a family or for lifestyle flexibility to manage family responsibilities have already been briefly discussed. It is well established that women continue to complete the majority of household and family work in most contexts regardless of the amount of paid work either spouse or partner in a family completes; the situation is no different with entrepreneurship (McAdam, 2013). The term *mompreneur* was coined to represent this combination of responsibilities of motherhood and entrepreneurship (Nel, Maritz, & Thongprovati, 2010). Despite the catchy term *mompreneur*, this group of women entrepreneurs is far from homogeneous. Research on mompreneurs highlights the different ways that women balance these two sets of demands, including options such as working from home, using technology-facilitated meetings rather than travelling for face-to-face meetings, using extended family members for unpaid childcare, and deliberately keeping the business small until children are older (McAdam, 2013).

The embeddedness of a business in the family life explores the degree to which family routines are intertwined with business activities (McAdam, 2013). In highly embedded businesses, the women entrepreneurs manage family and business tasks simultaneously; in less embedded businesses, the women place clear boundaries between family time and business time. Family involvement in the businesses of women entrepreneurs can take a number of different forms. Family members can help out informally on an as needed basis, members of the family can be employees of the business, and members of the family can share ownership and decision making in the business. Family members can include parents, siblings, spouses, children, and more distant relations. Models of particular interest to researchers are copreneur businesses, in which spouses share ownership and responsibility in a joint business (McAdam, 2013) and family businesses, in which women participate with multiple family members in owning and running the business.

The research on women entrepreneurs and their relationships with their families serves to once again draw attention to the variation in the experiences of women entrepreneurs. This variation is clearly demonstrated in the collection of international case studies presented in Halkias et al. (2011). That this type of research is conducted exclusively on women entrepreneurs, however, exposes an underlying assumption that the relationship with family is important for women entrepreneurs but not men entrepreneurs. A final critique of the research on women entrepreneurs' relationships with their families is that the family ties are framed as deficits to be overcome. Lacking in the research, then, is discussion and data on the advantages derived from having a spouse or being part of a family unit. These advantages can include increases in the different types of capital, all of which are important for success as an entrepreneur.

2.3.6 The State of the Research on Women Entrepreneurs

The research critically analyzed in this section on women entrepreneurs has the objective of proving or disproving perceptions of women entrepreneurs as marked or different from men entrepreneurs. While this research serves as a starting point in understanding the experiences of women entrepreneurs, it is hard to ignore the randomness, contradictions, and inconclusiveness of the current approach (Carter, Henry, Cinnéide, & Johnston, 2007; Jennings & Brush, 2013; McAdam, 2013). The contrast between the research on women's entrepreneurs and entrepreneurs in general is stark, with the former being fragmented and lacking in substance, and the latter being robust and anchored to solid models and frameworks. Researchers must stop looking at women entrepreneurs through a deficit model and instead acknowledge and explore the numerous different ways to practice entrepreneurship. Research must provide theoretical models that pull the existing research on women entrepreneurs together to account for the complex interplay of multiple factors in real socio-economic and cultural environments that then create unique entrepreneurial experiences for women entrepreneurs (Carter et al., 2007; Marlow, Henry, & Carter, 2009; Hughes, Jennings, Brush, Carter, & Welter, 2012; McAdam, 2013). As more and more women move into entrepreneurship, a coherent and relevant body of research needs to be built to support them.

2.4 The English Language Education Sector

The English language education sector is the ideal sector in which to explore the experiences of women entrepreneurs operating cross-culturally and cross-linguistically. Inherent in this sector is the need to communicate cross-culturally and cross-linguistically on a daily basis; by the very

nature of the services offered in the sector, the clients, staff, and vendors are from a different cultural and linguistic background from the entrepreneurs. To explore the English language education sector, this section starts with a brief overview of English's position as a global language, which has enabled the growth of the English language education sector. It then describes the characteristics of the sector, including the business opportunities and challenges. Finally, the section concludes with a discussion of women entrepreneurs operating in the sector.

2.4.1 English as a Global Language

Renowned linguist David Crystal (2003) argues convincingly that English, having spread around the globe to a greater extent than any other language in history, is a global language. It is the language of business, technology, science, diplomacy, and, more recently, higher education and research. English is considered a basic skill by many governments and as such is included in curricula at the primary level along with other basic skills such as mathematics and first language literacy (Graddol, 2006). English's position as a global language has been built over time; it is the result the complex interaction of colonial, military, economic, technological, and cultural forces from English-speaking countries over several hundred years (Crystal, 2003; Gooden, 2011).

Interestingly, English is not the language with the most first language speakers in the world (Graddol, 2006). The language with the most first language speakers is the Chinese language dialects grouped together, including Mandarin and Cantonese. English is also not the language that is most rapidly increasing in its number of native speakers; that position belongs to Arabic. In contrast, according to Graddol (2006) the number of English native speakers is actually decreasing. English's position as a global language derives from the number of additional language speakers of English, both as a second language (it is used on a daily basis) and as a foreign language (it is used occasionally). There are approximately 375 million native speakers of English, but the total number of speakers rises to approximately 1.5 billion when additional language speakers are included (Statista, 2016). This number increases even more when speakers with lower levels of English language proficiency are included.

A country-by-country picture of the current use of the English language has been built by a global English language education company called English First. English First uses its database of adult online English language proficiency test takers to generate the EF English Proficiency

Index or EPI on an annual basis. In 2015, that database had 910,000 entries from around the world. The EPI data can be sorted by country, age, gender, and profession to provide snapshots of adult English language proficiency worldwide. The index assigns numbers to indicate the language proficiencies and then generates colour-coded maps to visually represent country fluency for comparative purposes. This index represents the most comprehensive set of data on English language proficiency globally.

The best way to fully understand the global prevalence of English and how English language proficiency varies from country to country is to visit the EPI website; however, the Executive Summary of the 2015 index highlights some of the key trends. The average level of English language proficiency rose in 2015. Nevertheless, there is a considerable range between the regions of highest proficiency and lowest proficiency. English language proficiency is highest in northern and central Europe. Within Asia, Latin America, and Africa, there are significant variations from country to country. The Middle East and North Africa have decreasing English language proficiency, the only regions to do so. There are also generational differences in language proficiency, but these vary from region to region. Women are generally more proficient than men. And finally, when the index is mapped against other economic indicators, there is a strong correlation between indicators of economic strength and higher English language proficiency.

The EPI is striking in that it visually presents English's global reach. Unfortunately, this global reach is a double-edged sword for the language. With non-native speakers outnumbering native speakers by approximately three to one, and with the population growth among non-native speakers being two and a half times greater than the population growth among native speakers, English is going to be influenced by conflicting change forces in the coming decades, with unpredictable outcomes (Crystal, 2003). First language speakers of English and additional language speakers of English alike have a vested interest in passing on a mutually comprehensible standard language to current and future generations of English language speakers and learners globally. However, given the nature of language and language usage, strong regional variations of English have already developed. Struggles are emerging over control of the standard of spoken and written language that gets passed on and what that standard should be (Crystal, 2003; Halliday, 2003). A whole sub-field of study on world Englishes focuses on the characteristics of regional variations of English and the challenge of

identifying a standard language in a language that has unprecedented global reach. Regardless of how the ongoing evolution of English as a global language plays out, another result of its global reach has been the formation of a vibrant and robust English language education sector to support learners around the world of all ages and in all walks of life.

2.4.2 The English Language Education Sector

It is difficult to estimate of the number of people learning English today, except to say intuitively that it is a large number, and it is growing. The most widely quoted approximation of the number of English language learners comes from David Graddol, a researcher contracted with the British Council to track English language trends globally. Using projections of the number of people in the world in non-English speaking countries between the ages of six and 24, the prime education years, he estimated eleven years ago that there would be just under two billion people learning English today (Graddol, 2006). He further predicts this number will peak at two billion in 2030 or slightly earlier and then slowly decline. The decline will be a result of multiple factors, including the shifting of English language speakers from the category of learners to fluent second language speakers as English instruction starts earlier and earlier in education systems.

Language education does not take place in a political and economic vacuum; all language-use policies, including those in education, take place within local, regional, national, and international political and economic realities. Given this, the growth of the English language education sector has produced well-intentioned debates about whether educators should participate in the spread of the English language, possibly at the expense of local and regional languages (Crystal, 2003; Gooden, 2011). This debate is particularly heated in regions of the world previously subjected to colonial and military conquest by English-speaking powers. At the centre of the debate is the concept of *linguistic imperialism*, the intentional imposition of the use of one language over another for political purposes. In a conscious effort to avoid accusations of linguistic imperialism, English language educators have tried to position English as a functional, culture-free language with practical application in multiple aspects of daily life. While language can never be devoid of a relationship to culture, as English has become more and more of a global language, it has moved into this functional position quite naturally to become a tool for mutual comprehensible communication for speakers of other languages.

There are three main ways to categorize the English language education sector: according to learner age, the context outside of the language classroom, and the source of funding for the classes. Learner age is generally broken into the following categories: pre-school (nursery school and kindergarten) for learners five years old and under, primary for learners six through 13 years old, secondary for learners 14 through 18 years old, post-secondary for learners in college or university, adult for learners who are in the workforce, and senior for learners who are retired. Note that the ages by which these categories are defined may change slightly depending upon the structure of a country's education system.

The context outside of the classroom is broken into the following categories: an English-language context, so that learners must use English outside of the classroom for all aspects of their daily lives including socializing and work (commonly called English as a second language); a non-English language context, so that learners study English as an academic subject and only use it to access external information or cultural artefacts (commonly called English as a foreign language); and a hybrid of the two, in which the context has multiple languages, of which English is one, so that learners use English for some but not all daily activities. The context dictates the urgency with which learners engage in the learning process; the more English is needed for daily life, the more urgent the learning process.

Finally, the English language education sector has programs that are either publicly funded, for profit, or a hybrid of these two funding models. Publicly funded programs include those for immigrants in an English-speaking country, for students of all ages as part of their regular academic curriculum in non-English-speaking countries, and for adult language training supported by the government. Publicly funded programs take place at school boards, colleges, universities, non-profit settlement organizations, and non-profit associations. For-profit English language education programs take place at language schools, private schools across all age groups including higher education, and online schools. This category also includes publishers, technology companies, consultants, and assessment providers. Finally, a hybrid-funding model is a fee-paying program run by a publicly funded organization. For example, a college or university may charge fees for a program, for example, for international students wanting to enter the college or university. The program earns money but is also supported by the facilities and administrative infrastructure of the larger publicly funded organization. This hybrid model creates challenges for the for-profit language program providers in that they essentially compete

against their own tax dollars. Another variation on the hybrid model is the international chain of British Council language programs. The British Council is the British government's independent but publicly funded organization used to promote British culture and the English language internationally. For-profit language programs in countries where the British Council operates compete against British tax dollars.

The English language education sector is not just about the teaching and learning of English. There is a wide range of supporting services around this central instructional function. The English language education sector thus includes the following services:

1. Language instruction through different modalities (classroom, blended learning, distance learning through the internet, computer-facilitated communication, or telephone)
2. Short-term study tour packages which consist of language classes, sightseeing tours, cultural activities, and accommodations
3. Agent services for international student recruitment and support
4. Standardized language assessments (paper based, computer based, or online)
5. Language teacher training from foundational pre-service courses through to ongoing professional development
6. Consulting services for curriculum development, program development, program review, and accreditation
7. Publishing of textbooks (print, e-books) and resource materials (print, digital)
8. Computer-based language labs and language education management systems
9. Apps, online activities, and other web-based resources

The English language education sector intersects with the tourism sector for the provision of accommodation (e.g., homestays or apartments) for students and sightseeing tours and cultural activities. It intersects with the general education sector as English language students are funneled into regular K–12, college, and university classes. Finally, it intersects with the social services sector in some countries as immigrants are provided with settlement and citizenship services.

Looking specifically at the for-profit category of the English language education sector, which is the focus of this research, there are challenges for entrepreneurs. The sector has fairly low barriers to entry; the initial investment required is low, entrepreneurs do not require specific

education or training, and, compared to other sectors, government regulation is minimal. In some contexts, these barriers to entry have been made slightly higher through industry accreditation systems and government quality control. However, compared to other sectors, the barriers remain low. Given these low barriers to entry, the sector is an easy and low-risk sector to enter and thus is highly competitive with relatively low margins. Because it is a service and not a product-based sector, English language education is comparatively labour intensive, making it difficult to get better profit margins.

A significant challenge in the sector is its volatility (British Council, 2006). The recruitment of students, both within a country and outside of the country, is subject to global events far beyond the control of the entrepreneur, including health scares (e.g., SARS and ebola), terrorism, financial crises, currency fluctuations, natural disasters, and political upheaval. The sector is also subject to shifting government policies and priorities with respect to visa issuance, education, and language.

As with other sectors, the English language education sector is undergoing rapid changes driven by technology. Technology is changing how instruction is delivered (e.g., blended learning, fully online learning, and self-directed learning) as well as the resources available (e.g., digital resources and online resources). Because of technology, it is no longer necessary for English language teachers to be in the same room as their students; they can be in another city or in another country.

The other significant change in the sector is due to demographics. As previously mentioned, the power balance between native speakers and non-native speakers of English has shifted because non-native speakers residing outside of the primary English-speaking countries now outnumber native speakers inside the primary English-speaking countries. With this demographic shift, the location of English language instruction in an English as a second language context is no longer limited to the US, the UK, Canada, Australia, and other primary English-speaking countries. It has shifted to secondary English language speaking countries including the Philippines, Malaysia, Singapore, and India. And the instruction of English as a foreign language has also greatly expanded and improved in quality. All of these changes are lowering the barriers to entry into the sector, increasing competitiveness and putting downward pressure on margins.

The size of the for-profit side of the English language sector in monetary terms is difficult to measure because the sector has both a direct value to an economy and an indirect value. There is direct value from the actual English language education services offered as well as indirect value from ancillary services that students in the sector tap into including accommodations, tourism, and ongoing higher education. In Canada in 2015, the estimated value of the English and French language education sector was $1.5 billion (CAD) including tuition and living expenses (Languages Canada, 2015). Because the language education industry organizations in Canada serve both official languages, all Canadian statistics include French language education along with English language education. This is not the case in other countries that provide English language instruction. The statistics also include revenue from publicly funded organizations such as colleges and universities that run fee-paying programs. The for-profit English language education sector can also be measured in the number of student enrollments per year. The estimated student enrollment for Canada in English and French language programs for 2015 was 133,910 students (Languages Canada, 2015). This number once again includes fee-paying programs at publicly funded organizations.

Similar types of statistics are available from industry organizations English UK and English USA. In the UK in 2015, there were 650,000 students studying English at 550 programs for an estimated value of £1.2 billion and 26,500 jobs (English UK, 2016). In the USA in 2015, there were 456 programs in the US, 227 of which were privately owned businesses; there are no revenue or job numbers available (English USA, 2016).

None of the statistics collected to measure the size of the English language education sector takes into account revenue from the other direct services such as language assessment, publishing, consulting, or technology. Nor do they include English language education delivered outside of Canada by Canadian-based organizations on a short-term or long-term project basis or the English language education increasingly being offered online through telecommunications tools such as Skype. Unfortunately, the complexity and diversity of the service delivery of for-profit English language education sector makes it challenging to determine the exact size of the sector, regardless of which statistics are used.

Despite the difficulty in measuring the true value of the for-profit English language education sector, it is commonly accepted that the UK has the most market share in the sector globally,

followed by the US. Canada and Australia compete for third and fourth place, switching positions every few years depending upon government visa policies, currency fluctuation, and geopolitical events. Other countries with some of the market share include Ireland, Malta, New Zealand, and South Africa. In the past five years, secondary English language countries have secured some market share in the sector through lower pricing and less stringent visa requirements. These countries include Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore, and India, as previously mentioned.

Similar to the lack of data on the size of the English language education sector both internationally and in Canada, there are also no data in Canada or globally on the number of businesses operating in the English language education sector or on how many of those businesses are owned and operated by women. There are just a few statistics that unfortunately provide only a few pieces of the puzzle. There is research that indicates that globally, education in general is one of the preferred sectors for women entrepreneurs along with health care and services (Kelley et al., 2015). In Canada, there are statistics on the number of businesses operating in the education services sector: there are 100,200 people working in 13,487 businesses in 2015 (Innovation, Science and Economic Development Canada, 2016). The number of language education businesses is embedded in but not tracked separately from those numbers for educational businesses, and there is also no tracking by gender. Languages Canada, the industry association for fee-paying English and French language program providers, indicates there are 161 accredited for-profit, privately owned language education businesses in Canada. This number does not include unaccredited businesses and other ancillary service providers, nor is there tracking by gender.

2.4.3 The State of the Research on Women Entrepreneurs in the English Language Education Sector

Clearly, research is needed to determine the size of the English language education sector—globally and on a country-by-country basis—as well as the number of women entrepreneurs operating in the sector. This data must include the revenue, the number of businesses, the number of employees, and the gender of business owners as a starting point. The data also need to include all the ancillary services in the sector in addition to the core delivery of English language instruction. Even without this data, however, the English language education sector remains an ideal sector in which to explore the experiences of women entrepreneurs operating cross-culturally and cross-linguistically. This is because the services offered in the sector require

daily functioning across cultural and linguistic boundaries, and in complex contexts, women entrepreneurs have rich, multi-layered experiences for a qualitative researcher to collect and analyze. Placing the research in a wide variety of cultural contexts, as is possible with this research, will only add to the richness of the data collected.

2.5 Women Entrepreneurs Operating Cross-Culturally and Cross-Linguistically

Research on women entrepreneurs underscores the importance of the environment or the context in differentiating the experiences of women and men entrepreneurs and in exploring variation in the experiences of women entrepreneurs. Two elements of the environment are significant to the research reviewed in this section: its culture and language. Running an entrepreneurial venture becomes more complicated for any entrepreneurs when they cross into a new environment and thus have to navigate a new culture and a new language in addition to the normal challenges of being an entrepreneur. These complications are multiplied for female entrepreneurs, given the additional impact that the environment can have on them versus men entrepreneurs, as previously established in the critical analysis of Dell, Inc.'s (2015) Global Women Entrepreneur Leaders Scorecard. This section starts with basic definitions of culture and language as well as a brief discussion on the relationship between culture and gender. It then evaluates the existing research on women entrepreneurs operating cross-culturally and cross-linguistically. Finally, the section identifies the gaps in the research that need to be filled.

2.5.1 Culture, Language, and Gender

Culture is a complex concept, and as such, there are hundreds of definitions of the concept from a wide range of academic fields. Some of these definitions are explored in the next chapter on the conceptual framework for the research. For the purposes of this discussion, however, a classic definition of culture from British anthropologist Tylor (1871) is used. Tylor defined *culture* as "that complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, morals, law, custom, and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society." This definition has stood the test of time because it captures key features of culture: its complexity; its layers of knowledge, behaviours, and values; its broad scope; the fact that it is acquired; and the fact that it is shared by members of a group. A basic definition of language is also used once again on the understanding there are many more definitions available. For the purposes of this discussion, *language* is a set of sounds, words, and structural patterns that are used by a group of people in

order to communicate thoughts, emotions, and information with one another in an efficient and systematic way (adapted from Mooney, Peccei, & Labelle, 2010).

That there is a connection between culture and language is supported by a decades-old body of research from multiple fields of study. The nature of this connection, however, has been the subject of substantial and continued debate (Baxter, 1983; Crawford-Lange & Lange, 1984). The debate can be represented by positions on a continuum. On one end of the continuum, cultural determinism, culture has a controlling relationship over language; in other words, culture determines language, how it is used, and the thoughts expressed by it. On the other end of the continuum, linguistic determinism, language has a controlling relationship over culture; in other words, language determines culture, particularly the perspectives, values, and thoughts expressed within that culture. The latter position is also called the Sapir-Whorf Hypothesis after the two researchers who first put forward the idea (Carroll, 1956). There are then perspectives on the relationship between culture and language that can be placed at varying points between these two extremes. Engaging in the debate over the nature of the culture–language relationship is beyond the scope of this literature review. For the purposes of the discussion, the relationship is placed in the middle of the continuum, with the recognition that there is a close, mutually influencing relationship between culture and language; the two cannot be learned or used independently of each other, and a change in one brings about a change in the other.

There is also a connection between culture and gender that needs to be articulated. Earlier in this section, it was established that gender can be defined from a biological perspective or a social construction perspective and that in women's entrepreneurship, a social construction perspective is used. In a social construction perspective of gender, teaching and learning play a significant role in the process of individuals shaping themselves to take on a designated gender role (Weatherall, 2002). Weatherall provides some additional definitions that are useful in establishing the connection between culture and gender. *Gender schemas* are sets of knowledge defining masculine and feminine behaviours for a culture and society that an individual needs to learn. These sets of knowledge vary from one culture to another because they are based on that culture's beliefs, values, and customs. *Socializing agents* (parents, teachers, peers, media, music, books, and religion) teach and reinforce these gender schemas throughout an individual's life span. Finally, *gender stereotypes* are generalizations about the attributes and roles of the two genders, once again based on the culture's beliefs, values, and customs.

It is evident then that members of different cultures construct their gender schemas and gender stereotypes differently and therefore have correspondingly different social constructions of gender. Women entrepreneurs conducting business cross-culturally and cross-linguistically must be familiar with the gender schema, gender stereotypes, and social constructions of gender for the cultures in which they are operating and must then negotiate any differences. This is an added element of complexity to the cross-cultural and cross-linguistic challenges experienced by women entrepreneurs.

2.5.2 International Entrepreneurship Research and Women Immigrant Entrepreneur Research

There is very limited research on women entrepreneurs operating cross-culturally and cross-linguistically as they run their businesses. However, there is also very little research on entrepreneurs in general operating cross-culturally and cross-linguistically; only recently has a subset of entrepreneurship research emerged that focuses on entrepreneurship across national boundaries. *International entrepreneurship* is defined by Oviatt and McDougall (2005) as "the discovery, enactment, evaluation, and exploitation of opportunities across national borders to create future goods and services." According to a thematic analysis by Jones, Coviello, and Tang (2011), the research on international entrepreneurship to date has focused on three areas: explorations of how to conduct entrepreneurship across national boundaries, comparisons of entrepreneurship from one country to another, and comparisons of how different countries conduct international entrepreneurship. The research in the first category, which is most relevant to this discussion, has focused on opportunity identification and exploitation in an international context. The term *cross-cultural entrepreneurial competence* was proposed to capture the ability to effectively navigate cross-cultural landscapes to identify entrepreneurial opportunities (Muzychenko, 2008). There is much more to undertaking entrepreneurial activities across borders than opportunity identification, and this is not represented in the current research. However, the fact that there is now a subset of entrepreneurship focused on international ventures is a promising start.

The only cluster of research that specifically addresses women entrepreneurs operating cross-culturally and cross-linguistically is research on immigrant women entrepreneurs. Immigrant entrepreneurship, for both women and men, is of interest to researchers because it is seen as a force for integration and economic security for immigrant populations (Halkias et al., 2011; Kelley et al., 2015). A study by Collier (2010) points to the first interesting direction for

research on immigrant women entrepreneurs: when and why they use their first language (L1) versus their second language (L2) when running their businesses. Collier found that immigrant women entrepreneurs who operate businesses serving immigrant communities used their L2 for basic business communication such as opening and closing transactions and their L1 for more personal conversations with customers.

The research on immigrant women entrepreneurs with the broadest scope, however, is found in Halkias et al. (2011), a collection of twenty-one studies from around the world based on the same exploratory survey but authored by different research teams. The survey was designed to capture many aspects of immigrant women's entrepreneurship based upon a review of the research literature. The survey has questions about business structure, products and services, access to finance, the use of technology, interactions with family, and level of confidence/risk taking in addition to questions about support from adopted communities and any cultural or linguistic challenges encountered.

The twenty-one studies that resulted from the survey data serve first to highlight that, as with entrepreneurship in general, there is extensive variation in the experiences of women immigrant entrepreneurs in all aspects of running their businesses, including their cross-cultural and cross-linguistic experiences. Second, the studies yield three clear patterns of cross-cultural and cross-linguistic interactions that can be illustrated through simple models. The variables in the models include the entrepreneur's first culture (indicated as C1); cultures the entrepreneur interacts with (C2, C3, and so on) through relationships with clients, vendors, staff, and the overall business context; the entrepreneur's first language (L1); and languages the entrepreneur interacts with (L2, L3, and so on) once again through relationships with clients, vendors, staff, and the overall business context.

In the first of these patterns, the immigrant women entrepreneurs reside in a second or additional cultural and linguistic context and conduct all aspects of their business in that second cultural and linguistic context. For example, in a study by the research team Thurman, Botha, Anast, and Halkias (2011), an Italian immigrant woman entrepreneur in South Africa interacted with her South African clients, vendors, and staff in English in the South African cultural context. The model of the pattern is given in Figure 11 below.

Figure 11: Immigrant Women Entrepreneurs Pattern One
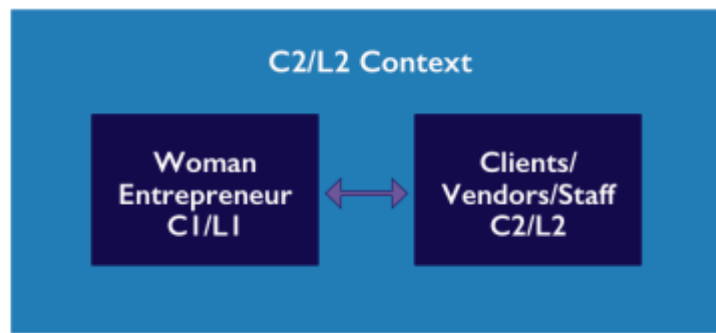
In the second interaction pattern, the immigrant women entrepreneurs conduct business almost exclusively within an immigrant community that has the same first culture and language as they do. However, they follow the business rules of conduct of their adopted culture and language context. For example, in the study by the research team Vaccarino, Tremaine, Anast, and Robotis (2011), an immigrant woman entrepreneur from China ran a travel agency in a Chinese community in New Zealand. While she was fluent in English and operated in the New Zealand business context, the majority of her interactions were in Chinese, including those with her staff and clients. The model of the pattern is given in Figure 12.

Figure 12: Immigrant Women Entrepreneurs Pattern Two
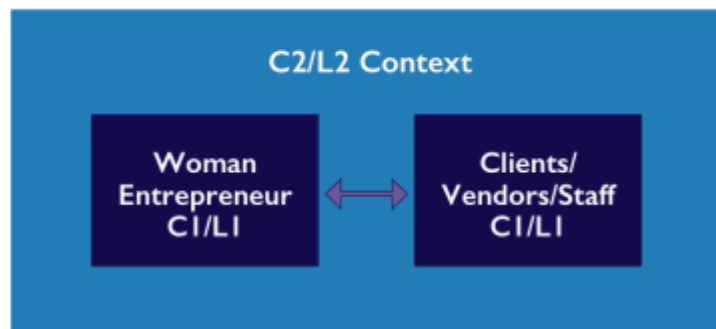
In the third interaction pattern, the immigrant women entrepreneurs leverage their location in their adopted community along with their ties to their homeland. They thus interact in both their C1/L1 context and their C2/L2 context; their vendors, staff, and clients are split between the two contexts in different ways. For example, in the study once again by the research team Vaccarino et al. (2011), an immigrant woman entrepreneur from China located in New Zealand exported wool products from New Zealand to China. She operated in the New Zealand context with her vendors and staff and in the Chinese context with her clients. To expand her business, she then added a variation of the interaction pattern by sourcing vendors in China and clients in New

Zealand to further leverage her bridging role between the two communities and contexts. The model of the pattern is given in Figure 13.

Figure 13: Immigrant Women Entrepreneurs Pattern Three
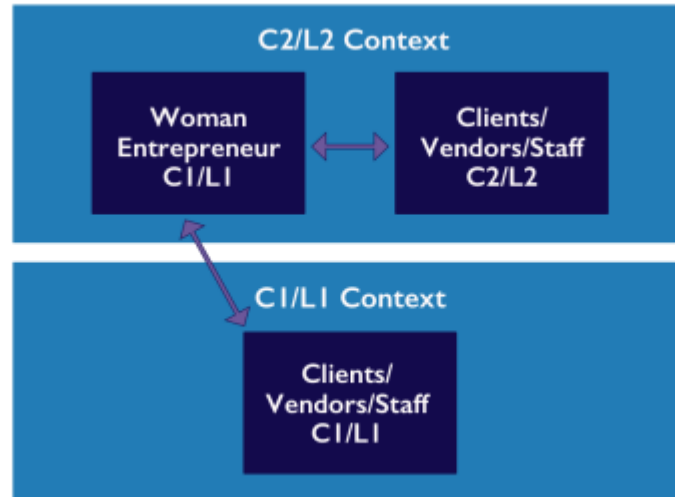
The interaction patterns above, evident in Halkias et al.'s (2011) data, are just the starting point in the possible extended analysis of this set of data. As a next step, the cultural and linguistic challenges identified by the immigrant women entrepreneurs can be aligned with their corresponding interaction patterns. For example, in the study from Vaccarino et al. (2011), it appears that women whose clients and vendors were drawn from the immigrant community, and who thus used the same culture and language, experienced fewer challenges than those who crossed cultural and linguistic boundaries. Another next step which could be taken with Halkias et al.'s (2011) data is to interpret it using cultural and linguistic conceptual frameworks to understand the specific aspects of culture and language that presents challenges. For example, once again from the study by Vaccarino et al. (2011), a woman entrepreneur working in a male-dominated sector in her adopted community experienced more challenges than women working in female-dominated sectors. Another example can be taken from the research team of Zakka, Caracatsanis, Mourad, Harkiolakis, and Antoniou (2011), who found that immigrant women operating in adopted cultures that were similar to their home cultures experienced fewer cultural and linguistic challenges. A meta-analysis of the data collected by Halkias et al. (2011) from multiple perspectives can yield significant information on the experiences of immigrant women entrepreneurs.

2.5.3 The State of the Research on Women Operating Cross-Culturally and Cross-Linguistically

If women entrepreneurs are to be encouraged to undertake entrepreneurial endeavours that cross cultural and linguistic boundaries, then an entire body of research on women entrepreneurs functioning cross-culturally and cross-linguistically needs to be built. The sparse research that currently exists points the way for some of this future research. The research on international entrepreneurship needs to be expanded beyond opportunity identification to all aspects of entrepreneurship; it then needs to differentiate women's experiences and men's experiences. The research on immigrant women entrepreneurs' language choices offers an intriguing research direction, and the research on immigrant women entrepreneurs provides some preliminary cultural and linguistic interaction patterns and ideas of some of the challenges faced by women. In addition to filling in the gaps in the research on immigrant women entrepreneurs, future research needs to capture the experiences of women entrepreneurs operating cross-culturally and cross-linguistically. Finally, future research needs to be interpreted through existing conceptual frameworks on culture and language.

2.6 Supporting Women Entrepreneurs to Operate Cross-Culturally and Cross-Linguistically in the English Language Education Sector

Ultimately, the purpose of any research on entrepreneurship, regardless of the specific profile of the entrepreneur and the entrepreneurial context, is to identify how to support current entrepreneurs and promote future entrepreneurship. Given the overwhelming evidence from researchers that entrepreneurship drives economic growth and stability, supporting entrepreneurs and promoting entrepreneurship is an academic and government priority. The research presented in the preceding literature review should thus be assessed with this overall objective in mind: how does the research support and promote women entrepreneurs operating cross-culturally and cross-linguistically in the English language education sector? The answer at this point is that the research supports entrepreneurs with coherent, theoretically robust findings. Thereafter, as the focus of the research narrows to women, to cross-cultural and cross-linguistic experiences, and finally, to the English language education sector, the research becomes progressively less coherent and theoretically robust, as well as more sparse. There is thus space in the body of research for an exploratory study on the experiences of women entrepreneurs

operating cross-culturally and cross-linguistically in the English language education sector in order to start to fill these rather large gaps.

It is not enough to fill theoretical gaps, however, with practical subject matter such as entrepreneurship; the next step—application—also needs to be taken. Puechner and Diegelmann (2007) present four themes from a European Union project that they evaluated called the Promotion of Female Entrepreneurship. The following four themes were used to categorize research in an entrepreneurship literature review prior to building the program: problem awareness, support systems or programs, networking, and education and training. These four themes can also be used to guide the application of theory to practice in order to create meaningful and impactful support for entrepreneurs, but with two changes. While it is important to identify problems or challenges, it is also important to identify successes; just as much can be learned from successes as from problems. The first theme, then, needs to be changed to *success and problem awareness*. The second theme needs to be changed to *support programs* to more clearly differentiate it from *networking*. The themes are visually represented in Figure 14 below, with the theory and application themes labeled. Notice that the arrows go both ways and among all of the themes. The relationship between theory and application is not one-directional; theory influences application and application influences theory. The three components of application also influence each other.

Figure 14: The Theory and Application of Entrepreneurship Research
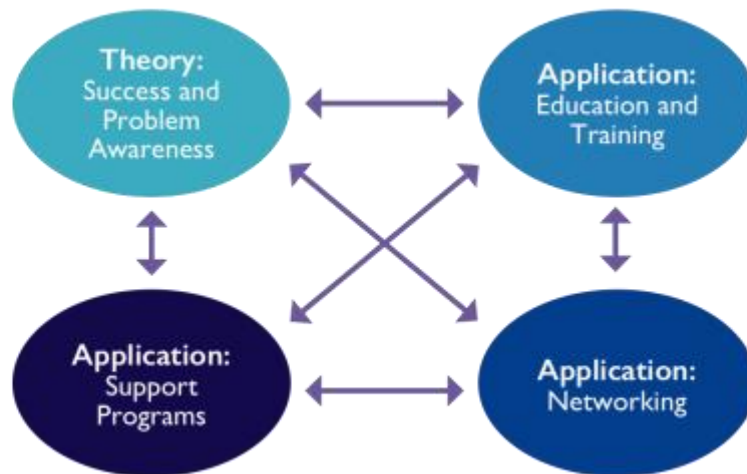
This exploratory study identifies the successes and problems of women entrepreneurs operating cross-culturally and cross-linguistically in the English language education sector. The findings

of the study are then used to recommend support programs, networking, and education and training. One final theoretical exploration needs to be completed before the study starts, however, and this is the discussion of the conceptual frameworks of culture and the culture and language relationship through which the data generated in the study is interpreted.

Chapter 3: Conceptual Framework

"What is hardest of all? That which seems most simple: to see with your eyes what is before your eyes."

-Johann Wolfgang von Goethe

3.1 Introduction

The findings of this research are interpreted through a conceptual framework that involves a series of definitions and conceptualizations of culture and the relationship between culture and language. A single definition or conceptualization does not provide an adequate framework through which to interpret the data. As Oxford (1994) indicates, given the intricacy of the concept of culture, it is more accurate to consider the multiple meanings of culture rather than a single meaning of culture. The following definitions and conceptualizations are used in the conceptual framework as the meanings of culture: the tourism definition, the iceberg analogy, the onion analogy, cultural values continuums, cultural learning domains (affective, cognitive, and behavioural), the acculturation model, communicative competence, intercultural competence, intercultural communicative competence, and culture as a complex, dynamic system. These definitions and conceptualizations were selected from among hundreds of possibilities based upon my experience conducting adult education and professional development on culture and language over the past twenty years. Several are well cited in research in multiple fields, including language education, intercultural communication, and international business. All have proven effective in a pedagogical context in my experience, providing different lenses through which learners can explore the concept of culture and its relationship to language. Linking the definitions and conceptualizations to pedagogy is imperative given that education, training, and other forms of support are the ultimate goals of this research. The definitions and conceptualizations, in addition to forming the conceptual framework of the research, also served as part of the data collection process, being presented to the participants in a mini-lecture format as a discussion prompt.

The definitions and conceptualizations of culture and its relationship to language used in the conceptual framework move from simple to more complex. The simpler definitions and conceptualizations are useful because they represent commonly held understandings of culture

and its relationship to language; they are thus the starting point for non-experts. They are also easy to apply for analysis purposes. The more complex conceptualizations, on the other hand, are useful because they allow for investigation of the deeper layers of the concepts. No one definition or framework is better than another; they each provide a different window into culture and its relationship to language. See Figure 15 below for a continuum of the definitions and conceptualizations from simple to complex. Each of these definitions and frameworks will be discussed in turn for its contribution to the interpretation of the data.

Figure 15: Conceptualizations or Definitions of Culture from Simple to Complex

3.2 The Tourist Definition

The tourist definition of culture is the simplest of all of the definitions. In this definition, culture is what people travel to different cultures to experience: to see the art, hear the music, see monuments and historic buildings, see national costumes, participate in festivals, and eat the food (Hall, 1976; Crawford-Lange and Lange, 1984; Oxford, 1994). A relationship between culture and language is inherent in this definition; language is a component of culture, being one of the reasons that people travel to another culture. The tourist definition of culture is the one most commonly found in the public domain. It is also the definition that is most prevalent in the English language education sector, from language textbooks to the activities used in the classroom (Tyers, 1997). The scope of the tourist definition of culture is visually represented in Figure 16.

Figure 16: The Tourist Definition of Culture
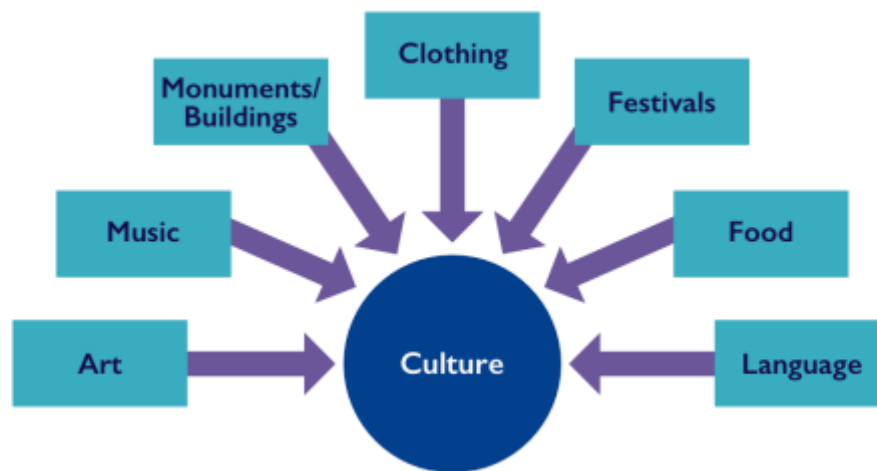
This definition is called the tourist definition for a reason. Tourists are only in a new culture for a short period of time. As a result, the components of the tourist definition of culture are noticed easily and quickly. The components of this definition are also non-threatening. While tourists might not like a particular kind of food or music from another culture, they do not usually feel endangered by them. The tourist definition focuses on things that are intriguing, entertaining, interesting, and just plain fun, but not controversial. The global tourism industry relies on the fact that people enjoy experiencing different music, art, and food. While the tourist definition of culture is simple, it is a good starting point in any analysis of culture because it allows people to organize their initial observations of that culture. The danger with the tourist definition of culture is that people stop here; it is important to move beyond this surface level understanding of culture.

3.3 The Iceberg Analogy

In 1969, Hall differentiated between in-awareness culture and out-of-awareness culture, which can also be called surface and deep culture or seen and unseen culture. *In-awareness culture* is similar to the tourist definition of culture and includes language, food, music, rituals, families, houses, greetings, and leisure activities. *Out-of-awareness culture* is the culture that cannot be seen and that even members of a cultural group are often not aware of. Examples of out-of-awareness culture include the size of personal space, the methods for indicating power differences in relationships, work habits and practices, and the meanings of non-verbal communication. It also includes the concepts of time, beauty, friendship, privacy, good and evil,

right and wrong, teaching, learning, logic, and motivation. This conceptualization of culture adds an intangible layer to the tangible understanding of culture presented in the tourist definition of culture. Culture is not just what is experienced through the senses because it also has a hidden, abstract layer.

In-awareness culture and out-of-awareness culture allow for a greater understanding of the relationship between culture and language. Just as there is an intangible layer to culture, there is also an intangible layer to language. The tangible layer of language is its sounds, words, and sentence structures; the intangible layer of language is its nuance, metaphor, discourse protocols, and rules of appropriate usage.

A common analogy used to present in-awareness culture and out-of-awareness culture pedagogically is an iceberg (Selfridge & Sokolik, 1975; French & Bell, 1998). The portion of the iceberg that is above the water is the in-awareness culture. The portion of the iceberg that is below the water is the out-of-awareness culture. The iceberg analogy is compelling in that it makes the challenges of out-of-awareness culture evident; it is the hidden, abstract intangibles of a culture that present the barriers and frustrations for people who are new to the culture. The iceberg analogy is illustrated in Figure 17.

Figure 17: The Iceberg Analogy of Culture

3.4 The Onion Analogy

The iceberg analogy of culture divides culture into two layers: an in-awareness layer and out-of-awareness layer. The next conceptualization of culture—the onion analogy—adds more complexity because it has three layers. Robinson (1985) defines these three layers as products (literature, art, artefacts, folklore, music, and food), behaviours (customs, habits, and leisure

activities) and ideas (beliefs, values, and institutions). The products layer of a culture is similar to the tourist definition and in-awareness culture in that it is tangible. However, it is not as wide in scope, being restricted to what members of a cultural group create. The behaviours layer of a culture is also tangible, but it is defined by what members of a cultural group do in specific situations. Finally, the ideas layer of a culture is the intangible core of a culture that both drives the culture and holds it together.

Adding a third layer to culture also allows for a third layer to be added to language. The products of language are the language systems: the sounds, the words, the grammar, and the discourse. The behaviours of language are how the language is used to communicate through listening, reading, speaking and writing. And finally, the core of the language is the set of values and beliefs that are built into the language through rules of appropriate usage.

The analogy associated with this three-layer conceptualization of culture is the onion. The products of a culture are on the outside of the onion; they are the easiest to identify. The behaviours of a culture are the next layer, still tangible but slightly less easy to discern. Finally, at the centre of the onion are the values, intangible and thus very difficult to perceive. The onion analogy is shown in Figure 18.

Figure 18: The Onion Analogy of Culture
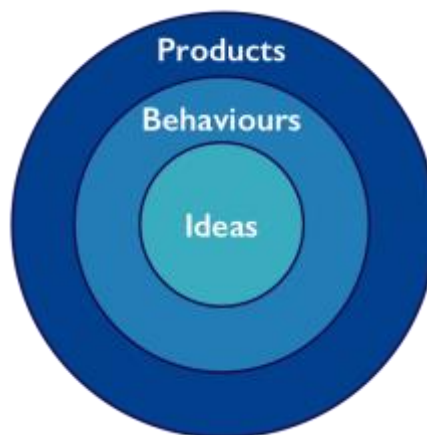
There is a second onion analogy of culture, this one based upon the work of Hofstede (1980, 1991). In this second onion analogy of culture, there are four layers: symbols, heroes, rituals, and values, with a fifth category, practices, bridging all four layers. While the divisions of the layers of culture are different in this onion analogy, the basic concept is the same; there are

elements of a culture that are more deeply buried than others, and these core elements drive the culture. Figure 19 is an adaptation of this alternate onion analogy model

Figure 19: Adapted from Hofstede's (1980, 1991) Onion Analogy of Culture
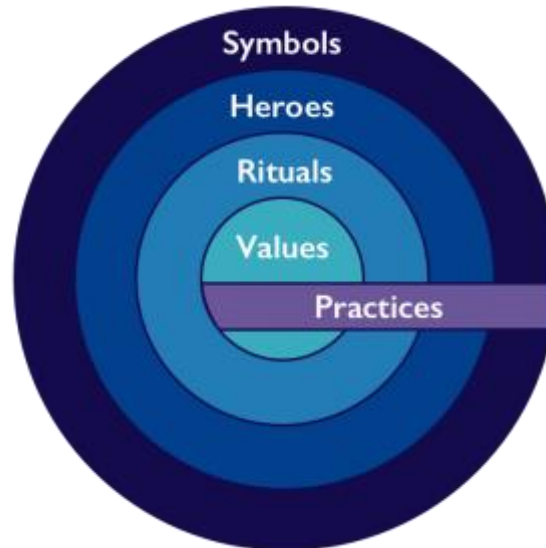
3.5 Cultural Values Continuums

The next conceptualization of culture, cultural values continuums, builds upon the work of Hofstede's (1980, 1991) onion analogy of culture in which values are at the core of any culture. Hofstede defined values as being the degree of importance that a person or a group puts on an idea or belief. To build cultural values continuums, opposing values are placed at the two ends of a continuum. Cultures can then be analyzed and placed somewhere between the two opposites to reflect the importance the culture places on that idea or belief. The collection of positions on the cultural values continuums constitutes the core set of values for a culture; understanding these core sets of values for cultures then allows for the identification of areas of alignment and areas of tension when comparing cultures to each other.

There are hundreds of different human values; therefore, the challenge when using cultural values continuums as an analytical or pedagogical tool is selecting the values to focus on. Hofstede (1980, 1991) starts with five key values continuums: power distance, individualism versus collectivism, masculinity versus femininity, uncertainty avoidance, and time orientation. Each of these will be described briefly in turn in order to further illustrate the concept of cultural

values continuums. All the descriptions of the cultural values continuums are taken from Hofstede (1980, 1991).

The first values continuum is built around the concept of low and high power distance as illustrated in Figure 20.

Figure 20: The Power Distance Values Continuum

The power distance values continuum captures a culture's attitude towards authority. People in a culture with low power distance do not respect authority, and there are few outward distinctions between those with power and those without. People in a culture with high power distance respect authority and accept large disparities between those with power and those without. Those with power have authority and corresponding titles, receive deferential formal treatment, and display outward signs of power.

The second values continuum is built around the contrast between individualism and collectivism.

Figure 21: The Individualism versus Collectivism Values Continuum

The individualism versus collectivism values continuum differentiates how people in a culture establish their identities. People in an individualistic culture see themselves as being independent and responsible for their own lives, decisions, and successes. People in a collectivistic culture see their primary identity as being derived from the group or groups to which they belong. They make decisions by consensus in the best interest of the group and take care of all members of the group at the expense of individual needs.

The next values continuum has the rather contentious name of the masculinity versus femininity continuum.

Figure 22: The Masculinity versus Femininity Values Continuum

The masculinity versus femininity values continuum is not about the roles that men and women play in a culture; rather, it is about the importance a culture places on character traits that were traditionally considered to be either masculine or feminine. The terminology is clearly outdated; better terminology would perhaps be competitive versus collaborative. Terminology aside, the values continuum is important. A culture on the masculinity end of the continuum places value on material success, progress and change, work, superior performance, competitiveness, decisiveness, and assertiveness. A culture on the femininity end of the continuum places value on caring for others, helping, collaborating, preserving tradition, and building relationships.

The uncertainty avoidance values continuum captures how comfortable people in a culture are with risk.

Figure 23: The Uncertainty Avoidance Values Continuum

People in a culture with low uncertainty avoidance like risk. The culture is dynamic and loosely structured. There are few rules and regulations, and there are many exceptions to those rules and regulations. On the other hand, people in a culture with high uncertainty avoidance do not like risk. They will research and plan extensively before taking action. They are conservative, highly regimented, and systematized. They use detailed rules to tightly restrict the behaviour of their group members to mitigate risk.

The time orientation values continuum captures the relationship between time and decision making in a culture.

Figure 24: The Time Orientation Values Continuum

This values continuum answers the question of what time span people in a certain culture use to inform their decision making. In a short-term time orientation culture, people go a short time back in history or a short time forward in the future for their planning and decision making. They live with a focus on the present, believing that the present best informs decision making. In a long-term time orientation culture, people go either further back in history or further forward in the future for their decision making and planning. They therefore live with a focus either on the far past, the far future, or both. They believe either the past or the future better inform decision making.

Trompenaars (1993) and Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner (2012) build upon the work of Hofstede (1980, 1991) to add more values continuums: universalism versus particularism, emotional expression, degree of involvement, and conferment of status. All of the descriptions below are adapted from Trompenaars (1993) and Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner (2012).

The first values continuum is universalism versus particularism.

Figure 25: The Universalism versus Particularism Values Continuum

The universalism versus particularism values continuum contrasts treating people the same way with treating people differently. In a universalistic culture, it is important to treat everyone the same way, according to the same set of rules that have been agreed upon. In contrast, in

particularistic cultures, it is important to treat people differently based on who they are and what the nature of the relationship is. For example, in the same situation, family and friends will be treated differently from those with a less close relationship.

The second values continuum Trompenaars (1993) and Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner (2012) focuses on emotion.

Figure 26: The Expressing Emotion Values Continuum

The values continuum contrasts the degree to which emotion is expressed publicly. People from a culture on the neutral end of the continuum are reserved in their emotional expression. They demonstrate a small range of emotions in public, and they do not express any emotions strongly. People from a culture on the affective end of the continuum express a wide range of emotions in public, and they express them strongly.

The next values continuum is the degree of involvement continuum.

Figure 27: The Degree of Involvement Values Continuum

The degree of involvement values continuum captures differences in how responsibility is assigned and accepted. At the diffuse end of the continuum, responsibility and blame when something goes wrong are assigned and accepted across a whole group of people. Everyone takes responsibility for the mistake collectively, which means that no specific individual takes responsibility. Contextual factors are considered to have had a significant influence on events. However, at the specific end of the continuum, responsibility and blame are assigned to one individual, and contextual issues are not considered to be of any significance.

Trompenaars's (1993) and Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner's (2012) final values continuum tackles the concept of status.

Figure 28: The Status Values Continuum

The status values continuum differentiates how people are awarded status in their cultures, with status either being achieved or ascribed. In a culture with achieved status, group members receive status based on their abilities and their actions. Status can be attained through hard work, ability, creativity, or other achievements. The particular achievements that receive status vary from culture to culture—for instance, the achievements could be in academics, sports, business, military, or artistic achievements—but the status all has to be earned. In a culture with ascribed status, group members receive status based on who they are. Status may be awarded because of family name, family position in society, perceived beauty, height, hair colour, skin colour, ethnicity, or inherited wealth.

The status values continuum also reveals beliefs about human destiny. If a culture has achieved status, its group members believe in self-determination; with effort and perseverance, people are viewed as having the ability to change their position in life. If a culture has ascribed status, its group members are fatalistic; no amount of effort will change people's position in society.

The impact of cultural values continuums on research and training in multiple fields has been and continues to be significant. Since Hofstede first put forward the cultural values continuums in 1980, his research team has greatly expanded the number and application of cultural values continuums (Hofstede, Hofstede, & Minkov, 2010) as have other researchers (Kirkman, Lowe, & Gibson, 2006). There has been some criticism of the cultural values continuums: they are based on work set primarily in a business context; cultures are not homogenous enough to warrant these types of generalizations; they can lead to judgmental stereotyping; and they do not allow for how a culture changes over time (Kirkman et al., 2006). While these criticisms are valid, cultural values continuums provide an insightful, clear, and practical conceptualization of

the complex interplay of values at the core of any culture. They illuminate the invisible barriers that individuals encounter when interacting cross-culturally.

3.6 The Learning Domains of Culture

The next conceptualization of culture comes from the education sector. It complements the cultural values continuums from the business sector. Culture can be conceptualized from a learning perspective, using an adaptation of Bloom's Learning Domains (Bloom, Engelhart, Furst, Hill, & Krathwohl, 1956) in which he divides the imperatives of learning into the cognitive, psychomotor, and affective domains. Adapted to culture learning, these three domains become the knowledge, behaviour, and attitude domains (Holliday, Hyde, & Kullman, 2004) as illustrated in Figure 29.

Figure 29: The Learning Domains of Culture
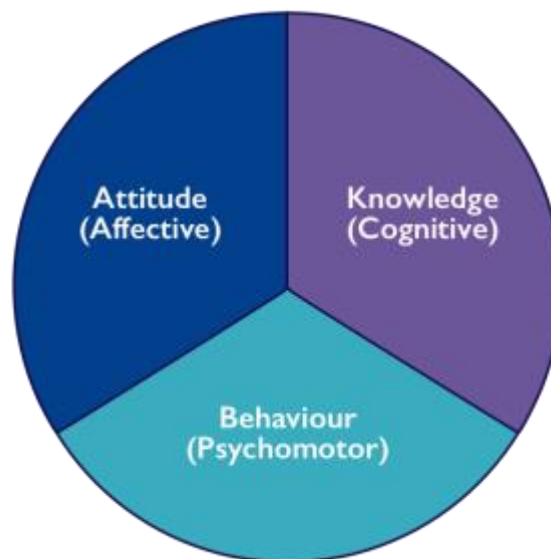
As described by Holliday et al. (2004), the knowledge learning domain of culture involves an individual learning information about the concept of culture in general and about specific cultures in which that individual must interact. Using previously introduced conceptualizations of culture, this knowledge includes surface culture such as the tourist definition of culture, in-awareness culture from the iceberg analogy, and cultural products from the onion analogy. Also included as an important component in the knowledge domain, from a cross-cultural communication model from Gudykunst (1994), is strategies for gathering knowledge. How does an individual gain knowledge of a culture? Of these strategies, noticing or awareness is the most

essential; if the culture is not noticed, knowledge about it will not be acquired. Finally, work in the education sector by Marzano (2004) sheds light on the role of the knowledge domain when interacting across cultures. Cultural knowledge is the background knowledge or context which frames those interactions. Interactions will not be successful if the parties participating in them do not share the same background knowledge or understand the context in the same way.

The behaviour learning domain of culture partially overlaps with the behaviour layer in the onion analogy of culture that was previously discussed. However, the behaviour learning domain also includes what the behaviours are, what meanings the behaviours convey, and which behaviours are appropriate in a particular cultural context (Holliday et al., 2004). It is the latter two elements, the meanings and the appropriateness, that are novel to this discussion. To be successful interacting in a new culture, people must correctly interpret the behaviours of others and then select the appropriate behaviours or responses for the situations in which they find themselves.

While the knowledge and behaviour learning domains of culture offer more insights into culture and its relationship with language, the real merit of the conceptualization resides in the attitude learning domain. None of the conceptualizations presented thus far address the emotional or affective aspects of interacting across cultures that are encapsulated in the attitude domain. Yet emotion is both a driver of interactions across cultures and the reasons for negative outcomes that can occur (Holliday et al., 2004). Positive emotions or attitudes towards cultural differences will motivate people to seek out interactions that involve those differences. Negative emotions or attitudes towards cultural differences can lead to discrimination, prejudice, and racism. Changing the attitude domain from negative to positive, then, can have a significant impact on culture learning.

3.7 The Acculturation Model

Given the importance of the attitude learning domain of culture noted above, conceptualizations of culture that address the emotional side of culture learning are warranted. Models of acculturation, the process of becoming accustomed to a new culture (Hofstede et al., 2010), specifically address this. Lysgaard (1955) first identified a u-shaped pattern of emotions which individuals experience in acculturation; individuals start with positive emotions when entering a

new culture, then descend into negative emotions, and finally recover to positive emotions again. Subsequent researchers built upon Lysgaard's work to develop various four-stage models of acculturation within this u-shaped pattern; while the models use different terms for each of the four stages, there is little to differentiate the models in terms of their emotional characteristics (Zapf, 1991). Recent models, for example, Hofstede et al. (2010), still adhere to the same four-stage u-shaped pattern.

Regardless of the terms used, stage one of acculturation is characterized by positive emotions such as enjoyment, excitement, euphoria, and optimism. Stage two is characterized by a range of negative emotions such as frustration, stress, anxiety, depression, loss, and anger. Stage three is characterized by a shift back to positive emotions such as adjustment, coping, awareness, and habituation. And finally, stage four is characterized by a stable emotional state of confidence, renewal, and, once again, enjoyment.

The most researched of the stages of acculturation is the second stage, commonly known as culture shock (Damen, 1987; Bennett, 1998; Early & Ang, 2003; Early, Ang, & Tan, 2006; Livermore, 2009). With its plunge into potentially destructive negative emotions, the second stage is the most emotionally traumatic of the stages, and it is the point at which acculturation can stall or fail altogether. Zhou, Jindal-Snape, Topping, and Todman (2008) summarize three main perspectives on the cause of the emotional downturn of culture shock: a stress and coping perspective, an identity perspective, and a culture-learning perspective. From a stress and coping perspective, culture shock is caused by an overload of psychological stress; learning stress coping strategies pushes an individual through culture shock. From an identity perspective, culture shock is caused by the threat the new cultures poses to the identities of individuals. Culture shock can thus be overcome by building an identity that aligns with the new culture, alongside the individuals' first identities. Finally, from a culture-learning perspective, culture shock arises from the disorientation individuals experience in a new culture because they no longer know what is appropriate and what is not; even the simplest of tasks, such as going to a bank or a post office, becomes an enormous challenge. From this perspective, culture shock can be overcome by learning the behaviours and norms of the new culture. Regardless of the perspective taken, helping individuals navigate culture shock as quickly as possible is the pedagogical goal of most culture training and support.

The final stage of acculturation has also been the focus of further research, to identify different acculturation options. Berry (1980) proposed four acculturation options: assimilation, separation, marginalization, and integration. With assimilation, individuals completely abandon their first culture. With separation, individuals do the opposite and reject the new culture, possibly leaving the new culture and returning to the first culture. With marginalization, individuals have weak ties to both their first culture and the new culture. And finally, with integration or adaptation, considered the emotionally healthiest outcome, individuals have strong ties to both their first culture and the new culture. Hofstede et al. (2010) differentiate between three possible outcomes in the final stage of acculturation in comparison to the individuals' positions in their first cultures. Individuals' acculturation outcomes in a new culture can be better than, worse than, or the same as their positions in their first cultures. Tange (2005) defines a different fourth stage as interculturality, in which individuals can move easily and effectively from one culture to another, but do not fully belong in any culture.

Ethnocentrism, a state that individuals exist in before acculturation, can be added to an acculturation model to draw attention to the knowledge and emotional states of individuals who have not previously interacted with different cultures (Storti, 2001; Early & Ang, 2003). Individuals in an ethnocentric state believe in the inherent superiority of their culture and are not capable of viewing the world through any other cultural lens. Finally, a fifth stage to the acculturation model, reverse culture shock, can also be added if individuals return to their first cultures. Reverse culture shock entails the same negative emotional slide as culture shock, for the same possible reasons, but it is experienced going back into a first culture rather than into a new culture. Reverse culture shock can be more devastating than culture shock, simply because it is often unexpected.

For the purposes of integrating the key elements from the discussion above for the data collection process, a simplified acculturation model, illustrated in Figure 30, was used. In the final stage of the simplified model, Berry's (1980) stages have been condensed into three stages: assimilation, adaptation (marginalization and integration), and departure (separation).

Figure 30: Four Stage U-Shaped Model of Acculturation
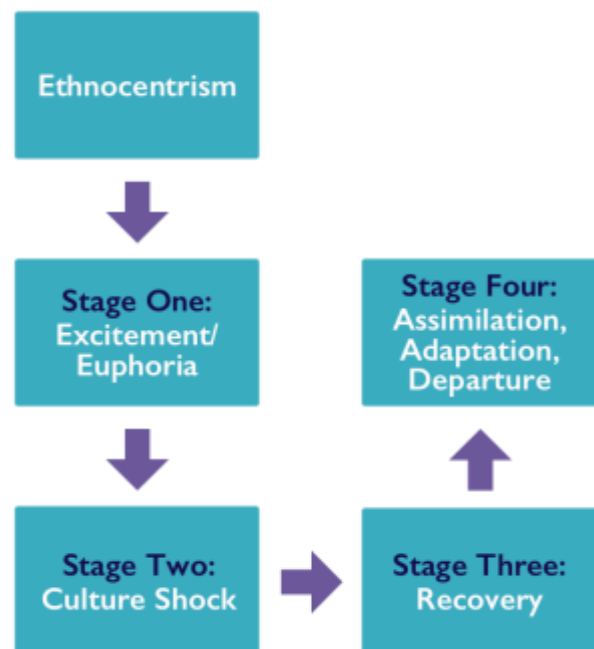
3.8 Communicative Competence

Communicative competence addresses the gap between knowing a language and being able to use that language effectively and successfully to communicate. Models of communicative competence clearly identify the links between language and culture learning. They do this by focusing on the elements of using an additional language for communication purposes. For this reason, communicative competence is a useful addition to the conceptual framework for this research.

Chomsky (1965) was the first to bridge the knowledge and performance gap with the concept of linguistic competence, a combination of both knowledge of a language and the ability to use it. Hymes (1972) followed up on Chomsky's work by noting the importance of appropriate language use in specific sociocultural contexts, thereby establishing a language and culture connection. Canale and Swain (1980) delineated three components of communicative competence: grammatical competence (the correct use of lexicon, syntax, and semantics); sociolinguistic competence (the appropriateness of communication depending on the context, the participants, and the rules for interaction); and strategic competence (a set of strategies

speakers use when communication fails). Once again, the language and culture connection is clear in this model with the sociolinguistic competence component.

Over time, different researchers added to and modified the concept of communicative competence. Canale (1983) added a fourth component to the model: discourse competence (the cohesion and coherence of the utterances in a discourse). Savignon (1983) added a dynamic component to the concept of communicative competence by highlighting that communication occurs interpersonally as well as intrapersonally. Bachman (1990) brought hierarchy to the components, elevating strategic competence as the overlying decision-making competence in a speaker's ultimate communicative output. And Celce-Murcia, Dornyei, and Thurrell (1995) changed grammatical competence to linguistic competence and sociolinguistic competence to sociocultural competence. They then added a fifth component, actional competence (matching linguistic form with communication intent).

A number of competing models of communicative competence are currently in use. The model selected for the conceptual framework for this research is from Celce-Murcia (2008), a revision of the Celce-Murcia et al. (1995) model. In the revised model, Celce-Murcia changed actional competence to interactional competence and added formulaic competence. The Celce-Murcia model thus has six competencies: linguistic, sociocultural, formulaic, interactional, discourse, and strategic competence.

Communicative competence is undeniably a complex model; however, with this complexity, it points to key connections between culture and language. The first competence, linguistic competence, is the knowledge of the language systems including its phonology, lexicon, morphology, and syntax. This competence corresponds to what is normally considered language. Sociocultural competence is an individual's ability to communicate appropriately within a specific social and cultural context. Celce-Murcia (2008) further breaks down sociocultural competence into three sets of variables that affect appropriateness: social contextual factors such as age, gender, status, and social distance; stylistic choices such as politeness strategies, use of correct genres, and use of correct registers; and cultural factors such as knowledge of the recipient's culture and knowledge of culture in general. Socio-cultural competence establishes clear linkages between language and culture.

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Formulaic competence is knowledge of and ability to use fixed chunks of language that are specific to situations and functions. They include phrases for routines, collocations, idioms, and lexical frames. Formulaic language plays a role in making communication efficient and predictable. As a simple example, "How are you?" is formulaic language used in greetings between friends. Culture comes in to play with formulaic competence because the fixed chunks of language are often reflective of cultural values. For example, a direct translation of a greeting between friends in Chinese is "Have you eaten?", which reflects back to a time in the Chinese culture when there were insufficient food supplies. This is in contrast to the English expression, "How are you?", which has no such cultural linkage.

Interactional competence is language in action; it is the ability to manage the communication process. Celce-Murcia (2008) further divides interactional competence: actional competence is the performance of common speech acts such as introductions, expressing problems, and expressing opinions; conversational competence is the performance of appropriate turn-taking; and non-verbal/paralinguistic competence is the appropriate use of non-verbal communication. Linkages between language and culture are evident in interactional competence, as cultures vary in terms of their speech-act patterns, conversational patterns, and non-verbal and paralinguistic patterns.

Linguistic, sociocultural, formulaic, and interactional competence all contribute to discourse competence. Discourse competence is the ability to select sequence and arrange words, structures, and utterances to achieve a unified message. Without any of the four other competencies, a speaker will not have discourse competence.

The final competence in the model, strategic competence, is the knowledge and use of non-linguistic strategies to ensure that the process of learning a language is efficient and the communication in that language is successful. Communication strategies in this competence include stalling, self-monitoring, and interacting. Strategic competence is considered to be the overriding competence that guides the application of all other competences. In this overriding position, strong strategic competence can drive effective cross-linguistic and cross-cultural interactions even in the absence of strong linguistic competence. The interplay of the six competencies is illustrated in Figure 31 adapted from Celce-Murcia's (2008) model.

Figure 31: Adapted from Celce-Murcia's (2008) Model of Communicative Competence
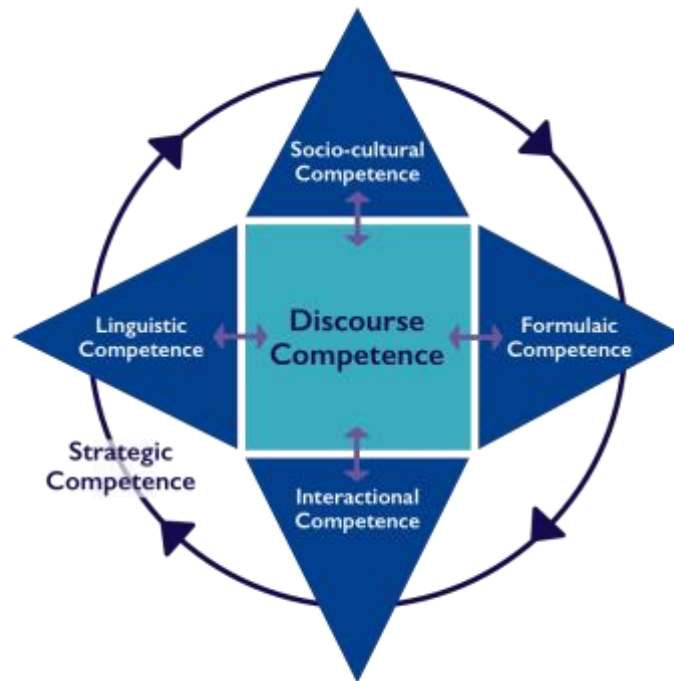
3.9 Intercultural Competence

Intercultural competence sets out to identify why some individuals are generally more adept at functioning across cultures than others (Wiseman, 2002; Stier, 2003, 2006; Rathje, 2007). As with the concepts of culture, acculturation, and communicative competence, there are numerous competing definitions and models of intercultural competence, and there is extensive debate on the validity and usefulness of each. There is even debate surrounding the term to use, with the terms cross-cultural competence, intercultural effectiveness, and cross-cultural effectiveness all considered to be interchangeable with the term intercultural competence (Holiday, Hyde, & Kullman, 2004).

The tensions that arise in the attempts to define intercultural competence centre on several key issues, which reveal something about the nature of the concept. The first of these issues is the way to conceptualize this competence, either by using lists or structures (Rathje, 2007). Lists are definitions of intercultural competence that itemize personal characteristics that might make individuals more interculturally competent. Structures are frameworks that attempt to identify how different factors interact to make individuals more or less interculturally competent. The second issue is a familiar one: reconciling the need for knowledge with performance (Stier,

2003, 2006). There are definitions of intercultural competence that focus on what individuals need to know and those that focus on what individuals need to be able to do. For the knowledge definitions, there is debate about the scope of knowledge required; should it be culture-general or culture-specific knowledge? Adding a third issue to the knowledge versus performance debate is the question of the roles of emotion and attitude in intercultural competence. Finally, there is also debate surrounding the purpose of acquiring intercultural competence. Should it be acquired for pragmatic purposes such as increasing effectiveness, efficiency, and appropriateness or for learning purposes such as self-improvement and personal interest?

Wiseman (2002) positions intercultural competence as a measure of an individual's effectiveness and appropriateness in the application of knowledge, motivation, and skills when interacting with one or more individuals from different cultural groups regardless of anyone's language proficiency. Byram (1997) proposes a more detailed model with five factors he calls *savoirs*, from the French noun for "knowledge." To pull together the contentious issues at the heart of the concept, Byram's structure has one knowledge factor, one attitude factor, and three performance or skill factors.

The first factor, called *savoirs*, is the knowledge required for intercultural competence. It includes both culture-general and culture-specific knowledge but with an emphasis on the former. Included in culture-general knowledge is knowledge of social groups, processes, and interactions, highlighting that culture is built and shared by members of a group as they interact.

The second factor, called *savoir être*, describes the attitudes that enhance intercultural competence. This includes the characteristics of curiosity, openness, flexibility, and adaptability. It also includes individuals' attitudes towards themselves and their relationships to others, as well as the value they place on others. Significantly, this factor includes the ability to see things from different perspectives and understand that there are different values that apply in a situation.

The third factor, called *savoir comprendre*, is the skill set required to interpret observations, experiences, and artefacts from another culture and relate them to previous experiences and other cultures. It also includes the skill set of identifying how misunderstandings can arise and how to resolve them. The fourth factor, *savoir apprendre/faire*, is the skill set required to

discover a new culture while interacting with it. This includes noticing similarities and differences in the new culture and digging beneath the surface of those observations to discover the deep culture along with the surface culture. Finally, the fifth factor, *savoir s'engager*, is the skill set to critically evaluate any culture based upon the preceding knowledge, attitudes, and skills.

Byram is quick to point out that none of these five factors acts in isolation; they influence each other and are also in turn influenced by context and by formal, targeted instruction. Figure 32 provides a visual representation of the five factors in Byram's model as well as their relationships with each other.

Figure 32: Byram's (1997) Model of Intercultural Competence
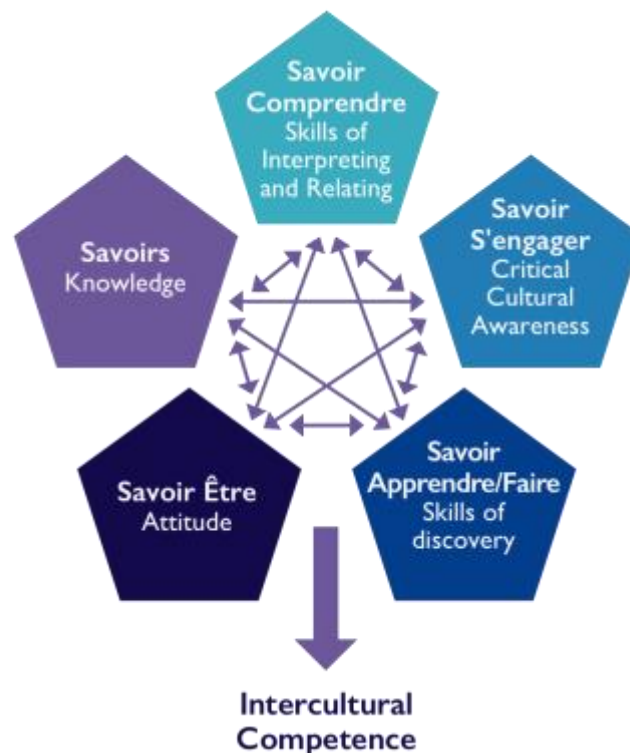
Byram's five factors can be criticized for being descriptively vague, open to interpretation, and hard to measure objectively. Yet his endeavour to address all the conflicting and contentious areas of intercultural competence and to develop a solid foundation from which to assess intercultural competence is noteworthy. For this reason, Byram's model is an appropriate conceptualization of intercultural competence for the conceptual framework of this research.

3.10 Intercultural Communicative Competence

The two previous sections introduced two types of competence: communicative competence with a focus on the effective use of an additional language and intercultural competence with a focus on functioning appropriately and successfully in a new culture. When these two competences are joined together, a new compound competence is formed called intercultural communicative competence. Intercultural communicative competence is the ability to effectively and appropriately communicate in a new culture through the use of an additional language (Byram, 1997). This model suggests a strong and important connection between competence in an additional language and competence when functioning in a new culture. Figure 33 shows one possible way to illustrate intercultural communicative competence by putting two existing models together, in this case Celce-Murcia's (2008) communicative competence model and Byram's (1997) intercultural competence model.

Figure 33: Intercultural Communicative Competence
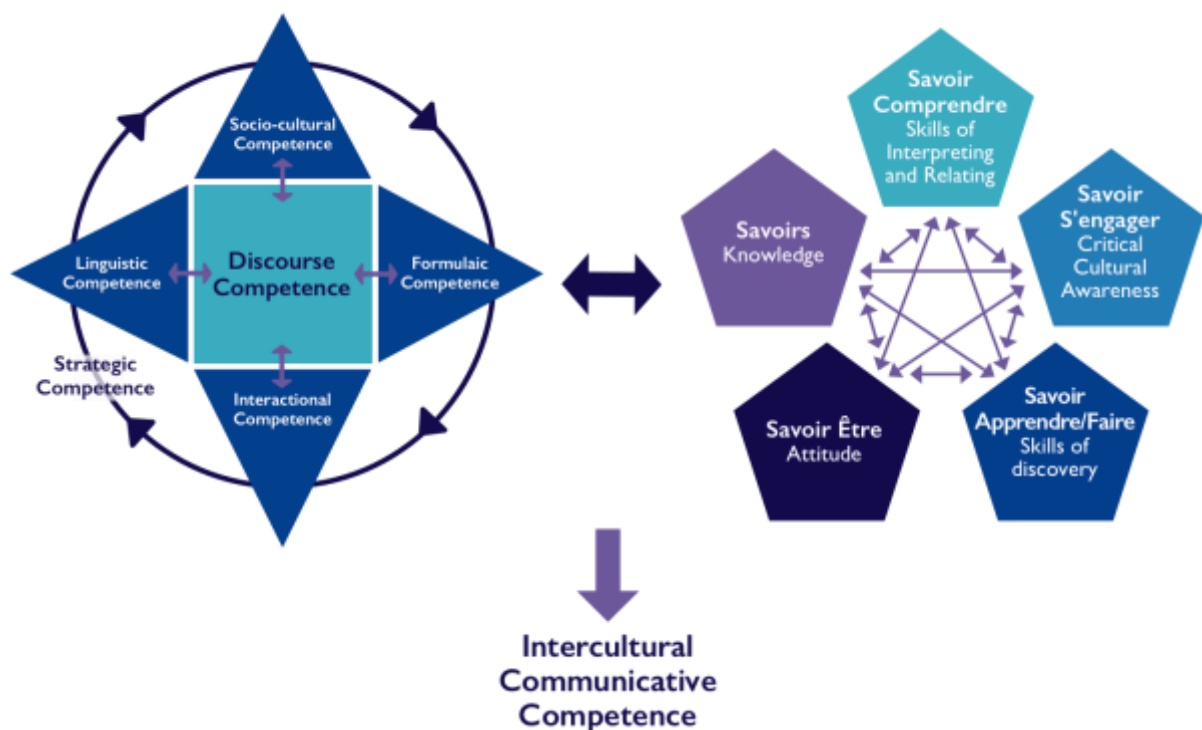
The terms intercultural competence and intercultural communicative competence are sometimes incorrectly used interchangeably. The terms are distinct, however, with the first referring to competence independent of language, and the second bringing language into the picture.

Additionally, there are different models of intercultural communicative competence because researchers use different foundational communicative competence and intercultural competence models. The intercultural communicative competence model above uses Celce-Murcia's (2008) communicative competence model, but, for example, Byram (1997) uses a communicative competence model from van Ek (1986).

The greatest challenge with this model or framework, however, is its complexity. Because communicative competence and intercultural competence are already complex, when they are combined, the resulting framework is even more complex. Balboni and Caon (2014) emphasize the importance of models of intercultural communicative competence being simple. The whole purpose of a model, they argue, is to have an efficient way to understand a complex concept from a performance rather than descriptive perspective. When the model itself is complex, that efficiency of comprehension and thus application is lost. With this in mind, they propose an alternative model of intercultural communicative competence that links just three types of competence—verbal, non-verbal and cultural competence—to successful outcomes in cross-cultural communicative events through a mastery of performance. This simpler model notwithstanding, the framework in Figure 33 was selected for this study because it logically builds on the two competence frameworks previously introduced.

3.11 Culture as a Complex Dynamic System

The words complex and dynamic have been used frequently in the discussion of the preceding conceptualizations of culture and their relationship to language. It is thus fitting that the final conceptualization of culture and its relationship to language in this conceptual framework is culture as a complex dynamic system. Culture as a complex dynamic system draws from Dynamic Systems Theory, one of a set of theories that has gained traction in a wide variety of fields to explore the complexity, unpredictability, and changeability of the modern world. The previous approach to complexity—of reducing systems into discrete, isolated entities or variables in order to understand them—was no longer seen as adequate. Researchers in fields as diverse as meteorology, mathematics, medicine, the behavioural sciences, and economics turned to theories that embrace complexity rather than simplify it.

There are two groups of terms that need to be defined in order to understand the conceptualization of culture as a complex dynamic system. The first group relates to the concept of *system*; the second group relates to the theories that have been developed to study and understand complex systems. A *system* is a group of components that together create a unified whole (system, n.d.). A system can be naturally occurring or manufactured. It can be very small or very large. Cultures and languages are systems.

A *simple system* is one in which the relationships among the components of the system do not change (Larsen-Freeman & Cameron, 2008a) such as any mechanical device like a watch or a clock. A *complex system* is one in which the relationships among the components of the system are mutually influencing, unpredictable, and changeable (Larsen-Freeman & Cameron, 2008a). A culture and a language are both complex systems with multiple variables interacting within them and on them at any given time.

A *closed system* is one that is not influenced by external variables (Larsen-Freeman & Cameron, 2008a). It can be argued that there are in fact very few true closed systems in the world because everything is interconnected and is influenced by both internal and external forces. Even a watch, while it appears to be a closed system, is subject to external forces such as water and dust. An *open system* is one that is influenced by external and internal variables (Larsen-Freeman & Cameron, 2008a). Most systems, including cultures and languages, are open systems; they are connected to variables around them. For control purposes, some researchers choose to position open systems as closed systems.

A *dynamic system* is a complex system characterized by steady or sudden change over time (Thelen & Smith, 1994; Larsen-Freeman, 1997; De Bot, Lowie, & Verspoor, 2007; Larsen-Freeman & Cameron, 2008a). A *complex adaptive system* is one that is constantly self-organizing in response to internal and external change to maintain balance within itself (Miller & Page, 2007; Ellis & Larsen-Freeman, 2009b). Once again, cultures and languages are dynamic systems and complex adaptive systems. Pulling all of these definitions together, a complex dynamic adaptive system is illustrated in Figure 34. The larger shape represents a complex dynamic system. The small circles represent different variables at work on the system both internally and externally. The arrows represent the mutual influence among the variables.

Figure 34: Illustration of a Complex Dynamic System
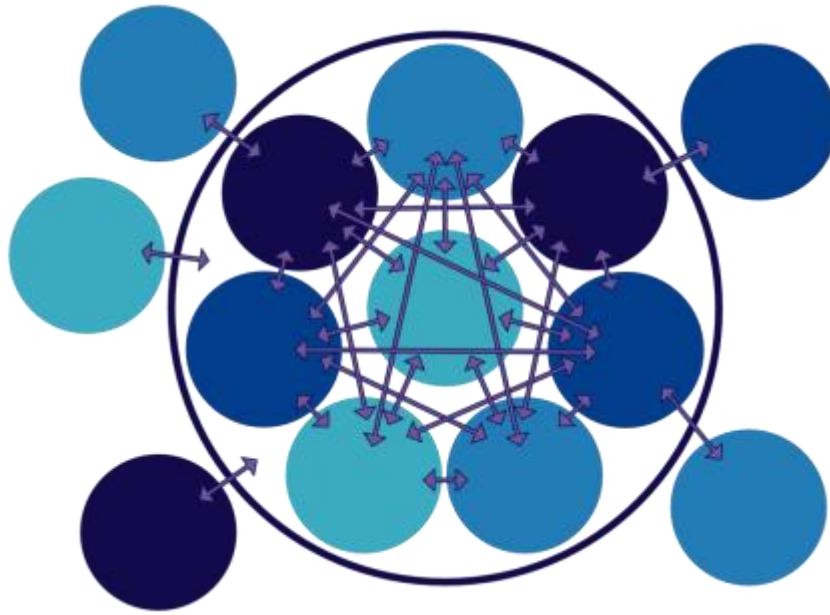
The second group of definitions relevant to this discussion is for the different theories that have been developed to explain and interpret complex dynamic systems. The theories, while all seeking to explain complexity, emphasize different aspects of complex dynamic systems and therefore provide a slightly different lens through which to view each system. *Chaos Theory* highlights the randomness, or chaos, generated within complex systems (Gleick, 2008). Randomness is inherent in complex systems; according to Chaos Theory, given the complexity of the interaction of the variables, it is impossible to predict what will happen within the system or how the system will react to external variables. *Complexity Theory*, as the name of the theory implies, focuses on the complexity of the interaction of the internal and external variables in a system (Waldrop, 1992; Johnson, 2009). Finally, *Dynamic Systems Theory* emphasizes the processes of change, development, and learning within the system in response to internal and external variables (Thelen & Smith, 1994; Larsen-Freeman, 1997; De Bot et al., 2007). For the purposes of this conceptual framework and this research, Dynamic Systems Theory is used to represent the set of theories focusing on complex dynamic systems on the understanding that researchers may use any one of the above terms depending upon their research goals.

Dynamic Systems Theory allows researchers to acknowledge, frame, and interpret processes of change, development, and learning in complex dynamic systems. They can thus seek to understand the complex dynamic systems rather than to simplify them through a reductionist

approach (Thelen & Smith, 1994; Larsen-Freeman, 1997; De Bot et al., 2007; Larsen-Freeman & Cameron, 2008a). Further, Dynamic Systems Theory acknowledges that complex dynamic systems are made of many interdependent variables whose relationships and interactions change over time. The theory can be used to interpret the interactions of both internal and external variables as well as interactions between two or more opposing or contradictory variables at work at the same time (Thelen & Smith, 1994; Larsen-Freeman, 1997; De Bot et al., 2007; Larsen-Freeman & Cameron, 2008a).

Dynamic Systems Theory is also useful in identifying and accounting for intra-individual variability in different contexts (Larsen-Freeman, 1997). This is particularly relevant for research that focuses on depth, such as a case study. Further, exploring intra-individual variability allows researchers to study outliers, the outcomes that do not fall within a normal distribution curve in conventional research. In conventional research, outliers are essentially ignored in the discussion of data and results. In Dynamic Systems Theory, outliers can actually become the purpose of the research because they highlight the unique outcomes from the interactions of the different variables in the dynamic system being studied (Larsen-Freeman, 2006; Larsen-Freeman & Cameron, 2008b).

While Dynamic Systems Theory can be used for both quantitative and qualitative research, the former is challenging, particularly for social sciences researchers. Quantitative research attempts to represent the interactions among the variables in the complex dynamic system in mathematical and computational models (Van Geert, 2007). Addressing even one variable takes a complex mathematical model or equally complex computer simulation that is beyond the capabilities of most social sciences researchers. A qualitative application of Dynamic Systems Theory that seeks to describe the nature and patterns of interactions among variables therefore tends to yield more useful data in the social sciences.

Van Geert (2007) makes a further important distinction in the use of Dynamic Systems Theory, between a formal, methodological application of the theory and an informal, conceptual application of the theory. In a formal application, Dynamic Systems Theory serves as an actual research methodology. In an informal application, Dynamic Systems Theory serves as the conceptual framework through which the data are interpreted. Unfortunately, this informal application of Dynamic Systems Theory easily lends itself to overuse and misuse. Dynamic

Systems Theory is a current trend in the social sciences; those looking to capitalize on the trend can more easily do so with an informal application of the theory. While it would be inappropriate to identify research work that is guilty of riding the Dynamic Systems Theory trend, it is a weakness that those reading and using Dynamic Systems Theory need to be wary of.

In her influential work in 1997, and again in 2012, Larsen-Freeman establishes that language and language learners are both complex dynamic systems. Her argument was subsequently supported by the work of a range of researchers including De Bot et al. (2007), Van Geert (2008), Beckner et al. (2009), and Verspoor, de Bot, & Lowie (2011). The positioning of language as a complex dynamic system generated extensive language learning research framed within the concept: Cherciov (2012) examined the impact of learner attitude on first language attrition and second language acquisition; Dornyei (2009) studied the influence of individual learner differences (the variables within the dynamic system) on language acquisition; Meara (2006) modeled vocabulary development and loss in bilingual and multilingual learners; Larsen-Freeman (2006) studied the writing of Chinese students of English; Macqueen (2009) explored ESL learner writing; Verspoor, Lowie, and Van Dijk (2008) researched a single advanced learner in a case study; De Leeuw, Menne, and Scobbie (2012) analyzed the loss of L1 pronunciation with L2 acquisition; and Herdina and Jessner (2002, 2013) examined language attrition in multilinguals. Research on language and language learners with complex dynamic systems as the conceptual framework continues to impact the language teaching and learning field.

For the conceptual framework for this research, I propose that culture and culture learning can also be positioned as complex dynamic systems (Tyers, 2015). Like language, culture is the result of the internal and external variables that are mutually influencing, unpredictable, and changeable. Like language, culture changes over time as a result of the interactions of these internal and external variables. Interestingly, with culture, the internal and external mutually influencing variables are both from nature and of human origin. Natural variables working both internally and externally include climate and weather events, the natural resources available to members of that culture, the proximity to water, the land elevation, the soil, the animal life, the plant life, and geological activity, just to name a few. Variables of human origin working both internally and externally on a culture include technology, economics, religion, language, society,

politics and ideology, and history. There are also individuals working as change agents on a culture, both internally and externally. The complexity of culture becomes evident when these variables are visually represented as in Figure 35 below. A sampling of the internal variables driving culture is inside the larger circle, and a sampling of the external variables is outside the larger circle.

Figure 35: Culture as a Complex Dynamic System
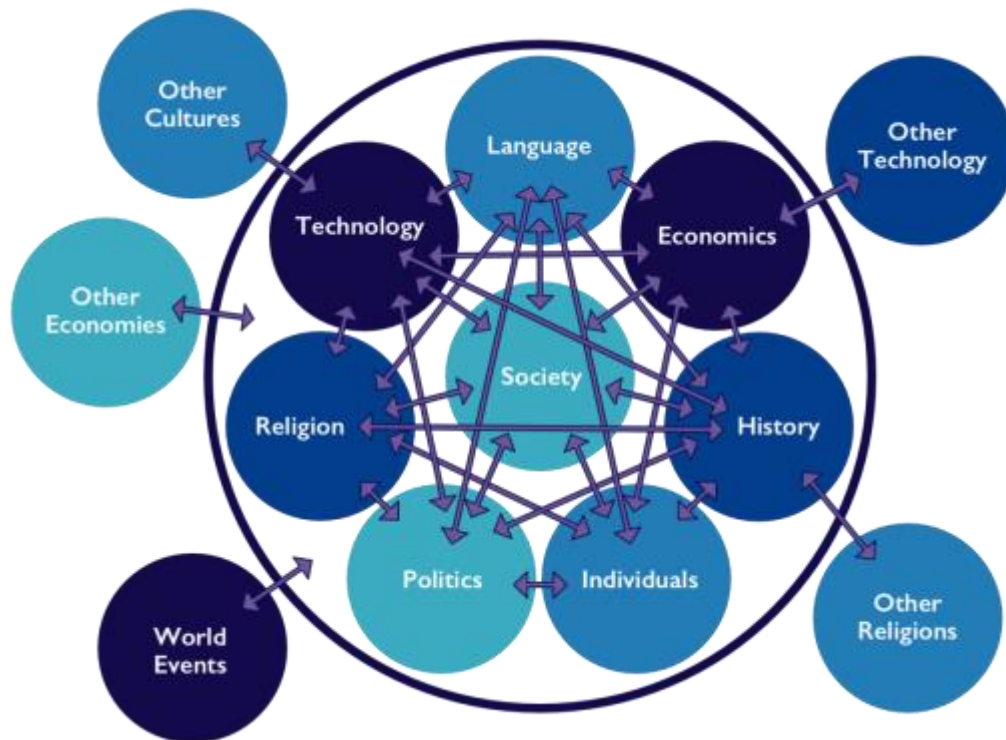
Positioning culture as a complex dynamic system, and interpreting it through Dynamic Systems Theory, represents the most complex conceptualization of culture. While it is difficult to use this conceptualization quantitatively, as discussed above, it is nonetheless valuable to view culture through this lens to start to grasp its sheer complexity. Conceptualizing culture as a complex dynamic system also allows for a realistic assessment of challenges individuals encounter when operating cross-culturally and cross-linguistically. The surprise should not be that mistakes are made; rather, the surprise should be that more mistakes are not made.

3.12 From the Simple to the Complex Revisited

The ten definitions and conceptualizations of culture presented in this chapter, which move from simple to complex, comprise just a small representation of the myriad ways in which culture and its relationship to language can be conceptualized. The conceptualizations chosen to be part of the meanings of culture (Oxford, 1994) in the conceptual framework for this research represent both established ways (the first nine conceptualizations) and new ways (the last conceptualization) to understand the concept. They represent work from diverse fields of study including international business (cultural values continuums), language education (communicative competence), intercultural communication (intercultural competence), and the hard sciences (culture as a complex dynamic system). Having these multiple meanings of culture in the conceptual framework allows the present research to fully take advantage of the exploratory nature of this multiple narrative case study and to dig deeply into the rich, multi-layered data generated from the qualitative data collection process.

Chapter 4: Methodology

"Your greatest creation is always going to be your life's story."

-Jonathan Harris

4.1 Introduction

The goal of the research is to capture the stories of women entrepreneurs in the English language education sector who function cross-culturally and cross-linguistically on a daily basis. These stories can then inform the support, training, and education provided to women entrepreneurs in the same sector and in other sectors which also require daily cross-cultural and cross-linguistic functioning. This chapter introduces the participant selection process and all steps of the research design, including the research context, the research approach, the data collection process and tools, the data analysis, and the data evaluation and interpretation. The rationales for the decisions at each step of the design process are integrated into the description of each step. The chapter concludes with a discussion of the research validity and the limitations of the research.

4.2 The Participant Selection Process

The participants of multiple narrative case studies can be as similar or as different as possible. The advantage of having participants be as similar as possible is that common experiences can be analyzed. The advantage of having participants be as different as possible is that a wide range of variation in experiences can be identified (Yin, 2014). In this research, the latter approach was used. The only similarities among the participants were that they were women entrepreneurs and that they were operating a business in the English language education sector. There was variation in age, location, age of business, size of business, business structure, and services offered, to name a few. The participants were selected to provide a sampling of the different types of women entrepreneurs and different types of English language education businesses functioning in different contexts.

The six participants in the research were recruited from my professional network through individual emails or phone calls of inquiry. The criteria for participant recruitment and selection

were kept simple: a female entrepreneur; ownership in a business in the English language education sector; daily involvement in running this business; and sufficient English language proficiency to communicate verbally with me and to understand the written text in the data collection tools. An English language proficiency test was not used to formally evaluate the English language proficiency of the participants whose first language was not English. I made an informal evaluation of the participants' English language proficiency based on my previous professional interactions with the prospective participants. Speakers of English with varying levels of English language proficiency reflect the reality of the English language education sector, with women entrepreneurs operating businesses in the sector forming a subset of these speakers. The negotiation of meaning in English by the participants whose first language was not English formed part of the data collected.

In addition to ensuring variety in the profiles of the women entrepreneurs, in the English language education businesses, and in the operating contexts, I ensured that there was no power differential between myself as the researcher and the entrepreneurs as the participants. Even though there was an existing professional relationship with all the participants, I had no power over the entrepreneurs and vice versa. Were there to have been a power differential in the relationship, the validity of the research and the security of the participants could have been compromised.

All the women entrepreneurs whom I approached agreed to participate in the research. Once participants expressed interest in participating in the research, they were sent an Informed Consent Form, which detailed what was required of them as participants. All participants completed the consent form prior to the start of the data collection process. See Appendix 1 for the Informed Consent Form for Participants. Once the consent forms were signed and submitted, the participants were assigned pseudonyms to protect their identities and the identities of their businesses.

4.3 Research Design

Researching the experiences of women entrepreneurs in the English language education sector required building a unique, qualitative research design that captured the pragmatic process dynamics inherent in the business world and the personalized experiential dynamics inherent in

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the English language education world. To capture these two sets of dynamics in the research design, I drew upon two broad qualitative research approaches, one often termed *post-positivistic*, which seeks to maintain an objective distance from the data, and one often characterized as *post-modern,* which recognizes the inevitable subjective element in analyzing and interpreting all data. By intertwining these two approaches through the selection of data collection strategies and analysis processes from each, I was able to generate triangulated data and analysis that provided multiple perspectives, both objective and subjective, on the same phenomena. This provided rich insights into the participants' experiences and compensated for the inadequacies of a single perspective. It also mirrored the objective and subjective tensions that naturally occur in any business operating in an education context.

This section briefly outlines the research design; subsequent sections then describe each step of the design in more detail. The research design is placed within the context of the current knowledge about women entrepreneurs operating businesses cross-culturally and cross-linguistically in the English language education sector. For ease of understanding, this context of current knowledge is divided into four areas or categories of research: entrepreneurs, women entrepreneurs, the English language education sector, and cross-cultural and cross-linguistic entrepreneurial interactions.

The research methodology is a multi-narrative case study, which allows both for the objective thematic analysis of the data and for the subjective interaction of the women entrepreneurs and myself as the researcher with the data. Five data collection methods were used: questionnaires, self-assessments, narrative interviewing, an asynchronous focus group, and field notes. The self-assessment used two data collection tools: a standardized language proficiency grid and a widely validated cultural awareness inventory. The narrative interviewing was further broken down into open-ended questions, critical incident responses, and cultural artefacts. These different data collection methods allowed for data to be collected with varying levels of involvement from me. I developed the questionnaires. In the self-assessments, I was only involved in the selection of the tools. In the asynchronous focus group, I developed the mini-lecture to which the focus group responded. I was most involved in the narrative interviewing and field notes. In the former, I interacted with the participants to identify and validate the meanings in their experiences. In the latter, I noted subjective observations throughout the narrative interviews.

The data analysis similarly draws from the two research approaches of objective distance from the data and close subjectivity with the data. The data from the narrative interviewing and asynchronous focus group were put through *restorying*, a process that brings the researcher very close to the data alongside the participants. Restorying is a collaboration between the researcher and the participants to clarify and validate the events and their meanings as revealed through the initial interview process. Restorying will be explained in more detail in a section below. The data were then objectively analyzed using thematic coding. The data were put through a first cycle of coding, mapped against the research questions, and put through a second cycle of coding. The coded data were then compared to the existing research and evaluated and interpreted through the conceptual framework.

As the final step in the research design, the analyzed data were tied back to the research questions and the assumptions, to identify areas for future research, and to suggest ways to support women entrepreneurs operating in similar contexts. Figure 36 illustrates the research design for the entirety of the study. Each step in the research design is described in greater detail in subsequent sections, starting with the research methodology.

Figure 36: Research Design
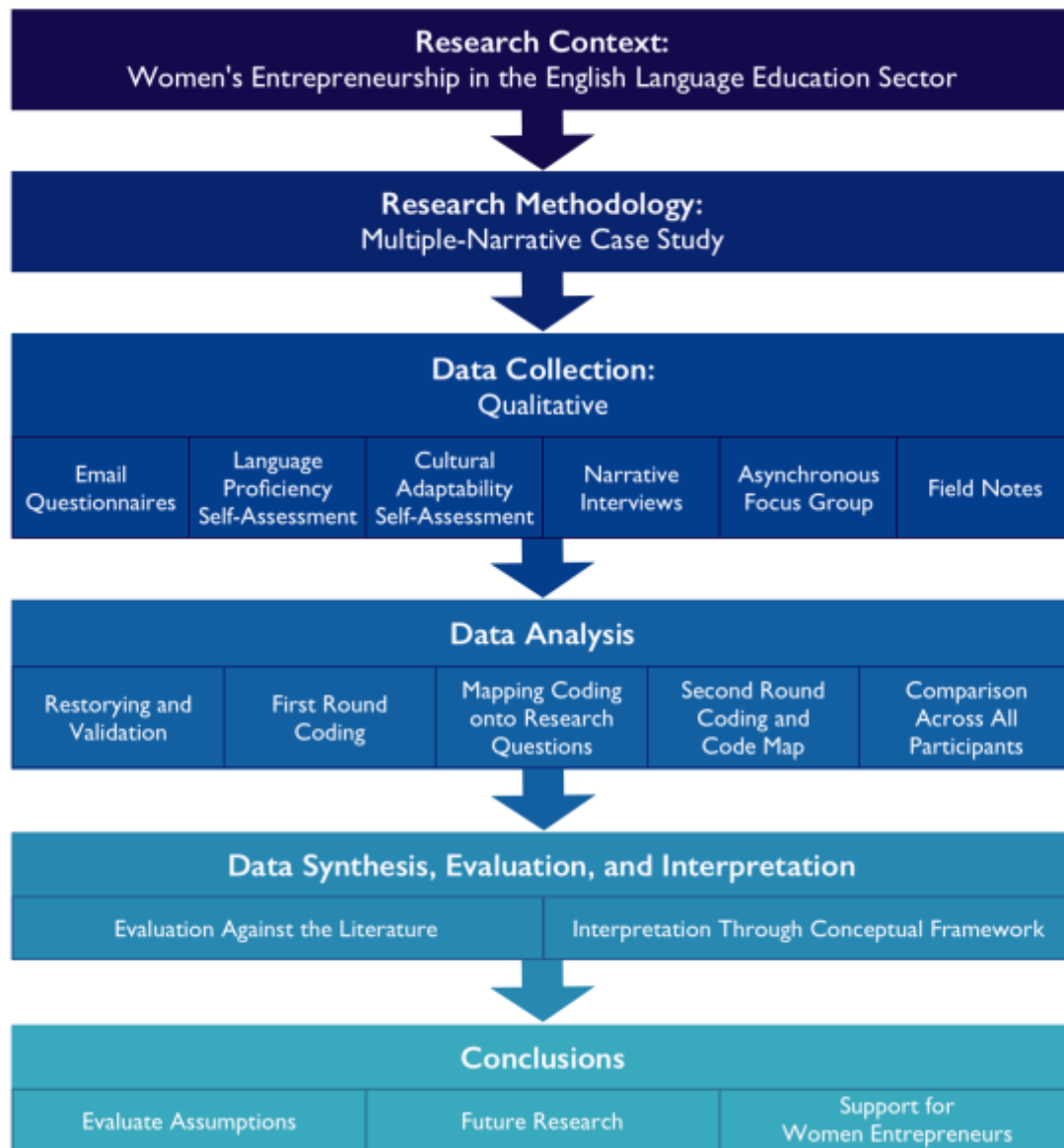
4.4 Research Methodology: Multiple Narrative Case Study

The research methodology selected for this study is a multiple narrative case study. This section first discusses the reasons for selecting multiple narratives rather than a single narrative, followed by the reasons for selecting a case study. The section concludes with the purpose of this particular case study.

A case study usually focuses on a single phenomenon, unit, or entity (case study, n.d.; Merriam, 1988; Creswell, 1998; Yin, 2014). That unit or entity can be a single person or a group of people

held together by one or more common interests such as a family, a department, or a whole organization. It can also be a policy, a system, or a program. A multiple narrative case study focuses on more than one unit or entity to allow the researcher to compare and contrast the experiences of these multiple entities while still exploring them in depth. This research, as stated, focuses comprehensively on six very different women entrepreneurs to compare and contrast their cross-cultural and cross-linguistic experiences in their unique English language education business contexts. A multiple narrative variation on a case study is thus appropriate.

A case study is used when the researcher wants to holistically understand a complex social phenomenon operating over time in a real-world context (Yin, 2014). In this study, I make use of the key characteristics of a case study to study the experiences of the six women entrepreneurs. By focusing on a small number of participants, I could conduct intensive, in-depth data collection to generate very rich data about the participants (Merriam, 1988; Creswell, 1998).

Multiple data sources are used in a case study to collect in-depth data on the participants (Merriam, 1988; Creswell, 1998; Yin, 2014). Information about the participants in this study could thus be collected with multiple tools and methods and from multiple perspectives. A case study also follows the entities or participants over time (Creswell, 1998). In this study, I could thus track the participants' change, learning, and development over a designated period, particularly with respect to their cross-cultural and cross-linguistic experiences.

Significantly for this research, a case study is embedded in a real context (Creswell, 1998; Yin, 2014). The contextual element of a case study is important in this study given the unique and changing contexts—both cultural and linguistic—in which each participant operates. Because of the comprehensiveness of a case study, as well as the need to set some boundaries on the depth of the research, researchers select one or more aspects of the participants to focus on (Gall, Gall, & Borg, 1999). In this case study, the focus is on the cross-cultural and cross-linguistic interactions of the participants as they run their English language education businesses within their contexts. Finally, in a case study, the researcher uses previously established theory to guide data collection and analysis (Yin, 2014). The data collection and analysis in this case study were guided by multiple conceptualizations of culture and the language–culture relationship.

A case study can be used for one or more purposes: descriptive, exploratory, evaluative, explanatory, and relational (Hancock & Algozzine, 2006; Duff, 2007; Merriam, 1998; Stake, 1995; Yin, 2014). In this research, the case study is used for both descriptive and exploratory purposes. The research is descriptive in order to capture the cross-cultural and cross-linguistic experiences of the women entrepreneurs; this purpose aligns with the subjective approach to the research. The research is also exploratory in order to identify themes and issues that can form the basis of future research questions; this purpose aligns with the objective approach to the research.

Case studies are sometimes seen to have limited application because of the small sample size used. Contextually based case knowledge is also seen as less valuable than general theoretical knowledge. There is also concern that the researchers may be biased towards verifying their hypotheses and so will subconsciously structure the research and interpret the data to this end. Because of these limitations, case studies are often seen to be useful only to start the exploration of an issue rather than to provide any concrete conclusions (Flyvbjerg, 2011).

There is, however, a solid place for case studies as a complement to other forms of qualitative and quantitative research. They provide depth where other forms of research provide breadth (Flyvbjerg, 2011). They root their data in complex contexts and facilitate the exploration of complex behaviours (Yin, 2014). And they can have multiple purposes (Hancock & Algozzine, 2006; Duff, 2007; Merriam, 1998; Stake, 1995; Yin, 2014). Because of these strengths, case studies have an established place in business and entrepreneurship research. They are also readily accepted in language and education research (Faltis, 1997). It is specifically because of these strengths, particularly the detailed focus on complex contexts and complex behaviours, with both a descriptive and exploratory purpose, that a multiple narrative case study was the chosen research methodology for this study.

4.5 Data Collection: Qualitative Methods

As indicated above, a multiple narrative case study methodology uses a variety of data sources to study entities from different perspectives. The qualitative data collection methods selected for this research allowed data to be collected from the perspective of the participants and myself as the researcher, as well as through standardized tools, as illustrated in Table 6 below.

Table 6: Data Collection Methods Perspectives

Data Collection Methods	Perspective
1. Email questionnaires	Participant
2. Language proficiency self-assessment	Participant, self-assessment tool rating system
3. Cultural adaptability inventory self-assessment	Participant, self-assessment tool rating system

4. Narrative interviewing
    a. Open-ended questions
    b. Critical incidents
    c. Cultural artifacts
	Participant, researcher

5. Asynchronous focus group	Participant, researcher
6. Field notes	Researcher

Each of the data collection methods is described in detail in the following subsections.

4.5.1 Email Questionnaires

To start the data collection process, basic information about the participants and their businesses was collected using two email questionnaires. Participants completed two questionnaires, one about themselves to create an entrepreneur profile and one about their businesses to create a business profile. See Appendix 2 for the Entrepreneur Profile Questionnaire and Appendix 3 for the Business Profile Questionnaire.

4.5.2 Self-Assessments

Self-assessment is a process by which individuals evaluate themselves, their achievements, and their outcomes using a predetermined set of criteria or an assessment instrument (Boud & Falchikov, 1989). Self-assessment can be open ended when participants provide commentary in response to the criteria or closed when participants complete inventories of questions or statements for which either options or a rating system are provided. The self-assessment criteria may require participants to judge themselves (self-judgment), analyze themselves (self-analysis), or recall their actions or reactions to past events (self-recall). The self-assessment criteria can cover any or all the cognitive, affective, and behavioural domains. Finally, the self-assessment criteria can focus on the past (retrospective), the present (current), or the future (predictive).

Self-assessment is widely used in higher education, ongoing professional development, and job performance appraisals to assist individuals and groups in appropriately focusing their learning and actions moving forward. See for example research synthesis studies by Boud and Falchikov (1989) for higher education; Ward, Gruppen, and Regehr (2002) for physician professional development; and Harris and Schaubroeck (1988) for job performance appraisals. The use of self-assessments is expanding into language proficiency and cultural awareness and adaptability studies as a way of facilitating student independence and self-efficacy in language- and culture-learning processes. See for example Kissling and O'Donnell (2015) for the use of self-assessment in language learning and Black and Duhon (2006) for the use of self-assessment in culture learning.

The strength of self-assessment is that it allows researchers to capture the self-judgments and perceptions of participants while also attaching that knowledge to a predetermined framework; this is then seen as an important step in the learning process (Boud & Falchikov, 1989). There are, however, limitations to the use of self-assessment because the participants are so close to the data; they may try to be objective, but it is impossible to eliminate all of the subjectivity. The correlation between the self-assessor and external assessors (such as a teacher or a standardized testing tool) can be weak due to biases of the self-assessor, biases in the external measures, shortcomings in the self-assessment instrument, and shortcomings in the self-assessment context or the assessment protocol (Harris & Schaubroeck, 1988; Boud & Falchikov, 1989; Ward et al., 2002). Self-assessor biases can be particularly problematic. Participants can be too lenient or too strict in their assessments. They can provide the socially desirable response rather than the true response. They can provide a response that is self-serving or egocentric. They may have a blind spot towards the criteria they are assessing, or they may simply not know what they do not know (Ehrlinger, Gilovich, & Ross, 2005). Because of these shortcomings, self-assessment is not useful in high-stakes assessment situations or other situations in which a concrete, objective grade or rating is required. It is, however, useful to capture participant self-judgments and then compare these to data from other sources. It is also useful in awareness-building to identify what individuals have already learned and what they still need to learn.

In this study, two self-assessments were used in the data collection process to capture participant self-judgments: a language proficiency self-assessment and a cultural adaptability self-assessment. These self-assessments were used immediately before the narrative interviews to

build the participants' self-awareness of their language proficiency and cultural adaptability. The Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Grid for Assessing Language Proficiency (2016) was used to gather participant self-assessments of their language proficiencies. The Cross-Cultural Adaptability Inventory or CCAI (Kelley & Meyers, n.d.) was used to gather participant self-assessments about their emotional resilience, flexibility/openness, perceptual acuity, and personal autonomy when interacting cross-culturally.

4.5.2.1 CEFR Language Proficiency Grid

In language learning, language proficiency self-assessment of a single language is generally used as a complement to assessment by an external agent such as a teacher or examiner (Oscarson, 1989). It is seen as a way to make students aware of the criteria of language proficiency, with the aim of making them independent learners of that language (Kissling & O'Donnell, 2015). In this study, however, language proficiency self-assessment was used to capture the participants' self-judgment of their language proficiencies across multiple languages to create an overall language profile for them. In building the language profile, the data from the self-assessment were complemented with data from the email questionnaire and the narrative interviews. In the Entrepreneur Profile Questionnaire, participants were asked to list the languages they used and the languages they had formally studied. In the narrative interviewing, they were asked to discuss their language use experiences while running their businesses. The language profile therefore included the participants' first language, languages they had formally studied, languages that they had learned through immersion in that language's context, and languages the participants used for business purposes. Returning to the self-assessment, it had a secondary purpose of raising the participants' awareness of their language use to prepare them for sharing their cross-linguistic experiences in their narrative interviews.

The tool used for the language proficiency self-assessment was a language proficiency grid for the Common European Framework of Reference, also known as the CEFR (Council of Europe, 2016). The CEFR was selected as the language proficiency framework for its applicability to any language rather than one specific language. It is also a language proficiency framework that is known and accepted globally and with which all participants were familiar. Participants completed one Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Grid for Assessing Language Proficiency for each language they speak. They rated their proficiency in each language according to the level descriptors in the assessment categories in the CEFR: listening,

reading, speaking, and writing. The six levels in the CEFR progress from beginner (A1 and A2), to intermediate (B1 and B2), to advanced (C1 and C2). The C2 level is considered native speaker proficiency. See Appendix 4 for the Language Proficiency Email with instructions on how to complete the self-assessment and Appendix 5 for the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Grid for Assessing Language Proficiency.

4.5.2.2 Cross-Cultural Adaptability Inventory (CCAI)

Self-assessment is well-established as a method for measuring culture learning, and there is considerable variety in the purpose of the culture learning research. Thomas et al. (2008) summarized research in which self-assessments were used to determine participants' suitability for an international placement or a management position that required cross-cultural communication. Black and Duhon (2006) and Watson, Siska, and Wolfel (2013) used self-assessment to determine the culture learning outcomes of a study abroad program, while Holmes and O'Neill (2012) used it to determine the culture learning outcomes of intercultural training. Finally, Sercu (2004) used self-assessment to determine the culture learning that accompanies language learning. This range of purposes illustrates the applicability of self-assessment to a variety of culture learning research and to a wide range of participant profiles.

There are both open-ended question and closed question culture learning self-assessments. Open-ended question self-assessments include PEER (Preparing, Engaging, Evaluating, and Reflecting) in which participants take part in and then reflect on cross-cultural encounters (Holmes and O'Neill, 2012), critical incidents in which participants analyze the critical incidents to determine the cultural forces at play and to suggest subsequent actions (Collins and Pieterse, 2007), simulation games in which participants self-analyze and self-judge their behavioural choices as the game progresses (Hurn, 2011), and video analyses in which participants self-analyze their cross-cultural communication to identify their strengths and weaknesses (Morell, Sharp, & Crandall, 2002).

Closed question culture learning self-assessments are inventories of questions or statements to which participants respond by selecting from options provided or selecting a number on a ratings scale. The responses are then turned into scores with accompanying descriptors. Some closed question self-assessments have been developed for specific research projects, while others are commercial products. An example of the former is the Intercultural Adjustment

Potential Scale (ICAPS), developed for Japanese sojourners and immigrants to the United States (Matsumoto et al., 2001). An example of the latter is the Intercultural Development Inventory developed and sold by the MDB Group (n.d.).

The self-assessment selected for this research, the Cross-Cultural Adaptability Inventory (CCAI), is a closed question commercial product. The self-assessment is an online inventory of statements to which participants provide rated responses. At the end of the process, the self-assessment system produces a score on four characteristics or dimensions that the developers of the assessment have identified as being significant for successful cross-cultural adaptation: emotional resilience, flexibility/openness, personal autonomy, and perceptual acuity (Kelley & Meyers, n.d.). These scores are then rated against the average scores of all those who used the assessment in the past. Test-takers are provided with a graph on which to map their results, descriptors for each of the four categories, and ideas for improving their adaptability in each category.

The CCAI was selected for this research for three reasons. First, it was designed as an awareness-building tool as well as a self-assessment tool to provide participant self-judgments (Kelley & Meyers, n.d.); it thus closely matches the dual purposes of its use in this study. Second, it has been widely used and validated by other researchers. See for example the Nguyen, Biderman, and McNary (2010) validation study. And finally, because the self-assessment is available online, it was easily accessible to all the participants, who are located globally. See Appendix 6 for the Cross-Cultural Adaptability Inventory (CCAI) Email sent to participants with the instructions for completing the inventory.

There are limitations to the use of culture learning self-assessments. The biggest challenge that is immediately apparent is the different terminology used from one assessment to the next. The terminology used includes cultural awareness, cross-cultural adaptability, cultural intelligence, intercultural competence, and intercultural communicative competence. The definitions of these terms were introduced in Chapter 3, so they won't be provided again in this section. Given the different terminology used, and the subsequent different conceptualizations of how culture learning is measured, it is very difficult to compare one study to the next and to consolidate findings. That said, there is a need for self-assessment research in culture learning because

culture learning is an internal process with limited external evidence that can be assessed. This need has produced extensive culture learning self-assessment research.

There are two self-assessor biases that need to be mitigated in the use of culture learning self-assessments. One is that the participant may select the socially desirable response in the assessment rather than the true response. It is not socially desirable, for example, to reveal stereotypes, racism, or any form of dislike about other cultural groups. Therefore, participants may not be honest when answering questions related to these issues because it is not socially acceptable to do so. A second self-assessor bias is that participants may be ignorant about their ignorance. In other words, they will not know what they do not know. Culture is a very complex concept, and cross-cultural interactions are equally complex. Many participants in cross-cultural events simply do not grasp this complexity and therefore are not able to identify what they do not know on a self-assessment.

These possible biases in the participant responses on the self-assessment inventory were mitigated in this study by collecting data on participant cultural awareness through additional data collection methods. Participant cultural awareness was thus examined from multiple perspectives. In the Entrepreneur Profile Questionnaire, participants were asked to list the cultural groups with which they have interacted in both a professional and personal context. They also had to indicate whether they had completed any formal culture training. In the narrative interviewing, participants were asked to share the challenges and the rewards they have experienced while interacting cross-culturally and learning about other cultures. Finally, in the asynchronous focus group, participants were asked to respond to different conceptualizations of culture and share experiences that aligned with the conceptualizations.

4.5.3 Narrative Interviewing

The largest amount of data for the multiple narrative case study was collected using narrative interviewing a method taken from narrative inquiry. This section first briefly introduces narrative inquiry and then describes narrative interviewing as a data collection method including the process of restorying. To conclude, it explains how narrative interviewing was implemented in this research.

Bruner (1986) indicates that narrative is one of two ways that humans make sense of their experiences; the other way is through logic. While logic is persuasive because of its reliance on facts and truth, narrative is persuasive because it relates to real life (Bruner, 1986). Narrative inquiry as a research methodology, then, is research that involves stories (Barkuizen, 2014; Barkuizen, Benson, & Chik, 2014) and a search for the meaning of the lived experiences in those stories (Beattie, 2007). In narrative inquiry, researchers and their participants uncover the meaning of the events and experiences of the participants' lives through a collaborative process called *restorying* and through a negotiated validation process in which the researcher and participants confirm the meaning that was uncovered (Beattie, 2007). It is also the process of differentiating between the experiences the participants actually lived and the narrative those participants have constructed about those experiences (Beattie, 2007).

A limitation of narrative inquiry is that it can be perceived as subjective, rooted in the combined perceptions and beliefs of the researcher and the participants. Because of the collaborative nature of restorying and validation, it can also be difficult to identify where the participant ends and the researcher begins. However, narrative inquiry embraces its subjectivity and positions itself as a complement to more objective research methodologies based on logic. Positioned this way, narrative inquiry has become an accepted research methodology in the social sciences, including language education and applied linguistics (Chase, 2011; Barkuizen, 2014; Barkuizen et al., 2014; Benson, 2014).

Narrative interviewing, which is central to narrative inquiry, is a distinct process designed to collect narrative data (Clandinin & Connelly, 1990; Beattie, 2007). It is different from standard interviewing in that the narrative interviewing process is non-hierarchical and collaborative. In a standard interview process, the interviewer controls the agenda and the direction of the interview with a list of prepared questions; the interviewee then answers those questions. In narrative interviewing, the interviewer initiates the interview through open-ended questions, but the interviewee then controls the direction of the discussion. In addition to open-ended questions, participant responses can also be prompted by photographs, audio, video, artefacts, and texts. Regardless of the prompts used, the role of the interviewer is to ask follow-up and probing questions in response to the interviewee's answers to explore, fill out, and clarify the narrative (Beattie, 2007).

Once the narrative interview data has been gathered, there is a second step called restorying. *Restorying* is the process in which the researcher takes the raw transcribed data from the narrative interview, identifies key narrative elements such as character, plot, and setting, and then crafts the data into a cohesive chronological narrative text. In the restorying process, particular importance is placed upon areas of tension between the personal and the individual's role as a professional (Beattie, 2007). These tensions represent the key messages and interpretations that both the researcher and the participants want to communicate. The researcher pulls out these key messages and interpretations as the narrative is written. As a final step, the researcher once again collaborates with the participants to confirm or validate the narrative that has been written. The researcher and the participants agree on the final narrative that gets told as a result of the narrative interviewing and restorying (Fontana & Frey, 2000; Beattie, 2007).

The restorying process bridges data collection and data analysis. The initial restorying, through targeted follow-up questions during the interview process to explore areas of tension, is part of data collection. The writing of the narrative and the final validation of the narrative by the participants can be positioned as part of the data analysis process.

Narrative interviewing was selected for data collection in this research over standard interviewing because it allowed me to comprehensively explore the individual experiences of the women entrepreneurs. It allowed me to investigate the meanings of those experiences through the collaborative processes of restorying and validation. Narrative interviewing also yields data that are accessible and relevant to non-experts; this then allows the participants' stories to be shared beyond the research community, which is a clear intent of this research.

Three types of prompts were used in the narrative interviewing in this study: open-ended questions, written critical incidents, and cultural artefacts. The initial open-ended narrative interview questions were piloted with a research assistant to ensure that they were clear and effective. See Appendix 7 for the complete list of open-ended interview questions. I wrote the critical incidents based upon my personal and professional experiences. I selected short critical incidents in which the factors resulting in the incident were difficult to identify and in which multiple factors were at play. See Appendix 8 for the critical incidents. The cultural artefacts—

real objects that had meaning for the participants—were chosen by the participants as being representative of significant and memorable cross-cultural experiences.

The narrative interviews were conducted over a series of sessions of no more than one hour scheduled according to participant availability. Some participants completed the interviews in four interview sessions, while others took five sessions. For five of the six participants, the interviews took place via Skype. For the sixth participant, located in China, the interviews were conducted via WeChat because Skype did not work effectively. The interviews were conducted with both the audio and video functions. However, only the audio was recorded to maintain participant anonymity. Finally, the recordings were transcribed to create a written version of the data.

4.5.4 Asynchronous Focus Group

The final step of the data collection process that involved the participants was an asynchronous focus group in which participants shared their responses to a mini-lecture video on different conceptualizations of culture and the culture-language relationship. Focus groups provide the opportunity for multiple interactions, and the idea generation that accompanies these interactions is not possible in a one-on-one researcher–participant interview (Kamberelis & Dimitriadis, 2011). They also allow the researcher to turn control of the discussion over to the participants (Kamberelis & Dimitriadis, 2011). This research exploited both of these focus group benefits. The focus group offered a very experienced and diverse group of participants with different perspectives and opinions the opportunity to share their stories and ideas with the other participants. It also provided the participants with the opportunity to respond to different conceptualizations of culture and the culture–language relationship presented in a mini-lecture without my presence.

The original design of the focus group was for it to be synchronous using the group calling function of Skype. This design proved challenging due to Skype not functioning for one participant, connectivity issues for another participant, multiple time zones, and the participants' busy and unpredictable schedules. The focus group was redesigned to be asynchronous using an online recording application called Voice Thread. With Voice Thread, participants record their comments about individual PowerPoint slides. Their recordings were then made available for

the other participants to listen to and respond to and for me to review and transcribe. See Figure 37 below for a screen shot of the Voice Thread user interface.

Figure 37: Voice Thread User Interface
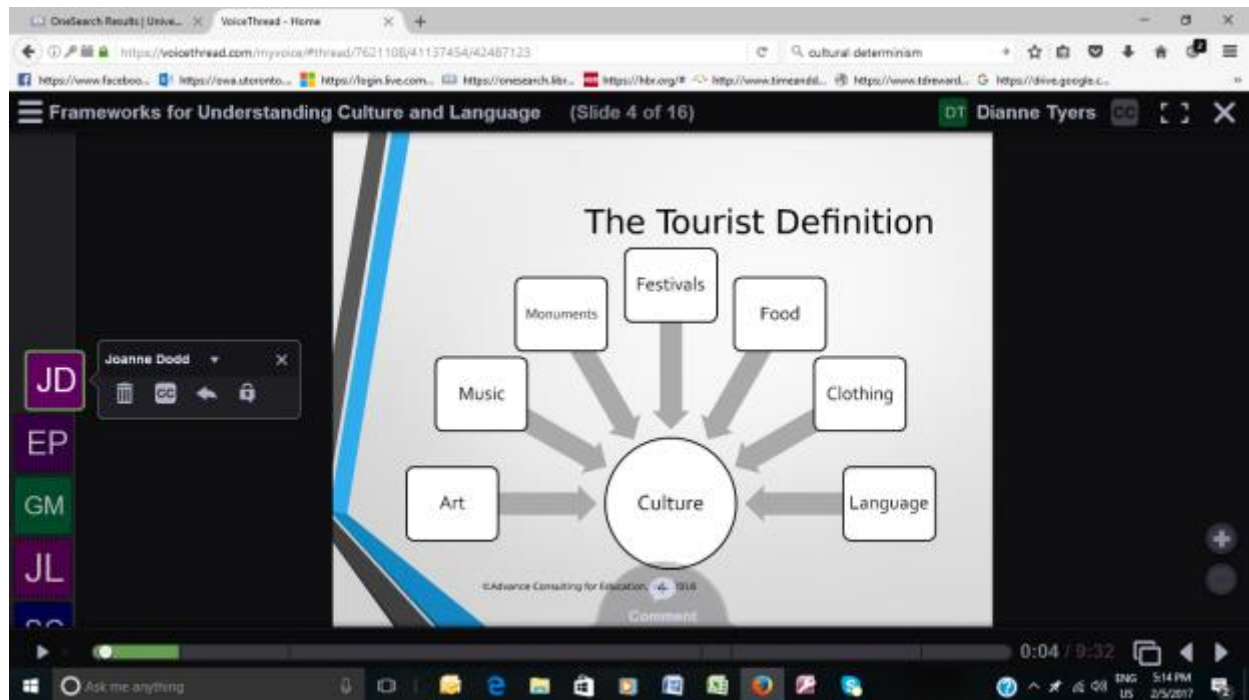
The asynchronous focus group was originally scheduled at the beginning of the data collection process. However, before data collection began, it was moved to the end of the process. I did not want to influence the participants with any conceptualizations of culture and the culture– language relationship before they recounted their cross-cultural and cross-linguistic experiences with their English language education businesses in the narrative interviewing.

The conceptualizations of culture presented in the mini-lecture were the same as those presented in Chapter Three of this dissertation. The conceptualizations of culture were the tourist definition, the iceberg analogy, the onion analogy, cultural values continuums, the learning domains of culture, the acculturation model, communicative competence, intercultural competence, intercultural communicative competence, and dynamic systems theory. To view the video of the mini-lecture on the conceptualizations or frameworks of culture, go to https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OEAC2Qif-_M.

Participants were first given instructions on how to access the video. Then they were given instructions on how to set up an account in Voice Thread and access the focus group discussion file. The access to the Voice Thread file was originally set for two weeks. However, the participants had many things that they were juggling, so the access was extended to eight weeks. This allowed participants to record their responses, listen to other participant responses, and then respond again. Thus, an asynchronous dialogue was built. See Appendix 9 for the asynchronous focus group emails with the instructions for the data collection. To view and listen to the asynchronous focus group, follow the instructions in the second asynchronous focus group email.

4.5.5 Field Notes

During the narrative interviewing portion of the data collection, I kept field notes about the participants' paralinguistics and non-verbal communication. The paralinguistics recorded in the field notes included the participants' speaking speed, speaking volume, hesitations, and changes in intonation. The non-verbal communication recorded in the field notes included the participants' facial expressions, eye contact, head nodding, gestures, and posture. Field notes were used to allow me to observe and record what happened in the interviews and what words the participants used to fully capture the information they were communicating (Emerson, Fretz, & Shaw, 2011, Mulhall, 2003). The field notes also provided a third perspective on the data being collected. While the questionnaires, interviews, and focus group captured the voices of the participants—and the self-assessments provided external ratings—the field notes provided my perspective on the interactions. I wrote down what I considered to be important paralinguistic and non-verbal communication as well as key messages and interpretations of the narrative based upon my experience and perspective.

4.6 Data Analysis

The data analysis had five steps: restorying and validation of the narrative interviewing data; a first coding of the data from each qualitative data collection method; mapping of the coded data from all the qualitative data collection methods onto the research questions; a second coding of the data to ensure the validity and accuracy of the coding and to create a Code Map; and comparing and contrasting across all participants.

4.6.1 Restorying and Validation

The data collected from the narrative interviews and asynchronous focus group were restoried following the process described in the data collection section. Recall that in the narrative interviewing data collection process, I used targeted follow-up questions to clarify the experiences and meaning that participants shared in response to initial open-ended questions. In the first step of the data analysis process, I then consolidated the transcribed spoken text into concise and cohesive narratives based on key messages and interpretations that emerged during the interview process. The participants' personal voices were maintained in the resulting written narrative texts. The participants were then given the opportunity to read and validate the written narrative texts as having captured their experiences and meanings.

A short sample of original transcribed spoken text below and its corresponding restoried written text illustrates the restorying process.

> Hi, this is Sabrine. I was just listening over the comments here and I find it so interesting. From my experience when I lived in Korea—I lived there five years, and I didn't really acquire the language, but I was able to acquire the culture. Which is interesting because most people—I heard Gabriela's comments—about you can't really understand the culture because it is so tied with the language. But I found that understanding the culture was more important than understanding the language so you wouldn't make a social faux pas or insult somebody in a certain way. Even though you didn't know the language, you were able to cross that bridge. For example, in Korea, it shows politeness to hold the money with two hands when paying a clerk in a store—it shows more respect to the clerk rather than throwing the money on the counter. People always asked me how did I get around without being able to fully communicate—I say I could only give directions to a taxi, but I understand certain cultural rituals that were expected, and I was able to get the message across to the locals that way. I do understand that language is so tied to it, but you can learn the culture without actually speaking.

With the restorying process this spoken text became the following written text:

> I lived in South Korea for five years. I didn't really acquire the language, but I was able to acquire the culture. I found that understanding the culture was more important than understanding the language. Even though you don't know the language, you can bridge the cultural differences. For example, in South Korea, it shows politeness to hold money with two hands when paying a clerk in a store. It shows more respect to the clerk than throwing the money on the counter. People always asked me how I got around in South Korea without being able to fully communicate. I answer that while I could only give directions to a taxi, I understood certain cultural rituals that were expected. I could get the message across to South Koreans that way. I do understand that language is tied to the culture, but you can learn the culture without actually speaking the language.

4.6.2 First Coding

The first round of coding of the data used eclectic coding. Eclectic coding uses coding from many different coding categories simultaneously to match the research questions and the purpose of the study (Saldaña, 2013). Eclectic coding was a good fit with the exploratory nature of the study. The following types of coding, taken from Saldaña (2013), were used under the umbrella approach of eclectic coding:

1. Attribute coding was used for the features and characteristics of the participants themselves and their businesses, as well as for their language proficiencies and cultural adaptability and awareness.

2. Descriptive coding was used for topics and events that the participants experienced.

3. Emotion coding was used for the emotions the participants associated with the specific topics and events. Emotion was identified through participant use of emotion words such as *sad* and *frustrated* and through emotion markers noted in the field notes such as intonation use, speaking speed, word stress, and hesitation.

4. Values coding was used for the beliefs that the participants held, both cultural and general. Values were identified through participant use of values words such as *important*, *significant*, and *believe*.

I used three additional types of coding in the eclectic, not from Saldaña and designed specifically for this research:

1. Meaning coding was used for indications of the sense of purpose that the participants derived from their experiences.

2. Conceptual coding was used for instances in which the data aligned with one of the conceptualizations of culture or the culture–language relationship used in the conceptual framework.

3. Strategy and advice coding was used to identify practical approaches or techniques that the participants used to overcome challenges they experienced or to mitigate risks. It was also used to identify advice the participants had for other women entrepreneurs operating in the same sector.

Additionally, the ratings data from the CEFR Language Proficiency and Cross-Cultural Adaptability Inventory self-assessments from all participants were compiled into two comparative charts.

Data were coded with multiple codes if it appeared necessary. For example, an event could have emotion or values or meaning associated with it; therefore, it received two codings.

It is also important to note that some qualitative data were excluded from the analysis. If I felt that the inclusion of the data would in any way be detrimental to the participant who provided it, I did not use it. I kept the participants' anonymity and security a priority throughout the analysis process.

4.6.3 Mapping of the First Coding onto the Research Questions

After the completion of the first coding process, the coding was mapped onto the research questions to ensure that the all the questions were addressed through the data. Strategy and advice coding were mapped onto the first and final research questions to support the underlying purpose of the study, which is to inform the support, training, and education provided for women entrepreneurs who need to function cross-culturally and cross-linguistically, both in the English language education sector and in other sectors in which businesses operate across borders and languages.

Table 7: Mapping of the First Coding onto the Research Questions

Research Question	Coding
1. What are the case histories of the women entrepreneurs and their businesses?	- Attribute coding on the participants - Attribute coding on the participants' businesses - Descriptive coding on the participants' businesses - Values, emotion, meaning coding related to the participants' businesses
2. What are the levels of cultural awareness of the women entrepreneurs?	- Attribute coding on the participants' cultural awareness - Conceptual coding on the participants' understanding of cultural concepts
3. What are the language proficiencies of the women entrepreneurs?	- Attribute coding on the participants' language proficiencies - Conceptual coding on the participants' understanding of the culture-language relationship - Descriptive coding on the participants' use of language in their businesses
4. What personal meaning do the women entrepreneurs derive from running their language education sector enterprises?	- Meaning coding on the participants' purposes - Emotion coding
5. What are the stories of the women entrepreneurs as they conduct business cross-culturally and cross-linguistically with their language education sector enterprises?	- Descriptive coding on the participants' experiences - Emotion, values, emotion and strategy, and advice coding on the participants' experiences - Conceptual coding to relate the experiences back to the conceptual framework

4.6.4 Second Coding and Code Map

In the second round of coding, the descriptive coding—into which the majority of the narrative interviewing data fell—was further subdivided into six descriptive categories: entrepreneur experiences, woman entrepreneur experiences, English language education sector experiences, language and cross-linguistic experiences, and culture and cross-cultural experiences. Another large data section, attribute coding, was similarly divided into personal attributes and business

attributes. For all types of coding, the themes that emerged were refined and concisely titled to ensure that the coding was as structured and distinct as possible (Saldaña, 2013). The entire set of code types, categories, and themes were mapped onto the Code Map (Saldaña, 2013) below in Table 8.

Table 8: Coding Map for Qualitative Data

Type of Coding	Categories	Themes
Attribute	Personal attributes	Location, age, family structure, education, previous experience
	Business attributes	Location, age, size, legal structure, services offered, financing, roles in the business, business missions, business visions, business financing
Descriptive	Entrepreneur experiences	Business context, characteristics of entrepreneurs, motivation, social value building, partnerships, human resource management, public relations, risk management, external support systems, work-life balance
	Woman entrepreneur experiences	Gender and entrepreneurship, funding and financing for women entrepreneurs, support organizations for women entrepreneurs, gender and partnerships, entrepreneurship and family, gender and culture, gender and power, gender and age, safety
	English language education sector experiences	English in the local context, balancing education and business, programs and services, sales and marketing, competitive and regulatory environment, human resource management, risk management, accreditation, sector associations, student management, communication, access to funding
	Language and cross-linguistic experiences	Language proficiency, learning additional languages, personal cross-linguistic experiences, business cross-linguistic experiences
	Culture and cross-cultural experiences	Cultural adaptability and awareness, cross-cultural training, personal cross-cultural experiences, current business cultural context, working in a new culture, managing a multicultural English language school, managing a monocultural English language school, marketing an English language school internationally, cross-cultural project management, cross-cultural teacher training, strategies, personal safety

Type of Coding	Categories	Themes
Emotion		Positive emotions (excitement, happiness), negative emotions (frustration, sadness)
Value		Profit, student success, teacher success, lifestyle flexibility, business as personal, independence
Meaning		From student interactions, from teacher interactions, from community interactions
Conceptual		Tourist definition, iceberg analogy, onion analogy, cultural values continuums, learning domains of culture, acculturation model, communicative competence, intercultural competence, intercultural communicative competence, culture as a complex dynamic system
Strategy and Advice		Entrepreneur strategies/advice, women entrepreneur strategies/advice, English language education sector strategies/advice, cross-linguistic strategies/advice, and cross-cultural strategies/advice

4.6.5 Interrater and Intrarater Reliability

The application of the selected codes was subjected to interrater and intrarater reliability verification. To verify interrater reliability, I gave a research assistant the selected codes and asked her to code twenty pages of data, including data that I had found particularly challenging to code. I then compared the research assistant's coding choices with my choices. We discussed any differences. To establish intrarater reliability, I analyzed and coded the entire data set three times at each of the first and second coding stages.

4.6.6 Comparing and Contrasting

The coded data for the participants were mapped together for comparative and contrastive purposes. Comparative charts, tables, and diagrams were built whenever possible and appropriate.

4.7 Data Synthesis, Evaluation and Interpretation

Once the data had been deconstructed through analysis, it was first synthesized, then compared to the research literature, and finally interpreted through the conceptual framework. In the data

synthesis stage, the relationships among the coding, categories, and themes were identified, related to the research questions and the overall purpose of the study, and visually represented through the construction of an Operational Model Diagram (Saldaña, 2013). The data synthesis stage yielded the Operational Model Diagram in Figure 38.

Figure 38: Operational Model Diagram
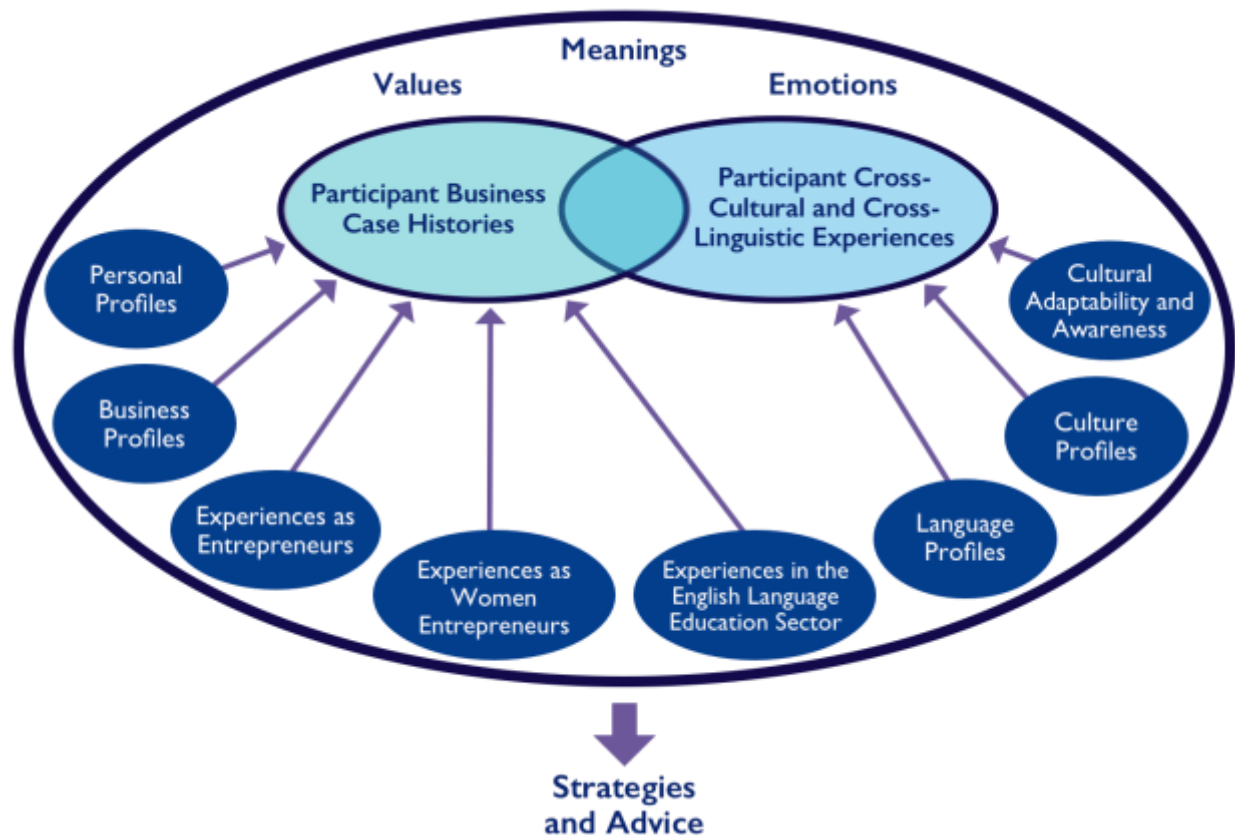
The synthesized data were related to the current research presented in the Literature Review on entrepreneurs, women entrepreneurs, the English language education sector, and cross-cultural and cross-linguistic interactions. Finally, the data were interpreted through the conceptualizations of culture and the culture–language relationship that form the conceptual framework of the study and that were also introduced to the participants in the mini-lecture video that preceded the asynchronous focus group.

4.8 Validity and Credibility

Validity and credibility were at the forefront of the research design, data collection, data analysis, and writing processes. Strategies from Miles, Huberman, & Saldaña (2014) with respect to qualitative research validity and credibility were applied throughout the study, including the following:

1. Multiple qualitative data collection methods were used to provide multiple perspectives on the same phenomena.

2. At each step of the data collection process, the limitations of the step were specified along with the strategies that were applied at that step to mitigate those limitations. The overall limitations of the study are specified in the next section.

3. In the data coding step, both interrater and intrarater testing were used to establish the accuracy of the coding system. The coding was also revisited in the Code Mapping step to further validate it.

4. The qualitative data collection focused on gathering context-rich or thick data to build a multi-level understanding of the experiences of the participants in their specific and unique contexts.

5. In the data synthesis, analysis, and interpretation steps of the research design, areas of uncertainty and opposing explanations were identified and discussed. These areas then formed the basis of the suggested future research presented at the end of the study.

6. The data analysis step of the research design was used to connect the data to current theory on women entrepreneurs operating cross-culturally and cross-linguistically in the English language education sector. The research is thus firmly anchored in current theory whenever possible.

7. Finally, the data and discussions were presented clearly and logically, in both text and visual format, so that they could be easily understood and followed.

4.9 Limitations of the Study

It is important to acknowledge the limitations of the study. Because of the small participant sample size, the study results cannot contribute to general theoretical learning in women's entrepreneurship in the English language education sector. Similarly, because of the specificity and uniqueness of the context of each participant, the study results once again cannot be generalized. The results will, however, contribute to context-based learning because of those

unique contexts (Flyvbjerg, 2011). A third limitation of the study is that it will not establish any degree of cause or effect with respect to the experiences of the women entrepreneurs. The study will reveal the commonalities and variation in the experiences of the women, as well as the degree of complexity of the interactions of the variables in the experiences of the women, but it will not establish any causal relationships.

As the researcher, I create several limitations for the study. My personal experiences were used to design the study. I also conducted the narrative interviewing and set up the asynchronous focus group. I analyzed and evaluated the data. While my personal experience informed and enriched each stage of the research, all the research was conducted and seen through my eyes and with my inherent biases. I may have missed data or misinterpreted the data based on those lenses and biases. I also selected the conceptualizations of culture and the culture–language relationship that form the conceptual framework of the study. There are many, many conceptualizations of culture and the culture–language relationship available. I selected those that had proven useful throughout my career in functioning cross-culturally and cross-linguistically in language education and business environments. A different researcher may have chosen different conceptualizations.

Finally, the participants in the research are all part of my professional network. While all the relationships are professional, not personal, and none of the relationships involve my having power over the participants, this professional relationship may have influenced the responses provided by the participants. This limitation was offset by making the narrative interviewing as open as possible and by using an asynchronous focus group in which I did not participate beyond providing the mini-lecture as a prompt.

Chapter 5: The Participants' Business Case Histories

"Be daring, be different, be impractical, be anything that will assert integrity of purpose and imaginative vision against the play-it-safers, the creatures of the commonplace, the slaves of the ordinary."

-Cecil Beaton

5.1 Introduction

This chapter, the first of two data chapters, presents a multi-layered picture of the six participants and their English language education businesses. The participants have been given the following pseudonyms: Emma Peel, Gabriela Martinez, Jasmine Liu, Joanne Dodd, Nailah El-Amin, and Sabrine Cabrel. Throughout the research, the participants are referred to by the first name of their pseudonym. Participant voices, restoried under the narrative interviewing process and included throughout the chapter, are indicated using the text colour coding system in Table 9 below.

Table 9: Participant Colour Coding

Participant	Colour Code
Emma	Blue
Gabriela	Brown
Jasmine	Green
Joanne	Pink
Nailah	Purple
Sabrine	Orange

Given the two qualitative approaches intertwined in this research, one more objective and one more subjective, I had two choices in how to present the data in this chapter. While both the objective and the subjective are present in the data, a structured, thematic presentation based on the coding analysis accentuates the objective side of the data, while a case presentation based on narrative accentuates the subjective side of the data. I chose a thematic data presentation

structure to allow for greater comparison and contrast among the six participants, on the understanding that a case data presentation would also be effective.

The data presentation starts with short portraits of each participant built from information from the narrative interviews and observations in my field notes. The presentation then follows with detailed comparative profiles of the participants built using the personal attribute themes that emerged in the data analysis: their ages, family structures, and levels of education, as well as their past business, management, and entrepreneurial experience. The next section turns the focus to comparative profiles of the participants' businesses using business attribute themes that emerged in the data analysis: location, age, size, legal structure, services offered, participant roles in the business, business missions, synopses, and visions. Finally, the data presentation recounts the business case histories of the participants as entrepreneurs, women entrepreneurs, and owners of English language education businesses, centred around the descriptive, value, meaning, and strategy themes that emerged from the data analysis.

5.2 Short Participant Profiles

Emma is originally from the United Kingdom, but her love of sailing and the ocean took her first to the Caribbean and then to one of Canadian coasts. She runs an English language school catering to international students wanting to advance their careers or enter Canadian higher education institutions. Equally strong in business and education, Emma is direct, careful, and systematic towards managing the growth of her business through her marketing, business development, and strategy roles. While she takes her business seriously, she filters all of her experiences through a dry and ironic sense of humour.

Gabriela is a serial entrepreneur whose past businesses were all in the tourism sector. Originally from Colombia, she has lived in Canada for the past forty years. Gabriela's current business is a small consulting company that straddles two countries, with her located in Canada managing project planning and a partner in Colombia managing project delivery. Through her company, Gabriela exercises her passion for bringing Canadian expertise to small communities in Colombia to help them build sustainable economies. Some of these projects focus on the development and delivery of English for tourism courses customized to the ecosystems of the small communities.

Jasmine is unique as an entrepreneur among her friends and colleagues in China. Not wanting to settle for an ordinary life, she quit her secure government job, travelled to Canada to learn English, and then returned to her hometown in China to start an English language school. She holds fast to her belief that Chinese students need to learn English for communication, not just to score well on exams or English language proficiency tests. Jasmine runs her business by herself, seeing it as a way to have a positive impact on the next generation of Chinese students and to exercise her fierce independence at the same time.

Joanne runs an English language school in her hometown in Canada. She stumbled into the English language education sector by chance when a school owner noticed her university jacket and offered her a job managing his language school. She soon partnered with a friend to start her own school catering to international students learning English for career and education purposes. Calm, logical, and detail oriented, Joanne takes care of the school operations, while her partner is responsible for sales, marketing, and business development.

Nailah started her English language teacher professional development company in Egypt to fulfill a personal mission to share her English language teaching expertise with her younger colleagues. With 32 years as a teacher under her belt, she knows the contexts in which teachers work and the corresponding challenges those contexts present. Nailah uses technology to bring cutting edge professional development to the teachers in a cost-effective and time-effective way. Although originally an educator, Nailah's knowledge about the impact of economic conditions on a society's education system and cultural values makes her strongly positioned to fulfill the mission she has set herself.

Sabrine is an easy-going but introverted world traveller. Having met in Korea and then moved to her home country of Canada, she and her husband made their next destination his hometown in Algeria. Sabrine wanted to have a business that would allow her to manage her young family but still earn a decent living. She and her husband joined forces with her husband's friend, already in Algeria, to create an English education company. Sabrine was not interested in just teaching English, so she focuses on English language teacher training. Constantly adjusting their business as they uncover more and more about how the Algerian business context functions, Sabrine, her husband, and their business partner have had to be flexible and agile as they try to get traction in what is a new business context for all of them.

5.3 Participant Comparative Profiles

The participant attributes collected have been categorized into the themes of age, family structure, level of education, business and entrepreneurial experience, and experience in the English language education sector.

5.3.1 Participant Ages

The participants range in age from 41 years old to 59 years old at the time of this research, with a mean of 49.5 years and a median of 50.5 years. The ages at which they started their English language education businesses range from 23 years old to 57 years old, with a mean of 42.3 years and a median of 42 years. See Table 10 below for participant ages at the time of this research and when they each started their English language education businesses.

Table 10: Participant Ages

Participant	Age at the Time of this Research	Age When Started English Language Education Business
Emma	55	38
Gabriela	59	57
Jasmine	47	45
Joanne	41	23
Nailah	54	52
Sabrine	41	39
Mean	49.5	42.3
Median	50.5	42

5.3.2 Participant Family Structures

The participants have different family structures. Five participants are married, and one is divorced. One participant has no children, three participants have grown children, and two participants have young children. See Table 11 below for a summary of participant family structures.

Table 11: Participant Family Structures

Participant	Family Structures
Emma	Married, no children
Gabriela	Married, two grown children
Jasmine	Married, one grown child
Joanne	Married, two young children
Nailah	Divorced, two grown children
Sabrine	Married, two young children

5.3.3 Participant Levels of Education

The participants are well educated, with the lowest level of education being a high school diploma plus certification for English language teaching and the highest level of education being a master's degree. See Table 12 below for a summary of participant education.

Table 12: Participant Level of Education

Participant	Current Level of Education
Emma	High school diploma and English language teaching certification
Gabriela	Bachelor's degree and a master's degree in adult training and development
Jasmine	Bachelor's degree and English language teaching certification
Joanne	Bachelor's degree, English language teaching certification, train-the-trainer certification, and a master's degree in applied linguistics
Nailah	Bachelor's degree and English language teaching certification
Sabrine	Bachelor's degree, English language teaching certification, and train-the-trainer certification

One participant, Joanne, increased her level of education while running her business. She obtained certification for English language teaching, train-the-trainer certification, and a master's degree in applied linguistics after starting her business to position the business to offer teacher training and advanced teacher training. This is how Joanne explains her reasons for pursuing further education while she was running her business:

I completed a master's degree while running my business. I was kind of thrown into this industry. I was not sure if I was done with school when I finished my undergraduate degree. I wanted to do a master's, but I wanted to work for a while. I took my master's in TESOL because of our teacher training courses. I wanted to offer the diploma-level course, and to do so, we needed a theory teacher with a master's. It was a logical fit. I am very involved in our teacher training program. I got the master's I wanted in a subject I love. None of our staff had a master's at the time. I showed them I'm doing professional development. It shows teachers I'm willing to better myself as well.

Another participant, Nailah, hopes to increase her qualifications in the future as she explained:

I hope to finish a master's and PhD. I like to research, and I like to read research about teaching. I have a deep understanding of the teaching profession, and I am always testing my ideas. Hopefully, it will not be too difficult to finish these degrees in the future.

5.3.4 Participant Business, Management and Entrepreneurial Experience

All the participants had business, management, and/or entrepreneurial experience prior to starting their English language education sector businesses. Emma had extensive business experience in the UK and the Caribbean:

When I finished high school, I worked in a market research firm in England. I was analyzing questionnaires. Then I became the manager of that department. I trained people and moved to the executive side. I was in client services. I liked the job training and teaching part of it. I couldn't teach because I didn't have a university degree. Then I worked in the Caribbean on a boat. Then when I came to Canada, I opened a tutoring business.

Gabriela shared that she has been an entrepreneur all her working life, always in the service industry:

I started my entrepreneurship career by selling popcorn at the university movie theatre. As a student, I also offered my services during the summer as a tour guide for Spanish-speaking tourists visiting Canada. My first real business was an inbound tour company offering specialized cultural tours to British Columbia and Alberta. Having my own business was convenient because I had children and needed a more flexible schedule. I could manage my time more easily, yet I actually worked harder. I managed and operated this business for seven or eight years. I developed signature Aboriginal experiences in collaboration with the Museum of Anthropology. With their collaboration, we developed our own programs to train Aboriginal tour guides. We also developed the historical and cultural content for the training, which was unique at the time. As an owner of the business, I also did everything else, and at times, many other things I didn't want to do, such as administrative work, cleaning the vans, invoicing, and so on. I sold that business. Then I went to Papua New Guinea to work in tourism with CUSO. I was eventually hired by the national tourism authority to develop a training program on sustainable tourism, which was

Jasmine had extensive government work experience, Joanne was the office manager of an English language school, and Nailah was an English department head. Sabrine's first business, which she started when she was 32 years old and living in Canada, was in event management. Nailah and Sabrine both shared that they had also completed entrepreneurial training before starting their businesses. They did not elaborate on the length or content of the training. See Table 13 below for a summary of the participants' business, management, and entrepreneurial experience prior to starting their English language education businesses.

Table 13: Previous Business, Management, and Entrepreneurial Experience

Participant	Previous Business, Management and Entrepreneurial Experience
Emma	- Business and marketing in the UK - Managing yachting operations in the Caribbean - Owning a small tutoring business in Canada
Gabriela	- Tourism and training businesses in Canada and Latin America - Managed a tourism training project in Papua New Guinea
Jasmine	- Worked for the government in China
Joanne	- Office manager for an English language school in Canada
Nailah	- English department head in Egypt
Sabrine	- Event management business in Canada

5.3.5 Participants' Experience in the English Language Education Sector
All participants were also experienced in the English language education sector, with the lowest number of years in the sector being four years and the highest being 32 years at the time of the research. Prior to starting their English language education businesses, five out of the six participants had direct work experience in the English language education sector. They had held positions in the sector such as tutor, teacher, office manager, test monitor, teacher trainer, and department head. The sixth participant, Gabriela, did not have direct experience in the English language education sector, but she had extensive training experience and cross-cultural

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experience, as well as business-to-business interaction with companies in the English language education sector. See Table 14 below for a summary of the participant experience in the English language education sector.

Table 14: Participant Experience in the English Language Education Sector

Participant	Positions Held in English Language Education Sector Prior to Starting English Language Education Business	Total Years of Experience in the Language Education Sector
Emma	Volunteer tutor, tutor, teacher, teacher trainer	19
Gabriela	Interacted with the sector on a business-to-business (B2B level)	12
Jasmine	Test centre manager, test monitor	4
Joanne	English language school office manager	20
Nailah	Teacher, department head, teacher trainer	32
Sabrine	Teacher in Korea and Canada	15
Mean		18.5
Median		17

Joanne's revealed previous experience in the English language education sector that exposed her to the darker side of the business:

> I started as an office assistant at a Canadian English language school. I had no knowledge of computers or running the office side of things. It was a small private language school primarily for Korean students. The owner was Korean. David, my current business partner, had finished a teaching stint in Korea and came back and became Director of Marketing at the same school. The school deteriorated, however. We didn't like how it was run. The owner did some fishy things. The school made no money, and there were few students. But the owner had a large house and drove a Mercedes. Investors came in to see school. The owner was making the school look like it was larger than it really was. He was essentially embezzling overseas investors. The RCMP came in and seized everything. The owner was also involved in immigration fraud with students, taking money for visa applications, but they didn't get the visas. My time at the school was short lived, but I learned a lot about running a business.

5.4 Business Comparative Profiles

The business attribute themes that emerged from the coding of the data included locations, age, size, legal structures, financing, services offered, reasons for being founded, histories, and the visions for their futures.

5.4.1 Business Locations

The participants and their businesses are located in Algeria, Canada, Colombia, China, and Egypt, as illustrated in Table 15 below.

Table 15: Business Locations

Participant	Business Location
Emma	Canada
Gabriela	Canada and Colombia
Jasmine	China
Joanne	Canada
Nailah	Egypt
Sabrine	Algeria

Emma's location on one of the coasts of Canada is dictated by her love of sailing. She explains why she and her husband moved from the Caribbean to Canada:

> We needed to live by the ocean, so it was either the west coast or the east coast. We went to one first, but didn't like it, so we drove all the way across Canada to check out the other coast—and we liked it!

Gabriela—in keeping with the mandate of her business to bring Canadian expertise in tourism, language, and culture to Colombia—works in Canada, but she also spends time in Colombia. Jasmine, Joanne, and Nailah are all located in their hometowns. Jasmine specifically chose to locate her business in her hometown because it was a small city. She saw this as an advantage, not a disadvantage: "In the big city, rent is expensive, and there is more competition."

Sabrine works in her husband's hometown, which is in Algeria. As she tells it,

> I had a business in Canada not related to English language teaching. We had a child and were running this business, but we wanted a change. I had taught English before, so we were looking to go abroad and teach English. I took an English

5.4.2 Business Age and Size

The participants' businesses vary considerably with respect to age and size, as summarized in Table 16 below. Emma and Joanne own the oldest and largest businesses. Jasmine owns the youngest and smallest business.

Table 16: Business Characteristics

Participant	Age of Business	Size of Business by Employees
Emma	18 years	- The two shareholders work directly in the business - There are 16 to 20 instructors depending on the time of year - There are eight more administrators in addition to the two shareholders
Gabriela	2 years	- The two partners work directly in the business - Local project staff are brought on board as needed - Volunteer teachers complete the instructional projects in Colombia as needed
Jasmine	1.5 years	- The owner works full time in the business - There is one full time Canadian instructor - Friends and family help as needed
Joanne	16 years	- The two shareholders work full time in the business - There are 17 instructors throughout the year with an additional 12 added in the peak summer season - There are four more administrators in addition to the two owners
Nailah	2.5 years	- The three owners work part time in the business
Sabrine	2 years	- The three owners work full time in the business - There is one additional instructor

5.4.3 Legal Structures of the Businesses

There is similar variation in the legal structures of the six businesses: four are incorporated, one is a partnership, and one is a sole proprietorship.

Table 17: Legal Structures of the Businesses

Participant	Legal Structure of Business
Emma	- Incorporated - Two shareholders each with 50% of the shares - Both shareholders work in the business - The other shareholder is female
Gabriela	- Partnership - One partner is in Canada and one is in Colombia - The other partner is female
Jasmine	- Sole proprietorship
Joanne	- Incorporated - Two shareholders each with 50% of the shares - Both shareholders work in the business - The other shareholder is male
Nailah	- Incorporated - Three shareholders - One other shareholder is male and one is female - Nailah has over 50% of the shares
Sabrine	- Incorporated - On paper, there are two shareholders, one is Sabrine's husband and the other is a male friend - Sabrine cannot officially be an owner in the business because she is not an Algerian national

Emma is unique among the participants in that she is not one of original owners of the school.

> The school was started by three women who were teachers at another language school and who decided to start their own school. I took on extra work as a substitute teacher at their school, on top of running my tutoring business. The owners landed a contract to do French training for military personnel, so one of the partners took that on. I then started as full-time teacher. After a while, one partner took maternity leave, and I became completely ensconced in the business. Then I was asked to be a partner four years after the school opened.

Gabriela has one partner, a female, located in Colombia.

> Over two years ago, I met with someone in Colombia who had the same concerns as I did. We decided to set up a business. We structured it as a partnership. She is in

Colombia. We registered the business in Canada.

Gabriela had criteria in mind when selecting a partner.

Partnerships are one of the best ways to get the resources you need to grow. You need to find people who can do things that you can't. You also need to find the right people with the same business values.

Jasmine was very clear that she did not want a partner.

I'm easygoing, but working with me is hard because I'm picky. I think I am the only person who can do a good job. If someone doesn't agree with me, I don't want to change my ideas. Many people have asked to partner with me, but I don't want a partner in business.

Joanne has one co-owner, a male.

David and I were friends prior to getting into this business. David is a salesperson. He is a talker. He handles the marketing, new contracts with agents, and student pathways to university. I look after the organizational elements; for example, I'm responsible for registrations, accounting, day-to-day correspondence, human resources, payroll, scheduling, and teacher development.

Nailah's co-owners were selected for the complementary skills they bring to the business.

My partners are young people. They are co-founders, but I have more than 50% of the shares. They have good experience with publications, event management, and making deals with people. They are also good with technology. They are faster with it than I am. The man is a graduate of a faculty of arts education. He is experienced at negotiating. The woman is a graduate of a faculty of arts engineering. She is an animator. She has done lots of graphic design and coordinating events.

For Nailah, being able to trust her partners was important.

One of most important and effective points to help a business to succeed is that you need people you trust. My partners have ethical characters. They are very helpful.

Sabrine's business has two official owners with her being a third, unofficial owner.

My husband's friend had returned to Algeria after living in Canada for 18 years. He is the school manager. He talks to new potential students and parents. He also runs the practicum for the TESOL program. I run the TESOL program. My husband takes care of supplies, looks after our kids, and drives me to off-site classes. My husband and partner look after the money. I am not an official owner on the business registration because I am not an Algerian national.

5.4.4 Businesses Financing

Some of the participants directly addressed how they finance their businesses, while others addressed it indirectly or not at all.

Emma has a careful, conservative approach to financing her business.

> We have never had a bank loan. When the school started, we got money from the Young Entrepreneurs program. We borrowed a small amount from family members, but we paid it off. We have never borrowed since then. We have a line of credit from the bank. If it looked so bad that we had to get a loan, we probably wouldn't do it.

Gabriela and Sabrine did not discuss the financing of their current businesses. Jasmine, Joanne, and Nailah did not directly address their financing; however, they shared how they have supported themselves through the start-up stages. Jasmine shared that she is supporting herself with other employment while running her business full time.

> I work two jobs. I work at school all day. Then I run the head office for the CAEL English language proficiency test for all of China. CAEL has grown well in China. It started in 2012. Since then, we have done over 400 tests. There are 19 test centres now all over China. We will possibly include Taiwan in the future. So, after I work all day at school, I contact the Canadian company that runs CAEL in the evening because of the different time zones.

Nailah also works full time as a language teacher in addition to running her business. Joanne, now well out of the start-up stage, shared that like Jasmine and Nailah, when her business was in its start-up stage and she was unable to take money out of the business to pay herself, she had a dual role as a business owner and employee. She worked another full-time job for a different company to support herself when there was no money to take out of the business.

> For first eight years of the business, I worked other jobs. I was a full-time manager at the Beer Store. I would get up early and work at school. Then I would work eight hours at the Beer Store and then go back to school until midnight. I did that until we started our teacher education program. Teaching the teacher education program allowed me to pull enough of a salary out of the business to pay bills. So, I could quit the other job.

5.4.5 Services Offered

While all the businesses operate within the English language education sector, they offer different services.

Table 18: Services Offered in the English Language Education Sector

Participant	Services Offered
Emma	- English language instruction - Language assessment - Teacher training (Teaching English to Young Learners)
Gabriela	- English language instruction for tourism
Jasmine	- English language instruction
Joanne	- English language instruction - Language assessment - Teacher training (Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages, Advanced Teacher Training) - Curriculum licensing - Consulting
Nailah	- Teacher training and professional development
Sabrine	- English language instruction - French language instruction - Teacher training (Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages)

Emma and Joanne run English language schools situated within an English-speaking context. Students attend the schools to participate in an immersion experience. Their lengths of stay range from two weeks to over a year. They will typically live with a host family during their stay to fully experience the language and culture. Some of the students then go on to complete higher education in an English-speaking college or university. Others are learning English to advance their career options in their home countries. The students come from all over the world, creating multicultural and multilinguistic schools. Students range in age from the late teens onwards, with most students being in their twenties. Most students study full time at the schools. They take part in extracurricular activities outside of class to learn more about the community and the culture. In the summertime, Joanne's school offers summer camps for teenagers. Emma's school used to offer summer camps, but they stopped this service several years ago. In addition to English language instruction, both Emma and Joanne's schools offer teacher education and language assessment. Emma's school is an assessment centre for IELTS, and Joanne's school is an assessment centre for CAEL and TOEFL. These are three standardized

English language proficiency tests used for immigration, professional purposes, and higher education admissions purposes. Emma's school runs a foundational English language teacher training course for international students, while Joanne's school runs a full range of English language teacher training courses, both in the classroom and online. Joanne's school also offers curriculum licensing.

Jasmine and Sabrine also run English language schools but not within an English-speaking context. Jasmine's school is within a Chinese-speaking context, and Sabrine's within an Arabic-speaking context. Their students learn English on a part-time basis around their other activities and responsibilities. The students learn English to be accepted into international schools or to advance their careers. While Sabrine's business is a language school, she focuses on the second service they offer: teacher education. She runs a foundational English language teacher training certificate course, while one of the other partners in the business runs the language education.

Gabriela runs an English language consulting business as part of her overall consulting business. The focus of the consulting is on the development and delivery of English language courses for local communities in Colombia to help those communities develop sustainable tourism initiatives. Nailah runs an English teacher professional development organization with a focus on supporting local teachers with training and professional development.

5.4.6 Participant Roles in the Businesses
Although all the participants are hands-on owners, they play different roles within their businesses. For Emma and Joanne, whose businesses are the oldest, those roles have changed over time. As her language school grew and matured, Emma moved into a senior leadership role, bringing in a management team to oversee the day-to-day operations, marketing, student services, and teaching. Joanne has similarly delegated responsibilities to administrative and teaching teams; however, she has chosen to keep some teaching and teacher training work.

Table 19: Participants' Roles in their Businesses

Participant	Current Participant Roles in the Business	Past Participant Roles in the Business
Emma	President and CEO	Teacher, Director of Studies, Director of Business Development, Director of Marketing
Gabriela	Director, Manager, Marketer, Trainer	Same as current
Jasmine	Director, Manager, Teaching Assistant	Same as current
Joanne	Director, Teacher, Trainer Bookkeeper	Homestay Coordinator in addition to the other roles
Nailah	Founder, CEO, Trainer	Same as current
Sabrine	Trainer, Instructor, Curriculum Consultant, Marketing	Same as current

5.4.7 Why this Business? The Participants' Business Missions

The participants all had different reasons or missions for starting or becoming involved in an English language education business. Emma started out as a teacher in the English language school that she eventually bought into.

> When I returned to England, I took an English language teaching course and loved it. I did really well on the course. I knew I had a knack for it, and I liked it. When we came to Canada, I couldn't teach English without a degree. I did volunteer work and opened my own tutoring business. I loved the students. I loved teaching. Running an education business was the next step. I have that in me to give. I get a lot of satisfaction from that. I started out with a love of teaching and then ended up running the business. I love the business side. My experience working in England was put to good use when our school needed more management skills. The environment where people are from all over the world and we are part of their journey is very exciting. I am very proud at graduations. We see them through their journey. We see them nervous at first going to university. It is very fulfilling.

Gabriela added English language education onto the services offered through her tourism consulting business that she runs.

> I am interested in tourism as a tool for economic development. I want to give training to communities that are entering the global market so that they can compete and be active and participate in tourism. My idea is to run a consultancy based on economic development and community participation. I realized if we are going to

have social inclusion in tourism, we need to help people learn English. We can do many things, but if they can't communicate, they will be left out of the benefits of tourism and the importance of meeting people from other cultures. This is how we came to offer English language training. I love this type of business. It gives me a sense of purpose in life. If I can help a couple of people and generate something positive, then I feel great. I love working with people and bringing them knowledge.

Jasmine started an English language school in her hometown so that she could teach students English the same way that she had learned it.

Before, I couldn't speak English. In China, I had learned English for about eight years. I could read it a little, but I couldn't speak it. I went to a language school in Canada and worked hard to learn English. The teaching style is different from China's. Very soon, I could speak English. I want to teach others in China to speak English like I had learned to. I had this idea when I was in the language school in Canada. I told the director of the school that I wanted to copy his school in China and teach lots of people to speak English. I am able to change someone's life by teaching them English.

Jasmine sees this type of business as a good fit with her education, personality, and aspirations to make a mark on the world.

I learned psychology. I am a good communicator with students. I like to talk with people. I have lots of experience educating and communicating with children. I am not good with math or technical work. This is a great opportunity to do something in my life. I should be proud of what I am doing. I am able to help one person and change their world. I worked a long time before. At my age, I want to do something for myself and do something meaningful. I didn't just want to do something just for money. I want to help someone. I want my life to feel important. When I do a good job, when someone is totally changed, the parents are so happy, the children are happy, and I'm happy. I have a supportive and encouraging role with my students. I may not make lots of money, but I enjoy my job.

Joanne started an English language school by chance.

I started working at another language school in my hometown, just as a fluke. I went with my current business partner David to Toronto when he had an interview to teach English in Korea. I was wearing a jacket from my university, and the person interviewing noticed. He said that the university has good graduates and that he was opening a language school in our city. He asked me if I wanted to come and work for him. He offered me the job without knowing my credentials. I was hired just for wearing my university jacket. I was fresh out of university. I had graduated at 20 years old. I had interviewed with a large manufacturing company and had been offered a job with them. I went to see the language school and talked to him. It came down to this: did I want to work in factory for the rest of my life, or did I want to do something interesting? I didn't even know the whole English language education sector was out there, I just knew it wasn't a factory. I wanted to use my brain after university. I had been in school for many years. I had worked all through high

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school and university. I had a lot of retail experience, so I was comfortable talking to people and meeting people. Eventually, I left that language school, and David and I started our own language school. I love the students. I love every aspect of the business. It was a stroke of fate that I encountered this particular business.

Even after running her language school for over 16 years, Joanne still finds it very rewarding.

I love the way knowledge has changed in the past 16 years. I like working with people in general and seeing human nature in action. It is extraordinary and very satisfying. I love it when someone walks in 10 years later and they are married, and have kids, and have the job they wanted. We had a part in that, even if it was a small part. It is very satisfying.

Nailah started her English language teacher training and professional development business after seeing a gap in the support offered to teachers.

We started with the idea of giving training courses for teachers. I have been a teacher for 32 years. I have worked in six schools and have trained teachers and coached younger teachers. I know of the problems in the education system in Egypt, in the schools, private language schools, and international schools. I have worked as a teacher for a long time, and I have worked as a supervisor in a number of schools. I saw the problems and wanted to try to do something to correct them on a personal level. I wanted to try delivering training courses, to give my point of view according to my experience. The content for the training would be suitable for what I've observed in schools and for our culture. I know which teachers need training, and I know the problems they have in each sector. I can give different perspectives, and that is what I want to provide the teachers with. This is how the idea for the business started.

Once Sabrine and her husband had decided to move to Algeria, they needed to identify a business that they could start.

I could teach English there. Teaching English is an international career, and you can do it anywhere. But I wasn't that excited about just teaching English. In Saudi Arabia, I was looking at university jobs, which were a step up from what I did before. But teaching regular English was not a step up. My husband's friend had taken an English language teacher training course before returning to Algeria. He was trying to establish himself in Algeria after being away for so long. It was a new career for him. He had never taught English before. I had taught English in South Korea many years before. So, I thought maybe I should bring an English language teacher training program to Algeria. We were looking at the course my husband's friend had taken. He had taken an online course. The teacher training course I took was more well-rounded. I contacted the organization I had done my course with to see if it was plausible. I met with the owner and discussed possibilities and options.

5.4.8 Business Synopses

The histories of the participants' businesses vary considerably because the businesses are of different ages and at different phases of growth.

Emma's business, at 18 years of age, is the oldest of all the participant businesses. As the oldest business, it has gone through the most changes as the owners have adjusted their business model multiple times.

> The initial business model for the school was small class sizes (six to eight students) and flexible scheduling. Students could sign up for a pronunciation class or a listening class once a week; whatever they wanted. After following this model for several years, we found we couldn't make any money. Reality set in. It was nice to be flexible for students, but they had to commit to more time. We had to pay rent and commit to teachers for their employment. We went to a model of full-time or part-time courses. After another couple of years of running classes of six to eight students, we realized that we still couldn't make enough money to survive. It was a hard decision to make, but we now have more students per class. We still have one of the smaller class sizes in the city. We started with high ideals for the students, but then we have to balance the business piece. We put education first, but in a clued-in way. We are more realistic about what makes sense.

Although Gabriela has started and run businesses her whole working career, her English language education business is only two years old.

> Although we have contacts in other Latin American countries, so far we have focused on Colombia. Our goal is to bring knowledge from Canada into Latin America. English language training is an expensive proposition. It is usually available in urban areas, in the bigger cities. It is not available in the smaller communities. There is no access to English language training there. Our company's first project was a pilot program, in October and November 2015, in a small community in Colombia called Sopo. Participants in the English language training either ran or were planning to run tourism businesses. A Canadian trainer developed an English language training course and materials specific to the region, with a focus on the vocabulary necessary to describe the flora, fauna, and geography. The feedback from the participants and local stakeholders was positive. We are in the planning stages for our next projects.

Jasmine's business is similarly very young.

> I started my school in May 2014. At the beginning, I had six students. At first, I only had adult students who were my friends. Now I have 30 to 40 students. I have adult students, high school students, and elementary school students. I didn't do any advertising to get more students. I am a very small company and location. At the beginning, my friends helped at my school. Now sometimes my cousin or my husband helps. But I am a one-person business. My teachers all come from Canada and have a TESOL certificate. Most Chinese students have never been in this type of

a class. It is very exciting for my students and very interesting. Some students get enough improvement to study abroad.

Jasmine has deliberately positioned herself to be different from other Chinese language schools.

In China, when students learn English or other subjects, their main purpose is improving their marks on tests. I don't want to do that. I want students to be able to speak, write, listen, and read in English. Students need to learn English not just to get test scores. My dream is to teach people to speak English not just to improve their test scores. So, our classes are different from Chinese English classes. If students want to study abroad, they will insist on my school. If they are staying in China, they will give up because it takes too long to improve their test scores.

Joanne's business is the second oldest business out of the participants.

After the other school had closed, I received an email from an agent in Mexico. I sent them an email telling them I wasn't working at the school anymore. The agent said, "I'm used to working with you. Where are you going? Send me the information, and I will work with you." That one email made me realize I had developed contacts. My friend, David, had made contacts as well. Within a week, we had signed incorporation papers for starting our own business. Our first two students were from Mexico. They came for a summer program. I worked out of an office that I had taken as a side job. One of my conditions for accepting the job was that I got a room to use as a classroom for two students. By September of that year, we moved into the first floor of the same building where we are now. And we have just grown from there.

Nailah's business is just past the launch stage.

We have an office on campus. For our teaching clubs, we rent rooms around campus because we need more space. We offer teacher training courses and workshops, and we also offer weekly discussions called Teaching Club. We are partly profit, partly non-profit. The workshops and courses are advertised as a business. Teachers pay for the course and get training. The non-profit part is the weekly discussions. We provide professional development cost effectively by using technology. Our training is all done online. We use live streaming to bring experts in. The speakers can see the people in the room, and the people see the speakers. They can interact with each other. We have a good reaction from our teachers about this model. The speakers for the professional development are all volunteers. I have made good contacts in the last few years at conferences and through social media. The expert speakers are very willing to help my teachers.

Sabrine's short business history has been characterized by redefining programs and services multiple times to adjust to what the owners discovered about the Algerian English language education context and the Algerian business context.

I thought I was going to bring the TESOL program here to Algeria and be a freelance teacher trainer. That was going to be our business. But we encountered

problems making partnerships with schools. The schools kept trying to change the TESOL program into something they thought it should be rather than what it was. I wanted it to be true to what it was, not what they wanted it to be. They were trying to take over. Our business partner, my husband's friend, had made connections with many language schools in the area. One school was going to close, and the location would be available for rent. The rent was a reasonable price. We decided to still go ahead with the TESOL program but to forget other people and do it ourselves. Things fell into place without a plan.

With our location, we now run a private language school teaching English and French as well as the TESOL program. Our French teacher, who is Algerian, used to work at a previous school in the same location. She teaches some groups and some one-on-ones. The former owner came to our open house, and she recommended we let her teach. She retired from her other job and now just teaches French. We also have various general English programs. Our partner and I teach English, and one of our TESOL graduates also teaches for us. I have two groups of students, a Saudi school group offsite, and one private student. We have about 70 students right now. Our partner hopes to add a medical English program and other specializations in the future.

5.4.9 The Participants' Visions for their Businesses

Moving forward, each of the participants has a different vision for the future of her business. Emma, her other shareholder, and her management team created a clear strategic vision for their school in 2013 that they still use.

We are focused on making the school the best it can be. Our mantra since 2013 has been "better not bigger." We have a capacity of about 200 students. We don't want to increase enrolment. We know all the students now. Actually, let me clarify that. With my job, I don't know all students. I don't introduce myself as "owner." It is not important to me that students know I'm the owner. But the other shareholder and all of the management team, they know all of the students. That is the way we want to keep it. So better not bigger.

Gabriela and her business partner want to expand their programs to other Latin American countries. They also want to use different delivery modalities.

We want to develop an online language learning program so that we can have a blended or hybrid program. The online learning is cost effective, but the one-on-one is also important. We need a sustainable and accessible program so that we can get some continuity and not just have one-off projects. I am also thinking of shifting the focus slightly. My passion right now is the intersection of language, culture, and entrepreneurship. I might pull out of the tourism focus. But I might not have the energy to start anew, build a new network, and market myself.

Jasmine's vision for her business is to continue to grow it and to expand into offering other types of educational programs.

In the future, I want to have an English school that is a big school. But that is a far-away dream. More recently, my hope is to have six classes on the weekend, with 10 to 12 students in each class. That is my purpose in the next year. I also want students to come more often. Students come to class one time per week. It is not often enough for them to really learn English. I also want to start a reading program. I think that would be very helpful for them.

Jasmine is also exploring other types of education programs to offer.

My friend works in a Christian school in China. It is a home school program from the US. She recommended that I visit. It is a good way to get students to learn English. I am interested in this program, but I haven't done more research.

Jasmine's business is not her end point. She has at least one other thing she wants to do in her working life.

If I go back to school, I will go to school for theology. I have two dreams. One is an English school. Then go to school for a master's degree in theology and become a minister after age 65.

Joanne and her business partner are exploring a variety of different programs and expansion options.

We are looking at what we can do with online courses and how much we can grow with them. Maybe we will offer online programs that students can take before coming here. We are also looking at online and face-to-face vocational diploma programs. We wouldn't have to apply to be a university to offer them. Another expansion option we are looking at is opening new campuses in similar-sized cities. Students could see more of Canada and transfer between campuses.

Nailah has very clear steps that she wants to accomplish in the next five years.

We are trying to go to governmental public schools to provide ongoing upgrading and training for their teachers. We will start with English teachers and then work with other teachers. We want to do follow-up work with the teachers for a full year. I am hoping we can apply this model. We have a plan for two years. We will go to five schools and then another five schools the next year. We will follow up on their work to see how much they will benefit, how they are going to apply it, and what their problems will be. This will be a great step for our work. I also want to expand my workshops to other countries. Many third world countries have the same problems. I want to help them with professional development. I have a five-year goal to reach other countries.

Sabrine and her partners are still navigating the present, trying to get traction in the Algerian context with their TESOL program, English classes, and French classes. However, Sabrine has a few ideas for additional services that she wants to offer.

5.5 Experiences as Entrepreneurs

Through the narrative inquiry interview process, participants shared their experiences as
entrepreneurs, women entrepreneurs, and entrepreneurs in the English language education
sector. Different areas of significance in each of these layers of their experiences emerged from
the data for each participant. The areas of significance or themes for each participant are
illustrated with a diagram and then shared through the participant's voice.

5.5.1 Emma's Experiences as an Entrepreneur

Emma has many themes related to her experiences as an entrepreneur, reflecting the length of
time she has been an entrepreneur as well as her role in the company and her strong business
focus.

Figure 39: Themes for Emma as an Entrepreneur
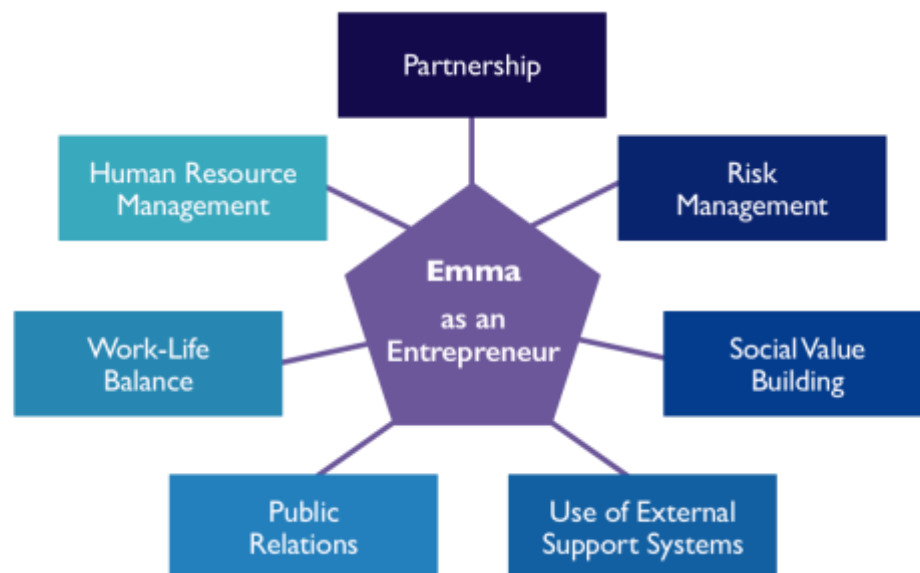
One of the defining characteristics of Emma's experiences as an entrepreneur is the journey of
her and her co-owners as business partners. They went from four owners when she joined the
business, to three owners, and now down to two. The owners have all been female.

> The partnerships have been difficult. We have had terrible ups and downs, but we always stuck it out. We are different people with different approaches. We have different attitudes. We are different ages—55, 43—at different stages of life. One partner has a child, and the other doesn't.

One of the lessons Emma has learned about partnerships over the course of running her business is the importance of separating the ownership role in the business from the role of running the school.

> If I could go back, or if I ever mentor someone, I would set up very clear responsibilities for each person. When our company was set up, we all had the same title and took the same money regardless of the job we were doing. This was how it was set up, and it just continued that way through the years. We didn't think it was fair that one owner took less than others. We made no distinction between our roles as owners and our jobs in the company. Last year, we changed this. The two owners now have different salaries because we have different jobs. When we started, we had no real comprehension of the difference between an owner and a person who works in company. If there was money left over at end of the year, we as owners took dividends. I realize now that there needs to be a clear distinction between your role as an owner and your job in the company. This needs to be set up at the beginning. At first, I couldn't articulate this. It is only working with a business coach that I could figure this out. There are two different things going on here—your role as an owner and the job you're doing.

Another defining characteristic of Emma as an entrepreneur is that she makes use of external support systems to get help for her business.

> When we need to get better, we get outside help. For example, with our curriculum review, we got someone outside to look at it. We also used a human resources consultant to help us evaluate all of our jobs and salaries.

One of the most important decisions to bring in an external consultant that Emma made was to get assistance with the ongoing challenge of separating out the roles of the partners and ensuring they were on track with their human resource management.

> After one of the previous partners retired, we put together a solid human resources policy manual. We checked to see if our compensation packages were fair. We evaluated each job. We found they were mostly fair, but our higher-level jobs were underpaid. They had fair pay when they were hired, but their salaries seemed high to us as owners. The salaries were a lot more than the owners took home not that long ago. But we can't think like that; ownership and salary are two different things. We struggled for years as owners to understand this.

Going back to the theme of external support, Emma also works with a personal business coach as part of her external support system.

I have been working with her since 2009. We needed someone to help with marketing. We were entitled to money through the Centre for Women in Business for a consultant. They arranged meetings with three people, and we could choose the one we wanted to work with. We talked to each individually to get an idea of how they saw the company. We worked through some stuff regarding roles and so on before helping with marketing. I kept seeing her on and off over the years, working with her more when restructuring took place in 2013, and I became the CEO. I needed help. We had issues. The staff weren't happy. We did a staff survey. The business coach did group discussions with staff. The owners were not there. She asked what the issues are and why there were so unhappy. We meet by phone once a month. It helps with stuff going on in the business, stuff I'm not sure how to handle. She doesn't really give advice. She helps me to stand back and re-examine things, and then I figure things out for myself.

One of the ongoing challenges Emma has as an entrepreneur is work-life balance, specifically balancing her professional goals and her personal goals.

My business coach also makes me think about what my life is all about. What do I want to achieve outside of work? I am trying to focus on things for myself. I have worked at the business for the past 15 years. I really had no free time or hobbies. I found it difficult to think about. It is so far out of my norm. So I am starting to learn Spanish. I am taking up golf with a group of women. My business coach is forcing me to think about what is next for me. I have all this experience and knowledge. How am I going to share this knowledge? So my business coach has two roles. She helps with business things and sometimes puts me in touch with others to help, and she helps with what I do for myself.

Another strong theme for Emma as an entrepreneur is risk management.

I am a conservative thinker. I pay my employees before myself as the owner. I am not a risk-taker. I am not willing to mortgage my house. My accountant said I'm still in business because I've been conservative. I am conservative; almost too conservative. I don't want to pay off debt at my age. We were paying off one of the former partners when she retired, and we as the other two owners are paying her share out of the business. We invest in our location and in our people. We are never going to be a cutting-edge school, which may be frustrating for younger teachers. We don't use innovative technology. With our investment, we need to recruit students. We are an old-fashioned school. I thought we had fallen behind. But we surveyed our teachers, and we found that they didn't really want new technology. We are careful about what we invest in. We don't borrow money. We make do with what we have.

The most recent aspect of being an entrepreneur that Emma is focused on is public relations and getting recognition for her English language school as a successful business.

I wanted our school to be nominated for a Chamber of Commerce award, not for my personal recognition, but for recognition of our company. We are contributing to the local economy, but people don't know about us. In our region, the businesses that

get recognition are call centres and businesses that anyone can do. They set up in a rural area and get government concessions and tax breaks. The companies stay while the incentives are there, then they leave when the incentives are not there. We are here for the long haul, and we don't get anything from the government. We don't get recognition in the business community. We are offering good jobs with good pay, but that is not in the news. I want to change that. We are thinking of working with a media person who can get stories out about our business success and our student successes. We need to get in the news. We need to get ourselves out there more.

The final theme for Emma as an entrepreneur is a commitment to social value building. She offers scholarships to students who could not otherwise afford to come to the school and makes targeted corporate donations to international community-based charities.

Our school donates to the South African charity of one of our scholarship students. We give a donation once a year to their charity. For Christmas, I sponsor a family through this charity instead of giving presents to my family. We sent them an old sewing machine, a hand sewing machine of my mom's. Electrical power in South Africa is hit or miss. So we sent the sewing machine to South Africa. They sent a video of women using the sewing machine. We can do so much for others with so little. When they were here last summer, I was talking to them about the possibility of setting up online teaching for people in their village. They are trying to raise money to build a community centre. Online courses would fit perfectly in with the community centre. They are in the early stages, but they are trying to help people in areas that will never be able to afford it. Then they could get better jobs than in the villages. This reminds me that it is our responsibility to help those people who can't help themselves. We are very privileged in where we live and what we have. Our clients are also the privileged few in their countries. There are many people we can help.

Emma had advice for anyone starting a business that as a theme falls under strategy and advice coding.

You have to decide what is important to you and what your focus will be. You don't want to waste time trying to be all things to all people. You have to know your competition and what they are doing. Get your business processes in place early on. People who start their own business are not necessarily the ones who like processes. You are always thinking of your next step, but you also need someone to run the business. You also need to know your strengths. Then you hire to make up for your not-so-strong points. You also need to force yourself to hire people who aren't like you. It is a tough thing to do. You don't feel comfortable doing it. Don't get into too much debt. You always hear of start-ups with investors, like in the high-tech industry, and they have a high level of growth. You have to be confident in your own vision for your school, even if it is with no or little growth. It is okay to be a small business that grows slowly. If you are running a language school, you have to love what you're doing because you're not going to be making great profits. But you will make enough to survive.

5.5.2 Gabriela's Experiences as an Entrepreneur

Gabriela had only two significant themes as an entrepreneur—the Colombian business context in which she is operating a Canadian business and social value building—despite a lengthy time as an entrepreneur. Interestingly, the majority of her narrative themes fall into other categories, particularly experiences as a woman entrepreneur and cross-cultural and cross-linguistic experiences. Even her first entrepreneur theme, operating a Canadian business in Colombia, straddles two categories: experiences as an entrepreneur and experiences operating cross-linguistically and cross-culturally. It is placed in the experiences as an entrepreneur because it mainly speaks to entrepreneurial activities, on the understanding that it would be equally relevant as a cross-cultural theme.

Figure 40: Themes for Gabriela as an Entrepreneur

Gabriela and her partner in Colombia strategically chose to register their business in Canada rather than in Colombia even though they are partially operating in a Colombian business context.

> It is a very difficult process to register a business in Colombia. At the beginning, we wanted to register our business in Colombia, but we quickly realized we didn't have the business volume and capacity to comply with multiple requirements imposed on any new business. These complexities are the result of the widespread and well-known practice of so-called entrepreneurs using businesses to launder money. There are a number of organizations claiming to keep things in order by making the registration process slow, expensive, and frustrating. For example, to change the structure of a business, it could take up to three years to make any adjustments. Or if after a couple of years, it is clear the business will not succeed, it could again take up to three years to dissolve the business. In addition, the process for filing the regulatory annual income tax is also quite lengthy and complex. Based on our research and following the advice from lawyers and other entrepreneurs, my partner and I decided to first develop the business further before we would invest the time and resources to register our business in Colombia.

Gabriela acknowledges that this decision to register the business in Canada rather than Colombia has created some limitations for the business.

> On some occasions, we've found that we don't have the same competitive edge as other national companies because we are not registered in Colombia. Some organizations are afraid of doing business with a Canadian company. It is not clear to them how to write contracts and how to process and honour payments. They are also concerned about how dealing with a foreign company can affect their taxes.

However, Gabriela has also found that registering the business in Canada and doing business as a foreign company in Colombia has its benefits, particularly in negotiating.

> Doing business in Colombia requires an understanding of a different code of ethics and a different set of expectations. A culture of corruption is embedded at every level, and it has actually been normalized through generations. It is normal to expect that in most cases, you may not hear the entire truth of the deal. In situations where business deals seem ambiguous, we have clarified that because we are a Canadian company, we must answer to a code of ethics and regulatory guidelines that imply transparency. So, we can use the Canadian company as a buffer. I can say, "That's not how we do things in Canada, and we are a Canadian company. So, we need you to think about doing it this other way." And as a foreign company, we can also offer our partners different perspectives and experience. We've built partnerships based on the importance of cross-cultural exchanges that are mutually beneficial. With our combined Canadian and Colombian experiences in business and culture, we have developed trusting partnerships that allow flexibility while insisting on transparency and honesty.

Like Emma, Gabriela has an intentional social value building element to her business that resonated strongly throughout her narratives.

> Our approach to business has a social context. It is a social enterprise essentially. It is between a business and a non-profit organization. We make money, but money is not the driver. This can make things financially challenging at times. We cannot ask for donations because we are not a registered charity. People will generously donate as long as there is a tax receipt provided. So, we know that our profits are for now the only way to advance the social aspect of our business. This is not a model that is understood by many, especially banks. They get confused about our priorities. Are we for profit, or are we a charity? At this point we plan to continue operating as we are. We are growing and we ourselves operating as a social enterprise, like many other similar organizations.

5.5.3 Jasmine's Experiences as an Entrepreneur

Being an entrepreneur is a very personal experience for Jasmine and this is reflected in her two themes in this category, which are focused on the personal rather than on business. Her

motivation for starting a business was very personal, and she takes a very personal approach to running her business.

Figure 41: Themes for Jasmine as an Entrepreneur
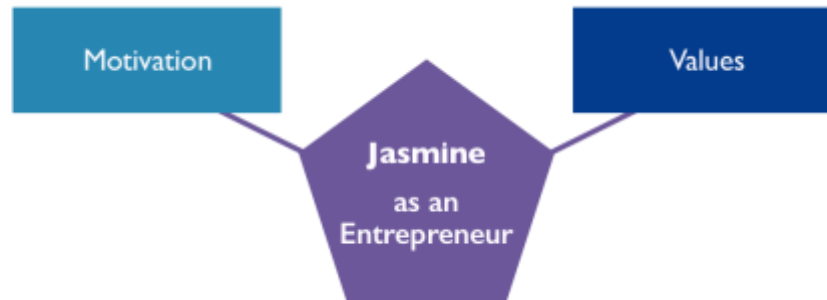
Jasmine had a dominant theme running through her experiences as an entrepreneur that becoming an entrepreneur was a life changing choice. Being motivated to become an entrepreneur was not something she fell into by chance, but rather it was a deliberate and conscious choice to live a unique, impactful, and extraordinary life. Jasmine became an entrepreneur as her second career after working for the government for many years.

> I started my business at age 46. When I was younger, I never thought to start a business. In 2008, my life was perfect. I had a husband, a daughter who is very smart, and a good job with the government. I thought I was successful in my life. I was bored in my job, and I didn't want to continue it, but everything was okay. My husband I were high school classmates. In 2008, the husband of a close classmate of ours died. That made me think, what if I die now? I needed to do something. If I continue my life, I don't want to continue it in the same way. I need to totally give up my job. I want to do something for myself. I want to leave my mark on the world. So, I went to Canada to study English. This was interesting for me. And then I started my school.

Jasmine admits that the choice to start a business makes her different from her colleagues and friends.

> I am a strange person in China. People my age talk about how to relax. Government workers retire early. I think I'm too young to be like that. Now I can work until age 65. My friends here feel sorry for me. I have gray hair. I work so hard. I feel tired. I have a lot of stress. I have lost weight. But my Canadian friends encourage me. Sometimes when I am tired or stressed, I wonder why I'm doing this. But then I remember that it is exciting that I can start something. I had one life before Canada. Now I am in my second life.

The other strong theme for Jasmine comes from the values coding in the data analysis. She values her relationships with others. While Jasmine has only been an entrepreneur for a short

time, she sees owning and running a business as being all about people. "The way you treat people is the way people will treat you. My friends help me, and I help them. People are people."

5.5.4 Joanne's Experiences as an Entrepreneur

Joanne has a resilient, high functioning partnership in her business, a theme that resonates throughout her narrative. Several other themes in her experiences as an entrepreneur result from her role managing the day-to-day operations of her English language school, particularly managing her staff.

Figure 42: Themes for Joanne as an Entrepreneur
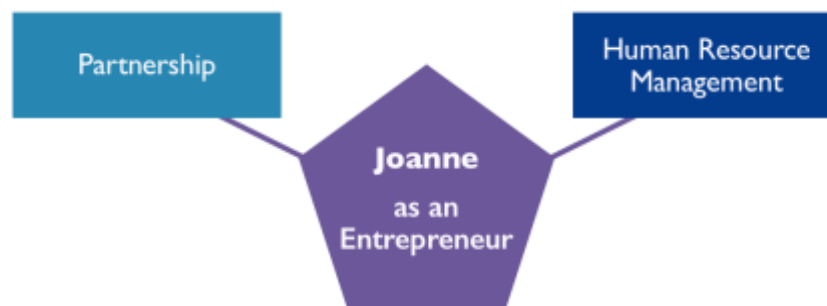
Like Emma, partnership is a central theme to Joanne's experiences as an entrepreneur, but it results from one long, durable partnership, rather than Emma's evolving partnerships.

> If you are going in with a partner, you have to be very sure of the partnership. You have to trust each other and support each other. It has to be reciprocal; it can't be one way. There also has to be a sense of equality between the partners. You have to find ways of keeping things even. You can't leave one person with the brunt of the responsibilities.

As their school has grown, Joanne and David have had to learn to how to manage their human resources, starting with learning to delegate responsibilities to their staff, a significant operational challenge for them both.

> David and I are very hands on. It is hard to hand over things to staff. As we have grown over the years, and things have changed over time, it has been difficult to realize that we can't do everything. We have had to learn to train someone to do tasks and then give it over to them. For example, I used to run the homestay program. I knew the families, and I had been to their homes. I had security in that I knew the students were safe. It was hard to pass this over to an employee. We did a lot of training, coaching, and hand-holding, but in a good way. She would run things by me if any she had any doubts. For delegating to work, it relies on choosing the right person to take over those responsibilities. We didn't always do it right. David

had to take back the management of the pathway to university program because it wasn't being done the way he wanted it to be done.

Along with learning to delegate, Joanne had to learn to hire as part of her human resources responsibilities.

When it comes to choosing right the people, I go with my gut instinct. Most people start in a teacher role. I watch them. I see their work ethic. I ask about other skills. I give them the opportunity to demonstrate those skills before moving them forward. I give them the opportunity to learn over time. I can't imagine hiring someone blindly without knowing them. I need to know a person and feel confident that they are the right person for the job.

Joanne takes a personal approach to her human resources management, ensuring her staff have professional development opportunities and career paths, as a strategic way to maintain staff motivation and engagement.

We groom our staff internally. We provide them with a lot of professional development. There is a ladder that employees can see. We start people at the bottom, but we make it clear in a conversation that there are opportunities to move up. We look out for who is interested in growing professionally. We provide free professional development courses that they can take on their own time. We see who is committed. Those are people that will get opportunities. Once we get them to that point, where they are trained and committed, we don't want to lose them. Then our goal is to keep them happy professionally, emotionally, and financially. We want them to feel valued.

Joanne places importance on communication in ensuring that her staff are engaged in the ongoing success of the school.

Communication is crucial. We talk to staff a lot through regular conversations, meetings, annual reviews, and just the grapevine. We talk about what is happening in the company and where the growth will be happening. We just let them know what is going on.

5.5.5 Nailah's Experiences as an Entrepreneur

Nailah's themes highlight her conscious motivation to start a business to serve needs that she identified within the English language education community and that she can meet given her lengthy experience in the sector.

Figure 43: Themes for Nailah as an Entrepreneur
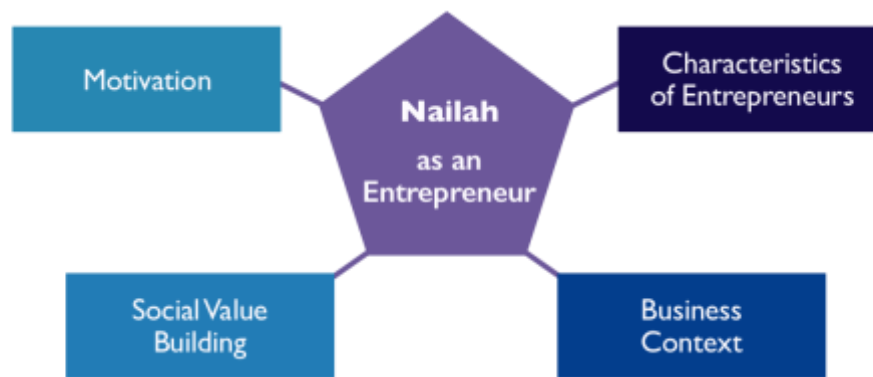
Like Jasmine, Nailah was consciously motivated to start her business to make a dream a reality.

> Your company is your dream. It is not just a product or a service; it is your dream. You need to be careful with it because it is your dream. My partners say I am too cautious. But I don't want to lose my dream for anything. I will not be careless with it.

Nailah has a strong social value building motivation with her business, with half of her business activities being deliberately non-profit.

> I can't make much money at this business. I enjoy giving back to society. I have a lot of experience. I want to pass it on to people. People who are away from the capital have no facilities. It is hard for trainers to get to these people. I am trying to help those people. If I can make a little bit of money and then help others, it gives me pleasure. If my company gets bigger, then I can think of helping others even more.

Nailah further elaborated on where her social value building philosophy comes from.

> There was a physics professor who gave a keynote speech at a conference about whether we can discard teachers. His speech generated lots of debate. There were many people positioning themselves against the idea that children learn on their own without a teacher. There is a "Hole in the Wall" project in which computers were put in poor villages in India. They left the computer there for two months. They found that the children did indeed learn on their own. They would go on the computer and to the internet and get information on their own. It influenced their education. They did the same in England in a number of schools. They showed that students could learn how to look for information on internet. Hence, I listened carefully to the debate on whether we need teachers. My interpretation of this debate is not about teachers versus technology. My interpretation is that kids in poor countries are not stupid. They can learn a lot. They just need help. And if I can give them help somehow, then I want to.

Nailah also had some observations about the characteristics entrepreneurs need to have.

> The most important thing is patience. Some people give up in the beginning. Business is not easy. You have to make it your mission. You have to believe in it. You have to push yourself forward. You have up days and you have down days, but the most important thing is to go on.

Finally, as a recent entrepreneur, Nailah spoke briefly about the business start-up activities required in the Egyptian context.

> The process of starting up our business was straightforward. We had to open a bank account, do some paperwork, and pay some fees to register our company. We had to register the name of the company to make sure there wasn't another company with the same name. The process took about one week.

Even though the process of opening a business went fairly smoothly, Nailah is quite realistic about the challenges of operating a business in the Egyptian business context. "Sometimes in Egypt, things are complicated for no reason."

5.5.6 Sabrine's Experiences as an Entrepreneur

Similar to Gabriela, Sabrine has a theme that straddles her experiences as an entrepreneur and her experiences operating cross-culturally and cross-linguistically: that of operating a business in a new culture in Algeria. She also has themes similar to Emma and Joanne in her partnerships and similar to Nailah in the characteristics of entrepreneurs.

Figure 44: Themes for Sabrine as an Entrepreneur
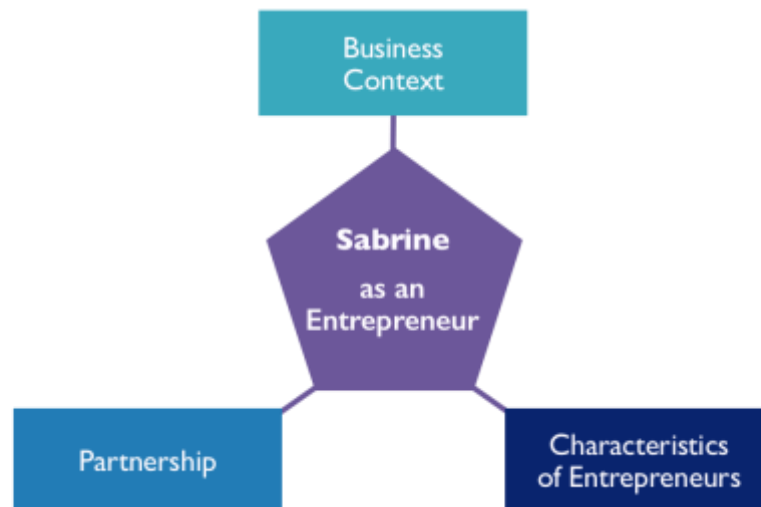
A dominant theme in Sabrine's experiences as an entrepreneur is her business context, specifically the Algerian business context that is new to her and her partners. While this is

potentially a cross-cultural experience theme, it is placed under her experiences as an entrepreneur because the focus is on entrepreneurial activities.

> It is more difficult to open a business in Algeria than in Canada. My advice to someone opening a business in Algeria is to take your projected timeline and either double or triple it. Things are just not done quickly or as fast as you would expect. You must be patient. Also, the things you expect as basics, like the internet, electricity, and water, can cause problems because you don't always have them. You just have to go with the flow. Don't focus on these things.

A key requirement Sabrine discovered when operating a business in Algeria is documentation.

> They like documentation in Algeria. We had to show a lot of documentation. We had to show our business partner's TESOL certificate to demonstrate that he is specialized in this field. The paperwork to open the school was done by our partner, thankfully. It all had to be notarized at the Canadian Embassy.

Like Emma and Joanne, a dominant theme in Sabrine's entrepreneurial experiences is the partnership of three owners: Sabrine herself, her husband, and her husband's friend. Remember also that Sabrine is not an official partner in the business because she is not an Algerian national.

> We're doing the business as a partnership with three owners. I took a women's business class in Calgary before I started my first business. One of the things they said very strongly was that partnerships don't work. But still, my first business was with my husband. We had a common goal, so it worked.

One of the biggest challenges Sabrine noted with three owners is having a common vision.

> We all have different visions for the business. It is hard to have the same vision. We try to blend different ideas to have the same vision. And then that vision changes over time. When we started this business, I wanted to work part time for full-time pay. We have two small kids. I didn't plan to start a business of this size. I was going to be a freelance TESOL instructor. But it became bigger and evolved. You work more when you have a business than when you have job. We have to make sure that all partners achieve what they want from this venture. We need to make sure they are satisfied with where it's going and are not feeling taken for granted. We need to have respect for each other and each other's visions.

Sabrine sees communication as being central to making the partnership work.

> Our challenge now, with three partners, is to keep communication open. This is really hard. We are all so busy with personal things and the running of everyday things that we forget to communicate with each other. Partnerships are easy to launch but hard to maintain. You must keep constant communication going. It is like a marriage.

Another important element that Sabrine sees in making the partnership work is having clear roles.

> It is also important to know what your role is and to make sure that all things are covered. We complement each other except that we are all lacking in office skills. We will have to hire someone with these skills eventually to manage our cash flow. We try to keep up with the office work, but I want to spend my energy on other things, not filing. We are trying to start a system to keep track of students. We need a database for students. Right now, we just have a pile of papers. We have copies of attendance sheets, but we lose track of attendance. We do keep track of payments, however.

Sabrine's final theme as an entrepreneur is key characteristics for entrepreneurs. She sees having a positive, pragmatic attitude as being important.

> When I was in university, I worked the night shift in a restaurant. One night, I didn't want to go to work. It was raining, and there was a thunderstorm. Just before I was about to leave for work, my sister called and said the restaurant had been hit by lightning and burned down. I didn't have to go to work that night, but I was then unemployed, which was much, much worse. After that experience, I don't cry about a job or a task because it could always be worse. If I am not happy, it is time to move on and do something else. Sometimes if you don't have a choice, you have to change your attitude. This was a life-changing experience for teaching me about attitude and motivation. And this is important as an entrepreneur.

Sabrine also sees motivation and resilience to navigate the natural fluctuations of a business as being imperative in entrepreneurs.

> We have lost steam for a little bit. We need to re-evaluate where the business needs to go. It is growing, particularly the TESOL program. Then we want to bring a CAEL testing centre to Algeria. But we don't really know where it's going to go. We have lost steam, which is inevitable in anything. You start with ideas and motivation, and then you lose steam. But you pick yourself up and keep going. You make steps forward. You think of marketing and promoting and growing, not just doing the minimum. It is all about balancing where you're at now versus what you need to do to move forward. It is a challenge to keep motivated and keep going. We have to reassess our goals. My husband motivates me. He has high expectations and demands. He is always after me to do things. Anyway, we have to decide where we want the business to go and how to push through the challenges to get it there.

5.6 Experiences as Women Entrepreneurs

As women entrepreneurs, the participants had different experiences to relate and different beliefs about whether gender affects entrepreneurship. Joanne, Nailah, and Sabrine did not perceive being a woman as a factor in their entrepreneurial experiences. For Emma, it made

some difference, but it was not the focus of her work. For Gabriela, being a woman resulted in what she felt were very different entrepreneurial experiences. For Jasmine, being an entrepreneur signalled her independence as a woman. Some participants had a variety of themes in this category, while some participants had only one theme.

5.6.1 Emma's Experiences as a Woman Entrepreneur

Emma had a number of observations about possible differences between women and men as entrepreneurs, but she also did not feel that these impacted the choices she made or the work she did. That said, Emma took advantage of funding and support organizations that are available for women entrepreneurs in her region. And even though Emma has no children, being an entrepreneur still affected her family life, particularly given the amount of travelling she has to do in her business development and marketing roles.

Figure 45: Themes for Emma as a Woman Entrepreneur
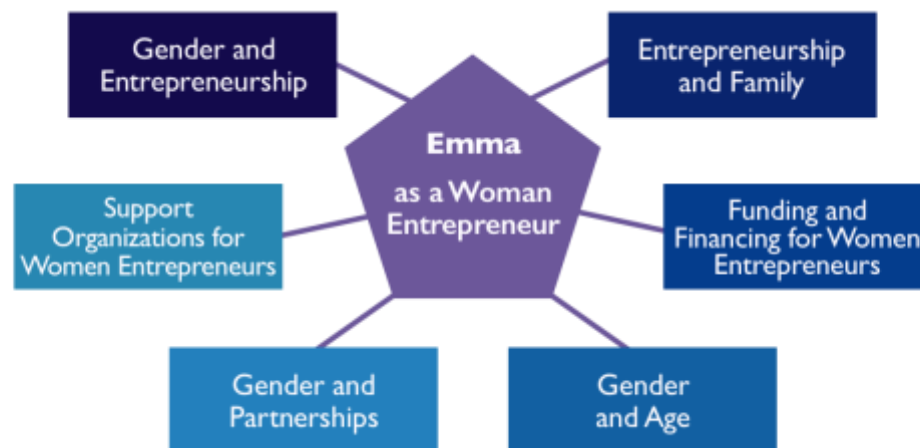
Emma commented on general differences she has seen between women and men as entrepreneurs during her years as an entrepreneur.

> I think it is generally difficult for women to get financing when they have businesses. It is difficult for them to get support and help. That said, I think women-owned businesses have greater success than male-owned businesses. We are more conservative, and we run smaller businesses. We take things more slowly and manage accordingly. We are more cautious financially. We usually do something we are passionate about.

All of the above said, however, Emma does not think that she is treated differently as a woman entrepreneur by those she interacts with in a business capacity. She thinks values are a more important consideration in entrepreneurship than gender.

> I don't really think about being a woman entrepreneur. I am just here to do a job. If I like someone and think it's someone I could work with, I don't think about it. It is the same if I don't like them and don't want to work with them. I have become more discerning about who I work with. Values are very important. Respect and integrity. At our school, we have identified our values through everything we do. I am not comfortable working with someone if they don't have these values regardless of who they are, woman or man.

Emma also indicated that because she is older, age, more so than gender, may influence how she is perceived as an entrepreneur and how she perceives herself.

Balancing entrepreneurship and family has impacted Emma because of her marketing and business development role in the business and the corresponding travel required.

> When I took on the marketing role for our school, which obviously involved a lot of travel, my work wasn't just about me anymore. It also involved my husband who has had to adapt to my not being here all the time.

The same theme of balancing entrepreneurship and family impacted Emma from a different perspective because she has a female business partner who started a family during the partnership.

> We had to navigate the maternity leave of one of our partners. And things also changed after that partner came back from maternity leave. She only worked from 8 am to 4 pm. She didn't work evenings and weekends. The other two partners picked up the slack for years.

Emma also felt that because the three partners at the time of the maternity leave were all women, they handled the challenges of the partner's young family differently.

> Why didn't we address the imbalance in the work hours among the partners when the one partner started a family? Because we are women. We tend to work around things. We believed in effort and commitment, so the two of us just shouldered the burden.

Even though she does not feel gender impacts her entrepreneurship on a daily basis, Emma and her women business partners have made some use of government funding available to women entrepreneurs.

> We initially didn't know funding existed for women entrepreneurs. Then we found out that the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency, a federal agency, funds the Centre for Women in Business. They have a lot of help for women and their businesses. We joined the Centre for Women in Business ten years ago. They said

we were eligible for funding. We needed help in marketing at the time. We got funding for a marketing consultant, which made it more affordable.

Emma is also part of an organization called the Women President's Organization (WPO) which offers a support network to women business owners.

> This organization is for women who run businesses that have reached a particular size. I was approached by someone through the Centre for Women in Business who is also the WPO chapter chair. I went to a meeting just as a trial. There are women in the organization who have really achieved great things. Some have large businesses. The organization is a support network. We have a monthly meeting. We report on how our business and personal lives are. We present an issue at something like a roundtable set up. We don't give advice. We talk about our own personal experiences, we ask questions, and we share experiences. It is structured and timed. I like it, and I like the women in the organization. It is something different for me. If I wasn't also working with a business coach, I would find it even more useful. I usually deal with my issues with my business coach, so I don't go to the meeting with issues. But we are supportive of each other. I can call and chat if I had an issue. It is super confidential. People can talk about anything.

5.6.2 Gabriela's Experiences as a Woman Entrepreneur

Gabriela felt that her gender had significantly shaped her experiences as an entrepreneur, and thus, she has many themes in this category, including some from the emotions and values coding data analysis.

Figure 46: Themes for Gabriela as a Woman Entrepreneur
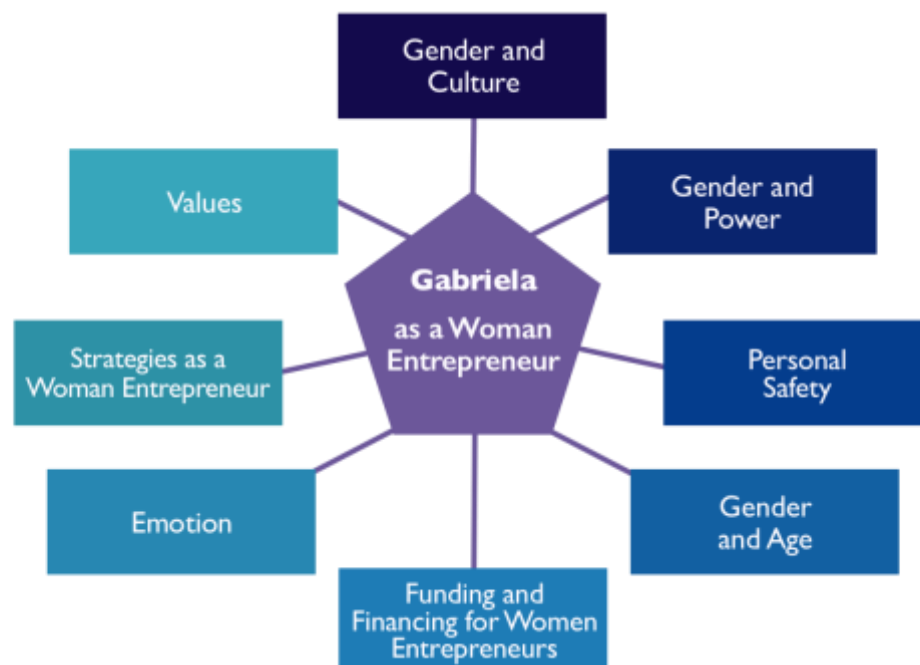
Gabriela has had to navigate being a woman entrepreneur in both Latin America and Canada, so she has a theme for gender and culture throughout her narrative as a woman entrepreneur. This theme could also go in the category of cross-cultural experiences; however, it is placed in the woman entrepreneur category because it relates more closely to this category.

> The relationships between men and women are very different in Colombia and Canada. Colombia has the classic Latin machismo. In some countries—Mexico, for example—the men will try to use the fact that you're a woman to their advantage. They will use sexual innuendo in charming ways. They will try to play with you mentally and emotionally.

Gabriela notes that being a woman entrepreneur in Canada is not necessarily easier, however, because of how she is perceived as a Latin woman.

> My biggest challenge in Canada is that I am a Latin woman. As an example, when I was working in the tourism industry quite a few years ago, I was sent to a trade show with one gentleman. He made it known within the company that he did not want to partner with me at the trade booth, but he did it anyway. I met him at a conference years later and asked him why he had not wanted to partner with me at the trade booth. He looked uncomfortable but finally answered my question. He said it was because I was a Latin woman, and he didn't trust me. I was shocked. He hadn't known me before that. We had had no connection before doing this trade show. He said that most of his male colleagues in the company felt that way about me, but none of them would say this in public or tell me this to my face. When I heard this, I understood my biggest challenge was how I was being perceived as a Latin female.

Like Emma, Gabriela thinks that her experiences as a woman entrepreneur have changed with age.

> It is easier for me now as an older woman to navigate the sexual innuendo, for example. But when I was younger, I always felt uncomfortable having to deal with the constant sexual innuendo from Latin men.

Some of Gabriela's most challenging experiences as a woman entrepreneur have been when she encountered gender-based power differences in any culture, in what she calls "men's clubs."

> It is really difficult when you encounter a men's club because it is power not just from a single person but from a group of people. And you are obviously excluded from this group. There is no way to win in this situation by directly confronting the men's club. The work in changing that is much larger. So I focus on the immediate, on the value that I am adding with a project. I choose my moment to indirectly point out that I understand very well how they perceive me with a well-timed comment such as, "Of course, I am just a woman, right?"

Another theme for Gabriela, from her past experiences in the tourism sector, is challenges accessing financing as a woman entrepreneur.

> It is a challenge with banks. Loan officers don't like to look at women owners. The banks would turn me down even though I had a profitable business. Finally, the credit union loaned me money and gave me a line of credit. They were very cautious, but they did work with me. At that time, getting a line of credit was a big thing. Entrepreneurship is a male dominate environment, and it was even more so back then.

Gabriela had a significant strategy theme in her experiences as a woman entrepreneur operating in Latin America.

> I learned to keep a friendly but distant relationship with anyone that I didn't consider a friend. I would ask about their wives and children. In certain situations, I have used my son to correspond with the men I am dealing with in Latin America. For example, with one set of clients whom I met at a conference, I saw how they were relating to women and was extremely disappointed in their comments. When they contacted me about doing business, I thought that if I wanted this contract, it would be better to have a man by my side. I used my son to correspond with them. I told him what to write. He would give them an excuse about why he couldn't meet with them on our business trips or during the sporadic Skype meetings. My son and I were always together on the most important calls. I won the contract. I was running the project and making the decisions, but they thought my son was the boss. In fact, they didn't know he was my son.

Gabriela's strategy theme extended into other strategies that she uses as a woman entrepreneur, regardless of the culture she is in.

> When I was single, I had a fake husband story. And I had a male friend record a message on my phone. When I go out for dinner, I don't drink. I always leave right after dinner. I'm friendly and open, but I keep strict lines in place. I dress conventionally. I wear a black suit with pants and high heels. It is like my uniform for meetings. Sometimes I will wear a skirt if I am in a hot climate, but it is one that falls just below the knee. It is better that they see me as old-fashioned. I don't show any curves or anything. I want to give off the message that I just want to do work. I just use a little makeup. The benefit to being a Canadian is that I am seen as a foreigner. People don't expect me to wear too much makeup. Women also don't see you as a threat, and men won't see you as a potential sexual partner. Many men fantasize about having an affair with a foreigner, which makes you a target. It is better to be neutral. People in all cultures find it less threatening if women are not provocative. It is important to be respectful and adaptable. I also write my expectations about business conduct into my contracts. I address issues of culture directly.

Gabriela is also very up front about safety issues as a woman entrepreneur. Mitigating safety risks forms another significant strategy theme for her.

> If I am going to a situation that has the potential to be dangerous, I do even more preparation that I would normally do. I choose where to meet. I bring someone with me who is on my side. I don't tell anyone where I am staying. When I am in the hotel, I always make sure I am aware of the escape route. If there are two beds in the room, I will put my travelling bags in the bed that is closest to the door and cover it to make it look like someone else is sleeping there. But I normally don't accept contracts where I will be in these situations, honestly. I would rather not put my life in danger.

Some emotional coding was used when analyzing Gabriela's experiences as a woman entrepreneur. She admits that using these strategies as a woman entrepreneur and being conscious about her safety is exhausting. I am always on alert. It is exhausting. I always make sure I plan some free time around the meetings so that I can get a break to re-energize.

Values coding was also used with Gabriela's experiences as a woman entrepreneur. With all her strategies, Gabriela is very pragmatic about her end goal as a woman entrepreneur.

> I basically need to know what I need to do to get a contract. I am not going to change their minds about women. I'm not fighting for feminism. I would never win in that environment and on my own. I am not going to change these people over the course of a contract. I just want to get a contract and complete it.

5.6.3 *Jasmine's Experiences as a Woman Entrepreneur*
Jasmine had one clear, powerful theme as a woman entrepreneur and one smaller theme.

Figure 47: Themes for Jasmine as a Woman Entrepreneur

The powerful theme for Jasmine was that starting her own business validated her sense of self-worth, independence, and importance as a woman. This was coded as a values theme, because it indicates the importance that she places on the independence that she has achieved as a woman entrepreneur. This could also be coded as an emotion theme because it is related to her sense of self-worth.

> In China, since 1949, the government has said that men and women are equal in China. We can go to work. We can keep our family name. We can do everything the same as men. But women are not equal to men. There is still the traditional opinion. Women's thinking is that we will marry and have a common financial account. The husband will make more money, and the wife will spend the money. In a family, the man is more important. I graduated from university and had a job. I thought I wasn't the most important person in the family. When I started my business, I changed my mind. I needed more independence. Before I belonged to the family, and I belonged to my husband. He was important, and I was not that important. After starting my business, I wanted to be an independent woman. I work very hard. I don't talk to my husband very much about my business. I want to be independent.

As a smaller theme, Jasmine's family has been supportive of her choice to start a business as a second career even though she runs it on her own and does not see it becoming a family business.

> My daughter got her English language teaching certificate this summer. She worked in the business during the summer. She taught in class. She helped a lot. But this is my dream, not her dream. Her dream is to work in medical science. So she helps, but it is not her business. Sometimes, a cousin, a friend, or my husband will help because it is lots of stress. But I am a one-person business.

5.6.4 Joanne's Experiences as a Woman Entrepreneur

Joanne's business partner is male, so gender and partnerships is a strong theme for her. An equally strong theme is entrepreneurship and family, particularly managing two maternity leaves for herself.

Figure 48: Themes for Joanne as a Woman Entrepreneur
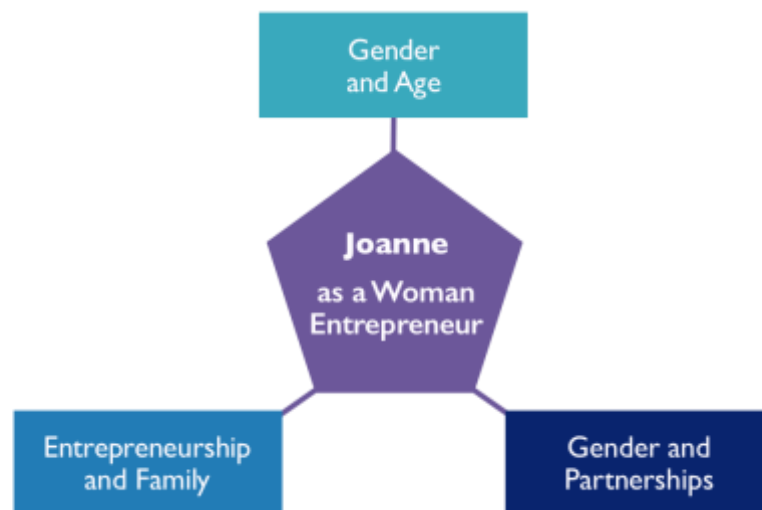
Joanne and her male business partner have a strong partnership that has worked well for them over the lengthy span of their business. While she feels she does have different experiences from her partner, she does not think these differences are significant to her as an entrepreneur.

> I do get treated differently than David by the students. It depends on the student's culture. Some take David's word as the final word. They see mine as the preliminary word that David may or may not change. It bothered me more in past. Now, I'm more accepting of it. It is the way it is. I can't change it, so I changed my approach. Now we have defined roles to prevent this from happening. Before, students could ask either partner about something, and they may get different answers from both of us. We had an issue with this. We had to show a united front and show that our policies were upheld and that we were a consistent organization. It is not always perfect. Sometimes a decision might be made that I would have made differently. But we have improved a lot in terms of consistency. It is not necessarily male/female differences; it is more personality, I think. I'm stricter, while David is more forgiving. We have a rule that if a student has spoken before to one of us, and then comes to the other partner, both of us need to be present at the discussion.

Joanne feels that age rather than gender was more of a factor in any challenges she experienced in her daily work activities when she was younger but less so now.

> I haven't felt at a disadvantage relative to my business partner for being a female. Any disadvantages at the beginning of our business I think were because of age not gender. I was twenty-three when we incorporated our business, and I was only twenty-one when I started at the other school. I never noticed that I was at a disadvantage because of my gender and I haven't felt impacted because of my gender. Maybe I used different strategies than my partner, but I think it was just a case of who students felt more comfortable communicating with.

Joanne's biggest challenge as a woman entrepreneur have been managing family, starting with the maternity leave for the arrival of her first child.

> I thought everything was prepared for my absence. I had the right people trained. But I was doing so many things back then that I couldn't put down on paper how to handle it. Scheduling was a disaster. The whole year was just awful. I felt fully responsible for the whole office. I went back to the office two weeks after the baby arrived. I worked from home when the baby was asleep. The experience with my first child was exhausting. It was better the second time. I learned from experience what worked and didn't work. I didn't take maternity leave for my first baby. There were no maternity benefits for business owners at the time. For my second baby, I took six months' maternity leave. Benefits were available then. But I still did payroll.

After her children were born, being an entrepreneur has allowed Joanne to manage her family responsibilities effectively. "The balance is that I can be the mom I want to be and still get the job of running the school done."

5.6.5 Nailah's Experiences as a Woman Entrepreneur

Nailah had a single but forceful theme in her experiences as a woman entrepreneur; running her business is about business and not about her or her gender.

Figure 49: Themes for Nailah as a Woman Entrepreneur

Nailah does not think about her gender when she is running her business. She simply focuses on her business.

> It is much easier to be a woman business person in Egypt now than it was before. Before, it was challenging. Now, it is just important to keep the focus on your business, not on yourself. You don't talk too much about yourself unless you are asked. When negotiating with someone, explaining a proposal, or introducing yourself on a business level, you talk more about business than anything else. There is no need to show off. People can ask for more details about you personally if they want, but you shouldn't offer too much. I think social media has promoted a lot of talking about yourself. Instead, I try to say, we are doing nice things; come and see for yourself what we do. It is not about me. It is about the business.

5.6.6 Sabrine's Experiences as a Woman Entrepreneur

Sabrine's single theme is similar to Nailah's; being an entrepreneur as a woman is not anything remarkable or worth dwelling on, particularly in Algeria.

Figure 50: Themes for Sabrine as a Woman Entrepreneur

Sabrine noted that it is not unusual for a woman to be an entrepreneur in Algeria. She does not feel she is unusual in any way in a culture in which women are high achievers, particularly with education.

> There are many women business owners in Algeria, particularly education businesses. Many women own schools. In Algeria, education is respected, and having a high level of education is important. School is free as long as you pass. There is no tuition right up to and including a PhD. Women here marry older after finishing their studies. More women are more serious about their studies. Algerian women are generally better students than men.

5.7 Experiences in the English Language Education Sector

There are some commonalities among the participants in their experiences as women in the English language education sector. They are all very clear about why they were operating in the sector and about the challenges of balancing education quality with building a viable business. However, because of the location, age, size, business stage, and services differences among their businesses, the themes within this category still vary considerably from one participant to the next.

5.7.1 Emma's Experiences in the English Language Education Sector

Emma's business development, marketing, and strategy role with her medium-sized English language school means she has multiple complex themes in her experiences in the English language education sector.

Figure 51: Themes for Emma in the English Language Education Sector

The first theme for Emma is finding and maintaining the balance between education and business. She is aware that she and her partners often made decisions from the perspective of educators rather than business women. She is very conscious of this balance because of this.

> All decisions were based on the fact that we were teachers first. Every member of our management team was a teacher. If we ran this business without classroom experience, we might make different decisions based solely on the bottom line and not factoring in what is best for students. You can see this in language schools that are based more on a business model than an education model. They are pretty high flying. They spend money. You see them advertised everywhere. They have high profile locations. They are good at marketing themselves. Everyone knows them. The owner of one of our competitors is not a language educator. He is a former car salesperson. He brought that sales approach to his language education business. He has four campuses. He spends a lot of money. He sponsors awards. He is a smart business person. He just has a different approach than a teacher when running a school, a different approach from ours.

Because of her business development role, decision making about adding new programs and services to the school is also a significant theme for Emma.

> My job is to keep looking for opportunities and to make sure there's money coming in and we are not just relying on students at the school. In all our decisions, we look for different revenue streams or services that are similar to or support our core business.

Emma has overseen the implementation of multiple new programs and services.

> In 2002, a local university approached us to help their students learn English. We developed a pathway program to prepare students for university. At the beginning, we just started with that university. There were not enough students at that university, so we started partnering with other universities in the city. Some signed on quite quickly. With another one, it took two years before they would even talk to

us. We were persistent. So then we had general English courses, pathways courses, and TOEFL courses. When our numbers were dropping off, we introduced a business English program. It still runs. The enrolment for that program really depends on the teacher. We added standardized testing in 2014 when we became an IELTS test centre. It is still in its early stages, but it is growing. It is not making money yet, but we hope it will make money. The test centre gets other people in the door. We are building up a profile among immigration consultants. They refer people to us. It was a good decision.

It is also Emma's responsibility to terminate programs and services that do not have the potential to be profitable in the long term.

We tried summer camps. We established a relationship with a conference centre. We hosted 11 to 20 students. Then we landed a large contract, with 25 girls the first summer and 100 girls the next year. We ran eight-week camps. They went well. We made money, but operationally, it was a nightmare. The camps weren't really handled by the school. They were handled by me. I set up the school in another location, then I hired the teachers and the staff. And with summer camps, it is hard for us to compete with lower pricing in the larger cities. Students can fly directly to the larger cities at a cheaper cost due to bulk fares. We decided not to offer them anymore because we couldn't compete. The other partners were happy to give up the camps. They thought it was a crazy thing to chase.

Emma is very careful and analytical about adding new products and services and differentiating their language school from their competitors.

When we were looking at becoming an IELTS test centre, we looked at one of our competitors. They were very successful. They were the only test centre in our city at the time. When we opened, we had to figure out what would differentiate us from them. We decided it would be our customer service. We developed a green room where students can relax before the test. We provide snacks and drinks. We treat them as people not just as a number. We make them feel comfortable before the test.

It is also Emma's job to help the language school navigate a constantly changing, competitive, and regulatory landscape, which is another theme for her.

After we opened our IELTS test centre, our competitor imploded. They are not operating right now. When they went under, we were forced into opening off-site locations much more quickly than we had planned. We have also opened off-site locations for testing in other parts of the region. But we are not doing too badly. It costs money for us to go to the other cities and look at venues. We don't want to spend money when the overall venture is still losing money. But it will pay off eventually. Then, also after we opened our test centre, a competitor based another province started offering IELTS testing in our region as well. They opened a one-person office in our city for registration. I don't know what effect this will have on us or if they are going to set up anything permanently in our city. If they do, we will have to work harder.

The complexity of marketing in the English language education sector is perhaps the most significant theme throughout Emma's experiences in the English language education sector. The first marketing challenge for Emma's language school is its location.

> I found out early on when I was travelling that we were trying to sell our school to people who not only didn't know the school, but they also didn't know anything about our city. We are not just marketing our school; we are marketing our city and our part of Canada. Talking to agents and students, we start by asking, "What do you know about Canada?" They usually know Toronto, Vancouver, and Montreal. When we are travelling, we always bring a map to show where we are. We show them how to get here. Agents usually like to send their students to larger markets, but we market our location as an English-speaking city. If students are in Toronto, they can speak their own language. We have to work hard to sell our city. We talk about the festivals, winter activities, summer activities, the clean air, the beautiful ocean, and the friendly people. We say that our host families speak English as their first language. We talk about the different types of food they can find in the city. It is a really hard sell to get them to consider our city over Toronto and Vancouver.

A significant component of the marketing theme for Emma is the use of a trial-and-error process to identify the best marketing channels through which to reach potential students. They have tried basic print materials, a website, agent fairs, student fairs, and trade missions.

> We started small. We started with flyers and posters locally and relied on word of mouth. The brother of one of the partners built a website for us. We started to take one or two marketing trips per year. Then we went to an agent fair. We built things up from there. Now we do two agents fairs a year in Miami and Canada. We do at least one trip to Asia, China, Japan, or Korea, and sometimes one more to somewhere like Taiwan, Thailand, or Vietnam. We will also do one trip to South America. We have been going to Brazil for quite a few years, but it is slow going. The last few years, we have also been to Chile, Peru, Ecuador, and Colombia. We have done agent-focused trade missions to the Ukraine, Russia, Spain, Italy, and Mexico.

Recently, social media has become an important part of Emma's marketing theme, as she and her team try to identify the best ways to use these digital platforms in different cultures.

> With social media, as with all marketing, you have to know your audience. You have to know who you are marketing to, whether it is students, agents, or parents. We have a company Facebook page and a student group Facebook page. Both are very successful. Instagram wasn't very successful. Our recruiters are on different social media outlets depending on their markets, for example, WeChat or QQ for China. The students and agents can connect with the recruiter easily on social media. The recruiters have iPads, not phones, so they use apps to communicate. For South America, our recruiter mostly uses Skype. You have to find out how people want to communicate with you and use that method, whether it is face-to-face contact or app contact that is working well.

Part of the marketing theme for Emma is working with agents, third party business people who recruit students for fee-paying language schools globally in return for a commission.

> Agents are a reality of the English language education sector. We partner with agents at student fairs if we have a long-standing relationship with them. If there is an agent there, they collect the information, and they do the follow up.

Marketing trips to meet with either agents or prospective students are also part of Emma's marketing theme. These trips can be agent fairs at which she meets with many different agents or student fairs in which her staff meet prospective students and their parents. Emma learned to be strategic about allocating staff to these two different types of marketing trips.

> Agents are usually owners of their owner businesses, so they like to meet me as an owner. My marketing manager and I do agent trade missions together because it is important that someone other than me becomes known as representing our language program. Student fairs, on the other hand, are not a good use of my time, as an owner and CEO. The students who visit the fairs like to practice their English with a native speaker even though they have no plan to attend any school. And if you don't speak their language, you can't have conversations with parents. So I focus on the agent fairs and send my recruiters to the student fairs.

Because marketing trips can be expensive, Emma has recently focused on building marketing partnerships with other local education organizations. These partnerships form another layer of the marketing theme.

> If another local institution is going to an agent or student fair, we might hook up with them. We try to focus on going to student fairs with a partner. For example, in China, we went with a local university. We shared the cost of a table. We sit together. Prospective students can see us as a partnership. We got twelve students from that particular trip. Partnerships are very important in everything we do.

Emma has learned that relationship building is an important component to marketing, regardless of the channel.

> It doesn't matter what culture you're from; personal connections are very important. At first, when I started marketing, I didn't want to share personal information. I am a very private person. But then I realized that sharing personal information was about trying to establish a connection. Then I became more forthcoming about things. So I ask them about themselves to find out who they are outside of the business relationship, and I share the same information about myself. The other challenge is that relationship building takes time. It is tough for a small school. You have to keep investing in a market, and then you ask yourself, "How long do we go on before we pull out?" It is hard to pull out because you have invested so much, and nothing has come of it.

Emma's marketing theme includes accessing funding for international initiatives whenever possible.

> There used to be another kind of funding for the language education industry in Canada called LIP funding. We used that to pay for airline tickets and consultants. But it is not available anymore. We are also one of the founding members of a provincial education organization. I have been a board member for most of the organization's existence. The organization gets funding from the government to subsidize operating costs. And then we get money to help with our airfares and accommodations if we travel as a group. This defrays some of the costs. The funding is useful. We wouldn't have been able to take trips when we first started the business without funding. But we don't base our decisions on trips now on whether or not we receive funding.

A large marketing challenge in the English language education sector that Emma identified is tracking the results and effectiveness of the money spent.

> We track how many students were spoken to. We get their contact information. We always ask how they heard about us. We offer specials for people attending fairs— for example, we waive the application fee—in order to track our results.

While Emma makes an annual marketing plan to capture their intended marketing activities and budget for any given year, she balances this with flexibility to take advantage of opportunities as they arise.

> We try to plan out a year. We make a marketing plan and budget. Each year, we do one or two trips to Asia, one or two to South America, and two agent fairs. Then we also allow ourselves the opportunity to grab things as they come up.

Over time, Emma has become quite philosophical about the complexity of the marketing challenges in the English language education sector. This philosophy mirrors Jasmine's value that all business is personal.

> It is all about whether people like you or not. It is personal; it depends on whether they can do business with you or not. I have come to accept that. I can only be me. We aren't going to be everything for everybody. There is a right fit for every student. If a school is not the right fit for the student, the agent, or the parents, it will never work for anyone. Everyone will be unhappy. Students will come when they are the right students for the right place.

Emma's final theme in her experiences in the English language education sector is about risk management.

> English language education is a really difficult business. We are at the mercy of so many things we can't control. The huge risks sometimes make you lose sleep at

night. It is a fickle business. You get students from Mexico, then something happens, and they go to another school. An agent changes, and the new agent has ties with another school. Or the currency exchange can be for or against you. It is the same thing with politics; they can be for or against you. You are at the mercy of the weather, like snow storms and hurricanes. If the government changes or the currency crashes, you can't do anything about it. It would be a lot less stressful if these risks didn't exist.

5.7.2 Gabriela's Experiences in the English Language Education Sector

The themes for Gabriela are all related to the first English for tourism project her company completed in a small town in Colombia. These themes have significant overlap with her cross-cultural experiences given the nature of the project. However, they have been included in this category because they relate directly to the project delivery.

Figure 52: Themes for Gabriela in the English Language Education Sector

Gabriela's first step in adding English language education to her tourism portfolio of programs was to understand the position of English and its associated culture within the cultural and linguistic context of Colombia.

> When I was younger in Colombia, there was not a positive perception of English. The United States had a terrible image and had interfered politically in many countries in the region. But things have changed significantly. English is now seen as a tool to be global, to be international. It is now recognized as the common language for business, for the internet, and for science and technology. Millennials embrace the language and are proud to speak English. They know they are more employable if they have English. Globalization has brought this change. Books are in English, and research online is in English. English terms are used in everyday language. Many university courses are taught in English. With globalization,

Colombians are embracing the idea of being bilingual. They know that they need to have a basic level of English in order to compete for work even at home.

Throughout the planning and delivery of her first English for tourism program in Colombia, a major theme for Gabriela was risk management. Interestingly, her risk management concerns were quite different from those of Emma. Gabriela needed to manage the risk created when her Canadian instructor arrived in Colombia.

When the Canadian instructor on the project went to Colombia, she was not aware of the potential risks of trusting too much and deciding to go around on her own. Language was not a problem because she speaks Spanish. But she didn't understand the culture under the surface. She didn't understand who she was dealing with or the dynamics of the situations she could be faced with. She didn't understand that she couldn't be too friendly and trusting because she could be an easy target. Canadians are too trusting. They need to be more cautious.

Gabriela further elaborated on her risk management theme, pointing out that cultural differences in the perception of risk actually created more risk for her business.

Risk means different things for different people, especially for people in countries like Colombia. In Colombia, people take risks on a daily basis, almost without thinking. The country has been through what is known as "The Conflict," a type of civil war that has been a daily diet for over fifty years. During those years, generations of young people grew up knowing that risk is a part of life. It is measured under different standards. In tourism, for instance, I've witnessed tour guides leading groups down the river on open barges. After asking the operator a few questions, it became clear that no one had first aid training or first aid kits. Very often, they don't even offer life jackets. Although things are changing and basic operational regulations are in place, most operators are quite informal. Operators and guides don't seem to take into consideration the risks of operating an adventure experience. They are offering a fun and beautiful adventure. In their eyes, part of the excitement is the risk they are taking. But Canadians will have a different opinion regarding risk. Currently with the work we do, we pay special attention to planning so that we minimize the risks the teacher may be exposed to. We ask our partners to have an emergency plan before we sign an agreement. We insist on the importance of not taking Canadian teachers into the streets without offering guidance and appropriate orientation. The locals don't understand and see risk in the same way as us. So with our projects, we need to find the language to convey the cultural differences regarding risk, and we need to explain how to evaluate risky situations to both our instructors and our local project teams.

Another unique area of risk that falls into Gabriela's risk management theme is the uncertainty of local politics.

There were a few uncertainties during the preparation and execution of the pilot language training project we launched in Colombia, particularly because the

municipal elections were to take place just after the end of the program. The Office of the Mayor at that time was involved in the project. His team members were enthusiastic supporters of the project and worked with us to make sure everything fell into place. They were committed to making this project a success because they knew it was an opportunity in their community. We knew that if a new mayor brought in a different agenda, we would have to start all over again. When you are working with private business or any non-government agency, it doesn't matter who is in power. But when you are working with government, it is all about who is in power. This is part of the risk you take.

As part of her risk management theme, Gabriela shared her risk mitigation strategy for this particular project.

Before deciding on the location in which to launch our first pilot project, we did our research. We chose the location based on the good reputation the administration had. The mayor at that time was recognized as one of the two most ethical mayors in the country. I also had personal references as I had previously worked in the area on another project. With this in mind, I explained our project to him. He responded enthusiastically. I knew that he also had to be cautious about any project and who he would choose to work with.

A final theme in Gabriela's pilot project for English for tourism, given that she was planning the project from Canada and Colombia, was the communication.

I would say that our program was successful in that it was delivered as planned. The success was due in great part to our previous experience working with the mayor's team. However, we always encountered an issue with their communication style. For some reason, and it seems like common practice, people in Colombia don't respond to emails. Although this was frustrating at times, we chose to always follow up with calls and to continue sending messages until we got the answers we needed. This is a practice that we are not too familiar with here in Canada. However, they appreciated it in Colombia. Their level of satisfaction was expressed in the post-project evaluation. We were really surprised at how grateful they were with our calls and constant communication pressure. They really meant it!

5.7.3 Jasmine's Experiences in the English Language Education Sector

Like Gabriela, one of Jasmine's themes is understanding the place of English within her context. She has to understand how English language education works in her context. She then has various themes related to running an English language school in a non-English context. Her final theme looks at the competition she faces from online English language education.

Figure 53: Themes for Jasmine in the English Language Education Sector
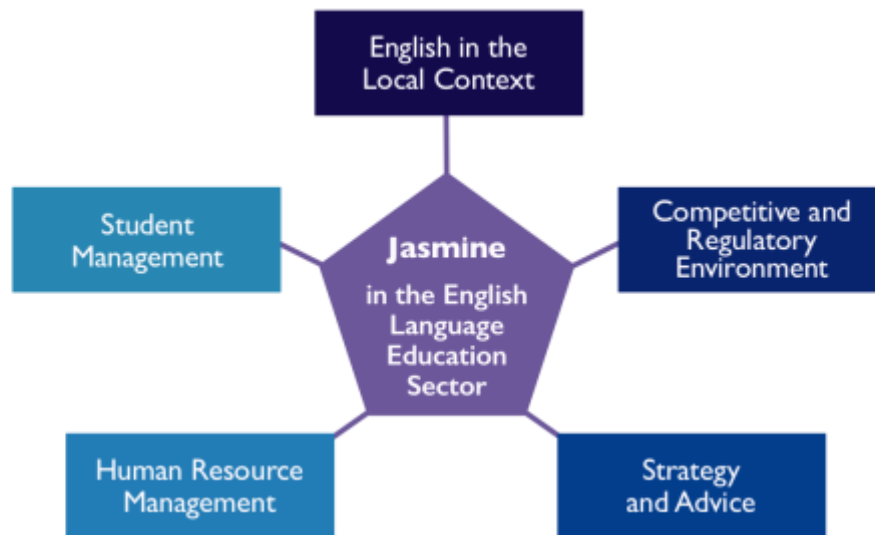
An important theme for Jasmine is understanding the position of the English language in the Chinese context. She has identified a difference between how English is perceived by students and how she perceives it.

> Some Chinese adult students wonder why they need to learn English. They think they can just use a dictionary to translate English into Chinese. And technology allows you to put a whole sentence in for translation. But language is more than this. It is also communication. I think communication is important for travelling and meeting people who are different.

As part of understanding English in the local context, Jasmine has a strong understanding of the English language education system in China and how it has changed over time.

> In my generation, we started to learn English in junior high school. No one could speak English after graduating from university. After having a daughter, I saw everything was changing. New university graduates can now speak English. But they are still not confident with English. I read about job fairs for university graduates in the newspaper. The newspaper said there were long line ups at each company, but when the company recruiters started speaking English, the students left. In China, students spend a lot of time memorizing vocabulary and learning grammar, but they can't use it. When my daughter went to elementary school, I got her a tutor for English so that she could also use English. When she went to Canada, her English wasn't too bad. Today, my daughter uses English very well as a communication tool.

An even more significant theme for Jasmine, one that represents her biggest challenge with her English language school, is human resource management. Throughout the short lifespan of her business, Jasmine has struggled to find and retain a qualified native English language teacher.

Because she has a small school, she only has one full-time teacher. Jasmine's whole business depends on the quality of this English teacher.

> I think my business may stop if I can't hire a good English teacher. I have one teacher now. This is my third teacher since my school opened. The first teacher worked here for a full year. The second teacher worked for four months. I have been lucky that my teachers have been good. But I worry that if I got a bad teacher, they could almost destroy my business, and I couldn't do anything about it.

> When my first teacher's contract ended after a year, I couldn't find another teacher. The language school I studied at in Canada helped me to advertise. When I couldn't find a teacher, they lent me a teacher for four months. During these four months, I still couldn't get anyone. I did lots of advertising and looked at lots of resumes. It is difficult to find a qualified teacher. I don't think the challenge is because we are in a smaller city. Some people prefer big cities and some people prefer small cities. The challenge is that I can't do a good interview because we're overseas. The interviews are done via WeChat. It is also hard to verify teacher qualifications. It should be easier to get a teacher because the Canadian economy is not strong right now. But I couldn't choose one. Finally, I hired my third teacher from Toronto at the last minute.

Under the same human resource management theme, Jasmine shared that it is expensive to employ a native English teacher.

> I didn't hire a teacher from the Philippines or Russia because they are not native speakers of English. My teachers are offered a flight and accommodations. I just don't offer food. So compared to other language schools in my area, my costs are higher. It is much more expensive.

She also shared that she is always cognizant of making sure her English teacher is a good investment. "It is difficult to make sure that my teacher has full-time work. Sometimes the teacher is busy, sometimes there are no classes."

And in a final comment under the theme of human resource management, Jasmine explained why she does not place herself in a teacher role in her school.

> I can't be the English language teacher in my school. At first, I had hoped I could be a teacher. But my pronunciation is not good. I don't want to give students that experience. But I still took a teacher training course to prepare myself for this business. Now I can understand if the teacher does a good job or not.

Another theme for Jasmine is the competitive environment in China. She is facing growing competition from online language schools, in which a native English teacher from outside of

China communicates with students in classes in China through live video streaming. However, Jasmine feels that what she offers is better than online language teaching.

> I don't like computer-based teaching. I prefer face to face. In China, online teaching is popular. There are lots of online teachers available. Students can choose which teacher they want and which course they want. It is very convenient. But they don't realize that a lot of the courses are a recording of the teacher. They are not live. And some of the courses have one week of independent study, then one class online via WeChat when they can then ask questions. Lots of online companies are gone very quickly. Some teachers think their jobs will disappear because of online teaching or technology. But teachers won't disappear because computers can't give emotional support. The children in my English class need emotional support. They can't get that from online teaching. They can't get a touch, a smile, or a hug, and they need these. We look at them as whole people. We give them support in their studies.

Jasmine's final theme is about her approach to student management in her school. In this theme, her value of making her business all about people also comes through strongly. Jasmine feels that she has a significant role to play in the lives of her students beyond teaching them English.

> I always support the students. I am almost like a coach. My niece stayed with me for a year and a half while attending my school. Her mother is a perfectionist. My niece was quiet when she came to study. Her studying habits were bad. She was always fighting with her mother. I told her if she wanted to study abroad, she needed to study English and work hard. She said, "My English is better than before." I asked her, "Did you give 100%?" She knew she hadn't. I said, "I will talk to your parents and allow them to send you to Canada. You need to work hard and find something you want to do." My niece completely changed. I said, "You don't need to go to university. If you find something you are interested in at college, go there." My niece didn't want to study any more in China. She is smart, but she couldn't get high marks in school. She didn't want to work hard. Now, she is studying in Canada at the same language school that I went to. She is getting over 90% in her classes. She is very happy. In China, schools focus on math, history, Chinese, and physics. She doesn't like these subjects. She prefers art and cooking. I encouraged her to find what she wants to do and do it well. Now she will go to university in Canada, too. I was an advocate for my niece. Her parents are happy because she's happy.

As part of her personal approach to student management, Jasmine also points out that her role is different from the parents' role.

> What I teach is totally different from what they learn from their parents. I tell them that life is bigger and that the world is bigger. Their parents say to them, "Get good marks and study hard." I tell them, "You can find something you are interested in, help someone, and be successful in one thing." For example, one of my students wants to be a chef. His parents say that they don't want that. I will say to the student, "That's great! Work hard in a restaurant, and maybe you can own your own business one day."

The final piece to Jasmine's student management theme is her role in supporting students as they prepare to go abroad.

> Some of our students have failed in China, so their family wants to give them the opportunity to study abroad. They come to my school to prepare to study abroad. We provide them with support to take the first step. Some students become successful. I am very proud. It is not just English that they get from me. I give advice to students wishing to study abroad.

Jasmine had a last theme that fit under the strategy and advice coding. Despite her success and satisfaction with her school, Jasmine advises against taking the same business approach with an English language school in China that she has taken. Unlike the majority of English language schools in China, Jasmine does not teach students to be successful on standardized English language proficiency tests. She teaches them to use English as a communication tool.

> I wouldn't take the same approach as I do if you want to have a big school. If you want to have a big school, you should follow the popular approach of teaching English for test preparation. A friend told me about another English training centre that opened last year with six students. They focus on test preparation. One year later, they had 100 students.

5.7.4 Joanne's Experiences in the English Language Education Sector

Joanne's themes are similar to Emma's given that their businesses in the English language education sector are the most similar of all of the participants' businesses. Like Emma, Joanne has a complex and competitive environment that brings with it programming and services decisions, marketing challenges, and risk management strategies.

Figure 54: Themes for Joanne in the English Language Education Sector
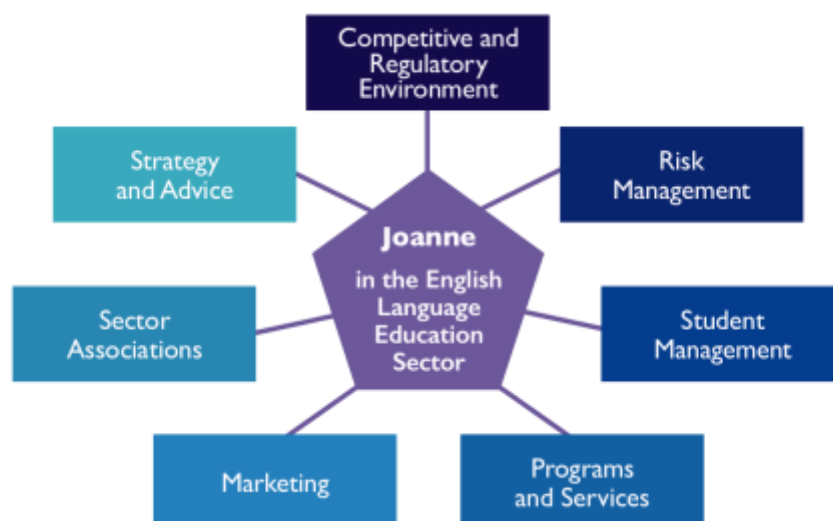
The first theme for Joanne in the English language education sector is managing the competitive and regulatory environment, specifically differentiating her English language school from the local competitors, given how competitive the sector is.

> Our main motto and what makes us different is the personal touch. For the first several years, David or I would pick students up at the airport ourselves. We would go on student activities. We would do anything we could do to make it personal. We have 120 students now, and we know almost all of them by name. We make our students feel important and cared about. We have their best interests at heart. It is not about the tuition they pay; it is about them feeling looked after.

Marketing is a significant theme for Joanne as it is with Emma. She and her partner use multiple marketing channels and are always tweaking how those channels are used in order to reach potential students cost effectively.

> We use print a little. We go to agent fairs. Our website is done in different languages. We have a website for our partners. We have an email newsletter that goes out to all our past students. We tried a video diary of what was going on at the school, but we don't use that anymore. We use social media. In China, we use WeChat. In South America, we use WhatsApp. We use Facebook and Twitter for all markets. We have international managers to liaise with our agents. Some of our agents are past students who expressed an interest in being an agent for us.

Like Emma, Joanne uses agents to help recruit students, but they are not the dominant source of students.

> At most schools, agents produce almost 100% of the student enrolments. We are the opposite. Most of our students don't come through agents. We have done a good job at promoting our school through word of mouth and referrals from friends and family. We were talking to a tech company, and they were beta testing a web-based platform for agents to keep track of registrations. They were also developing a program for education. They asked us to be a part of the education testing. We looked at it and said, "What about students who don't come from agents?" They had not thought about this. Most of our students don't come through agents. We need a program that works for all the marketing channels that we use, not just agents.

Also similar to Emma, Joanne has programs and services as a theme in her experiences. She and her partner David have been strategic about adding new programs and services to their language school as a market need became evident.

> We started with language instruction, then we added TESOL, then testing centres and then CAEL. If we wanted to be member of Languages Canada, we needed to train our teachers and get them certified. But there was nowhere to train teachers in our city. Offering TESOL ourselves was a logical step. When we've been approached by someone about a program or service, we say, "We don't have it, but let's see what we can do." Some have been successful, such as test preparation.

Students needed test preparation, so we developed a program to meet that need. Then there was no testing centre in our city, so we became a testing centre. Then we became the middle person between CAEL and our representatives overseas. They didn't feel they would be comfortable going to CAEL themselves.

As part of her programs and services theme, Joanne shared how she and her partner started their pathway program to help students gain entry into Canadian colleges and universities.

We also developed our pathway program because students wanted it. We started with pathway agreements that weren't really pathway agreements at all. The university simply said, "We'll accept your students, but on the acceptance letter, it will say they need to complete your course, and they need to have a satisfactory standardized test score." This gave us the opportunity to get students into the university. Then the university could see that our students were high-quality students, and their English was at an appropriate level. David has been proactive in bringing more universities on. We are willing to start with whatever they are willing to give us. Once they can see quality of our students, then we can eliminate entry steps. It is a step-by-step process, but we are willing to play the game and do what we have to do to prove ourselves.

Once again like Emma, risk management is a dominant theme for Joanne, given the multiple risks at play in the English language education sector at any given time.

There is risk in language education. There is risk in everything you do. There are people risks. Gut instinct is very important in people situations. In interviews, I don't care how good a resume is. If I'm not comfortable with a person, that means my students may not be comfortable with them. So, I don't hire that person. Homestay is the same. If I wouldn't leave my child there, they won't be used, even with a good police check.

Then there are downswings in the economy. We look for the downswings, but we don't feel the effects too much. We position ourselves as the economical option. We are not the cheapest option, but we provide quality education. There are always students looking for education. We are very conscious of our pricing. We want to provide jobs for our teachers and a salary for ourselves. We don't take advantage of anyone. We are not in it to make millions.

Then there are government changes like the recent changes in immigration. We believe fate has our best interests at heart. The recent changes in immigration, in the International Student Program (ISP), could have been a disaster for us. It was a disaster for many schools. But because we had TESOL and because we had to regulate TESOL, we were already doing all the things they asked us for in the ISP. The process became easy for us.

The more things you have going on as back-up plan, the better off you will be. We have done well in that way. There are always other things we can quickly jump into if we need to. We are language educators, language assessors, teacher trainers, and curriculum developers.

> We have always looked for ways to mitigate risk. David and I talk about it often. One of our staff is going to Turkey. It may mean no growth, it may mean stability, or it may make up for possibly losing Saudi students. We have to be proactive.

Despite her understanding of the risks inherent in the English language education sector, part of Joanne's risk management theme is knowing that taking risks is completely necessary.

> You have to be willing to take risks. Nothing may come of it, but something great could. For example, with marketing, we are willing to do one-shot deals, like $10,000 for a publication in Brazil, and then wait for results to decide if we do it again next year. As another example, one of our staff went to Turkey a few months ago to explore that market. It was an inexpensive trip because she went with one of our university partners. If nothing comes of it, we probably won't go back there, but it was worth trying. You have to take risks.

Joanne identified a number of challenges under the theme of student management. One found in any adult education context is setting the boundaries between teachers and students, all of whom are adults.

> We had conversations recently in our teacher training class regarding boundaries between teachers and students, especially if the teachers are younger and close in age to the students. If the teachers put a line there, these things won't happen. We recently added a policy to our employee agreement regarding students and teachers dating. We are realistic. These things happen. One of our past teachers married a past student. Another teacher divorced his wife and went to Japan with a student. If this happens, we're not stopping the relationship. But either the student needs to leave the school, or the teacher needs to resign. We tell them your job or the student's school. We have not had any negative comments about the policy from teachers.

Another student management issue that Joanne identified which is inherent in an English language school in which there are young adults is refereeing the relationships among the students.

> Young people are challenging. We get tears if they are in a long-distance relationship, for example. I get the severe situations. My teachers get the less severe situations. Problems may be shared among the staff depending on the severity. For example, we had two Saudi students who both thought they were the boyfriend of a Colombian girl. Then we had an angry Chinese boy, not a student, come to school demanding to know if a girl was in class. We said we couldn't give him personal information due to privacy laws.

Participation in a local association for English language teachers is an interesting theme for Joanne.

Joanne's final theme is one that falls under strategy and advice coding. She has the following advice if someone wanted to start a business in the English language education sector.

I would give this warning: make sure you really want to do it. You may have doubts. Your sleep and your wellbeing are not at the forefront. There are no sick days. You need to know in advance that it may not be smooth sailing the whole way along. Look for the silver lining at the end and strive to get there. There is no success overnight. It took ten years before things were comfortable in my life running the business. You must be passionate and committed to get through that.

5.7.5 Nailah's Experiences in the English Language Education Sector

The success of Nailah's business in the English language education sector depends upon her in-depth knowledge of the position of English in the local context and how it is taught in the public and private school systems. While there are other themes for Nailah that are discussed, her knowledge of the local English language context is paramount for her.

Figure 55: Themes for Nailah in the English Language Education Sector

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The first significant issue within Nailah's theme of English in the local context is the perception of the English language by Egyptians within a rich and complex linguistic landscape.

> Young people think it is more important to learn English than before. They can get a better job, obtain a higher salary, work in important companies, or travel. Unfortunately, they don't think about it until near the end of college or after graduation. Their main obstacle in getting a good job is a lack of English skills. English is also important if students want to go to private universities. Private universities teach all their subjects in English. But English is just one of several languages taught in Egyptian schools. The other languages, besides Arabic, are French, Italian, Spanish, and German. Italian and Spanish are very popular.

The existing English language education system in public and private schools from kindergarten through university also falls into this theme. Nailah needs to know all of these education contexts in order to identify teachers whom she can support with her professional development business.

> In Egyptian government schools, in the primary grades, they have English once a day. In the middle grades, they have six lessons per week. And in the secondary schools, they have six to seven lessons per week. Then there are specialized language schools where students have, on average, eight classes per week. And finally, in international schools, they have ten to twelve classes per week.
>
> In Egypt, the number of students per class differs from school to school. In government-sponsored elementary schools, middle schools, and high schools, there can be more than 80 students in one class. In language schools, there can be 13 to 55 students per class. In international schools, there are 10 to 20 students per class.
>
> English is taught at universities. Government universities have English credit hours that students have to take. It is a public program. It has a low cost. If you are in an honours program, it is more expensive. Honours students pay higher fees, but not as high as they would in private universities. Private universities teach fully in English.

Nailah works mostly with teachers in the government-sponsored kindergarten through grade twelve schools.

> My teachers generally don't teach in government colleges and universities because you have to have at least a master's degree to work in these schools. They usually apply for local universities and governments in other states. These universities don't have enough staff and advertise for teachers elsewhere. This is especially true of private universities. In the 80s and 90s, the government universities had job openings. Nowadays, they don't. People who want to apply to work in a university must apply to private universities. Most of these teachers work as instructors of language only. Private universities teach courses in English, so students must be good in English. To work in an actual English department, rather than as a language instructor, they have to have a master's or PhD.

The next theme for Nailah is developing customized programs and services to meet the unique professional development and support needs of the English language teachers in her local context.

> We make our training suitable for this culture and for the challenges our teachers have. For example, if a teacher teaches lower levels at a government school, they are probably young and don't have a lot of experience. They get depressed. The level of the students is weak, and they think they can't do anything about this. The teachers think what they hear in discussions is wonderful, but that they can't apply it to their classes. They are so enthusiastic in discussions. We help them discuss how to apply it in their classes in a step-by-step way.

An intangible component of Nailah's programs and services is the element of emotional support. Supporting teachers emotionally is thus also an important value for Nailah.

> We create a friendly, welcoming environment where teachers can feel comfortable. We also want them to feel we sympathize with their problems. We care for them. There is someone ready to listen and help to upgrade your skills, and you should not be ashamed to say that you don't understand.

Before starting her professional development business, Nailah used her knowledge of the local context to understand the competitive environment in Egypt. She was thus able to create a professional development service for teachers that does not exist in the local context.

> No one else provides a teaching club in Egypt. The American University provides group professional development sessions every few months, but the sessions are not for everyone. Not everyone is allowed to go. It is only for a chosen few. And it costs a lot. The TESOL association does a few workshops here, but not regularly. We are a unique service.

As with the other participants, sales and marketing are major themes for Nailah. However, within the overall theme of sales and marketing, she has different challenges. Her first challenge is simply educating local teachers—her potential customers—about the value of professional development.

> My starting point is talking to teachers about the value of professional development. I tell them that if they take a course or workshop, they will have ideas that they can apply in class. I try to help them understand that they need a little academic background to be able to understand what they are supposed to do. We have been successful in directing people's attention to the importance of professional development. At first, teachers just saw us as a training centre. We want teachers to believe in professional development.

Another marketing challenge for Nailah is pricing. Teachers in government schools in Egypt simply do not make a lot of money. "Not all teachers can pay for courses. Teachers' rate of pay is not very high. It is a challenge in our society."

It is also difficult to sell teachers on adding professional development into their regular schedules.

> Teachers teach private lessons during the school year after school to make extra money. Some teachers are mothers. They need to get home to look after family. If the teachers are single, they often teach private lessons after school. If the teachers are married, they have to be home with their family. Sometimes, I am frustrated about attendance at our discussions, but I understand why they can't come. I understand these small problems and try to help them through this.

However, Nailah's biggest sales and marketing challenge is accessing the decision-makers in the English language education sector.

> I joined an online course on entrepreneurship and how to grow a business. My advisor told me that my target market is the school decision-makers: the owners, the principals, the academic advisors, and the heads of department. The teachers are very enthusiastic about the workshops and want to take them, but I need to persuade principals, which is very difficult. I have to negotiate with them. Sometimes the teacher pays half for the workshops, and the schools pay half. The problem is that the decision-makers think that if teachers get trained and get more skilled, they will change schools and move to another employer. So they don't want to spend money on teachers who will just leave.

The most challenging decision-makers are private school owners.

> They are business people. They build schools to make money. Not all of them are concerned about the education system they provide. I have tried a number of ways of speaking to school owners. If I don't know a school owner, I find a person within the school that I can build a relationship with, such as a department head. That way I can get introduced to the school owner with a recommendation from someone within the school. Then I am not a complete stranger in the school.

Like Emma and Joanne, another marketing theme for Nailah is her significant use of social media to promote her business including Facebook and blogging.

> We use Facebook a lot. It is easy to connect with people around Egypt through Facebook. We joined different groups online such as teacher groups, teacher training groups, and schools. My long-term goal is to get lots of people on Facebook. If people are online, we can use it to our benefit. We reach teachers through the same technology they use. We also advise teachers to use technology to reach their students. There is a generational trend that teachers have to follow.

> We now also have people who read our blog. At first, they didn't think the blog was important or thought it was difficult and serious. But we keep it simple. We have simple points of what was discussed in our weekly meetings. If they can't attend our weekly meetings, they can read the blog. Then they can apply the ideas in their own classroom.

Also like Emma and Joanne, Nailah uses multiple ways to try to reach her potential customers, in addition to social media. Unlike Joanne and Emma, she does not have a formal marketing plan.

> We have no formal marketing plan. We send representatives to schools to discuss what we can do to help them. We cater to their needs. We go to school exhibitions, which are held at the beginning of the first and second terms. Schools come and exhibit work. We speak to parents and schools.

Another theme for Nailah is her search for funding. She has explored funding options for her business and will continue to do so, but she has encountered challenges unique to the education sector, and particularly the sector in Egypt.

> I have been working on different funding options but have not been successful yet. I had hoped that getting my business registered would be a big step towards getting funding. But investors and funders are more interested in technology, apps, and real products. Education is not popular. People think the government pays for education. Some large companies will donate money to reconstruct schools or hire trainers, but there is no follow-up. Some companies only donate money to education companies for tax deductions. Education is tough. It is a long-term process that requires a lot of money and time. There is no revenue other than a better society. This is not attractive to investors.

5.7.6 Sabrine's Experiences in the English Language Education Sector

Sabrine's experiences in the English language education sector focus on understanding the place of English and English language education within a complex linguistic landscape and determining how to market the business in the Algerian context, which was a new business context for all three business partners.

Figure 56: Themes for Sabrine in the English Language Education Sector

Like Gabriela, Jasmine, and Nailah, one of Sabrine's themes is the place of English and English language education within the local linguistic and cultural context. Sabrine noted the complex linguistic context in Algeria, which is a mix of Arabic, French, English and several other languages.

> Most advertisements are in French, which is still the language of academics. Instruction in all public schools and universities is conducted in French. In the K to 12 grades, French and Arabic are used, depending on the school. In past generations, most programs were in French. Arabic has been used more recently after the civil war. After Algeria became independent from France, they turned towards Arabic programs. So, the language of instruction is changing, but French is still very strong. The nice thing is that students have no problem with English pronunciation because they are used to hearing so many languages here like Berber, Kabyle, Arabic, and French.

Sabrine noted that this complex linguistic context is actually beneficial to English language education businesses because Algerians are used to learning languages and being multilingual.

Sales and marketing are very strong themes for Sabrine. Sales and marketing have been a challenge right from the start for Sabrine and her partners as they have tried to discover what works in Algeria.

> Our marketing is slow and steady. We are not very aggressive. We want to build a strong foundation. It is a new market. We all had businesses in Canada, but this is a new type of business for all of us. It is also a new country for all us. My husband and partner haven't lived here for many years. The country has changed. We had to figure out what marketing worked in Canada that we can use here. We sometimes have differences in opinion. With marketing, you don't want people to forget you.

> You have to have your hands in a few different places so people are reminded of you. You want people to see that you are legitimate and that you have something unique and valuable, of good quality.

Like Nailah, Sabrine and her partners do not use a marketing plan. They are learning how to market within the Algerian context through a trial and error approach with basic marketing channels.

> We were not doing too much marketing before. We mostly used word of mouth. Our partner networked with all the schools in the area where he was teaching when he first came to the country. He made connections with the staff and teachers and spread the word about our teacher training through them. He used to have a network marketing business before, so he is good at that. Then we got the basics like business cards and a website. Business cards are very important here. They need to be on good quality paper with a logo. They need to be presentable. We had a difference in opinion among the three of us regarding the logo to use on the cards and our website but finally agreed on one. We have decals on our vehicles and on two taxis. Three days after we put a decal on my brother-in-law's car, someone came in to the school, so it seemed to work. We also use our location signage. The fact that our location was a school before has been helpful. We are on a dead-end street, so we put up a sign showing people where to turn in to get to our school. And we put signage on the front of building. Our biggest sign was on the wall where the main street and the dead-end street split. A neighbour took it down, so we just put it up again.

Like all of the participants except Gabriela and Jasmine, Sabrine makes significant use of social media.

> Social media is big in Algeria. We are on Facebook. We have 526 people following us right now. In September, we only had 370 people. Then my husband's cousin posted things on different chats, and our number of followers jumped. We have a Twitter account, but we but don't use it. They have one different social media platform in Algeria called Wiknis. It is like Kijiji. We put ads on there for the school. One of our TESOL graduates helped to set that up. He posted it in French and English. It is a free ad.

A unique theme for Sabrine's experiences in the English language education sector is program accreditation, which makes a program official and legitimate in the eyes of the government.

> In this business in Algeria, program accreditation is important. But accreditation is just a stamp from the government. Language schools are not accredited unless they teach computer programming courses. It is really just marketing spin. One time, a private college for the sciences wanted to start a biology course in English. One woman came to us referred by one of our TESOL grads. We put together a quote. But they didn't go with us. The program was government paid, so they couldn't use our school because we are not accredited. We did all the paperwork for the quote, and then didn't use us. We worked to get our TESOL certificate validated by the

5.8 Conclusion

In this chapter, the first set of data on the business case histories of the participants was presented. The common word running throughout this first set of data is variation, throughout the participant and business profiles and their experiences as entrepreneurs, women entrepreneurs, and operators of businesses in the English language education sector. The lines among the business case histories and the data to be presented in the next chapter on the participants' cross-cultural and cross-linguistic experiences were not always clear cut. Some experiences could have been coded both as business experiences and as cross-cultural and cross-linguistic experiences. This overlap demonstrates the complexity of the participant experiences, and the corresponding challenge in analyzing these experiences. These trends of variation and overlap continue in the second set of data presented in the next chapter.

Chapter 6: The Participants' Cross-Cultural and Cross-Linguistic Experiences

"You cannot create experience. You must undergo it."

-Albert Camus

6.1 Introduction

This second data chapter presents the participants' cross-cultural and cross-linguistic experiences to create an in-depth cultural and linguistic picture of the participants themselves and of the cultural and linguistic contexts in which they run their English language education businesses. The chapter starts with the language profiles of the participants to capture their language proficiencies and then follows with their cultural profiles to uncover their cultural awareness and adaptability. It next presents their cross-cultural and cross-linguistic experiences as shared in the open-ended interviews. Their experiences are then coded thematically as part of their ongoing narratives as women entrepreneurs operating in the English language education sector. Finally, the chapter presents the participants' reactions to cross-cultural and cross-linguistic critical incidents, their cultural artifact stories, and their responses to the mini-lecture on different conceptualizations of culture.

I once again had choices for the structure of the data presentation in this chapter. At the beginning of the chapter, I use a thematic presentation, emphasizing the objective to compare and contrast the experiences of the six participants. In the second half of the chapter, however, I structure the data presentation around the data collection methods in order to allow for the rich interplay of the participants' cultural and linguistic ideas, understandings, and experiences. These choices were once again made knowing that highlighting one aspect of the data through the presentation structure de-emphasizes other aspects of the data.

6.2 Participant Language Profiles

The participant language profiles are built from information on their self-assessed language proficiencies, their formal language studies, and the languages they use for business purposes. The participants assessed their language proficiencies according to the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR). Each participant has at least some proficiency in one

language in addition to their first language. Two participants have at least some proficiency in three additional languages. Two of the participants are fully fluent in their second language.

Table 20: Participant Language Proficiency Profiles

Name	First Language	Second Language	Third Language	Fourth Language
Emma	British English	**Spanish** *Listening: A2* *Reading: A2* *Spoken Interaction: A1* *Spoken Production: A1* *Writing: A2*		
Gabriela	Colombian Spanish	**English** *Listening: C2* *Reading: C2* *Spoken Interaction: C2* *Spoken Production: C2* *Writing: C2*	**Portuguese** *Listening: A2* *Reading: B1* *Spoken Interaction: pre-A1* *Spoken Production: A1* *Writing: A1*	**French** *Listening: A1* *Reading: A2* *Spoken Interaction: pre-A1* *Spoken Production: pre-A1* *Writing: A2*
Jasmine	Chinese (Mandarin)	**English** *Listening: B1* *Reading: B1* *Spoken Interaction: A2* *Spoken Production: A2* *Writing: A2*		
Joanne	Canadian English	**Spanish** *Listening: B1* *Reading: B1* *Spoken Interaction: B1* *Spoken Production: B1* *Writing: A2*	**French** *Listening: A1* *Reading: A2* *Spoken Interaction: A1* *Spoken Production: A1* *Writing: A1*	
Nailah	Arabic	**English** *Listening: C2* *Reading: C2* *Spoken Interaction: C2* *Spoken Production: C2* *Writing: C2*	**French** *Listening: A1* *Reading: A1* *Spoken Interaction: A2* *Spoken Production: A1* *Writing: A1*	
Sabrine	Canadian English	**French** *Listening: A1* *Reading: A2* *Spoken Interaction: A1* *Spoken Production: A1* *Writing: A1*	**Korean** *Listening: A1* *Reading: A1* *Spoken Interaction: A1* *Spoken Production: A1* *Writing: A1*	**Arabic** *Listening: A1* *Reading: A1* *Spoken Interaction: A1* *Spoken Production: A1* *Writing: A1*

In addition to assessing their language proficiencies, the participants identified languages that they have formally studied, as summarized in Table 21. Interestingly, not all the language proficiency indicated by participants derives from formal language study. Sabrine is learning Arabic through living in Algeria, and she learned Korean when living and working in Korea. Joanne is part of a bilingual family and learns Spanish from her husband and relatives in addition to studying it formally when she has time. Conversely, not all the participants' formal language study turned into language proficiency. While Gabriela studied Italian, she does not indicate any proficiency in it. Similarly, Emma does not indicate any proficiency in German or French.

Gabriela is in an interesting position with her first language, Spanish.

> I have lived in Canada for forty years, so I now actually speak Spanish with different intonation than I used to. When I go back to Colombia, people don't believe I am from there because of the way I speak Spanish.

Table 21: Participant Formal Language Studies

Participant	Additional Languages Studied Formally
Emma	French, Latin, German, Spanish
Gabriela	Portuguese, Italian
Jasmine	English
Joanne	French, Spanish
Nailah	English, French
Sabrine	French

The final piece in the participant language profiles is the languages used to run their businesses. The participants used no more than two languages to run their businesses, as indicated in Table 22 below. Some of the participants use these two languages equally, while others have one language that is more dominant than the other. Emma uses only one main language.

Table 22: Participant Language Use for Business Purposes

Participant	Languages Used for Business Purposes
Emma	English
Gabriela	English and Spanish equally
Jasmine	Chinese (Mandarin) and English equally
Joanne	English with some Spanish
Nailah	Arabic and English equally
Sabrine	English with very limited use of Arabic

6.3 Participant Cultural Profiles

The participant cultural profiles are built from information on their travel for business and personal purposes, their cultural interactions for business purposes, any formal training or learning they have had in culture, their current cultural context, and their results on the Cross-Cultural Adaptability Inventory (CCAI).

6.3.1 Travel for Business and Personal Purposes

The list of countries to which participants have travelled for business and personal purposes is a first indication of the number and range of cultures to which they have been exposed and with which have interacted. Emma, Gabriela, and Sabrine have extensive business and personal travel experience, while Jasmine, Joanne, and Nailah have more limited business and personal travel experience as summarized in Table 23.

Table 23: Participant Travel Experiences

Participant	Travel for Business Purposes	Travel for Personal Purposes
Emma	Russia, Ukraine, Kazakhstan, Spain, France, Mexico, Brazil, Colombia, Ecuador, Iceland, Guatemala, United Arab Emirates, Turkey, The Caribbean	France, Italy, Greek Islands, Cuba, Ecuador, Mexico, US
Gabriela	Belize, Guatemala, Honduras, Panama, Ecuador, Chile, Brazil, Argentina, Colombia, Canada, US, Mexico, Australia, Papua New Guinea, South Pacific Islands	Brazil, Colombia, Canada, US, Mexico, Western Europe
Jasmine	Canada	Singapore, Cambodia, Canada
Joanne	Panama	US, Panama, Colombia
Nailah	UK, Turkey	UK, Turkey
Sabrine	South Korea, Algeria	England, Scotland, Wales, Ireland, France, Spain, Italy, Germany, Austria, Holland, Belgium, US, South Korea, China, Japan, The Philippines, Algeria, Qatar, Canada

6.3.2 Cultural Interactions for Business Purposes

In addition to interacting across cultures when travelling, the participants also interact with people from different cultures daily when running their businesses. When these daily interactions are put together with the business travel interactions, a full picture of the participants' business cultural interactions emerges, as summarized in Table 24.

Table 24: Participant Cultural Interactions for Business Purposes

Participant	Cultural Interactions for Business Purposes
Emma	Through her business travels and through running an English language school in Canada, Emma has interacted with cultures around the world. She has interacted with many cultures in North America, Europe, the Middle East, Asia, and Africa.
Gabriela	Through her various businesses, Gabriela has interacted with Spanish-speaking cultures in Central and South America, as well as Canadian Aboriginal cultures and Papua New Guinean cultures. With her current business, she interacts with the Canadian and Colombian cultures.
Jasmine	Jasmine interacted with many cultures as a student at an English language school in Canada. With her business, she interacts with the Canadian culture with her Canadian English teacher and the Canadian managers of the language test centres she supervises, as well as with her Chinese students.
Joanne	Joanne's English language school has hosted students from sixty-seven countries spanning the globe from Asia, the Middle East, Europe, and Central and South America.
Nailah	Nailah works with representatives of English language organizations such as the British Council, the Regional English Language Office (RELO), the Young Learners and Teenagers Special Interest Group (YLTSIG), the Teacher Development Special Interest Group (TDSIG), and the Global Education Conference for publications, presentations, and online conferences, as well as with her Egyptian teachers and partners.
Sabrine	Throughout her career, Sabrine has interacted with the Korean, Japanese, Chinese, Thai, Russian, Algerian, and Latino cultures, as well as some African cultures (e.g., Somalia) when working with immigrants in Canada. With her current business, she interacts with the Algerian culture.

6.3.3 Cross-Cultural Communication Training

Another important piece of the cultural profiles of participants is any formal training or learning they have had in culture learning or in working cross-culturally. Joanne and Sabrine completed brief culture-learning modules in their English language teaching certification. Jasmine completed intercultural communication training through a local language school and a local church. Gabriela completed intercultural communication training at the Cultural Intelligence Centre. She is also a certified facilitator with the same organization.

> I took the program three years ago in Chicago. The organization is becoming one of the leading centres for cross-cultural training in North America and now offers

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training in other regions of the world. When I took the program, there was a mix of participants from different backgrounds including church ministers, teachers, and people who work with language institutions. As an entrepreneur, I was the only person not in one of those categories. It was a three-day intensive course. As part of the registration process, they interviewed three people who had worked with me in cross-cultural environments. They collected information on how my colleagues perceived my skills and adaptability in cross-cultural environments. The results of these interviews were included in some of the topics we discussed in class. The facilitator also provided feedback and advice based on the information.

Table 25: Participant Culture Learning or Training

Participant	Culture Learning or Training
Emma	None
Gabriela	Intercultural communication training, certified facilitator
Jasmine	Intercultural communication training
Joanne	Culture learning as part of English language teacher certification
Nailah	None
Sabrine	Culture learning as part of English language teacher certification

6.3.4 Current Cultural Context

Also of interest in building the cultural profiles of the participants is the culture in which they currently work and live, as summarized in Table 26. Emma and Sabrine currently work and live in a culture that is not their first culture. Gabriela works in both her first and second cultures. And Jasmine, Joanne, and Nailah work and live in their first cultures.

Table 26: Participant Current Cultural Context

Participant	First Culture	Current Culture
Emma	UK	Canada
Gabriela	Colombia	Canada and Colombia
Jasmine	China	China
Joanne	Canada	Canada
Nailah	Egypt	Egypt
Sabrine	Canada	Algeria

6.3.5 Cross-Cultural Adaptability Inventory (CCAI)

Recall from the Methodology chapter that the Cross-Cultural Adaptability Inventory (CCAI) is a self-assessment tool the participants completed to provide their self-judgments on their cultural adaptability and awareness and to prime them for the individual interviews on culture and how they manage cross-cultural interaction. Recall also that there are four dimensions in the inventory: emotional resilience (ER), flexibility/openness (FO), personal autonomy (PA), and perceptual acuity (PAC). The results of the inventory present another piece to the cultural profiles of the six participants. The sample size is by no means large enough to draw any conclusions about the cross-cultural adaptability of women entrepreneurs operating businesses in the English language education sector in general. However, the results highlight the variation among the participants. Figure 1 below compares the CCAI results for the six participants.

Figure 57: Composite Participant Results on CCAI
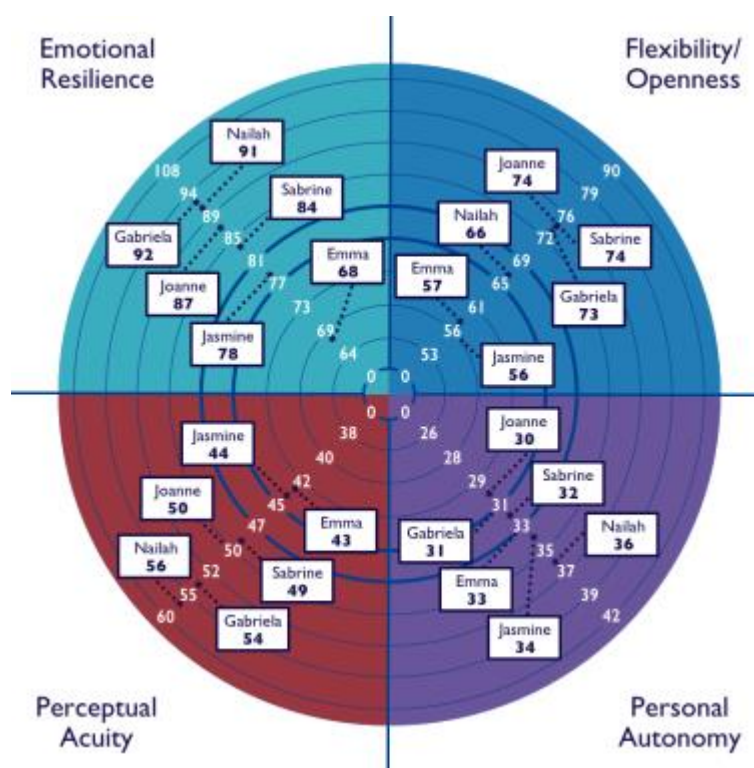
The two bold concentric circles in Figure 56 above represent the mean range of scores on each dimension established by the assessment tool developers based upon their extensive database of past user results. This mean range is provided to all users to allow them to compare themselves to this database of past users. For each dimension, Table 27 below indicates whether each

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participant in this research is at mean, below mean, or above mean compared to the database of past users.

Table 27: Participant Scoring in Relation to Established Means

Participant	Emotional Resilience (ER)	Flexibility/ Openness (FO)	Personal Autonomy (PA)	Perceptual Acuity (PAC)
Emma	Below Mean	Below Mean	Mean	Below Mean
Gabriela	Above Mean	Above Mean	Mean	Above Mean
Jasmine	Mean	Below Mean	Above Mean	Below Mean
Joanne	Above Mean	Above Mean	Below Mean	Above Mean
Nailah	Above Mean	Mean	Above Mean	Above Mean
Sabrine	Above Mean	Above Mean	Mean	Above Mean

The inventory developers, while providing a mean score range for each section of the inventory for comparison, state that the inventory is meant to provide each individual with insights into specific areas that they should develop. Individuals are directed to note their lowest scores overall and target these for development. Table 28 below illustrates the dimensions with the lowest scores for each participant, which are therefore suggested areas for future development.

Table 28: Participants' Lowest Scoring Dimensions

Participant	Lowest Scoring Dimensions
Emma	Emotional Resilience, Flexibility/Openness, Perceptual Acuity
Gabriela	Personal Autonomy
Jasmine	Flexibility/Openness, Perceptual Acuity
Joanne	Personal Autonomy
Nailah	Flexibility/Openness
Sabrine	Personal Autonomy

In the narrative interview process, Joanne specifically commented that her results on the CCAI surprised her.

> Some questions were hard to answer because sometimes the options were true and sometimes they weren't. One part that didn't surprise me was that personal autonomy was on the lower end. There is a difference in the way I think and the way I act. I might be more insecure than I let on. There is also a perfectionist in me, but I also go with the flow when needed. The other results seem realistic and accurate. My husband says that I'm sometimes too open-minded and too accepting of others. Accepting others becomes more important than my own beliefs. I am not sure if four parameters capture someone's ability to interact successfully across cultures. Some questions didn't directly relate to culture but rather to personal style.

6.4 Participant Experiences as Women Entrepreneurs Operating Businesses Cross-Culturally and Cross-Linguistically

Even though all the participants operate businesses in the English language education sector, their cross-cultural and cross-linguistic experiences are all different. In this section, the themes for each participant are presented with a diagram, and then the experiences behind those themes are shared in the restoried words of the participants. The text is once again coded to represent the voice of each participant using the same coding system as in Chapter 5.

Table 29: Participant Colour Coding

Participant	Colour Code
Emma	Blue
Gabriela	Brown
Jasmine	Green
Joanne	Pink
Nailah	Purple
Sabrine	Orange

6.4.1 Emma's Experiences Cross-Culturally and Cross-Linguistically

Emma's experiences cross-culturally and cross-linguistically fit into four main themes: living and working in the Caribbean as a visible minority, living and working in Canada as a non-visible minority, managing a multicultural school, and marketing an English language school

internationally. The first theme represents her previous experience. The latter three themes, mutually influencing each other, reflect her current position as the President and CEO of her language school in Canada. Within the latter two themes, there are multiple, smaller sub-themes.

Figure 58: Themes for Emma's Cross-Cultural and Cross-Linguistic Experiences
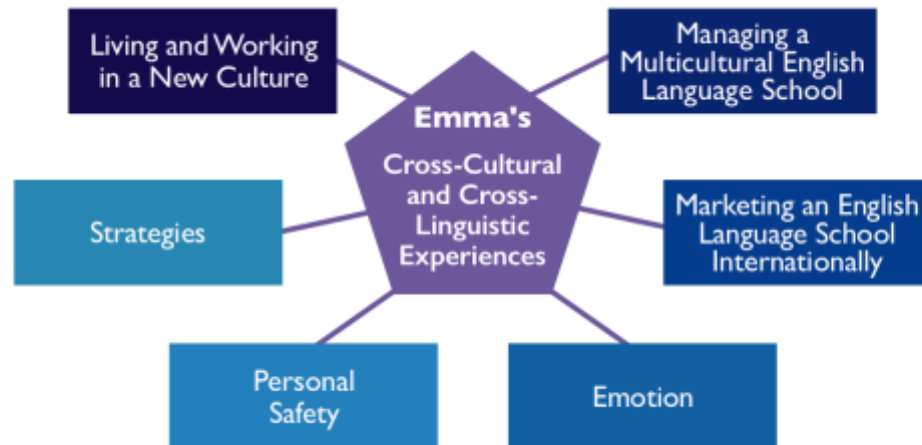
Prior to starting her English language school in Canada, Emma lived and worked in the Caribbean, a cross-cultural experience that had a significant impact on her and formed her initial perceptions about operating cross-culturally. It was her first experience living as a visible minority. The theme of living and working in a new culture is therefore strong in her narrative.

> When living in the Caribbean, I was always furious about something. I underwent a cultural shift. I went from living in England to living in the British Virgin Islands as a minority. People didn't want us there. They saw us as taking jobs from locals, but they didn't want to do the job of running charter yachts that we were doing. They ignored us when we went into a store until all the local people were served. They didn't speak to us. The standard answer we got in the Caribbean was "no." Their record keeping was in a crazy format. Everything was in paper files. For example, our immigration papers were all in paper files. We couldn't reason with people about anything. Dealing with the government was a hassle for white people. It was an infuriating cultural experience. They turn and ignore you when they are done with a conversation with someone else. I don't know if it is the same way now. There is more tourism there now. I haven't been there for years. This all happened twenty years ago. They liked Americans more than the British. The British had a bad reputation of taking over. There was also no concept of time. One time, we went with our parents to a restaurant. The server went to a revival meeting in the middle of the shift. It would be infuriating to run a business in that environment. But we adjusted, and in the end, it was a worthwhile experience.

The theme of living and working in a new culture continued for Emma as she went from living as a visible minority in the Caribbean to living as a non-visible minority in Canada as a British immigrant. She is linguistically distinct from those around her with her British accent and dialect but not visually distinct.

> When I was tutoring, students sometimes wanted a British tutor because of the accent. Most people associate a British accent with quality. They think it sounds better than a North American accent. So this usually works in my favour. But then, some of them also can't hear the different accent, depending on their level of English. I tell students they will be trilingual. They will know Canadian English, British English, and their native language.

Emma's second theme, managing a multicultural English language school, is equally significant. In her English language school in the Canada, she has students from around the globe. This creates a complex, dynamic cross-cultural school environment.

> It is challenging when you have so many cultures interacting in the same school. For example, there can be tensions if you have students from countries that are not getting along. Then again, some of the cultural groups get along really well. If cultural groups are outgoing or noisy, they like to hang out together. The quieter cultural groups have more trouble fitting in.

One strategy that Emma and her business partner use to manage their multicultural school is to promote the use of English as the language of communication among the students both inside and outside the classroom.

> We have a strict English-only policy within the school to facilitate students with different languages and cultural backgrounds mixing together. And the students usually all congregate together in the student lounge area, so they speak English automatically.

Still under the theme of managing a multicultural school, Emma points out that identifying the underlying cause of student challenges is not always easy.

> Sometimes it is hard to determine if an issue is a cultural issue or just an issue that arises when young people are in an environment where personal things happen, like boyfriend and girlfriend relationships. My business partner handles these student issues. She is both a counsellor and police officer. She decides when we need to call in professional help for these situations. We also sometimes have student learning issues that are hard to distinguish from cultural or language issues. We deal with learning disabilities or mental health issues, in which case we support the students as best we can, sometimes even assisting them to transition to another school that is equipped with the resources and training needed to meet their needs. So we do have cross-cultural tensions sometimes, but most of the time, we generally have young people issues or student learning issues.

The multicultural nature of Emma's school also impacts decisions all the way down to how their physical space is used.

> Our new location for our school has a prayer room for Muslim students. We spent a lot of time contemplating this decision, deciding whether we should adapt our physical location to accommodate one specific religion. We thought long and hard about it. At our old location, we gave these students classrooms to use for prayers, but then they also used the washrooms for ablutions. The other tenants in the building would complain about water on the washroom floors. In our new location, the Faith Room, as we call it, is dead space. There is no return on investment, but it addresses the practical issue we have. We call it the Faith Room because we don't want to talk about it as only for Muslim students, but they are usually the only ones using it.

To balance out this accommodation for one group, Emma has other ways of recognizing other cultural groups. "For other nationalities, we make sure we recognize the holidays that are important to them."

Emma's final theme, of marketing her school internationally and developing business, has multiple layers to it and significantly impacts her experiences running her business. A basic requirement for Emma when marketing an English language school is making their promotional materials available in multiple languages.

> It is a challenge to market to different language groups. We keep our website the same, in English, but we have a link to Google translate on it. We have a Chinese recruiter pushing us right now to have a Chinese website, which we are looking into. All our print marketing materials are the same for all markets. It is cost-prohibitive to have different materials for different cultures. Our main brochure is generic for all cultures. However, we will translate our main brochure and take that one piece of marketing with us on a trip. For example, if we are going to Brazil, we will have our main brochure in Portuguese. We keep our number of brochures small when we print. We produce less than 6,000 each year. Then we use inserts so that we can change the dates, programs, and prices as needed.

Marketing internationally also requires that Emma use student recruiters with different language abilities.

> We use student recruiting staff from different linguistic and cultural backgrounds. The customers are comfortable working with them. Culturally, we have to figure out how people want to communicate. We tailor our approach to what they want. And we have to remember that English is not their first language. We have two multilingual recruiters, one who speaks Spanish and Portuguese, and one who speaks Mandarin, Korean, and Japanese. We also send our student recruiters to international student fairs. They can speak with students and parents in the local languages. One challenge in managing our multilingual recruiters is that we can't verify their work because it is in different languages that we don't understand. As an

> organization, we are entirely dependent on them. When they leave, we lose all connection to the customers in their regions. The next recruiter has to start again.

Still under the theme of marketing her school internationally, Emma takes part in international trade missions, visits from hosts agents from different cultures, and international business development initiatives. Emma has participated in several trade missions organized by the Canadian industry association, Languages Canada.

> I did two Languages Canada trade missions: one to Russia and the Ukraine and the second to Kazakhstan and Italy. Trade missions are a controlled environment. I go to the hotel, work with the agents, and then leave. I don't do much. If I was travelling on my own, not with a trade mission, maybe I would have encountered more things.
>
> The Kazakhstan trade mission was a long journey. The first thing that hit me was the air. The pollution is so strong because they burn coal for fuel. My eyes were bloodshot from the pollution. I thought the people in Kazakhstan would be the same as Russian people, but they are quite different. Russians have a degree of seriousness, while people in Kazakhstan seemed much friendlier and more approachable. On the day of the agent fair portion of the trip, half of the agents didn't show up. The organizers were scrambling to find other agents who could come on short notice. Apparently, a cultural behaviour in this region is that they don't let people know they're not coming to an event. Nothing came out of the trip to Kazakhstan because securing student visas was a problem. They can't apply for visas in Kazakhstan, so they need to send them to Moscow for approval. It takes six months to get visas through this route. And most of the visas are rejected. The trip should not have been arranged in the first place when it was impossible to get visas for students from there.

Hosting international agents in her school has the potential to be equally problematic.

> One Russian agent came to my school, and I spent the afternoon with her. I took her out for dinner. She said she loved the school, but then I never heard back from her again. I find it quite challenging to read Russian agents. They tend to be serious and don't show much emotion. I just can't read them to gauge their level of interest.

International business development also falls under the theme of marketing her school internationally. This business development for larger, multi-student projects has presented Emma with the most difficulties. As an example, Emma described the struggles she experienced trying to develop business in the Gulf region.

> I have to be frank in saying I have been let down by Gulf region business people. Everything is rush, rush, rush to get it all in place and then nothing. There is a lot of big talk, but then they don't reply. You wait for people for hours before they show up for meetings, and then they're on their phones during the meeting. They expect a lot and are demanding. I did a project through our provincial international education organization. I was on the board of the organization at the time. The project was for

school improvement in a Gulf city. I wasn't the lead person on the project. The lead person on the project was treated very well at beginning, but once things started to fall apart, she wasn't treated well at all.

We had another bad experience with a client from the same region. This client is the reason we stopped doing our summer camps. This client brought 25 girls to our camp the first year, then 100 girls the next year. They told us they were going to come back the next year with 100 to 200 girls. We hired someone to work on the program. They worked on setting up the program until March. Then we were told that the students were going elsewhere. We had paid the person's salary to develop the program, and a conference centre was holding space for the camp. At that point, I was fed up with summer camps and fed up with dealing with clients from that region. They had no sense of loyalty. I decided we wouldn't be doing this anymore. I'm not willing to do business in the region anymore. I am just not okay with that way to do business.

With international business development and marketing, Emma finds it challenging to adapt to how people from different cultures communicate and conduct business.

Some cultures are easier to deal with. Some cultures are warm. Once you get used to hugging and kissing, I find them easier to deal with. In other cultures, they are quiet and don't have a sense of humour. In those cultures, I dial myself back so that I don't overwhelm them. Still, other cultures are very relationship oriented and friendly, but then nothing happens. Then I find other cultures quite aggressive and cutthroat. Ethically, I have some issues with how they work. It is hard to stay professional if they are not professional.

Through her international business development and marketing experiences, Emma has realized how important relationship building is in all cultures.

I had an agent in Mexico. He was an older man who had all the time in the world to chat. When I commented on the amount of time we spent chatting, he told me, "This is marketing. You have to commit to putting a lot of time into it." When we do education tours, after working all day, we are expected to go out in the evening to socialize and continue to build relationships. I tell my student recruiters who are on these tours to go out and do this. I tell them not to worry about keeping up with emails and other computer work while they are out on a tour. Their job is to connect and build relationships. One of our marketing goals is to build strong and meaningful relationships that both parties get something out of.

Emotion coding is evident in Emma's narrative when she commented that working cross-culturally and cross-linguistically all the time is exhausting, particularly the international trips.

I come back exhausted from international trips because I am on high alert the whole time I'm away. It is a weight off my shoulders when I arrive back in Canada. I feel safer in Canada because I can speak the language, and I can ask the police for help. When you are in some countries, the police may not be helpful. It is even more

exhausting when doing a multi-city trip. You are dealing with multiple cultures, multiple levels of risk, multiple currencies, and multiple languages.

Along with managing the exhaustion of cross-cultural and cross-linguistic business development and marketing, Emma puts effort into minimizing personal risk when she travels internationally. Safety is therefore a crucial theme for her.

> The main strategy is to minimize risk. I am super careful. I am overly cautious when travelling. I don't go out at night alone. Even when I'm in a group, I am quite cautious. I prefer to stay in the hotel. I am careful about taxis. I am careful about what I take with me. I don't wear much jewellery. I don't take a big bag. I split up my money. Some goes in my handbag, and some goes in my pocket. I photocopy my passport and carry the photocopy with me at all times. I leave my actual passport in the hotel safe. I carry as few things as possible in my pocket or bag. I would rather be overly cautious. I am always aware of my surroundings. I look around all the time.

Emma's final theme from all of her cross-cultural and cross-linguistic experiences is one of strategy. When she is operating cross-culturally, she tries to balance noticing patterns so that she can be effective and efficient, with trying not make pre-mature judgments about the people she meets.

> Because of all my cross-cultural experiences, I see patterns in cultures. I try to learn from my experiences. I adjust my way of interacting based on my experiences and previous interactions. But I also want to avoid making judgments based on incomplete information. When I meet someone new, they are first a person to me, not a culture. I adjust my responses based on how the other person behaves. That determines whether I do business with them or not.

6.4.2 Gabriela's Experiences Cross-Culturally and Cross-Linguistically

Gabriela's cross-cultural and cross-linguistic experiences originate from cross-cultural project management across two countries and cultures, with planning being directed from Canada where she is based and implementation taking place in Colombia where her partner is based. Interestingly, although Canada is Gabriela's second culture, she has been in Canada longer than she lived in Colombia. In her cross-cultural project management, Gabriela must navigate multiple differences between the two cultures in how business is conducted.

Figure 59: Themes for Gabriela's Cross-Cultural and Cross-Linguistic Experiences
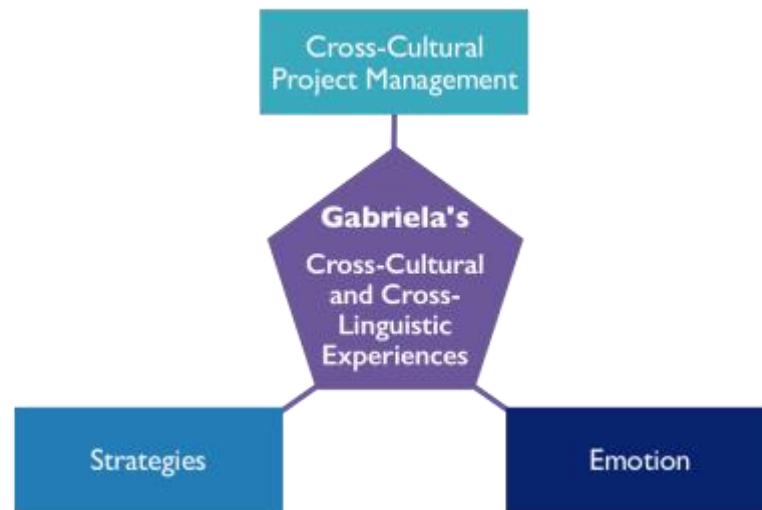
Under the theme of cross-cultural project management, the first issue that Gabriela regularly has to navigate is differences in the level of formality between the two cultures in terms of communication and relationships.

> In Colombia, everything is formal. Business letters are in very formal language. I often ask my partner to help with our written communication because I don't know the expected formalities anymore. There are also formalities about how to speak and how to relate to people, defined by hierarchy and also by gender. In a restaurant in Canada, for example, we are usually friendly to servers. We know that a server can be a student or the son of a friend. Or we were a server ourselves at one time. We are expected to treat servers as equals and with respect because they are not lower than a customer. In Colombia, and in most countries in Latin America, we expect and demand to be served as we please. Everyone knows their place in the transaction. In some cases, customers are condescending towards those who provide services because they are not considered equals. In other cases, servers are treated with disrespect because they are lower in the social ladder.

Another challenge with cross-cultural project management that Gabriela faces is enforcing written agreements with her clients and local partners.

> Written agreements can be mean nothing. As an example, in a previous tourism project, we produced a video that caught the attention of the National Ministry of Tourism of the country where it was produced. As per film and video production standards, the video included credits acknowledging the people involved in the project, including the technical support people. It also included our logo as the producers of the video. We received a request from the Ministry of Tourism to use our video at a world convention. We put together an agreement that said the Ministry of Tourism could not make any changes to the video, including the credits, without our prior written agreement. This was in a formal letter to a high-ranking

official at the Ministry. To our dismay, significant changes were made to the video. The changes included changes to the credits and a new message at the end of the video implying that the Ministry was the main producer of the video and our company just the support team. I sent them a formal letter ordering them to remove the changed video from their website. We never received acknowledgement of our complaint letter. We also knew there was nothing we could do as we were a small company.

Another aspect of cross-cultural project management that is problematic for Gabriela is negotiating payment.

I learned by experience not to start a project until I get the money that I want up front. It is customary that clients wait as long as they can to pay, but they expect you to start working on their project with just a promise that they will pay on a certain date. At some point, however, they will tell in you in a very nice way that they can't pay as agreed because they have financial issues or some other problem. My approach now is to set up my work in stages. I start each stage only when the client has honoured full payment for that stage. I keep in touch with my clients on a regular basis, and I provide them with frequent written reminders about the budget and the outstanding balance.

When managing projects in Colombia and Latin America, Gabriela has to manoeuvre through power differently than in Canada, which is another issue in her cross-cultural project management theme.

How we perceive power and relate to power is based on culture. Latin cultures tend to be hierarchical. For example, if you are a business owner talking to the mayor of a city, the mayor will always have the upper hand. He is doing you a favour by just agreeing to talk to you. You are expected to accept this power difference and act accordingly. Here is an example from when I worked in tourism. The mayor of a small community in Honduras had money to help the community develop cultural tourism initiatives. Decisions needed to be made to get the project going. They needed to invest in several health centres to get minimum health care services for locals and visitors alike. A high-ranking meeting was set up. I arrived for the meeting on time. But the mayor exercised his power by not arriving on time. He made us wait an hour. He arrived in a large truck. He wore dark glasses and didn't take them off during the meeting. So, I put my sunglasses on, too. First, I asked him what his interests in the project were, what was in it for him, and how he saw it unfolding. I let him display his power. I made a presentation and brought him into the project as a power player. I could not reject him as a partner in the project because I wanted the project for the people in the community. I navigated the meeting while keeping in mind that making him feel important was a key ingredient to get the final signature. But we integrated a commitment to transparency and accountability into the final agreement.

Emotion is a clear theme in Gabriela's cross-cultural experiences. She is always very aware of her emotions and very consciously manages them.

> Many times, I have had to pull back on my emotions. I tend to show my emotions easily. Managing this difficult mayor in Honduras, for example, was tough. It was against my principles to pander to a corrupt politician. I had to remember that I was there for others, not myself. Whenever I am in that situation, I remember why I'm there. I manoeuvre as best I can to find common goals. I remove myself from the personal and emotional and try to act in a strategic way. It is not always easy, and at times, it is exhausting. Thankfully, this is not an everyday occurrence.

Another emotion for Gabriela is exhaustion. Just as Emma finds international travel exhausting, Gabriela finds bridging projects across two cultures exhausting. She prefers to work in the Canadian culture than bridging to Colombian culture.

> I find it easier to work in the Canadian business culture. It is difficult for me to go to Colombia now. The constant adjustments to Latin American ways and trying to anticipate what might happen can be exhausting.

Gabriela has strategies for managing cross-cultural projects, as she does for being a woman entrepreneur, that she has developed over time through trial and error.

> I have learned that it is more effective to communicate by telephone and in person than email. It is very easy to strike the wrong tone in email. Important messages can be misinterpreted. You get a more accurate understanding of tone by the phone. I have also learned not to share too much information with a client. Less is better. And I also don't offer as much information up front. I have also learned that when I do use email, I need to take my time with it. Instead of responding immediately, I sit back, write, look at it, call, ask questions to clarify if needed, and then finish the email.

Another strategy that Gabriela adheres to with her cross-cultural projects is preparation.

> I take my work in cross-cultural environments very seriously. It is quite exciting to prepare for it. You learn by reading, by listening to stories, and by speaking with others who have also worked in a similar situation or environment.

Finally, Gabriela also described strategies she uses to problem solve when she encounters a cultural challenge she had not anticipated or prepared for.

> My strategy is simple. Usually, I ask lots of questions and request clarification. I paraphrase. I take notes. I put aside my immediate responses and ask for time to think before I provide a final answer. The most important thing is to listen and to step away from my preconceived ideas. I also use the third person approach. I say, "I spoke with my business partner, project manager, or team, and we decided how we can proceed." This approach works well for me. It removes me from the centre of the situation and allows space for negotiations without being personal. I also use the

Canadian business culture as a buffer. I say, "We are a Canadian company, and this is how we are required to do things."

6.4.3 Jasmine's Experiences

Jasmine's cross-cultural and cross-linguistic experiences can be divided into her experiences learning English in Canada and her experiences running her English language school in China.

Figure 60: Themes for Jasmine's Cross-Cultural and Cross-Linguistic Experiences
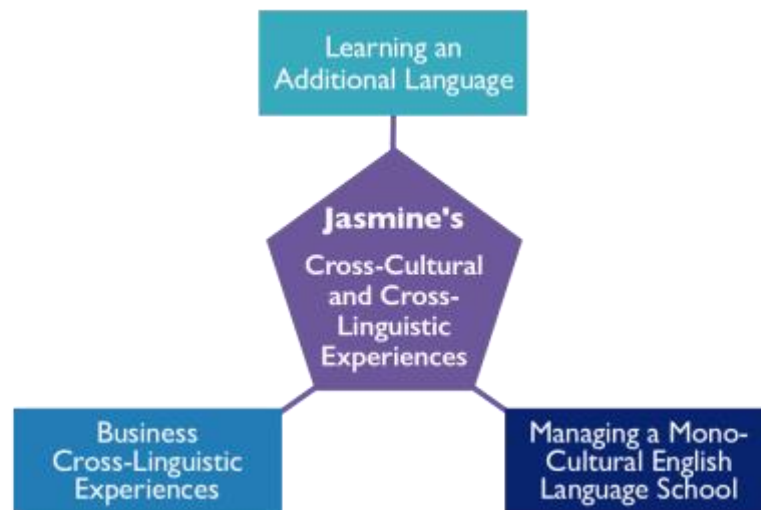
Jasmine's first theme is her life-changing experience learning English in Canada.

> I totally changed when I went to Canada to learn English. With my personality, I couldn't do the housewife role in China anymore. I was looking for something different to do. I couldn't relax. I had to do something different, or I would go crazy. Learning English in Canada was a great opportunity to make a change. I wanted to do one thing in my life that I would enjoy.

Interestingly, Jasmine is not interested in further travel now. Her energy has now shifted to her business.

> I don't want to travel now. I just want to work. My dream, when I was younger, was that I wanted to travel around the world. At my age now, I have lost interest in travelling. If you travel, you find that every place is the same because people everywhere are the same. Now, my dream is my business.

The most significant cross-cultural theme with Jasmine is running a monocultural English language school in China. Within this theme, Jasmine exploits the culturally different perspectives her Canadian English teachers have on education as a selling point for her school.

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The value of the Canadian teachers is that they have a different perspective on teaching and learning. Chinese teachers are very creative, but they are just not allowed to be creative in the Chinese school system. With my Canadian teachers, I let them be creative and not follow the rules. For example, one day in the spring, it was warm, and the teacher took the students outside. The students loved it. In China, we study in the classroom and work hard. And we always follow the rules. I appreciate creative learning experiences. In the school context, I have Canadian teachers so they can provide this.

On the other hand, when running her mono-cultural school, Jasmine serves as a culture broker for her Canadian English language teachers and her students. She explains Chinese culture to her Canadian English language teachers, and she explains Canadian, American, and other English-speaking cultures to her Chinese students. As Jasmine states, "I am always working between two cultures."

A cross-cultural obstacle that Jasmine had to broker with her very first Canadian teacher was accommodation.

At the beginning, with the first teacher, I let her live in my house. I thought she would be happy because it is comfortable. The teacher lived on the third floor, and I lived on the second floor. But she didn't like that because it wasn't private. So I rented an apartment for her. The apartment is not comfortable like my house, but the teacher liked the privacy.

Another cross-cultural obstacle that Jasmine has had to broker with all of her teachers is a general knowledge gap of Chinese culture.

The Canadian teachers all know that China is different, but they just don't know the ways in which it is different. One thing about China that I had to explain to the Canadian teachers was the one-child policy. And I had to explain that Facebook is blocked and so are other websites.

Jasmine has also had to broker class start times three ways, between what her Canadian teachers want, what she wants as a business owner, and what her Chinese students want.

My classes are very small, with one to three students. The students may be late, so the class starts late. But the teacher doesn't like to start late. I have to be nice to the students because they are paying. I talk to the teacher who says it isn't her fault that the students are late. I talk to the students and say that they have to follow Canadian rules, not Chinese rules. They have to start on time. The students understand. When I was at the language school in Canada, I thought more like a Chinese student. I thought they didn't need to be so strict with students being late. Canadians are very strict about being on time. Now I can explain to my students that it's Canadian culture to be on time. At the same time, some Canadian teachers don't understand

customer service when it comes to students and education. Students are customers. So, I also had a conversation with the Canadian teacher. I said we need to find the middle ground. I said we are running a business, and we need to focus on the customers.

Jasmine uses an interesting approach to broker the Chinese culture for her friends and her teachers. She uses stories, or one particular story, because she feels that stories are a powerful way to understand and explain a culture.

Before my friend travelled to China, I sent her a book called *The Moment of Peking*. It was very useful. When she visited different places in China, she had read about them in the book. The book is based on a famous Chinese novel, *The Dream of the Red House*. In China, this novel is equivalent to Shakespeare's work. The writer only wrote one novel. Many people have tried to translate the novel to other languages, to introduce it to other countries, but it is very difficult to translate. The language is so amazing. It is like a poem. You think it is about one idea, but if you think again, there is a different meaning inside. A famous Chinese writer actually gave up trying to translate the novel. He taught in America as a professor, and he knows English very well. When he gave up trying to translate the novel, he thought he could write a similar story in English instead. It is called "The Moment of Peking." I don't like the English story he wrote as much as the Chinese novel, but it helped my friend understand Chinese culture, family, and architecture. I also gave it to my last teacher. It is a good way to know China.

When running her monocultural school, Jasmine has a second culture-brokering role, that of preparing her students who are going abroad to study for the cultural differences that they will encounter. The first thing she talks to students about is their attitude.

I tell them that the important thing when they go abroad is their attitude. In China, in the past, people had limited property and just enough money to get by. More recently, families have more money and fewer children. The problem is that adults and children have the wrong concept that now that they have money, they can do whatever they want. If students are planning to study abroad, I teach them that they need to change their attitudes. They need to respect others and not just think of themselves. If they live in a homestay, for example, they shouldn't think they can do whatever they want. They must ask permission to go out. They must help with the housework. I tell them that this attitude is more important than studying.

Jasmine also explains the differences between the Canadian and American education systems and the Chinese education system to her students.

I tell them about the advantages of studying in Canada. I tell them they won't do as much work in school. That's why some of them want to study abroad. In China, students start studying at 6:30 a.m. Then they study and study, and they repeat and repeat. The Chinese education system is different. There are three years in high school. In the first year and a half, students finish all their courses. In the second

> year and a half, they repeat the courses to become more familiar with the subjects and get good marks. They have to take the national university entrance test. It is very stressful for students. Studying in Canada is not as stressful.

Jasmine comes full circle to her initial personal life-changing experience of learning English in Canada when she explains to students the approach that her school takes with teaching English and how they will learn English. She explains how this is different from how they learn English in their classes in Chinese schools.

> When it comes to learning English, Chinese students think they have to study from a book. Students who study from a book don't learn to communicate. They don't understand that they need to interact and communicate to learn, that they can't learn just from a book. They need to understand that good learning comes from their classmates and the learning environment. I tell them this.

Jasmine's final theme is her business cross-linguistic experiences. Jasmine serves as the main interpreter for her teachers to communicate with their students and for her students to communicate with their teachers. In this translator role, she noted that she often encounters differences between the surface and deep meanings of words in English and so sees the limitations to her own English proficiency in the context of running her business.

> It is difficult for me to communicate in English. I stayed in Canada for a long time while going to a language school. I thought I could communicate in English. But I realize that I can understand the words, but sometimes the thinking behind the words is different.

6.4.4 Joanne's Experiences Cross-Culturally and Cross-Linguistically

Joanne's cross-cultural and cross-linguistic experiences have primarily taken place within her English language school in Canada. She did not have prior cross-cultural or cross-linguistic experience before briefly being the office manager at a local English language school and then starting her own school. "Before starting this business, I had only travelled to the US before. I had only been on a plane once."

Even today, Joanne's actual international travel is limited.

> I have not taken much in the way of trips. Before I had kids, there wasn't enough money in the business to take these big trips. Now we have money in the business, but I don't want to leave the kids.

However, within her English language school, Joanne has interacted with students from over sixty-seven countries over the past sixteen years.

Figure 61: Themes for Joanne's Cross-Cultural and Cross-Linguistic Experiences
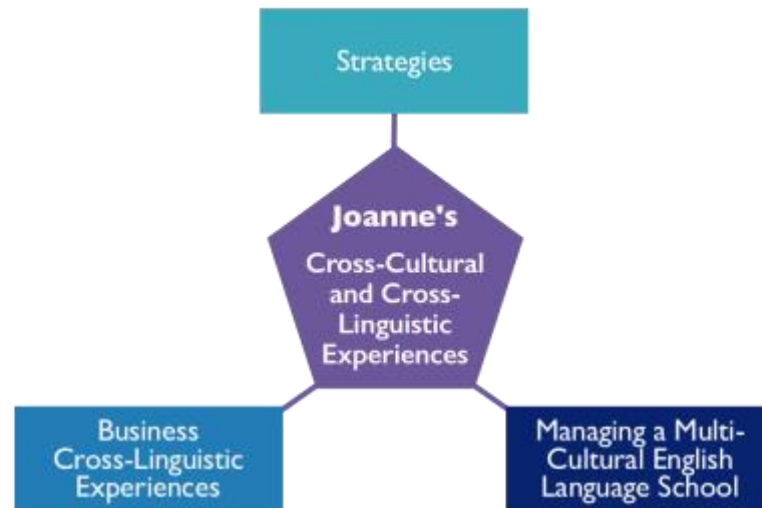
Managing a multicultural English language school is the most significant theme with Joanne. Just as Jasmine's experience learning English in Canada was life changing, Joanne's first experience working in an English language school was life changing.

> Meeting people from other countries was a new experience for me. They liked different food and had different clothing. I had never been interested in history and geography. Then I started to meet new people, and I became interested. I realized how big and how small the world really is.

Running a multicultural English language school has fed Joanne's ongoing interest in culture learning that started when she first worked in an English language school.

> I have 18 years of experience in English language education. We still get new cultures that I haven't encountered before. I go into every conversation with my eyes wide open. I make no assumptions. I learn from the students all the time, and they learn from me.

Some cultural groups in her multicultural English language initially presented Joanne with a steeper learning curve than others.

> It was very difficult at the beginning to understand Saudi students. The men seemed demanding and argumentative. They weren't really, but their pronunciation and intonation patterns made them seem that way. Saudi enunciation is very specific, and they are very loud speakers. But Saudi culture has changed, and the students have changed. Students ten years ago were devout Muslims. They followed the traditions and wore traditional clothing. Now students seem more westernized. They

try to mimic the language on street. They pick it up from each other and the media. They wear westernized clothing.

Over time, Joanne identified general contrasts between different cultural groups of students in her school, with the biggest contrast being between Spanish-speaking and Japanese students.

Spanish-speaking students are easy going. They are not afraid to make mistakes. They feel more comfortable and have a freer nature. Japanese students are more formal. They say "please" and "thank you" three times in one sentence.

These contrasts aside, Joanne is able to see through the differences to understand the messages from the students. "The two groups of students may be saying the same message, but the way it is relayed it is very different. But my mind has been trained not to see any difference in the message."

Having run a multicultural school for so long, communicating cross-culturally and cross-linguistically has become automatic for Joanne. She has become adept at business cross-linguistic communication, another theme in her experiences. "I don't think about how I communicate after a while. It becomes second nature with experience and knowledge." Joanne has also learned to do anything necessary to communicate with students with limited English. "I use lots of gestures. I use the white board for drawing pictures and writing words. I slow down and use basic English. We don't see as many low-level students like this anymore, however." Joanne has one additional language that she sometimes uses to facilitate communication. "With Spanish-speaking students, I sometimes speak Spanish when absolutely necessary."

Related to Joanne's theme of managing a multicultural English language school, Joanne uses specific events and celebrations as a strategy to create a multicultural environment in the school.

Recently, we had a Chinese New Year celebration. All the students in the school came. That has never happened before. Students brought some of their own food to the potluck, so it was not just Chinese food. Students did a presentation on how Chinese New Year is celebrated in different Asian countries. We also celebrated Ramadan and Eid al-Fitr. Once again, students shared food and presented. Things like this prevent critical incidents from happening. We celebrate holidays. We have general potlucks with food from the students' countries. We have weekly conversation circles for all levels so that students communicate with one another outside of class. We have a good turnout. We don't do conversation circles in the summer, however. The students asked for soccer instead.

She sees creating a safe environment as another crucial strategy in managing a multicultural school.

> We work hard to create a safe environment to diminish the cross-cultural challenges. It is easier to make a safe environment with smaller class sizes, and it is easier with so many different cultures. Safety can be as difficult as wondering if someone is going to stab you, or it can be as simple as feeling comfortable that you won't be criticized or that someone won't think badly about you because of something you say that's related to your beliefs. My teachers are great ambassadors for encouraging understanding among the different cultures. If we didn't do some of the things we do, maybe we would have more issues arise.

Like Emma, Joanne noted not all the cultural incidents that she has to manage in her multicultural school occur across cultures; rather, some occur intra-culturally.

> Sometimes we expect incidents between two different cultures, but then the conflict comes from within one culture. For example, there can be tension between Muslim students who want to remain very devout and those who want to be less devout. It is a sensitive problem. We have a discussion with the students. We say, "It is a personal decision. We have no right to judge. You can voice your opinion, but ultimately, it is their decision."

Joanne has seen some of these intra-cultural tensions between students escalate, which led her to implement another important strategy in her school.

> We have had a couple of minor fights between students. Both these fights were within the same culture. One was between two Saudi students, and one was between two Chinese students. I am not sure what the Chinese students were fighting about. Regardless, we have a zero-violence policy. Students get a warning first. We tell the students, "If it happens again, you will be removed from our school." We have never gone beyond a warning. Students have a contract that they sign that says the endangerment of any staff, student, or guest is not permitted.

6.4.5 Nailah's Experiences Cross-Culturally and Cross-Linguistically

Nailah, interestingly, did not have any experiences that fell clearly in the cross-cultural and cross-linguistic category of experiences. Her experiences are all focused on her business, which occurs in a monocultural setting. As demonstrated in the previous chapter, she is very knowledgeable about her context and about her business. Her challenges and, therefore, her experiences are tied to the context in which she operates and to the teacher professional development business she runs, not to cross-cultural or cross-linguistic experiences. Even though she has a deep understanding of culture and its connection to language, as demonstrated in the next section, her experiences running her business on a daily basis do not fall into the cross-cultural or cross-linguistic category.

6.4.6 Sabrine's Experiences Cross-Culturally and Cross-Linguistically

The cross-cultural and cross-linguistic experiences that Sabrine shared fell into six themes: living and working in a new culture, first in South Korea and second in Algeria; her personal cross-linguistic experiences; her experiences with her cross-cultural teacher training; emotion; and her multiple cultural identities. Her experiences from South Korea informed her experiences returning to Canada, and both of these informed her experiences in Algeria. She regularly draws comparisons among the three sets of experiences.

Figure 62: Themes for Sabrine's Cross-Cultural and Cross-Linguistic Experiences
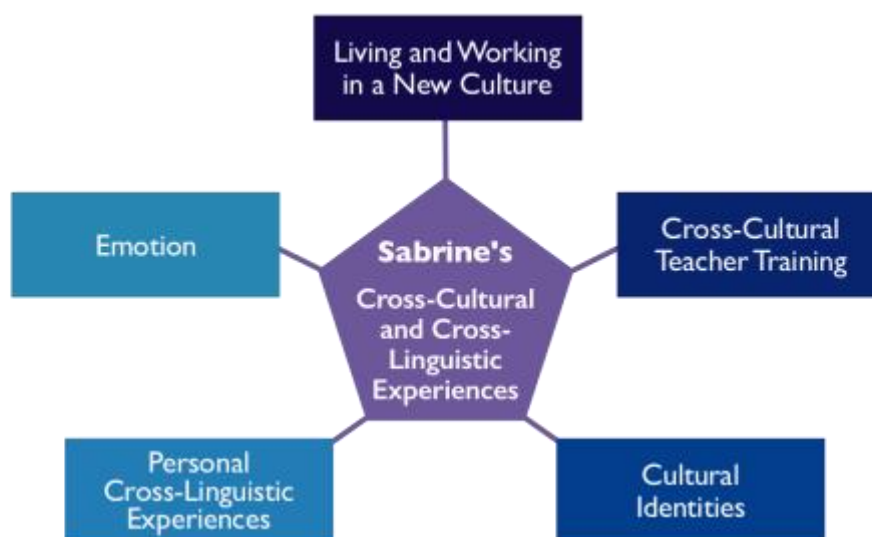
Sabrine's first experience living and working in a new culture was in South Korea. This was an impactful cross-cultural experience for her. She felt that she adapted well to South Korea.

> I don't think I experienced culture shock in South Korea. I had a strong network of expatriates around me. I didn't have to adjust completely to South Korea. I had my community, so I could keep my western qualities. It was nice there because teachers are highly respected. They are put on a pedestal. Canadian teachers expect and demand more than they get in Canada.

Despite adapting well to the South Korean culture, Sabrine noted characteristics of the culture that stood out for her.

> I really noticed the male–female dynamics. I would label it sexism. It is also a heavy drinking culture. People are forced to drink. They have to drink as much as the boss. Single girls are pushed to go out. South Korea has a fairly relaxed dress code, but you can't wear shorts or tank tops. The culture in South Korea has changed in recent years. It is less conservative, and they are not as respectful to elders as they were.

Through this experience living and working in South Korea, Sabrine learned that as a foreigner, she could position herself outside of the culture.

> Westerners don't always have to follow the rules of the culture in South Korea. In our school, we didn't have to do something if we didn't want to do it. The owner probably lost face with us a few times because of this.

She also indicated that it was difficult to become an insider in South Korea.

> Koreans are a closed people. They keep to themselves. They treat you like gold once you know them, and they are very generous, but it takes time to get in with them before they open up.

While in South Korea, Sabrine experienced several moral dilemmas created by cultural values differences between South Korean culture and Canadian culture that also formed part of her experiences living and working in a new culture.

> A small boy whom I tutored in South Korea had bruises all the time. I thought he might have been abused. This was a moral dilemma for me. Should I report it to the authorities? I had no proof. It was just my speculation. This was not my culture and not my country. I was not sure if this was taken seriously in South Korea. I didn't do anything in the end. I still feel guilty about that. But I did make his tutoring a good experience for him. I felt helpless. I talked to colleagues about it, but nothing was done about it. I had another moral dilemma in South Korea. A bunch of us were outside at night. A man was beating a woman in the street. Some of the male teachers with us tried to stop him. He told us, "It's okay; it's my wife." The woman started hitting the teachers, because they were holding her husband. She said if they called the police, the teachers would be arrested.

Returning to Canada after living in South Korea and experiencing reverse culture shock was a very challenging personal cross-cultural experience for Sabrine. She found this more challenging than living and working in South Korea in the first place.

> I experienced reverse culture shock when returning to Canada. I met my husband in Korea. My husband had never been to Canada. He had an easier time coming to Canada than me. I remember standing too close to a store clerk in Canada. In Korea, personal space is smaller than in Canada. My standing so close made the store clerk feel uncomfortable. I actually felt at home in Chinatown in Calgary. And I taught English in a Korean school in Calgary because it felt familiar. I had adjusted so well to the Korean lifestyle that it was hard to adjust back. My friends felt the same way. We didn't expect reverse culture shock. People didn't relate to us. They didn't have the same experiences. We just didn't fit in anymore. And teachers were not paid as well or treated well in Canada. We were not on a pedestal. We had to work on our boss's terms. We had to pay a lot more in taxes. It was just very difficult.

Upon moving to Algeria, Sabrine started another experience of living and working in a new culture. She is just starting to peel back the layers of Algerian culture. Sabrine finds the culture of Algeria unique and a product of its history.

> People don't know much about Algeria and its culture. They assume things. Algeria is an Islamic country, but it does not have an Islamic government. The government is secular and is modern in thinking. It is a culturally diverse country. The people all look different. There is influence from Turkish colonization and from the Greeks. There are Roman ruins in Algeria. There are Sahara people. The French colonized it for 150 years. Spain was also here. The history is quite rich.

Sabrine was familiar with some aspects of Algerian culture before moving to the country through her marriage to an Algerian.

> Because I married an Algerian, I had eaten Algerian food before I came here. Algerian food is a Mediterranean diet, similar to Moroccan food. The food is not spicy, but it is flavourful. Couscous is a staple. Then they have baguettes or bread. And there are sauces, soup, and yogurt. It is good, tasty food.

Sabrine readily admits that she is still in the beginning stages of understanding Algerian culture.

> I still don't understand Algerian culture and dynamics. I try to anticipate what people are going to say or do, but I can't. In Algeria, it is in the culture to respect older people, but it is not as prominent as in South Korea or Japan. I also really notice that men are always standing at the corner on the street with nothing to do. The women don't do that. They socialize at home, or they visit neighbours or families. In coffee shops, there are only men smoking, so coffee shops are not a comfortable or welcoming place. Music is in an interesting position in Algeria. Algeria has a rich musical culture and history, but sometimes, problems can arise because Islamic culture does not always look upon music favourably. There are differences in opinion about music because while some people are secular, others are more conservative. Some people are more sensitive to it than others.

Sabrine has found Algerian weddings a particularly noteworthy part of the culture she has seen thus far.

> Algerian weddings are like a fashion show. The women are segregated from the men. There is a man's party and a woman's party, but these may not be at same time. The woman's party has coffee, tea, and snacks. And then it is like a fashion show with dancing. And it will include the women doing tribal cries. The bride will wear five to seven outfits. Each dress costs about $1,000. All the gold they own is worn at one time. Guests will wear three or four outfits. The closer your relation to the bride, the more changes of clothes you will have. There is a change room. The bride sits on a stage on a big chair with cushions at her feet like a princess. She changes clothes, walks around, and sits down, and people take photos. There are traditional dresses from different regions. They love Hindi dramas, so there is an Indian style dress. There may be a Berber dress or one from Roman heritage.

> Designers try to reinvent the style every year. The embroidery and beadwork are beautiful. They wear jewellery, makeup, and hair clips. The bride wears a lot of makeup, like war paint. They pay someone a lot of money to do the makeup. One traditional thing is that the bride wears strings of pearls that go all the way down to her knees. She wears it on her head like crown. Before they agree to the marriage, the bride must have a belt of gold, or she can't be married. They spend a lot of money on weddings. I went to my niece's wedding, and I bought an Algerian traditional dress. It was like a piece of art. It had a wide belt embellished with beadwork. It is a spin on a Moroccan style called a kaftan.

Another theme for Sabrine is her personal cross-linguistic experiences in Algeria. She was very direct about her lack of proficiency in Arabic.

> I am not able to communicate with people here. My in-laws complain that I don't speak Arabic. I understand some of what they say, but I can't speak it. My father-in-law won't try to communicate. He just complains that I don't speak Arabic. My mother-in-law talks to me in Arabic like I understand everything. I only understand about 10%.

That said, Sabrine does not need Arabic for her daily life. "I mostly deal with students. I don't mix in society too much. I go to school and come home."

Sabrine also has a theme related to her cross-cultural experiences training English language teachers in Algeria. One challenge she has, that also merits emotion coding, is managing cultural differences in the emotional spectrums between Algeria and Canada.

> Algerian blood is hot, so to speak. We always see people's emotions. They don't hide them. They are very expressive. They wear their emotions on their sleeves. A lot of diplomacy is needed when training Algerian teachers. Our business partner is a better person to handle the diplomacy. He can talk to them. He doesn't talk to them directly. I get too frustrated. Our business partner knows how to talk to them and can resolve problems in indirect way.

Sabrine also commented on how student competitiveness affects the teacher training that she does.

> In the TESOL courses, there is a lot of jealousy shown. The trainees are very competitive. I saw this after the first test was given back with their grades. The trainees immediately compared their grades. Then they tried to bargain for extra marks.

Another strong theme for Sabrine is personal cross-cultural experiences. Now living in her third culture, Sabrine has developed three contrasting personal cultural identities: one for Canada, one for South Korea, and one for Algeria.

In Algeria, when I am with my in-laws, I am quiet. I can't communicate much. I spend time observing. I am introverted. I don't know where I fit. I am not interactive. In Canada, I can communicate with my family, so I am not as introverted. I am also the eldest in the family, so I play the older sister role. My South Korean identity is more outgoing. I was a teacher there, an entertainer. In Algeria, with students, I am different again. I can communicate. And I have a different role as a trainer. My in-laws get confused. They think, "How she can teach when she is so shy?" My husband's nephew and his cousin's daughter are in my class. They see another side of me that they don't see in a family situation. I am not conscious of changing my identity from one situation to the next.

Sabrine's in-laws gave her an Arabic name that to them captures her Algerian identity.

They call me Zina, the shy, quiet one. This reflects their perception of my Algerian personality, I suppose. Only my husband's family calls me Zina. My students and my Algerian friends that know me from Canada call me Sabrine.

Under the same theme of personal cross-cultural experiences, Sabrine talked about "sticking out" or being visibly different in the cultures she has experienced.

In South Korea, I stuck out. People were always staring at you. I would stare back, and eventually, they would look away. In Algeria, I don't stick out. In Canada, when I started wearing a hijab, people would ask where I was from. I said I was from Manitoba, and they were confused. Sometimes I would get called racial slurs. I would get people who were first generation immigrants asking me where I was from. I thought it was funny. People would see my hijab and make assumptions about my origins.

A significant personal cross-cultural experience that Sabrine is currently experiencing is her husband's reverse culture shock.

I had culture shock when moving to Algeria, but my husband has reverse culture shock. He hadn't lived there for a long time. Reverse culture shock is worse than culture shock in my experience. People who knew you expect you to be as you were, but you're not. People you knew aren't as they were. Society has changed. You've changed in other ways. You don't fit anymore. A lot of Algerians come back after living abroad and experience reverse culture shock. Many leave again because they can't adjust to living in Algeria again. You have to be flexible. You have to accept that this is how it is here.

Finally, but still under the theme of personal cross-cultural experiences, Sabrine is mindful of the impact that changing cultural and linguistic contexts has on her young children.

When my oldest son was young, we returned to Canada from Algeria for several months for me to have our second child. It took him a while to adjust after we got back to Algeria again. His English proficiency had increased in Canada, but he couldn't speak Arabic as well. He couldn't speak with his Algerian cousin. He

6.5 Critical Incidents

As the second stage of the interview process, participants responded to four critical incidents based upon the author's personal experiences. Participants were asked to discuss what their interpretation of the critical incidents was, what was happening and why, what the person in the incident should do or should have done differently, and if they had experienced any similar incident. Each of the critical incidents is summarized below, followed by the participants' responses to the incidents. The themes in the participants' responses are coded using the full range of coding from Chapter 4, including coding on entrepreneurs, women entrepreneurs, the English language education sector, cross-cultural and cross-linguistic experiences, emotion, values, and strategies. The themes are identified in the commentary preceding the participant responses.

6.5.1 Responses to Critical Incident #1

In the first critical incident, a woman entrepreneur, Janine, travelled to Dubai to meet a prospective client. At the end of three days of meetings, which were facilitated by an interpreter provided by the client, the client did not comment on the proposal Janine put together, and there was no subsequent communication from the client.

Emma's initial response was emotional. She was not surprised by this critical incident because she had experience working with this cultural group.

> It honestly didn't surprise me that this happened in a Gulf region context. I have been in similar situations. You ask yourself, "Did I offend them? Did they go with someone else?" You never know what the answers are. As Canadians, we just don't get the rules, and we get frustrated. I am surprised, however, that Janine didn't have her own interpreter. You cannot rely on the interpreter of the person you're talking to. If you don't speak the language, you need your own interpreter. The person in control in this situation was the interpreter.

Gabriela also was not surprised by this critical incident, but for a different reason.

> Being upfront with a lot of information is a Canadian thing. I have learned in Latin America that it is best to only give potential clients a bite of information before an

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agreement is signed. It is a huge investment of time and resources to go to another country to explore possibilities. You don't want to give them all your information so they can pass it on to someone else for less. I learned that the hard way. Now, before a business trip, I communicate with a potential client to give them only the necessary information. To move forward, they must show interest and commitment. Depending on the client, I will sometimes ask for a retainer. If they hire me, I set a date for the offer to end. If I don't hear anything from them by that date, the offer is closed.

Jasmine felt this incident was really a business issue that any entrepreneur has to manage. She felt it was hard to know what was going on in this incident, but to her, it came down to a business decision and also a communication issue.

I would focus on business. Is the business good? If I want to do business with them, I would try my hardest to find out what happened. If the person doesn't like my proposal, I would try to find out the reasons why. Was it a communication problem? I would want to make sure the interpreter didn't make a mistake. You have to be careful to make it clear what happened between the people.

Jasmine also shared a similar experience from managing her monocultural English language school with one of her students who just stopped attending without giving her a reason.

A girl needed to pass a test to get into an international school. The parents came to me looking for help. We helped her a lot, but she didn't get into the school. Her English level was very low. Her parents thought this was okay because she learned a lot and was happy. And she needed to write the test again. So they said she would continue at my school. But then I guess she changed her mind and didn't continue with our classes. I felt sad. I liked her a lot. I thought I did a great job with her. I can guess why she chose not to return, but I don't know for sure. Maybe they thought the price was too high. Maybe another reason was that I didn't do what another language school would do and promise what I couldn't deliver. Maybe the father changed the decision that the mother made. In the end, I put a lot of work into the student and didn't find out why she left.

Joanne has also experienced similar but not identical situations to this critical incident from marketing her multicultural English language school to potential partners in China.

We can be in a meeting with someone, and there is someone interpreting what we are saying. They leave with a smiling face, and they say, "We'll be in contact." And then we never hear from them again. It happened recently with potential Chinese partners. We were trying to convince them to use our curriculum. Then they became ghosts. Now, I almost expect this. In these conversations, I can't understand what they are saying, but I can pick out signals and intonation. Maybe they have more questions and are not letting us know. I listen to the discussion in Chinese for hints. Sometimes, I don't agree with the way an interpreter does things. It doesn't seem to match the culture to me. But I don't want to be confrontational, so I just let it go. In this incident, I would have followed up. Do you have any more questions? We are

flexible. Did we miss anything? I would encourage conversation if something wasn't working for them. I would try to find common ground for it to work for both parties. I would also look at the proposal process and maybe have a draft proposal before the final one. I would have a conversation saying, "This is the way I'm thinking; does this make sense to you?" I would do this before putting all the time in. A contract sometimes seems concrete, like you can't change or modify it. A preliminary or draft is a brainstorming of ideas so you can get ideas across in a less confrontational fashion.

For Nailah, this incident was about being an entrepreneur, not about culture. She shared a similar experience she had and her pragmatic approach to managing proposals.

I did not get too deeply into the proposal process. I went quickly through the proposal. He said it was too much money, and he couldn't pay that much. He said he wanted something highly professional, but different people have different meanings for the word "professional." They did provide me with transportation to and from their office. That was the only good thing that came out of it. I was not feeling at ease with the man right from the beginning. He was not up to the business standard that we are used to working with. He was a business man and contractor. He had a lot of money, but he wanted to invest his money in something that offered a good return. So it was okay that it didn't go anywhere.

Nailah stated that this type of situation is almost a rite of passage for new business owners.

This type of situation usually happens when you start your business. You have to prove that you are good and professional. That is the price you pay before you get ahead. You have to sacrifice things to get into a market and earn trust. When you get bigger, you have the upper hand. It takes time and doesn't come easily.

Nailah also sees trust as a significant factor in this type of situation, another entrepreneurial theme for her.

I don't trust people easily. In business, you have to be careful and get advice from others before doing things. Get advice from your friends or your partners' friends. They may have some experience, and you can get as much advice as possible from them. You also need to know what is going on in the market because every market is different.

Sabrine similarly felt this incident is a learning experience that every entrepreneur needs to go through rather than a cultural issue.

I don't know how to resolve this incident. It is a learning experience as to what not to do next time. The interpreter was hired by the other person. In the future, both parties should get interpreters so you know what is going on, and it is not one-sided. The person also showed too much of what they could do to correct the problems. The customer could correct the problems on their own and didn't have to pay anyone. You don't want to reveal too much. Before the consultation begins, the

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consultation fees should be paid up front. If nothing comes of it, you still get paid for your ideas. As Canadians, we tend to give too much without expecting payment. We are too generous. I had this experience as an event decorator. There was a big job opportunity, and I did a quote. I was thinking that this is the job that will launch us as a business. But they gave the job to a competitor and ripped off my ideas. In this situation, I would be wise and wouldn't expose everything at the beginning. But I also wouldn't write them off. They may come back later.

6.5.2 Responses to Critical Incident #2

In the second critical incident, a woman entrepreneur, Mary, was the target of repeated aggressive sexual behaviour from a host country project manager on an international project.

Emma had not experienced this type of incident, but her younger colleagues had. She felt this was an issue for women entrepreneurs that also had a cultural element to it.

> This hasn't happened to me. I am married and older. I am never in these situations. I have seen it happen with younger people, however. On an education marketing trip to Berlin, a Chinese agent was after a young woman from the education organization we belong to. Some guys had to intervene and get him out of the hotel. It is easy for there to be a misinterpretation of someone's friendly demeanour. I have heard of people who have a "married" story ready for certain countries so there is no confusion. When you are on your own, it's scarier. Some people in the same culture don't see it the same way. They think it's normal. If I don't get respect from the person I'm doing business with, I'm not interested in doing business with them. I would walk away.

Gabriela experienced this type of incident when working as a tour guide, but not with her current business. She saw this as both a gender issue and an issue that anyone in a leadership role has to manage.

> When you are a tour guide, you have many roles to play in addition to the job description. You are a psychologist, a marriage counsellor, a nurse, and a translator. Unfortunately, as experienced by all the tour leaders I know, passengers can become attracted to the tour guide because you appear to be a confident, knowledgeable, and understanding person. I learned how important it is to set boundaries right from the beginning. For example, I never let my tour groups know my room number. I didn't stay on the same floor as the group. This one trip, I was working in Belize as a tour guide leading a group of bird watchers. One late night when I was already in bed, someone knocked on my door. It was the husband of one woman in the group. After determining there was no emergency, I walked him back to his room and told his wife I had found him tipsy and lost in the corridors. I changed to a different room and pretended that nothing had happened. I always used humour to diffuse these situations. With this client, I had to be very firm and clear. I told him in private that I didn't want to damage his relationship with his wife, so I wouldn't tell her what he was doing. I said I had to do my work. I said if he didn't respect me, I'd have to ask

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for a different guide to take over the group or send him back. He got upset, but he got the message.

Gabriela described her strategies for being proactive about this type of situation.

> When I used to train tour guides, and I always emphasized the importance of setting boundaries and demanding respect from clients. When I was single, I had a "married" story. I learned this strategy in Papua New Guinea. I invented a husband, and not just any husband. This one worked for the RCMP! I would bring him into the conversation as much as possible so that people would be convinced he was real. I even at one point had a friend record a voice mail message on my phone to dissuade anyone who would try to check. I had my married story for safety but also so people would be able to place me within their framework of understanding of the world. If I had a story about being married and having a family, this would allow them to place me within their world in a way that they could understand. I also had a religion as part of my story because religion was also central to their world. They would not have been able to place me in their world without a religion they knew.

Jasmine similarly described her strategy or approach with people behaving inappropriately in a business situation.

> If I was in that situation, I would leave. I am a simple person. If I like something, I say I like it. If I don't like something, I just say so. If I like you, I will want you as a friend. If I don't like you, I don't want to talk to you. A smart business person is very clear on what is acceptable behaviour and what is not. If I don't like you, but your behaviour is acceptable, then I can do business with you. In China, in the business environment, this kind of thing happens every day. You have to be very clear that they can't do this, that something is not acceptable.

Joanne reacted emotionally to this critical incident and felt that culture played a significant role in this situation. She shared similar experiences she has had managing her multicultural English language school.

> This made me sad. I see it as a cultural situation that the project manager thought it was appropriate to behave that way with a woman not from his culture. Personally, I have been in a few situations with students when I didn't feel comfortable with the way they spoke to me. We had a Japanese student who had a significant mental illness issues during our first year of opening. He decided he was going to marry me. I was same age as the students at the time. He was clingy and protective of me. Then he would be screaming at me in school. At first I thought it was a joke. Then I had to sit down and say this isn't appropriate. My business partner, David, was present when the Japanese student yelled at me. I don't know if David also had a conversation with the student. Then there was a creepy student from Saudi Arabia. He was always at my office door, asking what I was doing. He wanted to take me to Saudi Arabia. I distanced myself from this student. Fortunately, he was just here for short time. He studied with us for two to three weeks. It was an easier situation to deal with because he was here for a short time. When these things happen, you try to

make the best of the situation. You protect yourself first. You get help if you need to. You get someone else to relay strong messages.

Nailah likewise reacted emotionally to this critical incident and then brought her response back to being a business person.

> I was surprised that this happened. I would want to leave. I felt angry and wondered why the person continued with the business project. What would I have done if I were in that situation? I don't judge people. I don't know all the circumstances. I would like to be able to leave even if I lose the business and money. To be seen as a serious business person, you need to be firm but nice. You can be friendly but respectful. It is not easy.

Like Joanne, Sabrine pointed out that there are cultural differences in how this incident would be perceived.

> Nothing like that has happened to me. Some cultures view this differently. They don't take it as seriously as we do. In Canadian culture, this is very serious. We feel strongly about this type of thing. The key is to prevent this from happening again. Some women wear a wedding ring and say they are married, but sometimes that doesn't matter or make a difference.

6.5.3 Responses to Critical Incident #3A

In this critical incident, the first of two similar incidents, a woman entrepreneur on an international project was having challenges getting a taxi to stop and take her back to her hotel.

Emma could not identify the reasons behind this critical incident. As a strategy, she asked many questions to obtain the information that was needed.

> As I read the critical incident, I wondered why it happened. Was it because it was a woman on her own? Was it because she looked like a foreigner? Was it because the driver didn't speak English? We often think taxi drivers are aggressive, but instead, maybe they don't pick up a person because they know they probably can't communicate with that person, and it will be difficult for them. Some people use Uber because you can order an English-speaking taxi driver in some places. Getting a taxi in some countries is difficult. It can be risky. You need to know what you're doing.

Gabriela had a number of possible explanations for the incident based on her past experience, demonstrating cultural awareness.

> Based on some of my experiences I have had in Latin America, I would say that some taxis have a preferred route and won't go out of their way. If they see that you are not going in the same direction as their route, they won't pick you up. Some taxis will stop, and after you tell them where you are going, they will say they aren't

going that way and drive off. This happens especially if it is the end of their shift or they are going home for lunch. It depends on the time of day. One time, I was trying to get a taxi in an unsafe area of town. It was late at night. I was tired, and no taxi was going my way. I decided to walk a few blocks to the nearest hotel. The bellboy called a taxi for me. I felt safe and grateful. Now I always find a hotel because I know taxis will go to a hotel any time anywhere in the world.

To Jasmine, the taxi story and the next critical incident, the restaurant story, were very similar. She shared her similar cross-cultural experiences from when she travelled to Canada to learn English.

> I had a problem like this the first time I was in a Canadian airport. I arrived in the evening. I had booked the air bus to the city I was going to study in. I called them to say that I had arrived, but no one picked up the phone. I was early, but the bus was booked and paid for, so thought I would wait for the bus. The pick-up time came, but the bus didn't come. I called again. They said no one had called in, so no bus was sent to the airport. I was scared. I didn't know what to do. I cried. I asked them why they didn't send a bus because I has already booked it. Maybe they didn't come because I was the only passenger. They told me to wait there until morning. I told them you must pick me up now. But they didn't come. There were only cleaners left in the airport after midnight. I asked them where to go. They showed me a lounge where I could sleep. It worked out fine, but it was scary at the time. It cost me $100 on my cell phone bill for the calls.

Joanne highlights the affective or emotional elements of this incident and shared an incident that was the complete opposite.

> When frustrating things happen in different cultures that we don't understand, we make assumptions. This leads to hurt feelings. We need some way to release our frustration. I don't lose my temper very often, but I have the same type of reaction. I haven't done much travelling outside of comfortable countries. My first time in Panama, I hired a driver, and I had the opposite situation to the incident. I took a taxi to the hotel that was two hours away. The driver was very friendly. He was happy to talk to an English teacher. I never felt discriminated against because I was a foreigner. He was very willing to talk to me.

Nailah, like Gabriela demonstrating her cultural awareness, felt these are everyday life stories that could happen in any culture.

> These could happen to anybody anywhere. Some days, everyone you meet is nice, and sometimes, everyone you meet is like in this story. I went through this many times even in my own city before I owned a car. Sometimes, I waited for half an hour for a taxi. Drivers believed the area I was living in was very crowded. I was living on a main street where they were digging for an underground metro. It was hard to drive to our street. I started offering extra money to get a taxi. Now the underground makes it easier to get around, although it is crowded. But before that, I

had stories like this every day. Being a tourist can be even more difficult. In Egypt, taxi drivers like to pick up foreigners because they will pay extra. In Turkey last year, in an area near the guest house where I was staying, I was tired and had a cold. I couldn't walk any further. I just wanted to be driven a short distance to the end of the street where the guest house was. Taxi drivers there weren't nice. The drivers didn't want to take me that short distance, but eventually one drove me. There are the same problems with all transportation. When I was in England, I did a tour of downtown Manchester. The sign said there would be a tram every five minutes, then every 15 minutes, then every 20 minutes as it got later in the day. In England, public transportation stops early, so I had to look for a bus. I found a bus that took an hour to get me close to where I was going. I had had a good day of touring, but then I had transportation problems.

Sabrine just felt this was bad behaviour, regardless of the culture. She also shared her transportation experiences from living and working in Algeria.

I don't take any taxis here. I have two brothers-in-law who are taxi drivers, so I go with them. I am too scared to drive here. The roundabouts are crazy. If cars bump into each other, they just yell and shake their fists. There is no exchanging of insurance information in fender benders. And this week, someone keyed our car. It is a two-year-old car.

6.5.4 Responses to Critical Incident #3B

In this critical incident, the woman entrepreneur was eating at a restaurant with some local colleagues. Her food failed to arrive by the time all of her friends had finished eating. She got very angry and insulted the restaurant staff.

Emma speculated about possible reasons for the behaviour of the restaurant staff in not bringing the food, once again highlighting the lack of information with which to make any definitive judgment.

Maybe they unknowingly offended the staff at the restaurant. The friends may have known what was happening, but they didn't want to tell the woman entrepreneur because it might make her embarrassed. Or maybe they were embarrassed by the behaviour of the restaurant staff and didn't know how to deal with it. It was awkward all around. I wouldn't know what to change for the next time if something was done unintentionally.

Gabriela had similar experiences to the critical incident in her personal cross-cultural experiences.

We were in an international hotel in Papua New Guinea, and a British colleague wanted apple crumble for dessert. My colleague also ordered vanilla ice cream with it. The dessert didn't come with everyone else's. The waiter came to say, "Yours

will take longer." Then he came to say, "We have run out of apples and crumble." Finally, after waiting over 45 minutes, the dessert arrived, but it was just ice cream, no apple crumble! Another time in an international hotel on another South Pacific Island, we didn't get what we ordered because they ran out of the ingredients. When we asked for the bill we found that we were being charged for the dish they didn't have. The waiter, who was in truth an honest person, didn't understand the exchange of products and services for money. It was written down, so we should pay for it. It didn't matter that we didn't get it.

Gabriela has a clear strategy for dealing with this type of incident.

I avoid confrontation if possible. I don't know who the person is, where they are from, how long they have worked there, or how much education they have. I won't change the situation by talking to the manager except maybe get the person fired, and I don't want to do that. It can be frustrating when you travel. You want everything to be easy and go well. I try to find patience and humour. For instance, my friend was upset and confused about the dessert. I felt badly for him and understood his frustration. But I also found the entire situation humorous. Humour saves you from feeling stressed. In that situation, there was no ill intent. It is also important to recognize that when you are a foreigner, in some places, some people will try to trick you, like taking a longer route in a taxi or charging more. That is just how it is.

Jasmine had similar experiences of frustration but in her daily life in China, highlighting her emotional reaction.

An experience I had like this was just a few days ago. I am a new driver and can't drive very well. I saw someone parked near my garage gate blocking me, so I had to back out of the garage. I opened the garage door halfway and took a look to see if I could get out. I thought I could get out, so then I got back in the car and broke the garage door. I kicked the other car because I was so frustrated. When you have lots of stress in your life, you think everyone is in your way. When you are relaxed, you can let things pass. But when you are stressed out, you reach a point where one small thing is too much.

Joanne also focused on the emotion of the person in the incident.

The person obviously felt frustration. There should have been some explanation as to why her meal was late, then the frustration wouldn't have been there. She wouldn't have had to react and insult them. She took it personally. And maybe they just didn't know how to explain why the food was late.

Nailah once again indicated that this type of story is an everyday event and not necessarily a cultural one.

This happens anywhere from time to time. Maybe they made all the dishes and just forgot this. Maybe they misplaced it, and that's why it was cold. It was not nice of them, especially since the customer was a foreigner. We had a similar experience

when we went to the south of Egypt. In the town we were in, there are restaurants on the seashore. We went to a restaurant and ordered a simple chicken dish. We got our food. There were three pieces of chicken in each. My daughter's plate had two pieces that were fine, and one piece that she couldn't cut. It didn't taste like chicken. She told the waiter. They changed the plate, but not the food. As compensation, we got one small stale cupcake for three people to share. We went back to that area there again few months later, but we didn't go back to that restaurant. These situations happen everywhere. Just recently, I went to a restaurant and asked for pizza. It took a long time. I waited for an hour. There was a change of shifts. I wasn't told it would be late or what the problem was. I didn't enjoy the meal because it was late, and I was in a hurry.

6.5.5 Responses to Critical Incident #4A and #4B

In the final two critical incidents, the woman entrepreneur has a positive experience with a female taxi driver in the Gulf region and a negative experience with a male taxi driver in China. The first taxi driver engaged in the communication process, and the second one did not.

Emma had some similar challenging taxi experiences in both her personal and business cross-cultural experiences and also shared the story of a colleague.

> I had a horrible taxi driver in Rome, coming from the airport. I didn't feel safe with him. He had an aggressive attitude. It is unnerving when you're in that situation. Another time, I was in Turkey with a Canadian friend. The taxi driver got lost going to the hotel. We were overcharged but only paid a lesser amount. You are trying to be brave and tough in these situations. It is scary because you don't know what's going to happen. You don't speak the language. In the same situation, we went to the hotel. They wanted us to leave our passports at the front desk. I didn't leave our passports. Then there was someone knocking at our hotel room door. It was creepy. It could have been innocent, but when you're tired, you just don't want to deal with it. I had a colleague who was held up at gunpoint by a taxi driver in Russia. He drove her to an out-of-way place. He pointed a gun at her face. He took her money, and then he continued driving her to a more populated area.

Emma also had strategies that she used when dealing with taxi travel.

> When I am in South America, when I am out meeting agents and if I don't feel confident, I will get the agents to get a taxi for me. I also ask them, "What do I need to say to the driver to get where I need to go? What I need to look for?" It helps with some of the unpredictability.

Gabriela is very philosophical about this type of experience, seeing it as normal in any culture.

> No matter where you are, you can never win with taxi drivers. It is a short-term service. They have no vested interest in building a relationship with you. You need them, but you won't see them again. They won't get repeat business. You can try to talk with them, but you are really at their mercy. They don't want to change. They

don't see themselves as business owners. For cross-cultural communication to be successful, there has to be a mutual and vested interest. I just keep a low profile and try not to be too friendly.

Jasmine is similarly philosophical, pointing out that there is a cost to learning in any personal or business cross-cultural experience.

> When you are in a new country or new area, you pay more than needed. That is just the way things are. There is a cost of learning something new. A life event costs you money to learn. It is the price of learning. You must think this way. In this incident, there is no choice. You can't go by yourself, and you can't communicate. It is just the price of learning.

Joanne has had similar positive and negative experiences to those in the critical incidents in her personal travels.

> I have had taxi rides that were positive experiences. As one example, I paid for a transportation service in advance. I booked a bus, but I got a taxi because I was the only passenger. I thought he would ask for more money. I was prepared for a confrontation. I offered more money, but he wouldn't take it. I have had negative experiences as well. There was one incident in San Andreas, Colombia. We took a trip booked through a tour company. After going through immigration, we were looking for someone with a sign with our names on it. Someone just grabbed our bags to put in a taxi. We assumed this was part of the process. Then a random person came up to us demanding money for putting our luggage in the taxi. And the taxi wanted money for the bags being in the taxi. The luggage was supposed to be in the bus with the others travelling to the hotel. My husband could speak the language to sort it out. It would have been very different if he wasn't there. A confrontation in another language would have been very uncomfortable.

Nailah has a strategy for managing difficult situations like the negative critical incident.

> I took a bus in Turkey from the airport to the hotel late at night. It dropped me a few streets away from the hotel. I needed to take a taxi from there to the hotel. The driver was going to take me to another district. He pretended to not know where I was going. Then he asked me for more money than expected. I had prepared myself for this. Sometimes you must argue with them. I have a strategy to get out of the taxi and then pay the money. If he doesn't like what you've paid, you're not still in the taxi.

Nailah demonstrated her ability to separate everyday events from culturally specific ones by pointing out that sometimes people have negative experiences because someone is just not having a good day. *"Some people are cooperative and helpful. But then sometimes people have had a problem earlier in the day and are just unhappy or angry. When people are tired, they make things difficult for others."*

Sabrine shared her personal cross-cultural experiences with the taxi system in Algeria.

> In Algeria, a taxi can pick up more than one passenger at a time if people are going to same general area. They ask you where you are going, and you tell them where you want to go. The driver then says "yes" or "no." Sometimes you talk about the price before the passenger gets in the car. They also have private drivers. They have people they regularly pick up and get paid a weekly or monthly rate. And there are city taxis and long-distance taxis.

Sabrine also shared a negative experience that one of her trainee teachers had with a taxi that affected the class scheduling.

> One of my students hired a taxi to take her somewhere three times a week. It was a three-hour drive. The driver would pick up city fares while waiting for her. He would talk to her while driving. He asked her about her studies. Then he wanted more money for the fare because she was attending school. She ended up paying more because she had no other option. We had tried to help her by having more classes combined so she wouldn't have to come as many days.

6.6 Artefacts

As the final step of the narrative interviewing process, each participant was asked to present between two and four cultural artefacts of significance to them. Cultural artefacts are real objects that participants deem to be cultural and that have significance for them. Participants described the artefacts and why they had chosen them. The themes in the participants' descriptions of their artefacts are once again coded using the full range of coding from Chapter 4, with the themes identified in the commentary preceding the descriptions.

6.6.1 Emma's Artefacts

Emma's first artefact was a painting from her first trip to Ecuador, which illustrated a value she tries to live by: that of appreciating how lucky she is with her economic position in society.

> When I was living in the Caribbean, I went on a scuba diving trip to the Galapagos Islands. I didn't know much about South America. I thought it would be similar to the Caribbean. I stayed overnight in Quito and went on a tour of the city. The level of poverty in Quito was staggering. There were young kids on the street in raggedy clothes shining shoes to earn money. There were Catholic churches dripping in gold, but the people on the steps of the church were destitute. I had never seen anything like this before. I went to a market where Indigenous people were selling goods. I was there with a friend who spoke Spanish. She asked how much a painting was. I knew we were supposed to barter, but I didn't want to barter. I paid seven dollars for the picture. It is very colourful and childlike. It is of a volcano outside of Quito and people working in traditional costumes. The picture reminds me of seeing such poverty and how lucky I am when others aren't so lucky.

Emma's second artefact was a piece of pottery from Puebla, Mexico, a place that is famous for pottery. This second artefact illustrates another of Emma's values, that of placing importance on communicating, regardless of language barriers.

> I go there every year with an agent to do student fairs in a few cities. It is a great place to visit. We went downtown with few people. We didn't speak Spanish. I went into a pottery shop which was owned by a woman. I picked up the pottery I wanted to buy. The store owner punched the price into a calculator and showed it to me. I had to barter with the owner, even though I don't like bartering. I paid twenty dollars for three plates. The store owner was a really sweet lady. We communicated through smiles and gestures. It was a cool experience. The pottery reminds me that as a language educator, I have to be prepared to make a complete fool of myself to communicate. I will do whatever is necessary to communicate with students or agents to get them to understand. I am not embarrassed at all.

Emma's third artefact was her favourite one. It is a gecko made of wire and tiny beads from South Africa. This artefact represents another of Emma's values, of giving back to the community, which is a motivation for her business of social value building.

> I haven't been to South Africa, but my school offered a scholarship to a student from there. In 2011, I received an email from a woman about a man who works in South Africa as the director of a not-for-profit charity. She asked, "Would you be prepared to offer him English lessons on a scholarship? He is looking to learn to read and write in English. He can only come for four weeks." I wrote back to say we were not a literacy school—we were an English language school. I said I was not sure what we could do to help in four weeks. She replied that anything we could do was fine. He had a place to stay, and his visa was sorted out. The scholarship would only cover his tuition. I looked him up on internet. He worked for a legitimate charity doing work in poor villages in South Africa.

> He arrived in January 2012. He was such an amazing guy. He spoke eight languages, but he had never been to school. He had been born in the apartheid era and had not had the opportunity to go to school. He was black. His father died young in war. One of my teachers was keen to help him in her beginner class. He learned to read and write a bit. The woman who has written the letter was his wife.

> He was so thankful for the opportunity. He was always grateful. Everyone fell in love with him, staff and students alike. He was gentle and kind. He wanted to raise money to help people in his village. He gave a presentation at our school about what his organization does. They sell things to raise money. He needed to learn to do a presentation. He had never done a presentation before.

> About 30 to 40 students came to listen, many of our Middle Eastern students included. He talked about his childhood, how he was poor and lost his father. He said that he had never been to school and lived in poverty. His organization had built a school and built toilets. Now they were looking for sustainable help such as seeds to grow a garden. People were in tears hearing his story. People could buy a

handmade item from the women of his village or donate money. He raised $700 from one presentation. He left some of the goods with us to sell. I bought this gecko from him. I keep it in my office at work.

6.6.2 Gabriela's Artefacts

Gabriela's first artefact was a small toy made from seeds, wood, bark, and string. This artefact represents how Gabriela views culture, through all of her senses, not just sight but also sound and smell.

It is called a wero-wero. It is from the southern part of Colombia, in the Amazon, from a small village on the Amazon River called Puerto Narino. There are two or three Aboriginal communities around there. Approximately 1,000 non-Aboriginal people live in the village. There are no roads, only wide walking paths. People live in wooden houses and have small kitchen gardens. The houses have no front walls so you can see what is happening inside. There are no walls because it is so hot and humid. To get there, you fly almost two hours, from Bogota to Leticia. You have to fly over the Amazon to get there. It is at the border of Colombia, Brazil, and Venezuela. It is known as the "wild west" because strange things happen there.

I stayed in Leticia one night in a hostel owned by a mother and daughter. Then I took a motor boat the next morning along the Amazon River to get to Puerto Narino. The ladies at the hostel told me to sit at the back of the boat for safety reasons. They explained that most local people don't swim, so I would have to look after myself if the boat capsized. So, I was told to sit by myself at the back of the boat.

We travelled west along the wide and murky waters of the Amazon River. During the two-hour journey, we passed a number of primitive villages and islands. I could see a lot of poverty. It is a different kind of life. In Puerto Narino, there are no cars. There was only one motor vehicle that collected the garbage. It was a tractor with a wagon. Everyone seems happy. You can walk anywhere. It is humid, hot, and relaxing. There was one place for internet access, but somehow, cell phones worked at nights and in some spots during the day. To spread news in the village, an officer from the mayor's office made photocopies from the newspaper that came from Leticia. The pages are posted a couple of times a week under the roof of huts located on the corners of the walking paths. There is one small elementary school.

In the highest point of the village, there is a tower that was originally built for security and now services tourists. The tower is also important for the community and the Aboriginal villages around. Tourists pay a small fee to go up the tower to see spectacular views of the Amazon River and the jungle. At the top of the tower, you find Indigenous people selling their handicrafts. The priest of the community also uses the tower to make announcements with a megaphone so that everyone can hear him. Any time he thinks he has an important message, he climbs the tower and broadcasts his news. If there are meetings, or someone important is coming, or there is a cultural or community event, you will hear it from the tower.

I had thought that because the Amazon is so remote, it would be quiet at night. But it was the complete opposite. The animals and the insects at night were really loud. The toy reminds me of the sounds in the Amazon at night, especially the frog sounds.

Gabriela's second artefact was an unusually shaped woven basket. It represents Gabriela's strategy for cross-cultural experiences, that of blending in with the local culture whenever possible.

I bought it at a market in Papua New Guinea. I liked the shape. I was travelling a lot and needed something strong to carry my camera in. The basket was hard and sturdy. I put my camera in a plastic bag, along with rolls of film and my lenses. The plastic bag protected everything from the humidity. When I was walking in the villages, people didn't know I had a camera in the basket. It just looked like a familiar basket to them. There was nothing unusual about it. Anything I carried in it was safe. The baskets are crafted by hand. The women use local weeds and grass to make them. They spend days just making one basket.

Gabriela's third artefact was a piece of First Nations artwork. It is of great value to her because it indicates her acceptance by the Aboriginal communities with which she worked with her previous tourism businesses. This acceptance is important to her as a sign of respect and validation of the work she did.

It is a present I received from a local artist when I was working in northern British Columbia. At the time, he was studying to become a carver. It is an eagle carved on a piece of green soapstone. I was told by members of his community that eagles and bears are my spirit animals. The eagle is a loner. They fly alone and have an independent spirit. The bear is also a loner. It does not live in groups. It is interesting that on a couple of occasions friends have given me bears. I like the eagle. It travels alone, has a keen eye, and knows what is going on. I have also received eagles from two different clients. The tradition of assigning a spirit animal to a person is not practiced as it used to be. I was told that in the past giving a spirit animal was a rite of passage. Based upon your personality you were given your spirit animal. For a non-Aboriginal person to receive a spirit animal was a sign of being received by the community.

6.6.3 Jasmine's Artefacts

Jasmine's first artefact was a small jewellery box with a lotus root design from Cambodia. It had meaning for her as a symbol of the independence to travel internationally, which she had achieved.

I chose this because it holds good memories of a trip I took to Cambodia with my Canadian English teacher just after I started my school. Cambodia was the second country that I visited after Canada. I remember how challenging it was to communicate in Canada when I first arrived. I chose to visit Cambodia next because

I saw in the news that China and Cambodia had a close relationship, and I thought I would be able to speak Chinese there. However, the language I used ended up being English. I felt a lot of freedom as I travelled because I could speak English. I felt relaxed and comfortable because I could communicate with other people. I met people from all over the world who now live there, and I met Cambodians and other Chinese tourists.

I didn't book a luxury hotel downtown. I booked accommodations in someone's home far from the city we were in. I used a tuk-tuk, a motorcycle with seats for four passengers, to and from my accommodations and to all the tourist sites I visited. I enjoyed driving on the country roads next to farm fields. They reminded me of my childhood. I hired the tuk-tuk driver privately, so it was usually just me and my teacher as passengers. I still communicate with the driver on WeChat. I have recommended him to my friends who also went to Cambodia.

I stayed in Cambodia for four days. I spent two days visiting temples, one day doing a tour of the city, and one day just walking around the city. The city is good for walking. I could walk everywhere. I was not familiar with South Asian history, so I bought a book about it, but I still don't understand the dynasties. As far as I understand, the temples were built, but when they were finished, there was no water, so they were abandoned. Then the same thing happened again a few hundred years later.

I bought many souvenirs such as t-shirts and scarves. Because it was a tropical country, I ate a lot of fruit and drank various fruit juices. I tried traditional Cambodian food. I took a Cambodian cooking class at a restaurant. We went to the market with the restaurant staff to buy the ingredients. Then we went back to the restaurant to prepare the food and finally eat it. I didn't get the chance to talk deeply with any Cambodian people, so I didn't really identify any differences between them and Chinese people.

Jasmine's second artefact was a bottle of colourful sand from a famous tourist destination in western China. It is important to her because it reminds her of the beauty of nature; people can build amazing things, but nothing is as beautiful as nature.

This place is famous for its mountains with caves, and the caves have sculptures and paintings that tell beautiful old stories. The sculptures and paintings were completed over a long period. The first ones are over a thousand years old. Different caves have different styles of sculptures and paintings. They are the work of different dynasties. My favourite place from the trip was Moon Spring Lake. It is a half-moon-shaped lake in the middle of sand mountains. The sand was all different colours. It was so beautiful it brought tears to my eyes. Humans couldn't build something as beautiful as this. It is God's gift. It is an amazing natural wonder. I have been there twice. It is more than two hours away by plane. On one of my trips, I took some sand and put it in a water bottle. My friends did the same thing. It was a long trip, and this was our first stop. We all bought lots of souvenirs, so our luggage became very heavy. Everyone else threw out their bottles of sand, but I kept mine.

Jasmine's third artefact was a smooth black stone that she got on a business trip to a city in western China for the test centre management work that she does. This third artefact, like Jasmine's second artefact, represents the value she places on nature over things made by people.

> We were promoting the test to high schools in that area. The trip started in a city next to the Yellow River. There are lots of stones in the river bed. The water in the river flows very strongly. It makes the stones flat and carves patterns on them. This stone has a pattern that looks like a dog on it. The business trip was very busy, and we all worked hard. There was no time for sightseeing, except for a few hours before our flight home. I went to the river to take a picture and then to a store to buy a stone as a souvenir. I like stones as a symbol of nature.

Along with describing her artefacts, Jasmine demonstrated her appreciation of her own country and culture.

> In our area of China, there are lots of rivers. There are water towns built by the river. Like in Venice, you travel by boat. There are lots of water towns. They are very beautiful. I invited a friend from Canada to visit China. I designed a trip for her. We went to the mountains and the lakes. We took a boat to travel to a western lake. We went to a museum and made a stamp in Chinese writing out of stone. We went to the hills to see lots of people carry their bird nets. We sat and drank tea and listened to the birds sing. We spent the whole morning there. When she left China, she said the trip was so beautiful. She told me I needed to have a second business: a tourism business.

6.6.4 Joanne's Artefacts

Joanne's first artefact was a wall decoration that was a gift from the family of two of her students. This artefact represents the meaning that Joanne derives from her English language school: that of helping students be successful.

> This is from the parents of a young Korean boy named Jack, who was 12, and his sister, who was 14. Their parents had arranged a homestay for their children with a Korean-Canadian family, but the living conditions were not good. The children came to me and said they were paying more money than we would charge, and they were living in a basement. One of them didn't have a bed. They were going to the grocery store, buying groceries, doing their own cooking, and cooking for the family.

> They moved into my house for two months until their mom could come here. They were too young to be out on their own. Their mom moved them into an apartment right beside mine. When she wasn't there, they had someone to look out for them. I became their guardian. Recently, Jack called. He had finished high school and university here in Canada, had become a permanent resident, and had gotten a government job. His sister was back in Korea. She was getting married. It has been sixteen years, but the impact still remains.

Joanne's second artefact was a bright picture of a Colombian house. Similar to her first artefact, this artefact represents the success of two students who she went out of her way to help.

> It is from Sandra, the sister of one of our first students. This student studied with us for a couple of months. He had made his own living arrangements. He attended another school prior to our school. Then he ran out of money. He either had to find a place to stay or go home. He moved into my house, on my couch. He stayed an extra two months. I didn't charge him any money. His sister came a year later and stayed in my second bedroom. She found out she was pregnant once she got here, but she miscarried while she was here. She stayed with me. I still talk to her. I gave them assistance above and beyond what a normal student requires. She is now a biologist. She was going to come to Canada to complete her Ph.D. I had to help her write the TOEFL. But then she had a second child. She had to postpone her studies. She is going to bring the kids to Canada one day.

Joanne's third artefact was a small boy's and girl's outfit from Afghanistan. Once again, this artefact represents the meaning that Joanne derives from her business, in this case being able to offer a scholarship to a very worthy student.

> A homestay family contacted us. They had met this immigrant family. The homestay family was big in serving the community and helping newcomers. This man's English was too high for the government-funded program, but they had no money. He studied with us for eight months for free on a scholarship. He became an ambassador for the school. He was very energetic, positive, appreciative, and friendly. He gave me this gift before he finished our final level. I haven't heard from him for a couple of years. He was a refugee. He had gone through the immigration system and was a permanent resident before coming to our school. He had a job.

Joanne had a fourth artefact, which was also her newest. It was a brightly coloured doll from another student whom she helped overcome an obstacle to come to Canada to learn English.

> It is from a student from Mexico. She registered with us last summer to come in January. She paid in advance. Then she emailed me that her passport wasn't real. The company she paid to help her with her passport did the wrong document. She wanted to cancel the course because she didn't think she would get a real passport in time now. I advised her to look into it more before cancelling the course. I said that maybe she could get her passport in time. I said I would refund her tuition if needed. She followed my advice, got her passport in time, and loved it at the school.

Cultural artefacts are important to Joanne and her school because, as noted with her specific examples, they represent the meaning and satisfaction she gets from her business.

> The artefacts I keep in my office are from students that I've helped more than others. Then we display more cultural artefacts and gifts from students in the lobby. We have representation from as many countries as possible and make the display visually appealing. We rotate the artefacts every once in a while. I also have artefacts at home. I have a marble chess board from a student from Mexico who

stayed with me. I have had many students stay with me. I have rented them a room, or I was a shelter for them when they needed it. From Mexico, I have a mask on the mantle. I have jewellery from Latin America and jewellery with blue stones from Mexico. From Colombia, I have a gold bracelet with coffee beans.

6.5.5 Nailah's Artefacts

Nailah's two artefacts were directly related to the business that she runs. The first was her iPad. This artefact represented the potential that technology offered her to support English language teachers in Egypt. It demonstrates her strong focus on the purpose of her business.

> I bring it with me everywhere. I do work and answer emails while waiting for meetings. It helps me at exhibitions and workshops and when I am talking to people. I use my iPad instead of carrying papers. It is very handy. When I am travelling, it is more helpful than a camera. I have an unlimited internet connection for the iPad. I have a subscription for it. It is helpful. I use it for meetings with Skype, for example, if I'm not in the office. It helps in business. People think you are professional and an expert. You are not isolated from technology. You are respected. If you are connected online it makes things easier. It helps a lot. Technology does so much.

Her second artefact was Jeremy Harmer's teaching methodology book, *The Practice of English Language Teaching*. This artefact, similar to her first, represents the meaning she derives from her business, that of helping teachers with their professional development.

> I adore this book! Whenever I have a workshop or training that I deliver to people, I read it again. I don't know how many times I've read it. I probably haven't read it all the way through, but I have read parts of it. It is a great reference book for any teacher. Unfortunately, I have not been able to get the new edition, but I intend to get it. Everyone likes this book. It is practical but based on theory. There is psychology about the development of students. It shows teachers how to deal with different ages of students. It is very useful.

6.6.6 Sabrine's Artefacts

Some of Sabrine's artefacts were from South Korea, and some were from Algeria, the two cultures in which she has been immersed for significant periods of time. All of her artefacts represent the different cultural identities that she has developed through her experiences living and working in the two cultures. Comparing and contrasting her two sets of experiences and two identities is a strong theme throughout all of her narratives.

Her first artefact was a set of South Korean cutlery: chopsticks and a spoon. They were made of metal. There were two sets of them; one set was blue, and one was red. "The Koreans eat rice

with a spoon. The chopsticks are for meat, sushi, and side dishes. They have a turtle design. They are a gift from a Korean friend."

Sabrine's second artefact was also from South Korea. It was a business card holder.

> South Korea is famous for lacquer and mother-of-pearl craft work. They sell these business card holders with a pen as an office set. My husband brought it back from trip to South Korea. It is lacquer with a mother-of-pearl crane design. I also have a jewellery box that plays a South Korean wedding song. It has a peacock design.

Sabrine's third artefact was from Algeria. It was an Algerian teapot.

> I am going to have to describe it for you because it is actually in Canada right now. I also have a ceramic tea set from South Korea. It is a traditional green one, with bowls and platters. The Algerian teapot is silver plated. Algerian tea is a mint tea with sugar. You pour the tea from up high so that the tea is frothy and has bubbles. They also drink Sahara tea, which is stronger than mint tea. It is green tea with mint then you add sugar. Tea is served at the end of a dinner to give you the hint that your stay is finished. At Algerian weddings, they like milk coffee with cakes. At the end, tea is served with another type of sweet. My husband's family likes milk coffee better. I prefer tea. They have tea stands in Algeria where you can buy tea to go.

Sabrine described other cultural artefacts of significance to her.

> I used to collect postcards from different places I went and put in an album. I went to Europe, and I also went on weekend trips to China and the Philippines. I also have South Korean coasters, sewn in different bright colours. They are a set of five. In South Korea, objects are sold in sets of five. The word for "four" sounds like the word for death. They are very superstitious. They sell things in sets of two or five. There is no fourth floor in buildings, and nothing is sold in sets of four.

6.7 Asynchronous Focus Group Responses

The participants responded differently to the conceptualizations of culture that were presented in the mini-lecture that preceded their asynchronous focus group. They connected to the conceptualizations to varying degrees and with varying levels of responsiveness. Once again, no clear pattern emerged other than the continuing theme of variation. The participants' responses can be coded under a number of themes, as indicated in the commentary below, including cultural adaptability and awareness, and cross-cultural and cross-linguistic experiences as well as each of the conceptualizations of culture.

6.7.1 Tourist Definition

The tourist definition of culture is a simple definition that positions culture as the things tourists travel to another culture to see, hear and experience: art, music, food, festivals, buildings, monuments and the language.

Joanne commented on the usefulness of the tourist definition as one that everyone can understand and relate to.

> The tourist definition is one of the more fun definitions of culture and something that probably everyone can relate to even if they don't have a lot of cultural experience. When we travel, we can see the art and the music. We will get to participate in some festivals and, of course, enjoy the food.

She also commented on a shortcoming of the definition as not providing a deep understanding of culture.

> If we look at the tourist definition, though, it's like an onion without a centre in that we can see all these things, but we don't understand why they are that way. In terms of entering a new culture, this is certainly what we see in the excitement phase, but if we don't find out what those underlying reasons are for the things and behaviours that we're seeing, then that's where we can get into some troubles later on.

Emma felt the tourist definition captures only the superficial layer of a culture.

> When people go abroad for a week's vacation, then come back and talk about the culture, you wonder how much they know about the culture. They've seen some art. They've seen some people dancing in the street. They've eaten some food. But when they come back and they talk about the culture, I don't really think that they know very much about the culture. They've seen a pretty superficial viewpoint of the culture. For example, I know a lot of British people who went to Spain for a week's holiday. They come back and talk about the culture, but they ate English food while they were there. They didn't do very much. So they didn't really know much about the culture.

Jasmine captured the shortcomings of the tourist definition with an analogy.

> From the tourist angle, talking about culture is just like when the wind blows over your head. You can feel everything, but you don't know very much. In this regard, I think language is a very useful skill. Language can help tourists learn more deeply about a local culture more quickly.

Gabriela, on the other hand, felt that the tourist definition of culture highlights the clear connection between culture, language, and tourism.

> I think tourism is a great platform from which to look into culture and language. I see a triangulation of culture, language, and tourism. I have been involved in the

travel industry for many years and have focused on highlighting culture in every program I develop and all the training that I do. And knowing the language allows us to better understand the cultural innuendoes and verbal expressions of the culture and its people.

Experiencing a culture with the senses is important to Gabriela and is for her also a part of the tourism definition.

I think experiencing a culture is not only an intellectual activity; it is an experience of the senses. We experience the smells, the colours, the textures, and the sounds of a culture. For instance, it is in the tone of voice, the sound of the language, and the music. This is how I think we experience culture, and tourism is a great platform to experience that.

Sabrine talked about how she was able to learn a culture without necessarily learning the language that went with it when she lived and worked in South Korea.

I lived in South Korea for five years. I didn't really acquire the language, but I was able to acquire the culture. I found that understanding the culture was more important than understanding the language. Even though you don't know the language, you can bridge the cultural differences. For example, in South Korea, it shows politeness to hold the money with two hands when paying a clerk in a store. It shows more respect to the clerk than throwing the money on the counter. People always asked me how I got around in South Korea without being able to fully communicate. I say I could only give directions to a taxi, but I understood certain cultural rituals that were expected. I could get the message across to South Koreans that way. I do understand that language is tied to the culture, but you can learn the culture without actually speaking the language.

Nailah highlighted the importance of respecting the culture being visited as a tourist and wanting to actually learn about that culture, demonstrating her level of cultural awareness.

I totally agree with the tourist definition of culture, although it is a very broad one. It covers many of the items that we enjoy or look for when we travel, and this is what enriches our journey. I also agree that language plays an important part in understanding the culture. It helps us to get a better understanding of the culture. I would also add that the desire to learn about the culture is very important in helping us to understand how the people think, how the people feel, and what the people do.

6.7.2 Iceberg Analogy

The iceberg analogy divides culture into in-awareness or seen culture, the part of the iceberg that is above the water, and out-of-awareness or unseen culture, the part of the iceberg that is below the water.

The iceberg analogy prompted Sabrine to comment on the impossibility of preparing to live in a new culture, a conclusion based on her personal experiences.

> Nothing can prepare you for actually living in a culture. You can study the language. You can know how to make the food. You can study the history, the clothes, and everything else. But nothing can prepare you for actually being there. You don't know what it smells like. You don't know what it tastes like.

Sabrine also brought up the issue of the dark side of a culture, the parts of a culture that are not very attractive or nice, that are in the hidden part of the iceberg, demonstrating her level of cultural awareness.

> You don't know the ugly sides of a culture that are hidden before you go there. The first time I visited Algeria, we went to the Sahara. I remember commenting to a friend of mine, who asked me "How was the Sahara?" I commented on the tires just thrown anywhere in the sand, and some garbage or something, that you saw as you were driving along. My husband was offended. He said, "Why would you tell them that sort of thing? That's an ugliness that we don't want to share with people." For me, it was just a surprising thing that I recalled and wanted to share. For him, as an Algerian, he was embarrassed by the trash. He didn't want to share that part of the culture that he's ashamed of. You wouldn't know that there are scattered tires in the Sahara if you didn't go there.

Gabriela identified the dynamic nature of the iceberg analogy, also demonstrating her level of cultural awareness.

> I find that the line between the seen and the unseen in any culture can move and drift. It is not static. Sometimes, it's not exactly straight. It can also move up and down based on where we are at any particular moment. Where that line is, at any given time, also depends on our personal knowledge, past experience, backgrounds, where we come from, where we are visiting, and how connected those worlds are to our own beliefs—for instance, our personal beliefs, our religious or spiritual beliefs, and our political beliefs. All of these factors influence how aware we are or how much we are willing to see. I always feel that I will have a chance to move the line a little bit lower and have a peek at what is below our known world.

Based on the iceberg analogy, Sabrine wanted to explore the relationship between religion and culture, based on her personal experiences, and a further indication of her level of cultural awareness.

> What is the relationship between religion and culture? Is religion an aspect of culture, or does culture influence how the religion is perceived? I am following a religion that is not of my original background or culture. I find in the culture I am living in, where that religion is part of the "culture," that they perceive their religion in a certain way. They are following their religion in a certain way, and there are some rituals or behaviours that they are performing with the assumption that it is

part of the religion. I will do things because I don't have the religion mixed with the culture because I'm coming to the religion purely as the religion. I go to the original teachings because I didn't learn anything from just following the cultural parts of the religion. Often, I will do something that I have found to be the correct way. Those in the culture with that religion would try to correct me thinking that I am ignorant to it. In fact, they are the ones ignorant to that aspect of the religion because they have mixed the culture with the religion so deeply.

Nailah thought that the iceberg analogy serves as a caution to research a culture before visiting it.

> We should find out what the out-of-awareness culture is before we venture into any culture. Understanding the out-of-awareness culture also shows respect to the people in the culture. We respect their habits, and we try to learn more about their culture, which will for sure enrich our experience in that culture.

Nailah noted that the iceberg analogy applied to life in general and not just culture, an interesting extension of her awareness about culture.

> I like the iceberg analogy for figuring out the challenges and difficulties of life in general. Nothing is perfect in life; there is always something underneath. It's the unseen part of the iceberg that sank the Titanic. The people who built the Titanic had too much confidence and arrogance to foresee the dangers of nature. They just weren't looking.

6.7.3 The Onion Analogy

The onion analogy divides culture into three layers: its products, behaviours, and ideas or values. The onion analogy generated the most discussion among the participants of all the conceptualizations of culture presented. The participants used the conceptualization to explain different cross-cultural situations they have encountered.

Sabrine talked about the difficulty of explaining the ideas behind cultural products and behaviours or the "why" to her teacher trainees.

> I always start with what an idea is. My TESOL students are not native speakers, so they are missing the ideas behind the culture. I always say you have to learn the ideas to teach your students; otherwise, they're not getting a very deep understanding of the culture involved with the language. They might have to do research to find answers that explain the idea. Even as native speakers, we don't always know why we do things. I always use the example of breakfast. An Algerian breakfast is milk and coffee with lots of sugar and something sweet, like a croissant or piece of cake. I remember giving my son this type of breakfast in Canada, and my mother saying, "You're giving your son cookies for breakfast!" It's not something we do in Canadian culture. We think breakfast is the most important meal of the

day, and we have to start with healthy food. In Algeria, that's not the case. Children drink coffee for breakfast, and this is a normal thing. I don't give my son coffee, but I know children who do drink coffee with milk and lots of sugar to get going in the day.

I remember another food example. Recently, I was eating lunch with one of my students. We were having a sandwich and chatting. We were eating Algerian sandwiches. They had turkey with lettuce, tomato, and french fries. Yes, they put the french fries in the sandwich rather than on the side. I told her that in Canada, we don't put our french fries in the sandwich. She asked me why. The only thing I could say is it's a side dish. It shouldn't be in the sandwich. It should be on the side.

In another example—not about food, but about cleaning—there was a spill on the floor, and I cleaned it up. In Algeria, they use a big chamois rag and big squeegee to clean the floors. I was cleaning the floor. I said to my trainee teachers that I remembered when I first tried to use one of these to clean the floor. It was very awkward because you have to use it in a certain motion. They asked what Canadians use to clean the floors. In Algeria, they will flood the floors to clean them and squeegee the water out the door. We can't do that in Canada. Our houses are wood, and the water would seep through to the next level and damage the beams and things like that. So, there are just these things that are missing in the ideas of why we do certain things.

Joanne agreed that getting to the ideas level of a culture is challenging. She shared experiences she has had in her multicultural English language school when trying to explain the ideas level of a culture to her students in response to their complaints.

We see the products, and we see the behaviours, but we don't always know why. I can certainly use a lot of food examples as well. When we're looking at breakfast, for example, we have an idea of breakfast in Canada being cereal, toast, yogurt, or fruit. It's typically more of a quicker meal, but it's important nonetheless. One of the biggest comments and quite frankly complaints that our students make about their homestays is that they don't like the breakfast. For some of our Chinese students, for example, they want rice or meat for every breakfast. For some of our Colombian students, they want eggs, pickled meats, or cured meats for breakfast. They don't understand that in Canada, breakfast is important but needs to be efficient because everyone needs to get out the door and get to work.

Joanne also shared a personal cross-cultural experience in Panama that further illustrates the challenges of digging into the different layers of culture.

Another example about food is shopping in bulk, which is what we do in Canada. Costco is one of my favourite stores. I love stocking up. I love having a full freezer or a full pantry because I want to spend as little time as possible shopping throughout the week. I want to get everything done at once. But when I travel to Panama to visit my family there, it's very different. That concept of shopping in bulk just really doesn't happen. Most of the Panamanians will shop for the day and

sometimes only for one meal. When you go to the corner store to buy your food, you don't have to buy a whole package of deli meat. You'll actually find a package in the fridge already opened, or you can take out the number of slices that you want. Similarly, you don't buy a dozen eggs. You buy the number of eggs that you need to make that particular meal. The concept there, for me, was very strange in the beginning. When you look at the actual ideas behind it, however, it made sense. Some of the homes don't have refrigeration or don't have the storage space, so it doesn't make sense in that case to stock up.

Emma used the onion analogy to better identify the differences between her first culture, the UK, and her second culture, Canada.

In Canada, values like the rule of law, tolerance, and equality are important. When I compare that to the British culture, I don't really think that the rule of law is terribly important in England. I think people there tend to be a lot quicker to ignore the law and to do whatever they need to do in terms of rioting or whatever to get what they want. I don't think that is one idea or value that would be British. I don't think either tolerance or equality would be true for British culture. I think one of the main reasons for the difference is that in Britain, there is still a very distinct class system. People think that it's not true anymore. But it's there, and it's been there for years. I don't think it will ever change. I think there is this idea that some people are the "haves" and some people are the "have nots." I think that certainly affects the way people think about things and how people relate to their neighbours or other people that they come across.

And the other thing that I think is interesting about British culture is the war-time culture. The British went through two world wars. I think that has affected how people behave. They had to manage with very little, so they became very thrifty, and they saved for a rainy day. Then I also started to think it's also generational. When does culture start to shift? Maybe when that generation goes, and the younger people who haven't lived through that take over, so their cultural outlook will be quite different from the older people.

In Canada, I think, it's very much that there are people who have money, and there are people who don't have money, but that's it. There isn't any of the history of the class system or an "I'm better than you because I have money and you don't" mentality. When I came here, I was quite surprised because I didn't see a class system here at all.

Gabriela used the onion analogy to answer a cross-cultural question she received many times as a tour guide.

Many summers ago, I was a tour guide in British Columbia and Alberta. One of the most frequent questions I received was, "What is the cultural difference between the US and Canada?" The first thing that came into my mind was multiculturalism. I always felt that this was one of the most important differences between the two countries. I still, to a point, believe the same thing.

Gabriela demonstrated significant cultural awareness as she hypothesized about the ideas that shaped countries that were colonized by European countries.

> How is Canada, which was essentially shaped by British ideas, different from England? In the case of Latin American, where I come from, the dominant culture was shaped during the Spanish and Portuguese conquests. But I think that the most dominating force of all is the Catholic Church. In some regions, we find a strong Indigenous presence in the culture, such as dances, artefacts, clothing, and rituals like the Day of the Dead in Meso-America. But all of these expressions of the Indigenous culture are suppressed by the Catholic Church creed, which continues to have a strong influence in everyday life. It also continues to have a solid political influence. Our history continues to be taught based on the writings left by the Catholic priests who entered the new world with the Spanish conquest. They settled in existing Aboriginal villages to educate and save the souls of the Indigenous peoples. The priests knew how to read and write, and therefore had the tools to tell their versions of events.

Gabriela also discussed external forces that shape the ideas of a culture.

> I agree with the notion that history, wars, social conflicts, climate, geography, and other relationships with the world around us are important in shaping ideas and culture. But today, our ideas are global, and they are gradually being changed and transformed by technology, migration, and mass travel patterns. So, culture cannot be defined only by geography and the boundaries between countries. I also believe that the current forces shaping our ideas and culture are evolving at an unprecedented speed. I see it in my region. It is affecting art, food, agriculture practices, music, festivals, and language. We hear the incorporation of English idioms, words, and concepts into most of our conversations in Spanish. And we see that people believe that learning English is now an important tool to function in this global economy.

Jasmine initiated a discussion on the connection between language and a culture's ideas, with a real example of a cross-linguistic challenge she had with her Canadian teacher.

> I would like to offer an example about how understanding the difference in the ideas between cultures is very difficult. When I want to offer a ride to my Canadian teacher, she always says, "If you want." I think I just want to help her. Who can tell me what she means?

Sabrine offered the following interpretation of the expression "If you want" and then discussed a cross-linguistic experience in literal versus non-literal use of language she had with her husband.

> This is an expression meaning, "As you like" or "Sure, why not." It's very Canadian, I think, to say something like that. It reminds me of when I first met my husband. He is not a native English speaker or from my culture. I remember I said, "It's up to you" when we were making a choice to go to a restaurant or to go shopping. I used this expression not thinking there would be any misunderstanding. He repeated "It's up to you," and he pointed up. He was confused about what it

means. He didn't understand that it meant "It's your choice." There are these little phrases that we take for granted and don't really think about as native speakers. But people who are new to the language or at a lower language proficiency level are confused because they take the language very literally. We use expressions that mean something else, so they have to interpret that. Another expression that my husband was amused by was when we lived in Canada, and we were having dinner with my family. My cousin used the expression, "You never know." These little expressions really stand out to a non-native speaker or someone who is new to the language and who has not been exposed to the culture.

Sabrine noted that the context in which English is used influences how much non-literal language is used.

My husband would use English in South Korea, but that is not an English culture. It was different for him using English in Canadian culture. When English is used in an English-speaking culture, it is a richer English because it's more naturally tied to the culture by native speakers. When you speak English in South Korea, you learn how to shorten your language so you are understood by the non-native English speakers there. You cut out idioms and expressions. You do that naturally so that you can be understood.

Emma pointed out cultural differences in the meaning of non-literal language. She also introduced the idea of generational differences in language usage.

I was just reading Jasmine's comments about the "If you want" comment and listening to Sabrine's reply, and Sabrine was trying to explain what she thought it meant. It's funny because my reaction actually was the same as Jasmine's. If I asked someone, "Would you like a ride?" and they said, "If you want," I would actually find it quite rude. Maybe that's a difference between a British cultural background and a Canadian one. It's not if I want. I'm offering to do something for you, so surely the response is "Thank you" or "Yes, please" as opposed to "If you want." I talked about whether this difference is cultural or generational. If the teacher who is talking to Jasmine is a young person, then maybe it's a cool way to respond. Perhaps, if it's an older person, they wouldn't respond like that. They would be a bit more polite, or what I would consider polite, anyway.

Nailah responded to the concept of ideas being at the centre of a culture by sharing her motivation for engaging in personal cross-cultural interactions.

We have to notice the differences between the ideas of cultures. These ideas are the most important attractions for me while I'm travelling in another country. For example, when I travelled to Turkey, Morocco, and the UK, I enjoyed my visits because the most important thing for me was to see the culture of these countries in action. I was always curious, and I am still curious, to know more about the people there. How do they think? How do they act? What do they believe in? I know it's not easy to get such ideas or to know about all these ideas in a very short visit. The most interesting thing, I think, during a visit to a different country is to sit with

locals at open cafes to watch them and listen to them, to know more about their culture and how they think.

Joanne demonstrated her level of understanding of three of the conceptualizations of culture by identifying the connections among the tourist definition, the iceberg analogy, and the onion analogy.

> The thing I really like about all these analogies is how they really tie in together. When we look at the iceberg analogy, really, it's no different from the onion analogy in that the behaviours and the products are what we see in the iceberg, and the ideas and values are what we don't see. The interesting thing is when we look at the pictures, it's quite different. The core of the onion (the ideas and values) are very small, whereas in the iceberg analogy, they're very large. Another analogy that's similar is the tourist definition. As tourists, we also only see the tip of the iceberg. We see all the fun things—the festivals, the music, and the food—that are very out there and present in the culture, but we don't see all of the other ideas and values that are underneath that.

Emma made similar connections.

> I felt that the comments that I'm going to make on the onion analogy would be very similar to comments I would make on the iceberg analogy. Here in the onion, the ideas are hidden in the middle, and in the iceberg, they're just hidden underneath, so I think they would be the same. And when I talk about the cultural values continuums, there are some things there that I think are relevant in the same kind of way as the onion analogy.

6.7.4 Cultural Values Continuums

The cultural values continuums allowed the participants to dig more deeply into their own personal and professional experiences. Sabrine used the cultural values continuums to compare the three cultures in which she has been immersed for a significant amount of time: Canadian, Korean, and Algerian. She also identified herself as having different values from any of these cultures because of her interactions with multiple cultures and her multiple cultural identities.

> I was trying to place my Canadian culture on these continuums, along with the Algerian and Korean cultures that I'm familiar with. I have lived there on those continuums. Then I was also trying to place where I fit now because of living in different cultures, I don't have the same values I had prior to just living in my native culture of Canada. I was looking at the high power distance versus low power distance continuum. In Algeria and even Korea, to some degree, demonstrating authority is allowed. They show off. They belittle people. They step on them. And they push them down so much.

Sabrine then highlighted the differences she saw with specific examples from her cross-cultural teacher training work in Algeria.

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When I teach my trainees, they find my teaching style different. I encourage them. I set them up for success. I don't belittle them. I don't treat them badly. They are not very familiar with this teaching style, and they really respond to it in a positive way. They put me as the authority figure as the teacher, but I don't take the role that they're familiar with, stepping on them and pushing them down. One student would always praise me as the expert and the teacher. One time, he just looked at me and said, "Don't get contaminated by Algeria. Don't change. Stay who you are." And then I made a joke, "I have to wash this Algeria off me because I'm getting contaminated." I think they find my approach refreshing, and they really respond to it.

Joanne identified a challenge with the cultural values continuums—identifying where a culture is on a continuum.

I find these cultural values continuums very interesting. Sometimes, they can shed some light on a cultural difference in ways that make sense. I do find that sometimes, the values continuums are a little more difficult to understand than some of the other ideas for explaining culture because they are very specific. You need to know a lot about other cultures to know where those cultures are on a continuum. I think just looking at the continuums on their own, it's hard to say where Canada is on the continuum. If you can't compare two cultures by placing another culture somewhere different on the continuum, it's really hard to place a single culture on there unless you just happen to know a lot about other cultures.

Like Sabrine, Emma used the cultural values continuums to identify differences among the cultures in which she has lived and worked.

It was interesting to see how these related to those cultures that I've come across. I've lived in Canada and Britain, but I also lived in the Caribbean. I don't know whether I can comment on all of them, but I found the high power distance and the low power distance values continuum quite interesting. This sums up the class system in England really well. The people who have power and authority are very comfortable showing it. That is how the class system works in England. You have a very small group of people who have or had a lot of power and authority. They certainly are not afraid to show it. They drive big, expensive cars. When they talk to people who are not in their sphere, they do talk down to them. They are disrespectful. I think that probably Canada, certainly from what I've seen, is on the other end of the continuum.

Jasmine demonstrated her level of cultural awareness by identifying the challenge of distinguishing the culture from the individual with respect to values.

If we talk about culture, about the whole country's culture, then the cultural values are very different. But, in my opinion, when you meet an individual, I think everywhere people are similar.

Gabriela similarly demonstrated her level of cultural awareness by noting that the more competitive a society is for limited resources, the more individualistic it is.

> I come from a culture that places a strong emphasis on individualism. Many people think that Latin American culture is collective or group oriented. But it is a culture that evolved based on a strong sense of survival. People are competing for whatever limited resources and opportunities there are. This happens at all levels of the society; it's not only in the lower economic levels, but it's also in the affluent and upper class, the wealthiest class. Because of this innate instinct to survive, people don't trust each other. Collaboration is not part of the business culture. I think individualism is quite prevalent in Latin America. The culture also has a high power distance in that it is acceptable to treat others with disrespect if they are in a position of less power and less money, if they are of Indigenous or black descent, if they are women, or if they are gay or lesbian.

Gabriela also noted the challenge of working with a different set of values than another culture, connecting the concept of values continuum to her cross-cultural project management experiences.

> I find in many situations when I try to inject Canadian values, it doesn't work. This is particularly true with the Canadian low power distance. It doesn't work in Latin America, which has high power distance, because people don't respect you, and people don't take you seriously. If you treat people differently, they sometimes don't understand it and don't trust your ways and intentions.

Gabriela applied the cultural values continuums to characterize the Latin cultures in which she works as being ruled by social status.

> I would say is ruled by social and economic status, such as colour, family last name, school, hometown, and connections. If you come from a powerful family, from a "good" family, from an educated or economically strong family, you have status, no matter what. If you look more Indigenous or black, you don't have the same status as if you are light skinned. You last name also matters. For example, if there is a job posting which says, "We are looking for a consultant who has international experience," if you apply with an international name like "Smith" or "Jones," you will probably get the contract over someone with a Latin-sounding name regardless of how much real international experience you actually have.

Gabriela found the uncertainty avoidance values continuum particularly relevant to her cross-cultural project management work.

> I find that risk and the sense of risk is one of the most challenging aspects of working with people who come from different cultures. There are those who avoid risk. They are always planning and doing risk assessments and pilot projects before launching into a real project. Then there are people who come from cultures where the decision making is very short and quick. They tend to move very fast without any planning or even preparing budgets. These different approaches to risk are

particularly evident when I am working for a Canadian company doing work in a country where there is great uncertainty because of the ever-changing situation. People tend to operate on a last-minute basis, without much planning.

Sabrine sees differences in the uncertainty avoidance values continuum between herself and her Algerian teachers in her cross-cultural teacher training.

> I think I am on the low uncertainty avoidance end of the continuum, but I think Canadians generally would be more towards the high end. Algeria is definitely a high uncertainty avoidance culture. In Algeria, people will get stable jobs, and everything has to fit in a box for the salary. You have to have certain certificates or degrees to get a certain pay. They put their twenty, thirty, forty years in and get their retirement. That's how people live. They don't jump around from job to job. I remember talking to students about my philosophy of if you don't like what you're doing, change it, and if you can't change it, change your attitude. They're not big risk takers in that way, so they are surprised by my philosophy.

Emma feels that low uncertainty avoidance is a value that all the participants in the research probably share.

> I would think that all of us who have given up our homes to go off around the world and live in other cultures are probably all at the low end of the risk-taking scale. I think we wouldn't have moved anywhere if we had high uncertainty avoidance.

Sabrine indicated that she personally has a short-term time orientation.

> This drives my family crazy. Sometimes, I wonder how I have succeeded because I try not to think too far ahead. I don't try to plan too far. My family, especially my sister and my mother, are always looking very far ahead and making plans for next year. In my mind, how do we know where we will be next year? Let's think about today and tomorrow and reflect on yesterday. Why worry about things that are so far in the future?

Joanne can relate to the short-term orientation versus long-term orientation tensions that Sabrine experiences. She has similar tensions in her cross-cultural marriage.

> As Canadians, we tend to think more in the long term. We plan for the future. I am a big planner. I don't want to know just what I'm doing today. I want to know what I'm doing for the next week, the next month, or even the next year. This is very different from my husband who comes from a short-term oriented culture. Trying to discuss those plans with him sometimes falls on deaf ears. It's just not in his nature to plan. Interestingly enough, though, ten years in Canada has started to shift him more towards the other side. It goes to show that certainly, culture can influence our own values and push us to assimilate into the new culture we are living in.

Joanne feels that the masculine/feminine values continuum should be renamed.

> I know the masculine/feminine continuum is always one that is of hot debate when I'm discussing it in my teacher training classes. The actual continuum itself is labelled in a culturally biased way. When we're saying that a culture that leans toward the feminine side has more equality between the genders in terms of how they deal with things, they're not "feminine," they're just equal. I know my teacher training classes themselves have agreed that this should be re-labelled in a way that is gender neutral.

Nailah pointed out that circumstances and context often determine the values people have and how they behave rather than culture per se. A culture's values will therefore change according to the circumstances of its people.

> The cultural values continuums are a strange idea for me; they are a philosophical idea that needs deep reflection. If we think about different societies and how they act towards others, their culture really depends a lot on the internal and external conditions those countries have. Sometimes, people have good attitudes towards each other, and sometimes, they do not. In many countries, it depends on the economic situation. When the economic situation goes down sharply, or there are lots problems politically or socially, you find that people change. They only think of themselves as individuals and what is best for them even if they have to step on others. I think this kind of analysis is not static. It depends on the political and economic situation in the culture.

Nailah further expanded on her belief that some of the values depend upon context.

> I still believe that the differences between high uncertainty and low uncertainty or short-term and long-term people depend a lot on the economic situation of the country. I think these ideas of high uncertainty avoidance and short-term time orientation can be found in developing countries or countries where the people suffer more just to meet basic daily needs. They cannot take risks because they are looking to meet their basic needs. They don't have anything that would help them to look forward to the future. They are always revolving in the hectic circle of "basic needs, basic needs." This does not give them the chance to look forward. That's why the people who try to look forward to the future and try to do something for themselves have to work very hard and suffer because of hard conditions to achieve their aspirations. The same story goes for short-term orientation. It's not only a personal trait, but it also depends on the economic situation of the country where the people live. It happens also with us personally when we move to live in different countries. We have to be very cautious of how we are going to go ahead until we understand the situation or all the conditions of the country around us, and we feel safe enough to live comfortably in the same area.

6.7.5 Learning Domains of Culture

There are three learning domains of culture—the cognitive, behavioural, and affective domains—that provide information on culture learning from three different perspectives of

knowledge, action, and emotion. Joanne liked that this conceptualization added the affective domain to culture learning.

> We've talked about things that we can and can't see very easily. And then we have the way that we think and the information that we have. But I think the affective side is an important part, too. How we act, how we think, and how we feel all go together. They are all equally important.

Emma also noted the affective domain is useful in understanding and managing cross-cultural experiences.

> We need to manage our emotions when dealing with different cultures. It's very easy to get frustrated, angry, and upset when interacting with a different culture. We have to stop and think, "Hang on a sec. Why am I thinking this? Why is this person behaving like this?" We've got to manage our emotions to understand the different behaviours that go with the culture. If we become too frustrated or angry, we can't see through our emotions to understand why this particular situation is happening.

Gabriela expanded on the importance of all three learning domains with a discussion of how literature can serve as a window into the soul of a culture, demonstrating significant cultural awareness.

> It is very helpful to learn the cognitive side of a culture and also to read novels and poetry from local writers. This helps to dig deeply into a culture to understand the behavioural and affective aspects of a culture. A few years ago, a friend of mine told me about a book she was reading by Gabriel Garcia Marquez. She said he had a surreal way of telling the stories of the towns and its inhabitants. She was also kind of mocking the people in the novel, their behaviours and beliefs. These are sometimes quite funny for us if we think about them from our own perspective here in Canada. But to her dismay, my interpretation was quite different. I said, "The stories and the situations that he described in his novels are actually true. If you or I or any of us visits the little villages and communities that he bases his stories on, these stories really happened. They might look and sound a little bit outrageous and weird to outsiders, but the people living there respond to the stories." This affective side of the learning domains of culture would be greatly enhanced if we pay more attention to the literature and the poetry of the places we visit.

6.7.6 Acculturation Model

The Acculturation Model puts forward the steps that individuals go through when they encounter and are immersed in a new culture. They start with ethnocentrism, move to excitement, and then culture shock. They then go through a recovery phase to finally end up at assimilation, adaptation, or departure. The participants had many comments and stories about the acculturation model from their personal and professional cross-cultural experiences and from the experiences of their students.

Sabrine shared how she teaches acculturation in her cross-cultural teacher training program.

> I always use my own life experience to explain the steps of acculturation. Most of our students don't know another culture. They've only lived and studied here in Algeria. They usually don't teach another cultural group, either. They are always interested to hear my stories. However, I wish there was another step in this model: reverse culture shock. I found reverse culture shock far worse than any other experience of culture shock that I had.

Sabrine has a specific example that she uses to introduce her teachers to the idea of seeing the dark side of a culture in the acculturation process.

> I always ask my students, "Do you know the Eiffel Tower? Do you know what it looks like? Have you actually been to it?" They know where it is. They know some of its history. I always share of my own experience when I first went to Paris, and I saw the Eiffel Tower and got closer to it to see the detail in the metal. I was very surprised. The colour was very different from what I expected. It was a red-brown colour. It had swirl patterns in the metal. It had this elevator to go up, which you don't see when you see pictures of the Eiffel Tower. All these things surprised me about it. This was back in 1999. I didn't have a digital camera then. I had a film camera. I took pictures from the lookout. For fun, I just held my camera over the edge and snapped a picture of the ground. A few months later I returned to Canada, and I developed all my film. I always ask my students, "What do you think I found that I wouldn't have known would have been there on the edge of the Eiffel Tower if I hadn't taken the picture?" I found there are cigarette butts on the edge of the Eiffel Tower. This is something you would not know if you didn't have that experience. It's kind of the ugly side inside the culture. You see all the beautiful things, and sometimes, there's some ugliness that is not apparent to you from the outside.

Sabrine also used this model to help her teachers who have lived outside of Algeria and then returned.

> One student in the last group I taught had experienced studying abroad in the UK. He had returned to Algeria and was not quite adjusting back to Algerian culture. I told him he had to assimilate, adapt, or depart. He asked if there was another option. I said no.

Sabrine also shared where she was at with her own acculturation process in living and working in Algeria.

> My students always ask me where I am in acculturating to Algeria. I say I'm adapting. I don't think I can assimilate to all the aspects of the culture. And I'm not going to depart. So I think I'm learning to adapt. For example, when you greet people, especially if you go to a wedding and there are lots of people there, you have to kiss everyone at the party. They are segregated parties, so it's all ladies. You go around the room, kissing them four times. For me, as a Canadian, we aren't that emotional in our greetings. Then you have to ask each other, "How are you? How is so-and-so?" It's time consuming at a party. I kind of get away with not doing some

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of these things as a foreigner. At first, I was very overwhelmed by these things, and I would avoid them as much as I could. Now I try my best to adapt, but sometimes, I still avoid these things.

Joanne shared the story of a student in her multicultural English language school who was not able to successfully to navigate the acculturation process.

I think it's important to note that even though we want to say that acculturation is eventually a positive thing, the truth is it's not always positive. Quite a few years back, I had a young man who came to our school to learn English from Saudi Arabia. He was very ethnocentric. He was not like a lot of our other Saudi students who had at least an idea of our culture through the media or from movies. He really had no idea. When he arrived in Canada, I think he thought it was just another Saudi Arabia, maybe with a slightly different climate. He was very surprised to discover this wasn't the case. I feel like he almost skipped the excitement phase of acculturation because I never really saw that out of him. He was just very uptight and nervous about everything that was happening. And then to make matters worse, shortly after he arrived in Canada, he was called back home to Saudi Arabia to get married in an arranged marriage. I don't want to say make matters worse because marriage should never make matters worse, but it made things worse for his acculturation.

About a month later, he came back to Canada to resume his studies. He came with his new young Saudi Arabian bride. He was going through all kinds of shocks, and not just culture shock. Acculturation can be applied to so many other things because it's about being in a situation that's new and different. This poor man was trying to acculturate to a new culture and new life in Canada, but he was also trying to acculturate to a new life with a wife whom he had just met a month before. He was really in the extreme mode of culture shock.

One of his tipping points was going to the bank to open a bank account with his wife. The first thing that happened was that the bank representative who was helping him to open his account extended his hand to shake his hand and then his wife's hand. The student immediately stormed out of the bank with his wife following behind. I was the person there waiting to drive them back to the school. I had to ask what happened. He was very, very upset, saying, "How dare this man try to shake the hand of my wife!" We went through a conversation that this is what we do in Canada, that the bank representative doesn't understand your culture. I continued that at our school, the teachers may understand your culture because they are familiar with it, but not everyone in Canada is going to understand your culture. I said very strongly, "This is Canada; this is not Saudi Arabia." He said, "That's ok, I'll fix this." I said, "What are you going to do to fix this?" He said, "Every time I go into a bank or into a store, I'm just going to talk to all the male associates first and tell them not to shake my wife's hand." I said at that point, "I don't know if you're going to get the best reception from doing that. You might want to look at another strategy." At that point, he just refused to listen anymore.

One of the other things that he had a really hard time with at the school was that when his wife did an English language assessment test and scored higher than him. Again, at that point, I didn't know a lot about the Saudi culture, and I wouldn't even say this is the case now knowing the Saudi students that I've had. For him, having his wife at a higher level than him was really something that he was not willing to accept. He tried to tell us that she had cheated on the test. Later, he tried to tell us that she was cheating in the class when she was actually doing very well, and he wasn't. We really tried to support this young man, and we really understood that he was going through a tough time. It was very difficult for us to understand from our cultural values. We just couldn't understand why it was so difficult for him. But we knew it was. We knew that his difficulties were sincere. But unfortunately for him, the recovery phase did not go well, despite all the support systems that he had at the school. His result was departure, and he did go back to Saudi Arabia, which was unfortunate. I like to use this example a lot to show that in some cases, departure is the result. As teachers, we want to be there and support our students so that assimilation or adaptation can occur and the student can be successful in the new culture, but sometimes, that is just not possible.

Similar to Joanne, Emma has noted the acculturation process with students in her multicultural English language school.

We have had students who have had issues with adapting to the new culture. They just assume that they can make everybody change to their own way of thinking and behaving. It's actually quite sad because we can't really help these students. They end up going home, probably having had a very miserable experience here, which is a shame.

Emma shared her own acculturation experience when living and working in the Caribbean.

My husband and I left England to go and work on a boat in the British Virgin Islands. Although the language there is obviously English, the culture is so different. When we first got there, it was very exciting. We were in the Caribbean. There was blue sea and blue sky and warmth. Everything was lovely. Then we realized that it was very different. I had worked near London, so I was used to a very fast pace of life. We couldn't have gone to a culture that was more different. The word "slow" doesn't do it justice. The other thing that we noticed was it was also "no." Every time we tried to do anything, the answer was always "no." We had to work our way around to getting an answer of "yes," but that would take numerous visits to the same place to get to that point.

For me, it was the first time that I had been on the receiving end of racial discrimination. Being white, if we were in a shop, a bank, or a government office, we would not be served until everybody else had been dealt with if they were black. That was an interesting concept for me, and it was very frustrating. We were trying to get things done, and it was just very difficult. After a while, we just accepted that that's the way it was, and we treated it with a bit of humour, I think, in order to get through it. We did adjust. It was a very happy time eventually there. I don't think that I assimilated. I probably adapted. I kept my original identity and just took on

some of the local culture. We started to talk the same way and to really slow down how we did things. The walking, the talking, and everything just became much slower. That was quite interesting.

Emma shared her reverse culture shock experience when returning to the UK after living and working in the Caribbean.

We got a very strange kind of reaction when we got home. People were quite keen to let us know that their lives had gone on while we weren't there, and their lives had been just as interesting as ours had. Many people were just not interested in hearing about the experiences that we'd had. We went through every step in the acculturation model, including the missing one: reverse culture shock. I think, in some ways, reverse culture shock is much more shocking to us than the initial culture shock. I think we expect culture shock but not reverse culture shock.

Gabriela explored the acculturation conceptualization of culture was struck by the importance of cultural distance and the reason for being in a new culture in the acculturation process.

Acculturation depends to some degree on where you're coming from and where you're going. When we are working with people, we also need to think about where they come from and the reasons why they are interacting with us. For instance, refugees are coming to a new country not because they think that this new culture is better or worse. They are coming to be safe.

Gabriela also drew connections between language proficiency and acculturation, as well as motivation and acculturation.

I think acculturation depends in part on the person's knowledge and understanding of the new language. The timing of the acculturation will also change based on the individual's expectations and motivations. It will be influenced by whether they arrive to a job or whether they have a very specific goal.

Gabriela dug more deeply into the possible endpoints of acculturation: assimilation, adaptation, and departure.

Assimilation is something that is not easy to achieve, especially if a person arrives after a certain age or if they have strong family ties. I haven't met anyone who would say that they are totally assimilated to a new culture. Adaptation I would say is easier to achieve. I would think that people tend to adapt to a new culture and situation. We tend to adapt once we know the language and once we have recovered from the culture shock.

Gabriela noted that first culture and age can influence the end point of acculturation.

We know that there are groups in different immigrant communities in Canada where people don't really adapt or assimilate. They stay living in a preliminary stage of recovery but still not quite in adaptation. They stay in Canada because their families

have settled in Canada. Many of these older immigrants don't interact with the dominant culture. They remain in a cultural bubble.

Jasmine also speculated that age is a factor in the ease or difficulty of the acculturation process.

> I think this model very clearly shows that the culture changes you, or you adapt to the culture. But I think age is also a very important factor. For the younger generation, maybe it is easier to live in a new culture. But for adults, maybe it is more difficult.

6.7.7 Communicative Competence

Communicative Competence identifies six competencies that are needed in order to be fully functional in an additional language: linguistic competence, sociocultural competence, formulaic competence, interactional competence, discourse competence, and strategic competence. The first four competencies influence each other and then feed into discourse competence, and all are supported by strategic competence.

Emma commented on the cyclical nature of building communicative competence.

> The arrows in the diagram indicate that this is a continuous cycle, so we learn a little bit of linguistic competence, and then we learn how to use that competence. We learn the formulaic language, and then we keep going around the circle as we get more and more ability to communicate.

Emma also commented on the strategic competence that English language educators have.

> I am guessing that as English language teachers, we all probably have a fairly high level of strategic competence. We are used to doing whatever we need to do to communicate. I was recently in Colombia on a work trip, and I had to communicate with my drivers. I don't have a great level of Spanish, but in the end, I just decided to go for it. I didn't always know the word I needed, but by using the strategic competence I've built as a teacher, I could get something out. The driver would then help me find the word I was looking for. I think with strategic competence and communicative competence overall, it is important that the person you're communicating with plays the game with you. If they don't play the game of communicating with you, then it's not going to work, even if you have strategic competence.

Emma provided another example of when strategic competence is not enough; this time with her students in her English language school.

> When our students go to the bank, for example, and ask for something, the person at the bank may just not try to communicate with that student. They'll just say, "I don't understand what you're saying." The student will come back to school and say, "I went to the bank and said I wanted to open an account, but it didn't work." Because

the teller didn't make an effort to interact with that student, the student just shut down. If the listeners are willing to put effort into communicating and to help and guess and make fools of themselves as well, the communication will be successful.

Jasmine pointed out that this model highlights the many layers to language learning and the corresponding challenges that each of those layers adds for the language learner.

> I think these many layers make things more difficult for me as a language learner. If language is just for communicating with words, then that is easy. But, if you need to learn socio-cultural competence, formulaic competence, and discourse competence, for example, then it becomes very difficult. Because of this, I think I still can't use the English language very well. These layers of competencies are my weaknesses.

For Gabriela, socio-cultural competence is one of the most important aspects of communicative competence, particularly as it relates to humour.

> Humour is one of the most difficult aspects of any culture to understand and convey. It is perhaps one of the ways to measure how culturally competent we are. When we are able to understand the humour and to accept it as non-threatening, we have a degree of socio-cultural competence. This is particularly true when it comes to the humour in the Latin countries. Humour in Latin countries is always filled with sexual innuendoes, class commentary, and gender issues. Humour always puts women and LGBTQI+ people in a lesser place. It is not necessarily the words that are used but how they are put together with intonation and facial expressions that create the innuendo.

Gabriela also commented on the behaviour that goes along with communication.

> In communicative competence, we are talking not only about the language, but we are also talking about the way we behave, the way we move, and how we look as we communicate. For example, in some cultures, it is not acceptable to look someone in the eyes or to stare at people. This is considered very disrespectful. Yet in other cultures, eye contact is expected or important. As you go down the hallway in an office, for instance, you see how people look at you, how they shake your hand, how they open or don't open the door for you, and how they join in conversations. These behaviours may lead you to think that someone is either interested or not in communicating with others.

Gabriela had more to say about the importance of the relationship between language and culture, which is strongly captured by the communicative competence model.

> Knowing a language goes far beyond understanding what is said or being able to translate literally from one language to another. Language is a tool that helps us understand the feeling of a culture and why the people in it are different. Without understanding the language of the culture, we are not going to understand many things about the culture. For instance, I find that English is a very precise and to-the-point language. Italian, Spanish, or Portuguese, on the other hand, are not. This, in

itself, defines the sense of timing, urgency, and accountability in different cultures. I realize that knowing the language doesn't give us a full understanding of a culture, but it allows us to experience the culture more profoundly.

This conceptualization brought Gabriela came back to the link between language, culture, and tourism.

> I think tourism is a great platform to look into the culture because it provides us with a very good opportunity to learn about ourselves and our own world. If we pay careful attention when we travel, we will see the differences and the similarities we have with the people living in the places we visit. This is why, in my opinion, we react to the places we visit. We feel uncomfortable, we dislike something, or we really like something.

6.7.8 Intercultural Competence

Intercultural Competence looks at different "savoirs" that go into making an individual effective in intercultural communication: *savoirs* (knowledge), *savoir être* (attitudes), *savoir comprendre* (interpretation), *savoir apprendre/faire* (interaction) and *savoir s'engager* (critical thinking).

Emma explored the concept of intercultural competence by asking the question of the role of age and particularly life experience.

> I wonder if any research has been done to look at intercultural competence depending on age group. When I looked at some of the competencies in intercultural competence—for example, knowledge of self and others—I felt that if someone was in their twenties, they might not have this. I certainly didn't when I was in my twenties. I think some of these things come with age. If you're put into a different culture when you're in your forties or fifties, I think you bring a lot of different types of skills to that situation. I wonder whether it's to do with age as much as anything else.

Gabriella also explored the concept more by asking the question of what is needed in order to feel intercultural competence.

> I would say that one of the things that we need is to be able to leave our own cultural bubble and our own understanding and beliefs of what's right and wrong. We need to do this to fully understand the people around us and why they behave in certain ways. The most difficult thing to do, in my opinion, is to leave behind our own expectations and our own beliefs of what is right and wrong that are based in our own culture.

6.7.9 Intercultural Communicative Competence

There were no comments from the participants on intercultural communicative competence. There are a number of possible reasons why the participants did not respond to this conceptualization. Because the model of intercultural communicative competence used was a composite of previous models (communicative competence and intercultural competence), they may have felt they had made all of the comments needed. Alternatively, the participants may not have understood the conceptualization or the model of the conceptualization that was used. As another possibility, they may have felt the conceptualization was not relevant or practical to their experiences.

6.7.10 Culture as a Complex Dynamic System

Culture as a complex dynamic system conceptualizes culture as the result of the internal and external variables that are mutually influencing, unpredictable, and changeable. Culture changes over time as a result of the interactions of these internal and external variables.

Emma and Sabrine responded enthusiastically to this conceptualization of culture. Emma agreed that cross-cultural interactions have a degree of unpredictability and chaos to them.

> When we're in cross-cultural situations, there are so many things going on all the time. We constantly have to readjust and to figure out what just happened. Why did that person stop talking? Why did that person start talking? Someone came into the room, and the whole temperature has changed. Someone left the room, and suddenly everything seems different. Was it a good thing that he left? Was it a bad thing that he left? What did I just say? Did I say something wrong? Did I break some rule? We try to remember all the rules of engagement. There are so many things happening back and forth. We're trying to constantly reassess and review what we just did and decide if we need to change our approach.

Emma understood from this conceptualization why functioning cross-culturally is so exhausting.

> I look at our students sometimes, and they really are absolutely exhausted at the end of the day. It's not just because they're learning a language; they're also dealing with all these things that are happening all the time.

Emma feels that this conceptualization takes the pressure off those involved in cross-cultural interactions.

> I think it is good because it means perhaps we shouldn't be so hard on ourselves when we don't quite get it right all the time. We all make mistakes when we're dealing with students every day. Sometimes, we mess it up culturally, and sometimes, when we're living in these cross-cultural situations, we get it wrong. All these things are happening all the time, and one thing will affect the outcome of the

next thing, which will then affect everything else. Maybe it was a brilliant cross-cultural interaction in the end because everything just came into alignment. Or maybe it was a complete disaster because one thing along the way just skewed everything.

Sabrine feels that culture as a complex dynamic system allows her to understand why cross-cultural interactions are often unpredictable.

> There are so many things going on. There are so many things that are obvious, others that are unseen, and others that are inside our heads and are not visible to onlookers. This is why predictions are impossible. It is a live moving thing that is always changing. Today, certain factors are more prominent, and tomorrow, they're not important.

Sabrine felt that this conceptualization helps explain her success living and working in South Korea.

> When I went to South Korea as a young person, I was not sure what the experience was going to lead to. My own family members underestimated my ability to adapt and live in that culture. My aunt and cousin predicted that I would be back in six months. I went there for one year, and I stayed five years. And I came back with a husband from yet another culture. There were lots of things going on that I was adjusting to and, in the end, thrived in.

For Gabriela, this conceptualization helped explain the need for alertness in cross-cultural situations.

> I realize how alert I have to be when I am working in a different culture or when I'm exposed to a different situation. This alertness is about being in the moment. All the intellectual preparation that we have done will fail if we are not alert to what is happening in the moment. We won't be able to absorb what's happening around us and interpret it.

This conceptualization also brought to mind the need for flexibility for Gabriela as she illustrated with her cross-cultural experiences.

> I also see flexibility as one of the most important tools in the strategy kit that I carry with me. I go into an interaction with a purpose. I have an idea of the outcome I want. I hope to bring home a business deal or have a learning experience. I always have a clear idea of what I want to happen. But I also know that this might not unfold the way I thought because there are so many variables in this cross-cultural interaction. As an example, when working with First Nations groups, even though I had an outcome in mind and a plan of action, the outcomes were always very different. To start with, it would take more time than expected to get into the topic that we were talking about. With Aboriginal clients, it would be very important to build the personal relationships first, and this is done by sharing stories. This was a

mutual way to understand each other so we could move forward and speak about the issues or topics in our agenda.

6.8 Conclusion

Once again, the common word running throughout all the data collected about the participants and their cross-cultural and cross-linguistic experiences is variation. No two sets of experiences are the same, although there are a few commonalities scattered throughout. Emma and Joanne, for example, have some commonalities in their experiences managing multicultural schools in Canada; Jasmine and Nailah have common culture brokering roles; and Gabriela, Nailah, and Sabrine face challenges created by the cultural context in which they are operating. The participants selected wide ranging cultural artefacts and corresponding stories that demonstrated the meanings that they derived both from their businesses and their cross-cultural and cross-linguistic experiences. The participants perceived the critical incidents quite differently, but they used the incidents to work through how to identify when culture is at play in a situation and when it is not. Some participants saw no influence of culture, indicating that the incidents were just daily events in any culture or part of running a business; some participants saw a significant cultural influence. And finally, the conceptualizations of culture presented in the mini-lecture resonated differently with each participant, with participants approaching the same conceptualizations from differing perspectives. They used the conceptualizations to once again work through their understanding of culture and their understanding of their cross-cultural and cross-linguistic experiences.

Chapter 7: Linkages

"If you think you are too small to make a difference you haven't spent a night with a mosquito."

-African Proverb

7.1 Introduction

This chapter discusses data from the previous two chapters within the framework of the research questions posed at the outset of the study. Within this framework, the chapter links the data to the literature on entrepreneurs, women entrepreneurs, the English language education sector, and cross-cultural and cross-linguistic interactions. To conclude, the chapter interprets the data within the conceptual framework of the study and within the different conceptualizations of culture and its relationship with language.

7.2 The Case Histories of the Women Entrepreneurs and Their Businesses

The first research question asked, "What are the case histories of the women entrepreneurs and their businesses?" The participants had varied business case histories. First, they differed in terms of length, from the short histories of Gabriela's, Jasmine's, Nailah's, and Sabrine's businesses to the lengthier histories of Emma's and Joanne's businesses. Among these short and long business histories, there is variation. Gabriela's young Canadian-Colombian consulting business has focused on cross-cultural project management with only the first project implemented at the time of the research. Jasmine's young English language school in China has grown slowly as she has adhered to an English language instructional model of teaching English as a communication tool rather than following the trend of teaching English for exams. Nailah's young teacher professional development business was defined by her struggle to promote the value of professional development to teachers, academic managers, and school owners in a challenging economic context. And Sabrine's young teacher training business has changed direction multiple times as she and her partners have tried to determine how to function within the Algerian context; it also changed as they worked to merge three divergent visions for the business and to meet the personal needs of the three owners. Emma's long business history was defined by its changing female partnerships and its changing programs and services in a highly competitive and dynamic market. Joanne's business is defined by a stable female–male

partnership and growth through the addition of new programs and services in response to market needs. A deeper look at the case histories of the participants is possible using the literature on entrepreneurs, women entrepreneurs, and the English language education sector as a framework. This application of the research to the data yields insights into the significant variation seen in the experiences of the participants.

7.2.1 The Participants as Entrepreneurs

The participants fit the basic definitions of *entrepreneur* presented in the literature. They organize their activities and the activities of others in their businesses; this can be seen in Joanne's and Emma's comments about how they have structured their businesses and managed their growth over time. They take initiative as well, with Nailah carving out a completely new service—teacher professional development—in the English language education sector in Egypt. And, most importantly, they take on risk, from Jasmine leaving a stable government job to learn English and then start an English school, to Emma and Sabrine relocating to two different countries to run businesses, to Gabriela running a business bridging between two countries at the same time. Emma described the risks inherent in being an entrepreneur and how she manages them. Joanne similarly explained the risks she and her business partner deal with in the English language education sector.

Gartner's (1988) summary of trait research on entrepreneurs and Ray's (1993) three ways to categorize the traits of entrepreneurs further illustrate that the participants in this study fit the definition of entrepreneur. Under Ray's first category of attributes/characteristics of an entrepreneur, the participants demonstrated perseverance (for example, Sabrine navigating the highs and lows of starting a business), energy (for example, Joanne, Jasmine, and Nailah all working additional jobs along with running businesses), and creativity (for example, Emma and Joanne developing new programs and courses). While none of the participants specifically listed their skills and competencies—Ray's second category—during the interview process, their skills and competencies became evident during the interviews and the responses to the mini-lecture. These skills included business planning, marketing, making sales, using technology, hiring and managing staff, serving customers, and developing programs and courses. Specifically, in cross-cultural and cross-linguistic interactions, the participants demonstrated strong socio-cultural competency and strategic competency. All participants demonstrated language proficiency in at least one additional language. In Ray's final category of background experience, the participants

had significant previous experience as professionals, business people, and managers (Emma, Joanne, Nailah, and Jasmine) and entrepreneurs (Emma, Sabrine, and Gabriela). They also had extensive experience in the English language education sector in the roles of student, teacher, teacher trainer, office manager, and department head. Finally, they had education that prepared them to run their businesses in the English language education sector, including entrepreneurial training (Nailah and Sabrine), teacher training (Emma, Jasmine, Joanne, Nailah, and Sabrine), cross-cultural training (Gabriela and Jasmine) and relevant master's degrees (Joanne and Gabriela).

Mueller et al.'s (2012) taxonomy of entrepreneur behaviour is useful in describing the wide and complex range of behaviours that the participants engage in daily as entrepreneurs. At the highest level of the taxonomy, the galactic level, the participants create awareness and demand for services (for example, Nailah's building awareness about the need for professional development), test out new courses and programs (for example, Emma and Joanne's ongoing course development processes and Gabriela's customized English for tourism projects), explore new markets (for example, Emma's ongoing marketing trips to new markets and Sabrine's foray into the Algerian market with English language teacher training), and try to get traction with an instructional methodology that goes counter to the local methodology (for example, Jasmine's introduction of the English for communication methodology as opposed to the test preparation methodology). At the next level, the molar level, all participants described completing functional activities in their businesses. Jasmine described her human resource management challenges with her Canadian English teachers, and Joanne described her career-building approach for her teaching staff. Emma and Joanne discussed how they manage their new program and service development processes. Gabriela discussed her project management. And Emma, Joanne, Nailah, and Sabrine talked about their marketing initiatives. At the molecular level, the participants all discussed specific activities in which they engage. Emma talked about building and maintaining relationships with agents. Jasmine shared how she positions her relationships with students. Nailah discussed her challenges in building relationships with school owners. At the atomic level, participants discussed their discrete actions or tasks. Emma, Joanne, Nailah, and Sabrine detailed their use of social media to communicate with customers. Sabrine shared how she and her partners put up school signage to direct traffic to their school. Jasmine discussed how she coaches her students to be successful when studying internationally.

It is evident that the participants all complete the full spectrum of entrepreneurial behaviours in Mueller et al.'s (2012) taxonomy.

Goffee and Scase's (1985) four categories of entrepreneurs are useful in identifying the business size and business structure differences among the participants. Jasmine fits into Goffee and Scase's first category of self-employed entrepreneurs with her sole proprietorship. Gabriela, Nailah, and Sabrine fall into the second category of small employer entrepreneur, with a small staff and a large span of control of their organizations' activities. Emma and Joanne fit into the third category of owner-controller entrepreneur, as they still take on direct responsibilities in the day-to-day operations of their larger organizations.

Moving on from the literature on entrepreneurs to the literature on entrepreneurship, Gartner's (1985) model of entrepreneurship is very useful in explaining some of the unique characteristics of the participants' experiences. Gartner identified four mutually influencing factors that contribute to the outcomes of entrepreneurial activity: the environment, the entrepreneur, the organization, and the processes. The data clearly demonstrated the uniqueness of the environment in which each participant operates her business, from its linguistic and cultural characteristics to its economic characteristics. Nailah, Jasmine, Gabriela, and Sabrine described their environments or contexts in detail, including the linguistic characteristics, cultural characteristics, and economic characteristics. Nailah stated that the economic context in Egypt strongly influences the culture and the actions she can and cannot do with her business. Gabriela, bridging two countries with her business, also has a challenging environment. The variation in the characteristics of the entrepreneurs can be seen in their ages, family structures, education, past experiences, and personalities. The variation in the types of organizations the participants have built was also very evident in the data in terms of age, size, business structure, types and numbers of partners, and services offered.

Finally, the participants all use varying processes to build and to run their businesses. Emma is systematic and methodical in both running and expanding her business, using information from regular environmental scanning, her marketing staff, agents, and external business consultants. Gabriela uses existing relationships from her tourism work to identify English-for-tourism project opportunities. Her delivery is planned in Canada and implemented in Colombia. Jasmine has built her business around the use of native speaker English teachers from Canada. Joanne

has built her business by responding to needs identified by students and through building strategic partnerships nationally and internationally. Nailah relies on technology, both for her service delivery and her marketing. Last, Sabrine has built her business through a process of trial and error in a context that she and her partners are still trying to understand. It is not surprising that the data indicated variation in the experiences of each of the participants. Gartner's (1985) model is thus useful for starting to explore the variation and uniqueness of the participants' experiences found in the data.

Shane and Venkataraman's (1997) model of entrepreneurship as opportunity is also useful in understanding the data from the participants. The participants shared their experiences, identifying and exploiting the opportunities in their distinct contexts. Nailah recognized the gap in professional development for teachers; Sabrine recognized the gap in teacher training courses; Jasmine recognized the gap in language schools that teach English for communication; and Gabriela recognized the gap in English for tourism courses at the community level. Emma and Joanne regularly scanned their contexts to identify emerging opportunities as the English language education market evolved locally, nationally, and globally.

Ucbasaran et al.'s (2001) model of entrepreneurship allows the variation of the experiences of the participants to be further understood. This model looks at the interaction of prior knowledge and theory with different types of entrepreneurs, processes, and types of organizations to create unique entrepreneurial outcomes within a particular context. The participants' prior knowledge and theory, different processes, and contexts have already been discussed. The organizations the participants run are all start-ups, but they are at different stages of development. The new variation revealed through this model is in the types of entrepreneurs. Emma and Sabrine are both serial entrepreneurs, being on their second businesses. Gabriela is also a serial entrepreneur, with a lifetime of entrepreneurial experiences behind her. Joanne is evolving from an experienced entrepreneur into a portfolio entrepreneur as her institution branches out into other services such as curriculum licensing and other markets such as China. Jasmine and Nailah are novice entrepreneurs, as they are at the beginning of their entrepreneurial journeys. With these differing entrepreneurial profiles, the participants bring different levels of entrepreneurial expertise to the table with their businesses.

McKenzie et al's (2007) model introduces intention, another important element that contributes to the variation seen in the participants. They identify two types of intentions: intuitive, holistic, and contextual thinking on the one hand, and rational, analytical, cause-effect thinking on the other. If these two types of intentions are put on a continuum, two participants in this research would clearly occupy each end. Sabrine would occupy the intuitive, holistic, and contextual thinking end of the continuum. She operates her business with little planning and few systems, making changes reactively based on information from the context. Emma would occupy the rational, analytical, and cause-effect thinking end of the continuum. She is systematic in evaluating new program and service options before implementing them. She analyzes program outcomes to make decisions about continuing or expanding those programs. The other participants fall somewhere between the two extremes of Sabrine and Emma.

Models on the stages of entrepreneurship can account for some of the variation seen among the participants but also point to a similarity. Scott and Bruce's (1987) model of the stages of entrepreneurship introduces five stages of entrepreneurship: inception, survival, growth, expansion, and maturity. Using this model, Gabriela, Jasmine, Nailah, and Sabrine are in the second stage—the survival stage—with their businesses, growing revenue while managing expenses. Emma and Joanne, meanwhile, are in the fifth stage—the maturity stage—controlling expenses, maintaining productivity, and finding additional growth opportunities. The Global Entrepreneurship Monitor Stages of Entrepreneurship (Kelley et al., 2015) model has four stages of entrepreneurship, which are entrepreneurial intentions, total early stage entrepreneurship activity, established business ownership, and business discontinuous. This model reveals a similarity: all the participants are at the same stage of established business ownership, completing regular, ongoing business activities.

The literature on the motivation of entrepreneurs also helps to highlight variation among the participants. For Sabrine and Joanne, having the flexibility to manage the demands of their young families is central to their motivation as entrepreneurs. This was also a motivation for Gabriela because she ran some of her past businesses when her children were young. For Sabrine, her business also presents her with the opportunity to work with her spouse. For Jasmine, her business has provided her with independence and autonomy. There is one motivation in common for Emma, Gabriela, Jasmine, Joanne, and Nailah. For these five participants, building social value is a strong motivator. They all significantly value having a

positive impact on students' and teachers' lives and on their communities. On a continuum of economic value building on one end and social value building on the other, the participants all fall clearly on the social value side even though their businesses are also designed to generate profit.

The final body of literature on entrepreneurship positions entrepreneurial activity as a driver of a society's overall economic development. This high-level view of entrepreneurship is also found in the data from the participants. Both Emma and Joanne are cognizant of the economic impact of their businesses. They find it very satisfying to create well-paying jobs and rewarding careers within their regions. Sabrine also understood that her teacher training program provided career options for her trainee teachers that they would not otherwise have. She was planning on offering workshops on resume writing and career management to supplement the career management module in her teacher training course. Gabriela strategically positioned her English-for-tourism training project as being a driver for local economic growth. Nailah was also aware of the broader economic context in which she was operating. Rather than commenting on the impact of this economic context on entrepreneurship, however, she commented on its impact on cultural values, a perspective that will be revisited later in this discussion.

A comprehensive analysis and comparison of the economic indicators of the economies in which the participants are functioning was beyond the scope of this study. However, given the participant perceptions of themselves as operating within a larger economic context, this type of analysis is warranted. The literature lists several economic benchmarking organizations that can serve as sources for economic indicators, including the OECD Determinants of Entrepreneurship, the World Bank Doing Business Survey, the Global Entrepreneurship Monitor Country Reports, the Heritage Foundation Index of Economic Freedom, and the Fraser Institute Economic Freedom of the World Annual Reports. An economic indicator analysis and comparison of each of the contexts in which the participants are operating would add a deeper layer to the understanding of their varied experiences as entrepreneurs.

7.2.2 The Participants as Women Entrepreneurs

The literature on women entrepreneurs allows the variation among the participants in this study to be further explained. The first question that the literature addresses is whether women fit the

definition of entrepreneur. It was already established earlier in this chapter that the participants in this study do in fact fit the definitions and models of entrepreneurs in the literature on entrepreneurs. However, the literature on women entrepreneurs asks this same question— whether women entrepreneurs are in fact real entrepreneurs—by focusing first on their risk taking with financing. The literature indicates that it is access to financing, not risk taking with financing, that differentiates women and men entrepreneurs (Ahl, 2006 and Jung, 2010). The data from the participants, however, reveal both these scenarios. Emma is clear and direct about her low-risk, conservative approach to financing. While she maintains a line of credit for her business, she is not willing to take out a loan or mortgage her personal home to finance the growth of her business. All the growth in her English language school has been financed through the business, which is known as *bootstrapping* (Brush et al., 2007). Emma has also taken advantage of small amounts of funding available for women entrepreneurs in her region to fund marketing and business development. With a previous tourism business, Gabriela, on the other hand, encountered the problems related to access to finance that are discussed in the literature. She spoke about her frustrations in the past when trying to secure a line of credit and being turned down by the major banks. She finally secured financing through a credit union. Gabriela attributed her challenges in securing financing to the banks' reluctance to lend to a woman entrepreneur. The participants also had other financing scenarios. Jasmine and Nailah finance their businesses by working other full-time jobs in addition to running their businesses; Joanne also did this for the first eight years of her business. Sabrine's business was financed by all three partners. Nailah points out another source of financing challenges—the English language education sector. She is frustrated that education is not an attractive sector for investors. The data thus paint a much more complex and varied picture of women entrepreneurs and risk taking with financing than is discussed in the literature.

The same complex picture emerges with the participants and profit motivation. Ahl (2006) argues that profit motivation does not define whether a woman is an entrepreneur or not, and the data from this study support this argument. While the participants have profit motivation, it is not their only motivation. Emma, Gabriela, and Nailah's other motivation is social value building (Harding, 2006). Jasmine's motivation is independence. Joanne and Sabrine have strong lifestyle motivations (Marlow, 1997), wanting the flexibility to manage their young families. All the participants are passionate about what they do. The motivations for the participants, then, are a mix of profit, lifestyle, personal independence, passion for their work,

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and social value building. This varied motivation, above and beyond profit motivation, does not make the women any less entrepreneurial than someone purely motivated by profit.

In Halkias et al.'s (2011) global survey of women entrepreneurs, they investigated whether women entrepreneurs avoid taking risks with their businesses because of a fear of failure or a lack of confidence. Neither fear of failure nor a lack of confidence is apparent in the data from this study. All the participants approached their businesses with confidence. While the participants all know that failure is a possibility, they did not demonstrate or discuss a fear of failure. The participants also have strong networks in their business partnerships, families, and friends to support them in their businesses.

Another area of research in the literature is the size of businesses run by women entrepreneurs. Cliff (1998) and Ahl (2006) investigated a perceived underperformance of women's businesses, disproving the hypothesis that women's businesses tend to be smaller than men's businesses. Kelley et al. (2015) indicate that 80% of all businesses are micro businesses regardless of the gender of the entrepreneurs. Further, Jung (2010) points to the sector of operation rather than the entrepreneur as being the main factor in business size. And Marlow (1997) found that some entrepreneurs strategically choose not to grow their businesses beyond a certain size. The data from this study aligns with all this research on business size. Most of the businesses in this study are micro businesses. Four of the six businesses have from one to four employees, while the remaining two businesses are small businesses, with between five and 99 employees. All the participants spoke about the challenges they face in growing their businesses within the English language education sector. And Emma made a strategic choice to limit further growth. The motto for the school is better, not bigger. She feels the school has reached a size at which they can be efficient but at which they still know all their students by name. Interestingly, however, the data from this study point to another factor in business size that is not mentioned in the literature: the size of the businesses in this study is also a function of their age. The four micro businesses are all less than five years old, while the two small businesses are more than 16 years old.

A discussion of the capital model of entrepreneurship is constructive in comparing the data from this study to the literature on women entrepreneurs. In the capital model, entrepreneurs access and exploit different types of capital that contribute to their success: economic, human,

entrepreneurial, social, and symbolic (McAdam, 2013). Economic capital, or financing, has already been discussed. Human capital is the education and experience that entrepreneurs have (human capital, n.d.). In this study, the participants have significant human capital, as evidenced in their levels of education, business experience, management experience, and entrepreneurial experience. They also chose to operate their businesses within sectors that they know, which is also supported by the literature (Brindley, 2007; Martin et al., 2015).

The participants also demonstrated significant entrepreneurial capital, or opportunity recognition and exploitation (Erikson, 2002; Shaw et al., 2009). All the participants identified opportunities within the English language education sector in their social and cultural contexts that they could exploit. Emma and Joanne added services to their English language schools based upon what the students needed and what they saw in the market. Gabriela saw a need for English language instruction in the small community tourism industry in Colombia. Jasmine identified a space in the market in her hometown for a different type of English language school, one that focuses on English for communication rather than for test scores. Nailah noticed a need for professional development support for English language teachers and used technology to meet the need. And Sabrine noticed a lack of standardized English language teacher training in Algiers, Algeria.

The two remaining types of capital, social capital (Bourdieu, 1977) and symbolic capital (Bourdieu, 1993), point to two areas of entrepreneurship that the participants in this research did not discuss in any depth. Social capital is composed of both personal and professional networks. The participants all briefly discussed their personal networks in terms of the support offered by their immediate family members and friends, but they did not reveal any strategic use of personal networks to grow their businesses. Emma and Joanne shared that they both developed their professional networks through participation in local and national sector organizations. Emma also mentioned that she enhanced her professional network as a woman entrepreneur with her participation in the local chapter of a women's entrepreneur support group. The lack of participant discussion of their networks is in stark contrast to the literature's focus on the importance of networks for women entrepreneurs as a source of emotional support and confidence building.

There is likewise a difference between the literature and the participants with respect to symbolic capital, an individual's status or prestige within a particular context (Bourdieu, 1993).

Sabrine indicated that women entrepreneurs actually had significant symbolic capital in Algeria, particularly when operating in the education sector. Jasmine, on the other hand, despite deriving significant personal satisfaction in being an entrepreneur, did not derive any correspondingly significant amount of symbolic capital. She is considered unusual as a woman entrepreneur in China. Interestingly, Emma pointed to a different type of symbolic capital that she lacked because of the sector in which she operated, not because of her gender. She had strategically tried to increase her business' symbolic capital by participating in the awards of her local Chamber of Commerce, given that the English language education sector is not well known in the region. She was also considering bringing in public relations help to further build her business' symbolic capital. The other participants did not discuss symbolic capital in any depth. The literature, on the other hand, points to distinct benefits that the participants could derive from exploring and exploiting both their social and symbolic capital more deeply. The literature also points to social and symbolic capital changing from one context to another, which is relevant to any study, such as this one, that has participants situated in different social, economic, and cultural spaces.

Another model introduced in the literature review, the Global Women Entrepreneur Leaders Scorecard (Dell, Inc., 2015), evaluates countries based on their business environment, gendered access, leadership and rights, pipeline for entrepreneurship, and potential entrepreneur leaders. This model validates the importance that all of the participants in this study placed on the environments in which they operate their businesses. While Dell, Inc. (2015) considers the business environment to be gender neutral, other research indicates that it is biased in favour or men entrepreneurs (Marlow, 1997; Ahl, 2006; Shaw et al., 2009; Garcia & Welter, 2011). That said, only one participant, Gabriela, mentioned challenges specific to the gender bias of the business environment in which she operates. Gabriela discussed at length the strategies that she uses when dealing with "men's clubs" and the general machismo values inherent in the Colombian business environment. To navigate these challenges, Gabriela followed one strategy introduced in the literature; that of using a male, in this case her son, to complete some of her business transactions (Garcia & Welter, 2011). While three participants—Joanne, Nailah, and Sabrine—all had male business partners, none of them indicated that those partnerships were strategically formed to navigate the gender biases of their business environments; there were reasons other than gender that the participants selected their business partners.

The other aspects of the Global Women Entrepreneur Leaders Score Card (gendered access, leadership and rights, pipeline for entrepreneurship, and potential entrepreneur leaders) did not seem to resonate with the participants in this study. The participants did not mention restricted gendered access or social or institutional challenges to their rights to be entrepreneurs. Of equal interest, none of the participants mentioned being motivated to become an entrepreneur because they had other entrepreneurs in their personal or professional networks. They also did not identify any women entrepreneurs who served as role models or mentors for them. Emma shared that she belongs to a support group for women entrepreneurs, but she joined this long after becoming an entrepreneur. Thus, the Global Women Entrepreneur Leaders Score Card, while focusing on the significance of the business environment, does not appear to correlate well with the experiences of the participants in this study.

The literature on women entrepreneurs and family, on the other hand, closely mirrors the experiences of several of the participants. Gabriela, Joanne, and Sabrine's experiences all align with the work of Nel et al. (2010) on the mompreneur experience of balancing being an entrepreneur and a mother at the same time. Gabriela's children are now grown; however, a strong motivation for her previous entrepreneurial ventures was to find a way to manage the responsibilities of a young family as a single parent. While Joanne did not have children when she started her business, she appreciates now that as an entrepreneur, she has the flexibility that she wants and needs as a parent. Joanne also spoke about the almost overwhelming challenges of managing her first maternity leave. At that time, she was running the school operations almost singlehandedly. Identifying the tasks that needed to be covered in her absence was difficult. She took only a very short time off and completed a significant amount of work from home. Her second maternity leave went more smoothly because she and her business partner learned from the first experience. Sabrine had clear family-based motivations for starting her business. She was looking for a flexible way to earn a living in Algeria while raising her young children. Sabrine's experiences also align with research on copreneurs, women who run businesses with their husbands (McAdam, 2013). And Joanne's choice to restrict her international business travel because her children are young aligns with limitations identified by McAdam (2013).

An interesting perspective on women entrepreneurs and family, found in the data but not in the literature, was provided by Emma. She talked about balancing the needs of one female partner

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who had a young child in a partnership of three women. The one partner's need for short, regular work hours placed additional responsibilities on the other two partners. Covering the maternity leave of this partner had also been demanding on the two remaining partners.

McAdam (2013) explores how embedded women entrepreneurs' businesses are with their family lives, arguing that women's businesses are more embedded than men's. In this study, there are varying degrees of embeddedness. The participant who has the most embeddedness is Sabrine, given that her husband is one of her business partners. Their family and business lives are intertwined as they trade off business and child rearing responsibilities throughout any given work day. Jasmine has some embeddedness in that her daughter and her husband occasionally help out in her business. However, she is very clear that the business is her dream and no one else's. Gabriela's son helped her in past businesses to overcome gender biases in the environment, but he is not part of her current business. Emma's business affects her family life in a different way; her role in the business requires frequent travel and therefore absences from home. Joanne did not discuss any connections between her business and family other than the flexibility that her business provides her. Nailah also did not discuss any business–family connections. Interestingly, neither the research nor the participants discussed entrepreneurship and family in a positive way. There is no discussion of the increased social capital or built-in support system that family can provide to a woman entrepreneur.

While there are clear linkages between the literature on women entrepreneurs and the participants in this study, there are also perspectives and experiences in women's entrepreneurship from the data that are missing from the literature and merit further study. One gap in the literature is to explore the fundamental question of whether women entrepreneurs actually perceive differences between themselves and men as entrepreneurs. Emma listed some of the general differences that she has observed between women and men as entrepreneurs, including access to financing and a more conservative approach to risk taking and growth that leads to more success over the long term. She noted that women tend to create businesses related to things they are passionate about. However, Emma also indicated that she really does not think about being a woman when she is running her business; she just sees herself as an entrepreneur. That sentiment was echoed by the other participants. Nailah very consciously keeps her focus on running her business. Sabrine noted that in Algeria, it is not at all unusual for women to run businesses, particularly in the education sector. Joanne thinks most differences

between her and her male partners are related to personality, not gender. Only Gabriela very clearly felt that she had unique experiences as a woman entrepreneur. This variation in perception among the participants should be explored.

Also deserving of research attention is Jasmine's experience of feeling empowered as a woman entrepreneur and the strong satisfaction and meaning that all of the participants derive from running their businesses. These findings stand out against much of the research on women entrepreneurs which focuses on a deficit model of women's entrepreneurship (Watson & Newby, 2007; Ahl & Marlow, 2012; Marlow & McAdam, 2012). The research asks corresponding deficit questions such as whether women entrepreneurs take the risks necessary to be successful (Ahl, 2006; Watson & Newby, 2007; Jung, 2010; McAdam, 2013; Marlow & Swail, 2014), whether women entrepreneurs have a fear of failure (Halkias et al., 2011), whether women's businesses underperform (Cliff, 1998; Ahl, 2006), and whether women entrepreneurs have the competencies and capital to be successful with their businesses (Shaw et al., 2009; Jung, Huarng et al., 2012; Kelley et al., 2015; McGowan et al., 2015) . As the participants in this study clearly articulated, being an entrepreneur as a woman can be a positive, validating experience that should be celebrated, not positioned around a deficit model. A deficit model simple does not align with how the participants in this research have experienced entrepreneurship. Given this stark contrast, the empowerment and satisfaction that women entrepreneurs derive from operating their businesses is a crucial area for future research.

Emma, Gabriela, and Joanne's observation that age changes the experiences of women entrepreneurs represents another gap in the existing research. Jung (2010) and Kelley et al. (2015) researched the age differences between women and men entrepreneurs but did not research the differences in experiences of women based on their ages. Emma, Gabriela, and Joanne all noted that because they are now older, they are less likely to be objectified and are more likely to simply be seen as business owners. Longitudinal studies that track women entrepreneur's experiences over time and contrast women entrepreneurs of different ages would allow for age as a factor in women's entrepreneurship to be explored.

Another gap in the research is a practical one that examines the strategies that women entrepreneurs use as they operate in the entrepreneurial space. Gabriela spoke extensively about strategies she uses to navigate power differences, culturally based gender role differences, and

personal safety issues. All the participants provided advice that they would offer to other women entrepreneurs operating in the sector. This practical, strategy-based approach to women's entrepreneurship deserves research attention given its potential to form a foundation of support and training for prospective women entrepreneurs.

Finally, a significant source of variation among the participants in this study not discussed in the literature is the influence of business structure, ownerships, and organizational roles on the experiences of women entrepreneurs. Five of the six businesses were corporations, with Jasmine's business being a sole proprietorship. More variation is evident, however, with the business ownership: Emma has had up to three business partners, all women; Gabriela has one female partner; Jasmine has no partner; Joanne has a male partner; Nailah has one male and one female partner; and Sabrine has two male partners, one of whom is her husband. Similar variation is evident in the roles the participants play within their organizations. Emma manages the marketing and business development, while leaving the in-school operations to her business partner. Gabriela has a strong planning role, while her partner has an implementation role. Jasmine fills every role as a sole owner, except teaching. Joanne does the opposite of Emma; she manages the in-school operations while her partner manages the marketing and business development. Nailah's partners take on marketing and promotion work. And Sabrine focuses on teacher training delivery, while her two partners manage all other aspects of the business. These varying business structures, ownerships, and business roles result in different experiences for entrepreneurs. Suggested future research is a qualitative study with a larger number of women entrepreneur participants to classify the business structure, ownership, and role variations and then compare and contrast the resulting experiences.

7.2.3 The Participants in the English Language Education Sector

The data from this study contribute to the body of research on the English language education sector by supporting the argument for English as a global language and by filling in large gaps in how the sector operates. Crystal (2003), Graddol (2006), and Gooden (2011) are compelling when positioning English as a global language. The data from the participants add local perspectives to the global trends described in the literature. Nailah, Gabriela, Jasmine, and Sabrine explained the current role of English in their contexts of Egypt, Colombia, China, and Algeria. It is interesting to note that Egypt has a colonial history with an English-speaking country, the UK, and China has a tangled history with both the UK and the US, which has

influenced the perception and use of English in these contexts in the past. Yet neither Nailah nor Jasmine noted these histories. There was also no discussion from any of the participants on English displacing first languages in their contexts. It is also important to note that three of the participants, Gabriela, Jasmine, and Nailah, speak English as an additional language.

The participants function in different linguistic contexts; two of them function in English language contexts (Emma and Joanne) and four of them function in non-English language contexts (Gabriela, Jasmine, Nailah, and Sabrine). An area of future research is to integrate an analysis of English language proficiencies in the participants' non-English language contexts using the English Proficiency Index (EPI). The literature raises the question of which version of English should be considered standard English for instruction given the increasing number of additional language speakers of English and the reach of English around the globe. Jasmine made the strategic choice to hire a native English speaker as a teacher for her school rather than a second language speaker from the Philippines or Russia, deciding this was the standard of English that she wanted to teach. She does not even position herself as a teacher. Gabriela made a similar choice, using a native English speaker for her English-for-tourism project. On the other hand, Nailah did not even discuss English language proficiency, either her own or that of the teachers she works with. Her focus with her non-native English language teachers is on English language teaching methodologies, not on their English language proficiency.

The data from this study also provide an understanding of how English language education works in local contexts. Jasmine shared her English language education experiences in high school and university and compared these with the experiences of her daughter's generation. She also contrasted the approach that teaches English for test preparation and exams—an approach found in the public education system and most private schools—and her approach of teaching English for communication. Nailah provided significant detail on how English language education in Egypt functions, including government and private K-to-12 schools, government and private universities, and private schools and tutoring. She also spoke about the English language teacher qualification requirements, as well as teacher schedules, salaries, and working conditions.

While there is alignment between the sparse literature on the English language education sector and the data in this study, the data from the participants add significantly to the understanding of

how for-profit businesses in this sector function. A foundational characteristic of for-profit businesses in the sector, as discussed by Emma, is the tension between education and business. Balancing this is a reality for any for-profit English language education organization. Emma also noted differences between the business approach of educators-turned-entrepreneurs such as herself and her partners, who were educators first, and entrepreneurs-turned-educators, who were business people first. She and her partners have had a long journey developing a business model that balances educational quality, which is important to them, with generating revenue to pay their bills and themselves.

The participants shared details about the wide range of services and products that fall under the overall umbrella of the for-profit side of the English language education sector. Three of the participants in this study focused on just one service. Gabriela focused on English for tourism, Nailah on teacher professional development, and Jasmine on English language instruction. Sabrine has two services that she offers: English language teacher training and language instruction. Emma and Joanne offer a full range of services, including English language instruction, language assessment, and teacher training. Both Emma and Joanne regularly scan the English language education environment to identify new service and program opportunities. They have clear development processes in place to bring these new services and programs to market.

The literature indicates that technology is a driver of change in the English language education sector. The participants had varying perspectives on technology's role in their businesses. Jasmine is facing increased competition due to technology; there is a significant growth in online language schools that deliver either live or recorded lessons from teachers located outside of China. While Jasmine believes that the quality of her delivery is superior to the quality of the online deliveries, her potential customers are not well versed in this quality difference or are focused on cost rather than quality. Nailah, on the other hand, relies on technology for the delivery of her services; she streams experts from outside of Egypt to her professional development meetings. Joanne uses technology in the day-to-day delivery of her language program with technology-enabled classrooms. Emma, in contrast, believes that her teachers can deliver quality language education without large investments in technology. Gabriela did not discuss the role of technology in her business.

All the participants shared their experiences with business functions and operations in the for-profit English language education sector. For both Emma and Joanne, student management can be challenging, including managing student-to-student tensions, distinguishing cultural tensions from age-related tensions such as dating, and addressing undiagnosed learning disabilities. Joanne also manages administrative and teaching staff and provides teaching staff with professional development options and career progression. One challenge for Joanne is addressing consensual teacher and adult-student relationships; she just recently added a clause to her teacher contract prohibiting these relationships. Jasmine's main operational challenge in running an English language school is her dependence on her native English teacher. She stated that if her native English teacher is not good, it will destroy her business. In Sabrine's business, the operations are handled by one of the male partners. She readily admits that the organizational and operational aspects of running a business are not a strength for any of the owners.

Emma, Jasmine, and Joanne spoke at length of their roles with students, with this being a highly satisfying aspect of the English language education sector for all of them. While Emma does not manage students directly, she takes great satisfaction in their successes. Joanne takes similar pride in the successes of her students, as evidenced by the stories she told about the cultural artefacts that she keeps in her school, in her office, and at home. Jasmine also takes great pride in the successes of her students. She sees her role as supporting students in their academic and career choices, even if those choices are considered unconventional by the students' parents. Nailah, working with teachers rather than students, finds satisfaction in the emotional support she offers teachers along with professional development and training.

All participants spoke of the complexity of marketing in the English language education sector. They all learned what works in their specific markets through a process of trial and error. Sabrine and her partners learned that marketing that is effective in Canada does not necessarily work in Algeria. Emma and Joanne also discovered this country-by-country variability with each of the international markets that they explored. They both had strategies for determining when to stop spending money in a market in the event that there was no return. Joanne also described the challenge of differentiating their school from their competitors. Nailah and Sabrine had very challenging marketing barriers. For Nailah, the challenge is getting access to school decision-makers. For Sabrine, a cultural marketing challenge is the value placed on

government accreditation in the education sector. Jasmine has thus far relied on word of mouth and her personal network to market her school.

Social media marketing added a new complexity to marketing for Emma and Joanne. They use different types of social media in different international markets depending upon the usage preferences. Nailah and Sabrine, on the other hand, find that social media gives them a cost-effective way to reach their potential customers and to build a community of educators in local markets with high general usage of social media.

The literature points to the volatility of the English language education sector (British Council, 2006). Emma, Joanne, and Gabriela discussed at length the complexity of risk management in the sector given this volatility. Because Emma and Joanne's businesses draw students from all over the world, their businesses are affected by global events completely beyond their control. They have to navigate economic crises, currency devaluations, natural disasters, and political events in all of the countries from which they draw students. They mitigate these risks by marketing to students from multiple countries rather than relying on students from a single country. Emma and Joanne also have to navigate a changing competitive landscape as new competitors enter the market and old competitors exit the market. A risk that Gabriela has to navigate is a changing political landscape in Colombia that affects power balances down to the local mayor level. Gabriela also noted that cultural differences in risk perception present an additional risk management concern. Her delivery partners in Colombia perceive risk very differently from the Canadian teachers going to Colombia for project delivery; this mismatch in understandings of the concept of risk is in itself a risk for Gabriela.

Finally, Emma, Joanne, and Nailah spoke of their involvement in associations within the English language education sector. Emma participates in trade missions with Languages Canada, the association for fee-paying English and French language programs in Canada. She also participates in a provincial association promoting education institutions in the province to international markets. Joanne participates in the local affiliate of the provincial English language teachers' association. Nailah is a member of two large international organizations for English language teaching, one based in the United States and one in the UK.

7.3 Personal Meanings of the Participants' Businesses

Despite the variation in the business case histories, there is one clear commonality among the participants. They all derive significant personal meaning from their English language education businesses based on their understanding that businesses, and particularly education businesses, reside within and are integrally connected to communities and societies. Evidence of this personal meaning is found in the participants' business missions and motivations for starting their businesses. It is also found in the artefacts they chose to present, in the stories they told about their experiences with their businesses, and in their responses to the different conceptualizations of culture. The deep sense of personal meaning that the participants derive from their businesses aligns closely with the research on women entrepreneurs; women pursue businesses in what they are passionate about (Marlow, 1997).

Emma takes great satisfaction in the education side of her business, in the achievements of her students, and in the subsequent contributions that they can make to society as a result of their language learning. She also finds it rewarding to run a business that provides high-paying jobs to her local community. Emma gives back to the community by allocating both time and money to philanthropic endeavours, including offering scholarships to worthy students who would not otherwise be able to afford classes and helping with fundraising on behalf of selected community-based non-profit organizations in developing countries.

Gabriela has a clear social enterprise element to her business; part of her business is strategically non-profit. She derives meaning from bringing Canadian expertise in English language and tourism to small communities in Colombia that are using tourism to build local sustainable economies. Her passion is the space that connects culture, language, and tourism.

Jasmine's satisfaction and meaning in her business comes from the achievements of her students. She takes pride in their English language learning and in the opportunities they open up for themselves by studying abroad. In addition to being the owner of the language school, she sees herself as being a coach for her students. She wants her students to be happy and feel supported and understood. She takes on a different role from their parents. She wants to make her students aware of the life and career possibilities that exist for them outside of ordinary career paths. She encourages them to pursue their dreams.

Joanne's cultural artefacts were an unmistakable indication of the meaning she derives from her business. Each artefact represented the story of a student for whom she had provided assistance above and beyond what was required as the owner of the language school. Joanne provided these students with accommodations, counselling, encouragement, and support, and she became very invested in their success. She feels a sense of accomplishment when any of her students come back to visit years after their stay at her school and share their success stories with her. She feels she has had a small part to play in these stories and finds that very meaningful and rewarding. Joanne also takes great pride in the professional achievements of her staff and is committed to helping them develop rewarding careers for themselves.

Nailah shared the meaning that her business has for her when discussing her two artefacts: the textbook she uses as a reference for her teacher professional development work and her iPad. She is passionate about sharing her expertise in English language teaching in the Egyptian context with the current generation of English language teachers. Throughout her lengthy teaching career, she has built a broad and deep knowledge of English language teaching in Egypt. She knows the challenges teachers experience and knows that through targeted professional development, those challenges can be overcome. She strategically uses technology, including her iPad, to help her in this work.

In her role as an English language teacher trainer in Algeria, Sabrine finds satisfaction in sharing Canadian methodologies, techniques, and philosophies with Algerian teachers. She told stories of providing her trainee teachers with a different perspective on teaching English, one that is student centred and facilitative rather than teacher centred and directive. She also talked about running collaborative rather than competitive training classes, which is also a different experience for her participants.

The meanings that the participants derive from their businesses can be divided into three main categories: meaning derived from interactions with students, from interactions with teachers, and from interactions with the community. Within these main categories, there are smaller subcategories, as indicated in Figure 63. The meanings that participants derive from their businesses drive everything that they do on an emotional level. While they may also have practical motivations for their businesses, such as profit, lifestyle, and independence, their meanings are specific to the sector in which they have chosen to operate their businesses. The

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intersection of these three categories of meanings is unique to the English language education sector.

Figure 63: Participants' Personal Meanings from their Businesses

Interactions with Students	Interactions with Teachers	Interactions with the Community
Helping students learn a new language	Sharing expertise with teachers	Providing jobs in the community
Helping students learn a new culture	Providing teachers with professional development and training	Giving back to the community (philanthropy)
Helping students meet their life goals and achieve their dreams	Providing teachers with rewarding careers	

7.4 The Language Proficiencies of the Women Entrepreneurs

The next research questions address the cross-cultural and cross-linguistic experiences of the women entrepreneurs in three stages: first by examining their language proficiencies, second by examining their cultural awareness, and third by examining their cross-cultural and cross-linguistic experiences. Each of these three questions is discussed in turn. Unfortunately, there is very little research against which to compare the data collected for these research questions.

The participants have all studied multiple languages formally, and some have learned other languages experientially during extended periods of time living internationally. In their businesses, four of the participants communicate primarily in one additional language. Gabriela communicates in Spanish and English, Jasmine in Chinese and English, Nailah in Arabic and English, and Sabrine in English with sporadic use of Arabic with her family. Emma and Joanne, on the other hand, communicate with many different language groups but do not generally use a language other than English. At any given time, they have literally dozens of languages represented in their schools, but they usually communicate in English, using any means available to them to communicate their messages. The participants self-assessed varying degrees of language proficiencies that resulted from these experiences using the Common European

Framework of Reference (CEFR). However, the interviews and the online asynchronous focus group in response to the mini-lecture on conceptualizations of culture and its relationship to language provided a richer layer of data about the participants' language proficiencies.

The model of Communicative Competence (Celce-Murcia, 2008) provided an effective framework with which the participants could analyze their language proficiencies. In this model, the following competencies together lead to successful communication in another language: linguistic, socio-cultural, formulaic, interactional, discourse, and strategic. Jasmine shared that the additional competencies explained the gaps that she felt she had in her English. She felt she had linguistic competence but was weaker in the other competencies. Sabrine was almost the complete opposite of Jasmine. She shared that when living in Korea, she focused on learning socio-cultural competence rather than linguistic competence. She felt that her time was better spent learning what not to do from a cultural perspective rather than the Korean language itself. She felt this strategy had allowed her to build a successful life for herself there. She is using the same approach during her sojourn in Algeria.

Both Emma and Joanne commented on the need to use strategic competence on a daily basis. For Emma, communication is about using all the tools available to convey a message even if that makes her look ridiculous. She will do whatever it takes to communicate. As Emma stated, because of the nature of her work, she has to have a high degree of strategic competence and socio-cultural competence. Joanne uses her limited Spanish with lower level Spanish-speaking students, but she otherwise relies on her strategic, socio-cultural, and interactional competencies when communicating cross-linguistically in her school.

There is an emotional side to language proficiency for two of the participants, which aligns with the affective domain in the Learning Domains of Culture (Holliday et al., 2004). Nailah spoke strongly of her love of the English language and its culture that motivated her language learning, her language teaching, and now her teacher training. Jasmine spoke about her experiences in Canada learning English as a life changing experience. It was something that she wanted to do for herself to meet a personal goal. One goal of her business is to position her students to have similar life-changing experiences.

Jasmine used the iceberg analogy (Selfridge & Sokolik, 1975) to discuss the challenges she has in understanding the non-literal language use of her Canadian English teachers. For her, this non-literal language use is part of the out-of-awareness layer of a culture. Gabriela and Jasmine used the tourist definition (Hall, 1976; Crawford-Lange & Lange, 1984; Oxford, 1994) and the acculturation model (Berry, 1980) to point to the role of language proficiency in understanding a culture and acculturating to that culture. They both felt that knowing a language helps people to better understand a culture and to acculturate faster. Sabrine, however, indicated that she was able to understand Korean culture and acculturate without knowing the language, so she disagreed with this connection.

Finally, dynamic systems theory explains Gabriela's comment that her high level of fluency in English, her second language, has influenced her first language usage of Spanish. When she goes to Colombia, colleagues and complete strangers comment that her Spanish is somehow different, particularly in its pronunciation. She thus gets identified as being an outsider because of the English influence on her Spanish. Gabriela's two languages, both of which she is fluent in, mutually influence each other in an ongoing, dynamic process.

7.5 The Cultural Awareness of the Women Entrepreneurs

As with language proficiency, the analysis of the participants' cultural awareness started with a standardized assessment tool, the Cross-Cultural Adaptability Inventory (CCAI) (Kelley & Meyers, n.d.). This inventory provides participants with scores in four dimensions: emotional resilience, flexibility and openness, perceptual acuity, and personal autonomy. The participants had varying scores in these dimensions, with no clear trends or commonalities. While the CCAI is designed as a personal development tool, it was hoped that its use would stimulate discussion about cultural awareness in the individual narrative interviews. Unfortunately, this was not the case. That said, the individual narrative interviews, critical incidents, artefacts, and focus group yielded significant data not prompted by the CCAI that added layers to the understanding of the participants' cultural awareness. The four dimensions of cultural adaptability from the CCAI can therefore be used to synthesize this additional evidence into a cohesive portrait of the participants' cultural awareness.

As entrepreneurs, the participants are all independent risk-takers for which emotional resilience, the first dimension of cultural awareness in the CCAI, is a key ingredient. Examples of the emotional resilience from the data include Emma developing business for her language school internationally in multiple markets through trade missions, agent fairs, and student fairs; Gabriela navigating the power politics of the local community in which the English for tourism program was run; Jasmine quitting her job and travelling to Canada to learn English; Joanne managing multiple cultural groups in her school and having to determine the origins of student-to-student tensions; Nailah contacting international experts to participate in her teacher professional development; and Sabrine embarking on her second sojourn in a new culture and starting a business at the same time.

The responses of the participants to the critical incidents are examples of their flexibility and openness, the second dimension of cultural awareness in the CCAI. Participants understood that there were multiple perspectives to the incidents, and thus multiple possible reasons for the outcomes. In the individual interviews, particularly when speaking about their artefacts, the participants expressed being comfortable with and enjoying differences and diversity.

The participants also demonstrated perceptual acuity, the third dimension of cultural awareness in the CCAI. As Emma indicated, as language teachers, they are willing to do whatever is necessary to communicate. They have highly developed strategic and interactional competence. Joanne indicated that she sees past the culturally different ways that her students have of communicating to hear the messages that they are communicating. The critical incident comments from the participants demonstrated their ability to interpret information objectively. For example, Nailah noted that many events that may initially appear to be cultural in origin are in fact just a part of daily life. And Emma keeps herself very aware of not stereotyping when functioning cross-culturally.

Finally, the participants all had a very strong awareness of their personal values and beliefs, a central characteristic of personal autonomy, the final dimension in the CCAI. For example, Emma is clear that if she does not like how someone is doing business, she won't do business with them. In order to navigate differing values, Gabriela keeps herself focused on the project and what needs to be accomplished. Jasmine adheres to her business model because it aligns with her values, even if it means slower growth. Joanne is also very clear about the value she

places on student care, and Nailah is equally clear about the support she wants to offer teachers. For Sabrine, her personal beliefs about being a supportive and encouraging teacher trainer enable her to deliver courses in a culturally different way that is highly valued by her participants.

A further important observation on the participants' cultural awareness from the data is that the participants built their cultural awareness through different types of experiences. Emma's cultural awareness has resulted from her extended stays in second cultures—in the Caribbean and Canada—and her work managing and marketing her language school. Gabriela's cultural awareness was sharpened through years of work in the tourism industry in multiple countries and through her experience of immigrating to Canada. She also completed intercultural communication training. Jasmine's cultural awareness was initially built during her stay in Canada learning English and has continued to grow through her culture brokering for her Canadian teachers and her students as well as through intercultural communication training. Joanne's cultural awareness has been developed through cross-cultural interactions in her language school as well her experiences in a cross-cultural and cross-linguistic marriage. Nailah's cultural awareness came from over 32 years as an English language teacher and several international trips. Sabrine's cultural awareness grew from an extended stay in Korea teaching English, her return to Canada, her current stay in Algeria, personal travel, and a cross-cultural and cross-linguistic marriage. The data thus demonstrate that there are many different ways to build cultural awareness, as illustrated in Figure 64.

Figure 64: Experiences Through Which Participants Built Cultural Awareness

7.6 The Participants' Cross-Cultural and Cross-Linguistic Experiences

Each participant, operating in a different context with a unique set of skills and past experiences, had a distinct set of cross-cultural and cross-linguistic experiences operating her business in the English language education sector. This finding strongly aligns the data from this study with the research literature, in which significant variation within the subset of women entrepreneurs has been identified (McAdam, 2013). A key factor in this variation is the context in which the women entrepreneurs function (Ahl, 2006). Each participant functions in a distinct cultural and linguistic business context that influences her experiences, in particular her cross-cultural and cross-linguistic interactions. Recall the collection of stories on immigrant women entrepreneurs from Halkias et al. (2011) from which different cultural and linguistic contextual models can be built. Similar modelling can be used to understand the cultural and linguistic business contexts of the participants in this study.

Jasmine and Nailah both function in their first culture and first language contexts, with a second language, English, layered into their interactions with students and teachers. Their interactions, however, are slightly different because Jasmine interacts with a native English teacher, while Nailah interacts with second language English teachers as well as English language teaching experts. These two contexts are illustrated in Figures 65 and 66 below.

Figure 65: Jasmine's Cultural and Linguistic Business Context
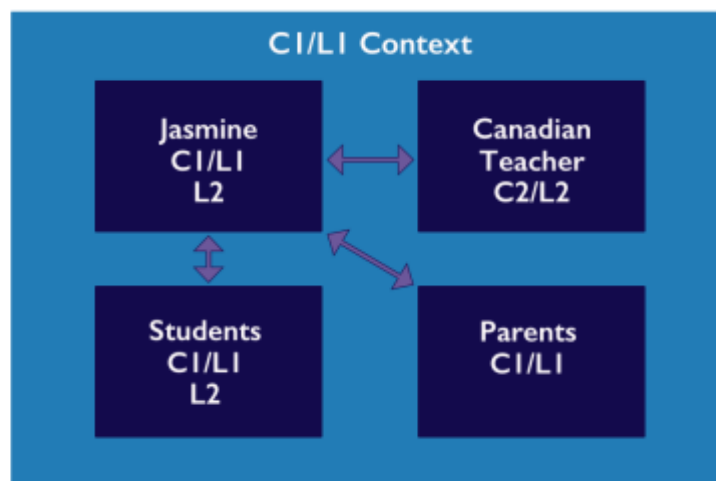
Figure 66: Nailah's Cultural and Linguistic Business Context
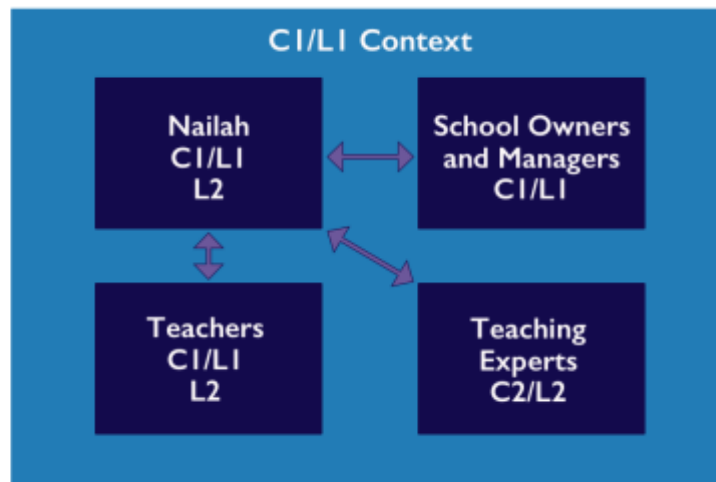
Emma and Joanne also function within their first language contexts, with Emma functioning a second culture context. Both Emma and Joanne experience multiple cross-cultural and cross-linguistic interactions with students from literally all over the world. These students are learning an additional culture and language. Emma then has the added challenge of going to multiple other cultural and linguistic contexts to market her school. These cultural and linguistic contexts are illustrated in Figures 67 and 68 below.

Figure 67: Emma's Cultural and Linguistic Business Context
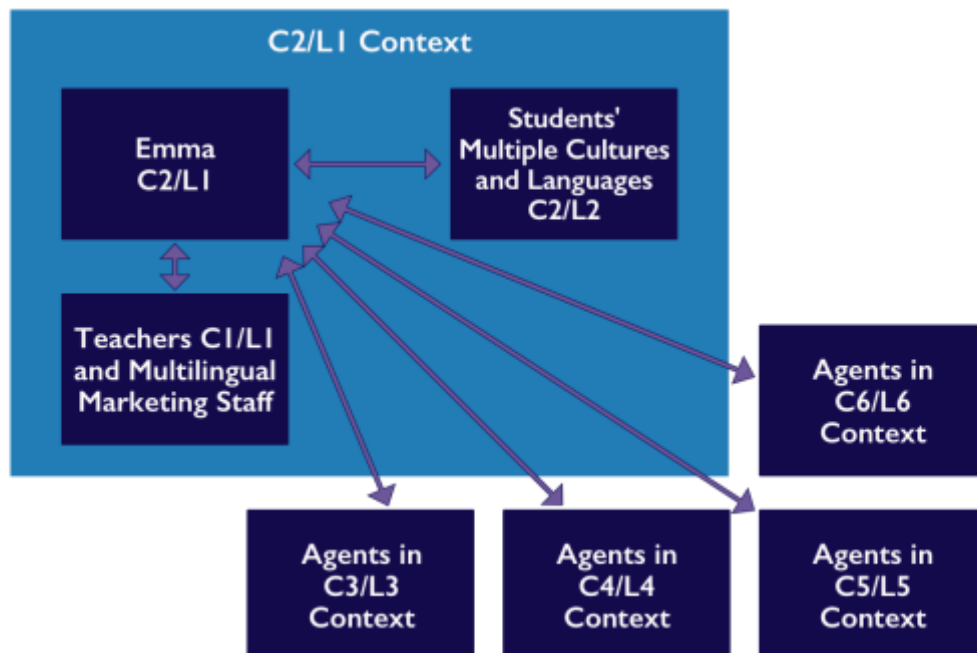
Figure 68: Joanne's Cultural and Linguistic Business Context
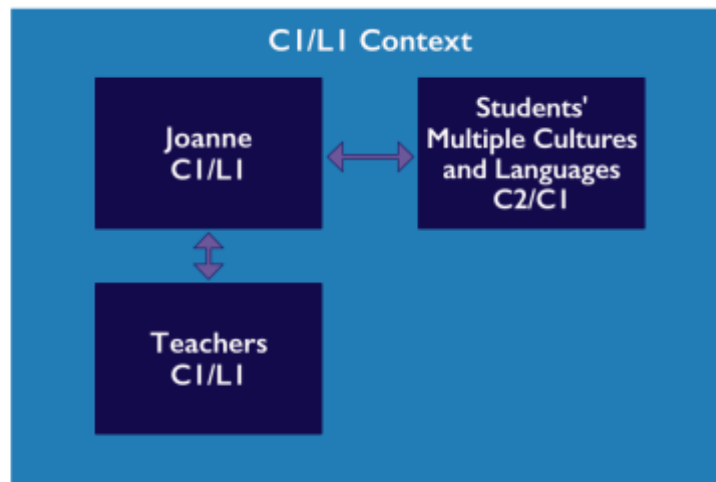
Sabrine's cultural and linguistic business context is her third culture. Her first culture is Canadian, her second culture is Korean, and her third culture is Algerian. She interacts with teachers of English from her third culture using English. She also interacts with her business partners, both of whom are Algerian Canadian.

Figure 69: Sabrine's Cultural and Linguistic Business Context
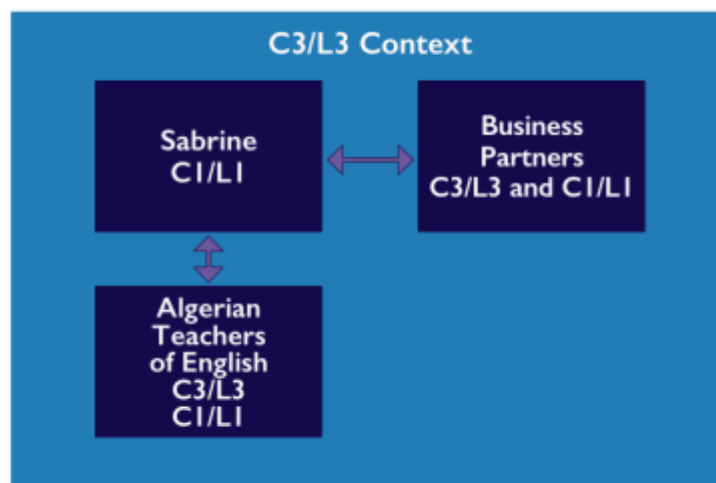
Finally, Gabriela interacts cross-culturally and cross-linguistically between her first and second culture and in her first and second languages in two different contexts, Canada and Colombia.

Figure 70: Gabriela's Cultural and Linguistic Business Context
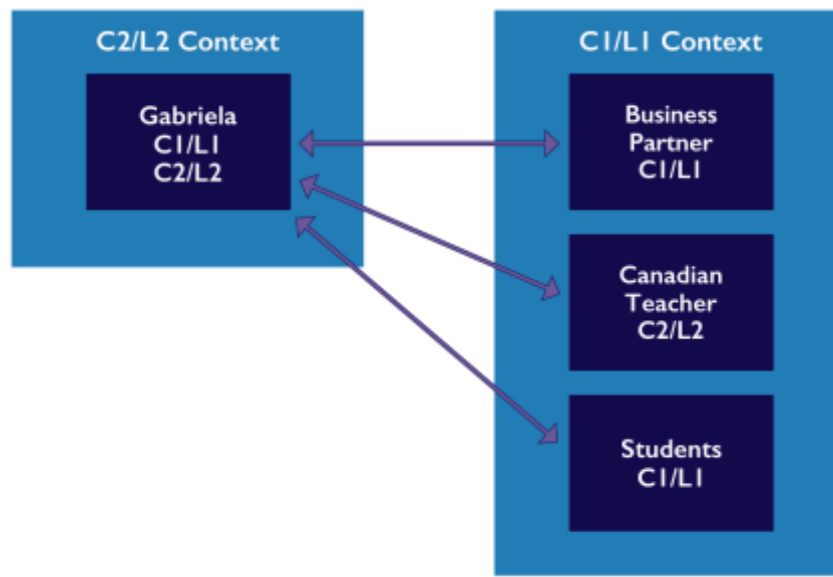
Further complexity is added to the cross-cultural and cross-linguistic interactions of the participants if their communication is facilitated through an interpreter. For example, Emma makes use of interpreters on her agent trips. Sabrine relies on her business partners to translate for her. Gabriela, Jasmine, and Nailah take on the interpreter role themselves in some of their interactions.

Figure 71: Cultural and Linguistic Business Context with an Interpreter
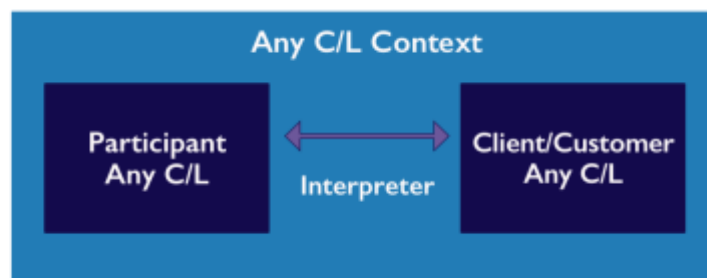
7.7 Conceptualizations of Culture and Its Relationship to Language

The conceptual framework for this study is a collection of conceptualizations of culture and its relationship to language. These conceptualizations range from simple to complex. They were used in two ways in the study. First, they were used as a prompt for the asynchronous focus group for analysis and further stories, and second, they were used as frameworks through which

to analyze and interpret the data from the study. As previously mentioned, responding to the conceptualizations allowed participants to demonstrate their cultural awareness at a much deeper level than the self-assessment tool (CCAI) used. Responding to the conceptualizations also prompted the participants to share additional cross-cultural and cross-linguistic experiences not shared in the narrative interviews. That said, there was no single conceptualization of culture to which participants responded more than others and which was therefore more effective as a prompt or analysis tool for them. Rather, the participants related to and responded to some elements of most of the conceptualizations.

The participants felt that the tourist definition of culture (Hall, 1976; Crawford-Lange & Lange, 1984; Oxford, 1994), the simplest of the conceptualizations, provided a good starting point for understanding their cross-cultural and cross-linguistic experiences. Gabriela felt that the tourist definition allowed for direct connections between language, culture, and tourism to be made. However, the participants were clear that this conceptualization of culture addressed only the surface of a culture and that more was therefore needed in order to analyze and understand cross-cultural experiences. Interestingly, the tourist definition of culture is useful in analyzing the data from the narrative interviews and the cultural artefacts. All the participants shared observations and experiences that fit within this conceptualization. Sabrine, for example, shared aspects of both Korean and Algerian culture including food, clothing, crafts, and household goods, all of which fit within the tourist definition. The cultural artefacts from all participants except Nailah also fit within the tourist definition.

The second conceptualization, the iceberg analogy (Selfridge & Sokolik, 1975; French & Bell, 1998), provided a tool with which the participants could search beneath the surface of a culture to identify and understand the intangible and unseen elements that often cause tensions in cross-cultural interactions. Sabrine used this conceptualization to dig more deeply into what she calls the dark side of a culture, the part that members of the culture do not necessarily want outsiders to see. She also used this conceptualization to ask questions about the relationship between religion and culture, as she has noted differences between religious practices across cultures. Nailah noted that this tool allowed for a dynamic understanding of culture. She indicated that the line between seen and unseen elements of a culture changes over time for both individuals and cultures as a whole.

The iceberg analogy is also useful in interpreting the experiences the participants shared in the narrative interviews and critical incident analysis. The participants shared numerous experiences in which they encountered unseen or unexpected barriers. For example, Emma encountered unseen challenges in her school's business development and marketing, with projects cancelled with no explanation and agents not following up on what appeared to be positive school visits. Jasmine faced unseen culture with her Canadian English teacher with respect to accommodations, with Jasmine thinking comfort was more important, and the Canadian English teacher thinking privacy was more important.

The participants found the third conceptualization, the onion analogy (Robinson, 1985), useful in analyzing why the products and behaviours in a culture exist and what the external and internal forces that shape the core ideas of a culture are. They found it a useful tool with which to identify the differences among cultures that appear quite similar on the surface, such as the Canadian, British, and American cultures. Joanne and Sabrine also shared how they teach this conceptualization of culture in their English language teacher training as a way to expand the cultural awareness of their trainees.

This conceptualization of culture is similarly useful in analyzing the narrative interview data. For example, when responding to the critical incidents, the participants were able to dig into the ideas layer of culture to see beyond the behaviours in the critical incidents. The participants identified numerous possible reasons why a taxi driver was not picking up a potential passenger, why food was late at a restaurant, and why a project manager was being sexually aggressive towards a foreign woman.

The cultural values continuums (Hofstede, 1980 and 1991) allowed the participants to further dig into differences among cultures on specific values and to identify reasons for tensions between their first culture and cultures with or in which they have worked. The participants also noted a number of challenges with the use of this conceptualization. Joanne noted that unless she knows a culture in detail and also knows the values continuums very well, it is difficult to know where to place a culture on a continuum. Distinguishing the values of an individual from the values of a culture is another challenge noted by Jasmine. Emma and Joanne also pointed out that the labelling of the masculine/feminine values continuum plays into one culture's assumptions about gender behaviour norms. And most significantly, Nailah identified that circumstances and

context may determine a people's values and behaviour rather than—or along with—culture. With this conceptualization, then, the participants recognized a useful analysis tool but also a tool that reveals more of the complexity of culture.

With respect to the narrative interview data, the cultural values continuums enabled the participants to differentiate their cultural values from the cultural values of those with whom they are interacting. For example, Gabriela works with differences in uncertainty avoidance between the Canadian and Colombian cultures; she has to educate each group about their different approaches to risk and risk management. Jasmine also bridges differences in uncertainty avoidance between her Canadian teacher and her Chinese students; her Canadian teacher values planning and scheduling, while her Chinese students are more flexible with class start times. With her trainee teachers, Sabrine navigates differences in a competitive (masculine) Algerian culture and a more collaborative (feminine) Canadian culture. Because Emma and Joanne interact with so many different cultures, they have to negotiate differences in all of the continuums.

One of the learning domains of culture (Holliday et al., 2004), the attitude or affective domain, provided the participants with a framework with which to discuss the role of emotion in responding to a culture and the role of emotion within a culture. Emma applied the affective domain in a practical way, identifying the importance of managing emotions in cross-cultural interactions, particularly in a business context. For Gabriela, this framework took her in a different direction. The affective domain prompted her to point out that cultures have emotional cores or "souls" that can often be uncovered through the study of the culture's literature, poetry, and art. She cited an example of literature that she had used in a discussion with a colleague to explain the soul of Latin American culture.

The learning domains of culture are also a useful framework with which to analyze the data from the narrative interviews, critical incidents, and cultural artefacts to focus on the affective or emotional elements to the participants' experiences. In their responses to the critical incidents, the participants were quick to identify possible emotional reactions to the incidents, including anger, sadness, and frustration. When describing their cross-cultural and cross-linguistic experiences, participants also used emotional words. For example, Emma expressed frustration at her summer camp project being cancelled with no explanation. Jasmine expressed puzzlement

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and confusion at the perspective of her Canadian teacher. The affective domain was also evident in the participants' discussions of their cultural artefacts. The participants expressed pride and satisfaction in the successes of their students, evidence of the positive emotional rewards of interacting cross-culturally.

The acculturation model (Lysgaard, 1955) is the conceptualization of culture that generated the most discussion among the participants. It provided them with a framework with which to analyze their personal experiences acculturating as well as the experiences of their students. Joanne noted that not every acculturation experience is positive. Sabrine and Emma observed the importance of an additional step in the process, reverse culture shock, experienced when returning to a first culture. Finally, the participants collectively identified cultural distance, language proficiency, motivation, and age as factors in the acculturation process. In the narrative interviews, the participants shared additional personal acculturation experiences and student experiences. This conceptualization of culture thus proved to be constructive both for generating participant discussion and for analyzing their experiences.

The communicative competence model (Celce-Murcia, 2008) has already been demonstrated as being applicable to the analysis of the data in this study with respect to the language proficiency of the participants. With this model, the layers of strategic and socio-cultural competence were added to the language proficiency self-assessments that the participants completed. In the asynchronous focus group, the model also allowed participants to dig deeper into the connections between language and culture that they have observed in their English language education businesses. The participants noted the connections among the competencies; increased student ability in one of the competencies in turn influences a student's other competencies. The participants also noted the need for strategic competence to be two way in communication; both the speaker and the listener need to bet strategically competent in order for the communication to be successful.

The conceptualizations of intercultural competence (Byram, 1997) generated comments from only two participants in the asynchronous focus group. Emma noted that age and particularly life experience are likely to be one source of the elements in intercultural competence. Gabriela noted that intercultural competence comes from an ability to step outside of the first culture's beliefs of right and wrong in order to imagine other possible realities.

When applied to the other data in the study, the intercultural competence conceptualization is more useful. Throughout the open-ended questions, the discussions of critical incidents, and the explanations of the cultural artefacts, the participants demonstrated the five factors in Byram's model—*savoirs* (knowledge), *savoir être* (curiousity, openness, flexibility, and adaptability), *savoir comprendre* (the ability to interpret observations and experiences), *savoir apprendre/faire* (noticing similarities and differences), and *savoir s'engager* (critical evaluation skills). For example, in the critical incidents, participants all demonstrated *savoir comprendre* with their multiple possible interpretations of the incidents. As another example, all of the participants demonstrated *savoir apprendre/faire* with their many observations of similarities and differences among the cultures with which they were interacting. As a final example, the participants were able to critically evaluate their own interactions with new cultures, as in when Joanne was able to successfully identify the messages of her students within their different culturally based communication styles. The model of intercultural competence thus validates the high level of knowledge and skill that the participants in the study have when interacting cross-culturally.

The compound conceptualization of intercultural communicative competence (Byram, 1997) was the least productive of all of the frameworks in the conceptual framework. Participants had no comments to make on this framework. As indicated in the data analysis, it is unclear why the participants did not have any response to this conceptualization. Identifying the reason for this, and if necessary, using a different model for intercultural communicative competence, is an area for future research.

Interestingly, the data from the study was mixed with respect to intercultural communicative competence. As mentioned in the discussion of communicative competence, the participants shared experiences that clearly demonstrated their abilities to interact cross-linguistically and cross-culturally with little or no language proficiency. The model of intercultural communicative competence thus only applies to participant experiences in which they had both communicative and intercultural competence. Gabriela, fluently bilingual in Spanish and English, and comfortable in both the Colombian and Canadian cultures, is the strongest example of an individual with intercultural communicative competence. Jasmine, with an advanced level of English proficiency in addition to her first language, commented multiple times that she lacked language proficiency when language and culture connect tightly. Nailah, who is also

quite proficient in an additional language, had very little cross-cultural interaction in which to apply intercultural communicative competence. Thus the model, while intellectually interesting, seems to apply only to a specific profile of participant, one with both language and cultural proficiency.

The final conceptualization of culture as a complex dynamic system resonated strongly with three participants: Emma, Gabriela, and Sabrine. Despite its complexity, they felt this conceptualization was useful in highlighting the unpredictability of cross-cultural interactions and the need for flexibility and alertness to manage that unpredictability. Emma noted that this conceptualization explained why functioning cross-culturally is so exhausting. Emma also felt that this conceptualization takes the pressure off everyone when mistakes are made or when interactions are not as successful as hoped. There are many different factors that contribute to the mistakes and the successes of cross-cultural interactions.

Even though the participants responded positively to culture as a complex dynamic system, it is quite challenging to apply this conceptualization of culture to the interpretation of the narrative interview data from this particular study. Very little of the data focuses exclusively on a single culture in isolation; rather, the findings involved the interactions of two or more cultures within a specific cultural context, for example, Sabrine, interacting as a Canadian with Algerian culture. Given this type of data, it would be more useful to position each participant's space or context as a complex dynamic system, with the different cultures with which the participant interacts as factors in the participant's experiences. For example, Sabrine's teacher training class can be positioned as a complex dynamic system, with factors such as Algerian culture, Canadian culture, English language education theory and practice, and Sabrine herself contributing to the experiences in the class. Emma and Joanne's multicultural schools can each be positioned as a complex dynamic system, with students and their cultural and linguistic backgrounds being factors in people's experiences in the schools, along with Emma or Joanne themselves, their staff, and the Canadian cultural context. By viewing these spaces in which the participants interact as complex, dynamic systems, the variations in the experiences the participants could be better understood; this is a potential area for future research.

Interpreting the data through the conceptual framework of multiple conceptualizations of culture and its relationship to language allowed for the cross-cultural and cross-linguistic experiences of

the participants to be interpreted in multiple layers and with increasing complexity. Using the conceptual framework as a prompt for the asynchronous focus group positioned the participants to do most of the analysis and interpretation themselves to demonstrate the depth of their cultural awareness. Clearly, however, no single conceptualization of culture and its relationship to language stands out as being more useful or effective than the others in interpreting the experiences of the participants. Each conceptualization of culture provided participants with a slightly different window through which to analyze and understand their experiences. Problematically, as well, the participants' cross-cultural and cross-linguistic experiences interpreted through the conceptual framework represent only a portion of the data collected as part of their case histories.

7.8 Proposing a Revised Operational Model Diagram

There are clearly demonstrated areas of alignment between the data from this study and the literature on entrepreneurs, women entrepreneurs, the English language education sector, and cross-cultural and cross-linguistic interactions. The date from this study also fills in gaps in the literature, particularly in areas in which the existing literature is sparse. The conceptual framework, which contains multiple conceptualizations of culture and its relationship to language, demonstrates the depth of the cultural awareness that the participants have developed through running their businesses and through their previous professional and personal experiences. All of this said, however, there is much more going on with the data than its alignment with the literature and its relationship to the conceptual framework. The data paint a comprehensive, complex, multi-layered picture of the unique cross-cultural and cross-linguistic experiences of participants as they run their English language education sector businesses.

The Operational Model Diagram was introduced in the methodology chapter that guided the synthesis of the data, as given again in Figure 72.

Figure 72: Operational Model Diagram

Figure 72: Operational Model Diagram
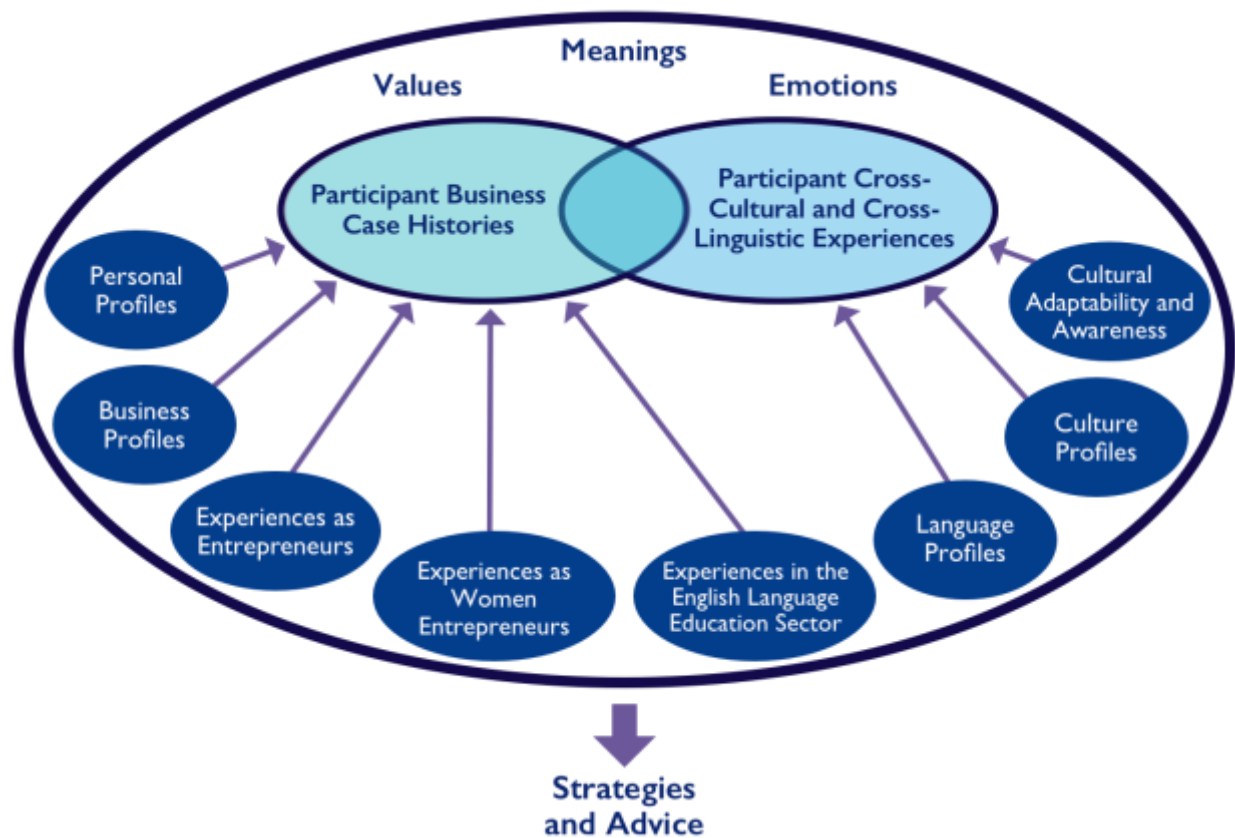
While this Operational Model Diagram provided a useful starting point in the synthesis of the data, in the end, it has proven too simplistic to capture the multitude of factors that have interacted to create the participants' cross-cultural and cross-linguistic experiences operating businesses in the English language education sector. The diagram is inadequate in five ways: the personal and business profiles need to be further broken down into their component factors; the influence of the different factors is not one directional, but rather it is two directional; the influencing acts among all of the factors, not just between one or two factors; the impact of the context is far more significant than the diagram would indicate; and finally, separating the participants' business case histories from their cross-cultural and cross-linguistic experiences is difficult.

Illustrating this complex interplay of factors is challenging; any attempt at a diagram becomes a cluttered collection of factors and arrows, as illustrated in Figure 73.

Figure 73: The Complex Dynamic World of the Participants
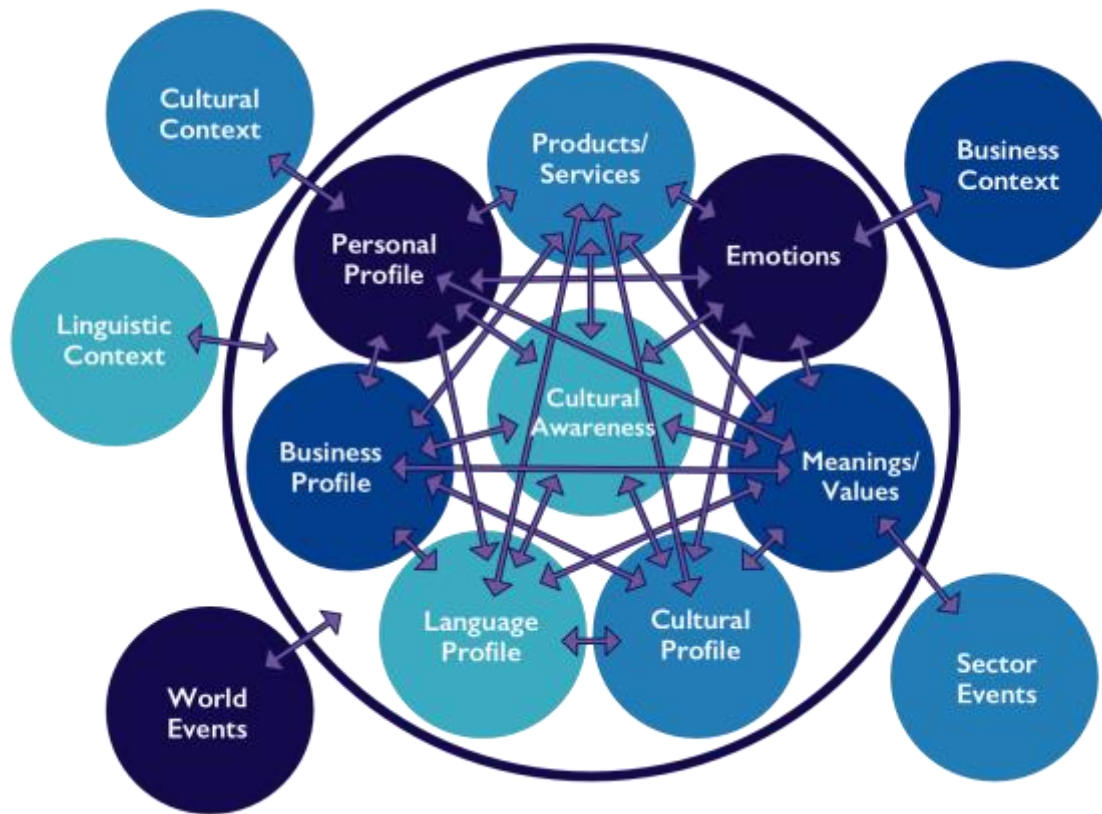
However, regardless of the disorder of the above diagram, it realistically portrays the dynamic and complex world in which women entrepreneurs operating cross-culturally and cross-linguistically in the English language education sector function on a daily basis.

Chapter 8: Moving Research on Women Entrepreneurs Forward

"Well-behaved women seldom make history."

-Laurel Thatcher Ulrich

8.1 Introduction

This is an exploratory study, designed to test assumptions about women entrepreneurs functioning cross-culturally and cross-linguistically in the English language education sector and to identify areas for future research. The study yielded extensive, rich, and multi-layered qualitative data on the experiences of the participants. This final chapter first revisits the research questions and their corresponding assumptions. It also briefly revisits the limitations of the study. It then discusses the usefulness of the conceptual framework applied in the study, followed by suggested areas for future research. It concludes with a discussion of the implications of the study for the education, training, and support of women entrepreneurs functioning cross-culturally and cross-linguistically in the English language education contexts or in similar contexts.

8.2 Revisiting the Research Questions and Assumptions

The first research question of the study asked, "What are the case histories of the women entrepreneurs and their businesses?" The assumption was that there would be significant similarities among the case histories of the participants and that a major theme in these case histories would be the participants' cross-cultural and cross-linguistic experiences. The study did not support this assumption. There were significant variations rather than similarities among the case histories. Each participant had a unique story to tell with her business that resulted from the complex interaction of multiple factors including personal factors, business structure factors, business characteristics, and business contextual factors, including cultural and linguistic factors.

While the participants certainly had many cross-cultural and cross-linguistic experiences to share in their case histories, these were not the only experiences that they shared. They also shared experiences as entrepreneurs, as women entrepreneurs, and as entrepreneurs in the

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English language education sector. And they shared personal experiences that were closely linked to their professional experiences. The overall case history of each participant, then, is a unique mix of these different types of experiences. While the cross-cultural and cross-linguistic experiences have a strong presence in all of the case histories, there are other significant experiences in the narratives. Emma's entrepreneurial experiences dominate her narrative as she serves in a business development and marketing role with her business. Gabriela's experiences as a woman entrepreneur come through strongly as a Latin woman operating in Canada and South America. Jasmine's English language education sector experiences are noteworthy as she navigates against the trends in English language education in China with her language school. Joanne's English language education sector experiences are also dominant, reflecting her operational role in her English language school in Canada. Nailah's experiences centre around the characteristics of the education and language education context of Egypt, where she operates her business. And finally, Sabrine's experiences have strong connections between the professional and personal as she strategically uses her business, in partnership with her spouse, to manage the responsibilities of a young family. For all of the participants, then, their case histories are a distinctive, complex mix of different types of experiences, of which their cross-cultural and cross-linguistic experiences are just one element. These experiences are the result of the different personal, business, and contextual characteristics that are at play with each participant. This variation points to the need for models of women's entrepreneurship in the English language education sector that highlight uniqueness and the complex interplay of factors that create that uniqueness.

The second research question of the study asked, "What personal meaning do the women entrepreneurs derive from running their language education sector enterprises?" The assumption was that the participants would derive significant personal and professional meaning from running their English language education businesses and from their cross-cultural and cross-linguistic experiences. The data strongly supported this assumption; the participants all derived significant meaning from their businesses. The data unexpectedly had an additional layer to it, however, pointing to categories of meaning that the participants found in running their English language education businesses: meanings from student interactions, teacher interactions, and community interactions. Meanings from student interactions included helping students learn a new language and culture and helping students achieve their goals and dreams. Meanings from teacher interactions included sharing their teaching expertise, providing training and

professional development, and providing rewarding careers. Finally, meanings from community interactions included providing high-paying jobs to the community and giving back to the community. All these meanings are closely tied to the participants' personal values and their multi-layered motivations for running their businesses.

The third research question of the study asked, "What are the language proficiencies of the women entrepreneurs?" The assumption was that the participants would have proficiency in more than one language. The study supported this assumption, with participants assessing themselves as having some degree of proficiency in two to four languages. However, the study provided more insight into this research question than the assumption envisaged. Through their experiences, the participants identified that it was not just language proficiency that was important as they ran their businesses but also their strategic and socio-cultural competence. Regardless of whether they were fluent in a language, they were prepared to do whatever was necessary to communicate with students, teachers, parents, or agents. They felt that their knowledge of culturally appropriate language and behaviour was equally if not more important than their actual linguistic fluency. In fact, some participants went so far as to say they did not need language proficiency in order to communicate, but they did need both strategic and socio-cultural competence. Strategic competence enabled participants to communicate with people from any language background, even if there was no common language to use. The data thus offered a much richer answer to this research question than anticipated.

The fourth research question of the study asked, "What are the levels of cultural awareness of the women entrepreneurs?" The assumption was that the participants would have high levels of cultural awareness developed through their cross-cultural and cross-linguistic experiences as they ran their businesses. The data did not initially support this assumption, with the participants having mixed results on the Cross-Cultural Adaptability Inventory (CCAI); on this self-assessment, they had some strengths but also weaknesses. However, through their analysis of the critical incidents, the stories they shared with their artefacts, and their responses to the different conceptualizations of culture and its relationship to language, the participants demonstrated considerable cultural awareness. They were able to view critical incidents from multiple perspectives, identify important cultural learning in their personal and professional lives, and uncover the complexity of their own experiences using different cultural frameworks. This data left no doubt as to the high level of cultural awareness of the participants. It did

however suggest that a better self-assessment tool for cultural awareness needs to be identified or developed.

The fifth and final research question of the study asked, "What are the stories of the women entrepreneurs as they conduct business cross-culturally and cross-linguistically with their language education sector enterprises?" There were two assumptions for this research question. The first assumption was that the participants would perceive the fact that they were women as significantly impacting all aspects of their work as entrepreneurs, usually negatively, particularly when they were functioning cross-culturally and cross-linguistically. The second assumption was that there would be one or several conceptualizations of culture and its relationship to language that would be the most fruitful in interpreting and understanding the participants' cross-cultural and cross-linguistic experiences.

The data did not support either of the two assumptions for the fifth research question. Only one participant, Gabriela, felt strongly that her gender impacted her work as an entrepreneur and that this presented additional challenges or barriers for her. While Emma felt there were clear differences between how women and men generally conduct business, she did not feel personally that her gender was a prominent component of what she did. Jasmine indicated that as a woman entrepreneur, she was unusual in China, but she thought that her main barrier to business growth was the English language education model she used for her school rather than her gender. Joanne felt that the differences between her experiences and those of her male business partner were due to differences in personality and in their different roles in the company. Nailah simply focused on her work building her business to support English language teachers and not gender issues. And Sabrine did not feel that gender was an issue in her business, citing that women business owners in the education sector were the norm in Algeria.

The final piece of the assumption was also not supported by the data in the study. The participants responded to and found relevance in almost all the conceptualizations of culture and its relationship to language, except for intercultural competence and intercultural communicative competence. There was no one conceptualization of culture and its relationship to language that stood out as being more or less useful or impactful for the participants.

8.3 The Usefulness of the Conceptual Framework

In the first research question—"What are the case histories of the women entrepreneurs and their businesses?"—the assumption was that a major theme in the case histories of the participants would be their cross-cultural and cross-linguistic experiences. In the data, cross-cultural and cross-linguistic experiences in fact constituted just one theme for the participants. They also shared their experiences as entrepreneurs, as women entrepreneurs, and as English language educators. These experiences were driven by the participants' different personal histories; business characteristics; and cultural, linguistic, and business contexts. In selecting multiple conceptualizations of culture and its relationship to language as the conceptual framework for the study, it was expected that the majority of the data collected would relate to culture and language. Given that this was not the case, the conceptual framework could only be applied to one portion of the overall data set. This limited application, while not ideal, still yielded useful and relevant interpretations of the data on the participants' cross-cultural and cross-linguistic experiences. It allowed for additional layers of understanding of that data to be built, from simple to complex. That said, a conceptual framework that could have been applied to the entire data set would have been equally if not more valuable.

8.4 The Limitations of the Study Revisited

The limitations of this study created by its methodology were introduced in Chapter 4 to provide the reader with a critical lens through which to view the data, analysis, and discussion. A reminder of these limitations is useful at the end of the study as a segue into the suggestions for future research. The study is limited by the small number of participants operating in specific and unique contexts, which constrains the generalizability of the findings. There is a constraint on claiming causal relationships from the data for the same reason. These limitations point to an opportunity for future research with larger numbers of women entrepreneurs operating in the English language education sector. Another limitation of the study is my closeness to all aspects of the research, including the participant selection, the research design, the selection of the conceptual framework, and the analysis of the data. This closeness is particularly evident in the restorying of the participants' experiences, a process in which I recast the participants' stories to highlight key ideas and themes. This limitation points to future research that is conducted by one or more researchers with more distance from the participants using research methodologies that

maintain that distance. Additional areas for future research, given below, are also suggested by the findings of the study.

8.5 Areas for Future Qualitative Research

Given the scarcity of research on women entrepreneurs operating English language education sector businesses cross-culturally and cross-linguistically, and the fact that a number of the assumptions in this study were not supported by the research data, this study has yielded a number of key areas for future qualitative research.

The first and most important area for future research is to use the same set of data from this study but to apply a conceptual framework that can be applied to all the data, not just the participants' cross-cultural and cross-linguistic experiences. The observation was repeatedly made throughout this study that the experiences of the participants were varied and unique. Factors contributing to this variation and uniqueness have also been identified multiple times. Given this variation and uniqueness, a possible appropriate conceptual framework for the entire data set is complex dynamic systems. The concept of complex dynamic systems can be used to explain the multiple routes the participants took to their current level of cultural awareness, the different personal meanings they derive from their businesses, and the unique interplay of personal, business structure, business characteristics, and cultural and linguistic contexts for each participant. It can also be used to explain the overall distinctiveness of each participant's business case history. Using this conceptual framework, the space in which each participant operates could be positioned as a complex dynamic system. The dynamic interaction of the different components of each participant's world that create their experiences would then be available for investigation. The literature on women entrepreneurs points to the need for a unifying theory on women's entrepreneurship. Given the complex, multi-layered, and dynamic nature of the data in this study about the participants' experiences as women entrepreneurs operating cross-culturally and cross-linguistically in the English language education sector, complex dynamic systems could serve as a unifying theory for the larger set of research on women's entrepreneurship, which is equally complex and equally dynamic.

The second area for future research is the impact of context on the experiences of the participants. The importance of context on the entrepreneurship process is supported by the

literature. While the study has some data on the business, cultural, and linguistic contexts in which the participants function, further exploration is merited to build a more detailed picture of these landscapes. The study has no data on the economic contexts of the participants even though Nailah noted a number of times that economic conditions impacted both her work and the cultural values of her society. More detailed economic data from economic indicators such as the World Bank Doing Business Survey, the Heritage Foundation Index of Economic Freedom, The Fraser Institute Economic Freedom of the World Annual Reports, Global Entrepreneurship Monitor Country Reports, and the Social Progress Index would provide a deeper understanding of how the economic context impacts the work of the participants.

A number of investigations into the linguistic and cultural contexts in which the participants operate their businesses are suggested by this study. For example, an investigation using English language proficiency data from the English Proficiency Index (English First, 2015) can shed light on the English language education sector experiences of the participants in this study or other women entrepreneurs operating in the sector. As another example, the cultural contexts of the participants can be analyzed using the different conceptualizations of culture and its relationship to language used in the conceptual framework of this study in order to provide more understanding of the participants' cross-cultural experiences.

A final and significant contextual characteristic that merits future research is the position of women. This study has no data on the position of women within specific cultural and national contexts. However, Gabriela's narrative in particular points to the impact of this contextual characteristic on women's entrepreneurial activities. An example of a contextual analysis of the position of women that can be used is found in the work of Hudson, Ballif-Spanvill, Caprioli, and Emmett (2012). This research team created a series of global comparative maps to illustrate different indicators of women's position within a society including the physical security of women, equality in family law, discrepancy in education, governmental participation by women, and required dress codes. Additional indicators can be drawn from the databases of the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs. In future research, the experiences of women entrepreneurs can be discussed within a framework of these indicators on the position of women within their specific contexts. The study completed by Kobeissi (2010) with a small number of indicators is an example of this future research.

Focused research on the four subsets of experiences of the participants in this study—as entrepreneurs, as women entrepreneurs, as English language educators, and as cross-cultural and cross-linguistic communicators—would be worthwhile. Within the subset of participant experiences as entrepreneurs, the following areas arise as ideal for future research:

1. *A more comprehensive and complex model with which to investigate and represent the motivations of entrepreneurs*

   Clearly, binary motivation choices such as profit motivation or a lack thereof, or profit motivation versus social-value building motivation, do not adequately capture the multiple layers of entrepreneur motivation uncovered in this study. Building a model that better allows the complexity of entrepreneur motivation to be captured and studied is warranted.

2. *An exploration of the link between entrepreneur choices of sector, products, and services and the meanings the entrepreneurs derive from their businesses built on these choices*

   In this study, there is a close connection between the meanings the participants derived from their businesses, the sector they operate in, and the products and services they offer. Exploring these choices with entrepreneurs, both women and men, from other sectors for comparative purposes would uncover more about the intangible personal satisfaction and sense of achievement that entrepreneurs gain from their businesses.

3. *An account of the interactions of business characteristics (the age of the business, the size of the business, the services offered, and the business context) and business structure characteristics (business legal structure, number of partners, personal characteristics of the partners, relationships with the partners, and roles that the partners take in the business) to create a unique set of entrepreneur experiences*

   In this study, there was significant variation among the participants' business characteristics and business structure characteristics, which influenced their entrepreneurial experiences. Exploring the impact of these characteristics on the entrepreneurial experiences of different sets of entrepreneurs would allow for a deeper understanding of how these characteristics interact.

4. *The relationships between entrepreneurs and their families*

   This body of research currently, and incorrectly, resides only within the subfield of research on women entrepreneurs. It should be moved to fall under entrepreneur research, given that both men and women entrepreneurs have families and corresponding relationships and responsibilities that they have to balance. The same questions about

entrepreneurship and family that women entrepreneurs are asked in research need to be asked of men entrepreneurs so that both sides of the entrepreneur/family relationship can be understood. The concept of family also needs to be expanded to include more than just young children; it needs to include spouses, grown children, elderly parents, and other family members so that a complete picture of the interaction of entrepreneurship and family life can be obtained. Additionally, the entrepreneur/family relationship also needs to be investigated from a positive perspective rather than a negative perspective. For example, research needs to investigate the social capital that entrepreneurs, both men and women, receive from their families, rather than focusing on how family responsibilities negatively impact entrepreneurship. A final possible area of study within entrepreneurship and families is the impact of business owners' parental leaves on their partners and their enterprises. Both Emma and Joanne indicated that managing partner parental leaves was challenging; Emma experienced an additional workload when her partner went on maternity leave, and Joanne learned through trial and error how to prepare for her parental leaves. While the parental leaves in this research were challenging, future research might also uncover positive perceptions and experiences with parental leaves in entrepreneurial enterprises.

Within the subset of participant experiences as women entrepreneurs, the following areas would be ideal for future research:

1. *Differing perceptions that women entrepreneurs have of the impact and relevance of gender on their entrepreneurship*

   Based on the data in this study, not all women entrepreneurs feel that gender is relevant to their entrepreneurial experiences. A study that digs into these perceptions with women entrepreneurs from a variety of sectors would be beneficial in establishing the spectrum of perceptions on the impact and relevance of gender on entrepreneurship. Researching women entrepreneurs from a positive perspective rather than a deficit model would also be valuable. Jasmine specifically mentioned how empowering it was for her as a woman to be an entrepreneur. This is in stark contrast to the research's focus on the deficits of women entrepreneurs. It is time to change the lens through which women's entrepreneurship is viewed in the research.

2. *The impact of partner choices on the experiences of women entrepreneurs*

   The participants in this study had quite different business structures and partnership

relationships, from a husband and wife plus friend ownership structure, to a sole proprietor, to all women partnerships, to women and men partnerships. The literature indicates partnership selection as one strategy with which to manage gender biases in a business context, yet this was not a factor in the partnership selection processes of the participants in this study. That said, the influence of different partner and business structure choices on the entrepreneurial experiences for women entrepreneurs was evident and merits further research.

3. *The impact of personal factors (age, education, previous management experience, previous experience in the sector, previous entrepreneurial experience, motivations, attitudes towards risk, and access to financing) on women entrepreneurs' experiences*
   The literature has explored some of these personal factors, particularly education, previous experience, attitudes towards risk, and access to financing. There is a gap, however, in research on age. The older participants in this study clearly indicated that they felt their age impacted their entrepreneurial experiences. Gabriela and Joanne specifically mentioned the differences in their experiences when they were younger to their experiences now. A longitudinal study on women entrepreneurs and age, or a shorter comparative study, would allow for further exploration of the impact of this personal factor.

4. *The importance of women entrepreneur networks and role models*
   The Global Women Entrepreneur Leaders Score Card (Dell, Inc., 2015) pointed towards the importance of access to women entrepreneur role models and support networks in women making the decision to become entrepreneurs. The support networks are seen as a vital source of emotional support and confidence building, without which women would not become entrepreneurs. The capital model, particularly social capital (Bourdieu, 1977) supports this perceived value of networks. Under the social capital model, networks are used not for emotional support but to strategically grow a business. Neither of these views of networks and role models, for either emotional support or social capital, resonated with the participants in this study. Only Emma accessed a women entrepreneurs' support network, and she did this long after she became an entrepreneur. This disconnect between the literature and the participants in this study would indicate networks, role models, and social capital as an area for future study.

5. *Women entrepreneurs and symbolic capital*
   In the literature review, it was explained that symbolic capital is an individual's status or

prestige within a particular context (Bourdieu, 1993). In the data, the participants did not discuss their symbolic capital as women entrepreneurs in any great depth. Sabrine indicated that being a woman entrepreneur was not unusual in Algeria. Jasmine indicated that the opposite is true in China. And Emma discussed her attempts at building symbolic capital for her business through applying for business awards and increasing her public relations work. Symbolic capital, however, is much more than this. With prestige comes an increased number of connections, an increased public profile, and increased respect, all of which can contribute to entrepreneurial success. Women entrepreneurs' understanding and use of symbolic capital in a variety of sectors is thus a good area for future research in order to then raise their awareness of why it's important, how to build it, and how to exploit it.

Because the research on the English language education sector is so sparse, there are many areas that have potential for future research. Just a few of these are mentioned below:

1. *Managing the tensions between quality education and business, particularly making a profit*
Emma discussed the ongoing tensions she and her partners have navigated between educational decisions and running a for-profit education business. She readily admits that they initially did not navigate this tension effectively. Research on these tensions that are inherent in any for-profit education organization can provide strategies for more effectively managing these tensions.

2. *Managing daily operations in the English language education sector*
The participants in this study had many experiences to share about the operations of their businesses in the English language education sector, particularly about managing teaching staff, marketing staff, and students. These operational interactions provide a rich pool of data of daily cross-cultural and cross-linguistic experiences that provide learning opportunities and evidence of the participants' cross-cultural awareness and competence.

3. *Complexity of marketing in the English language education sector*
All the participants except Gabriela and Jasmine discussed how difficult it is to market in the English language education sector. Emma and Joanne have to market to multiple cultures in multiple languages. Emma travels internationally to promote her school. Nailah has challenges gaining access to school decision-makers. And Sabrine is trying to

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identify an effective marketing strategy in a new cultural context in Algeria. The participants also discussed their use of social media and how this usage changes from one culture to another. Marketing in any business is complex, but in the English language education sector, it is more so.

4. *Managing risk in English language education sector*

   Both the literature and the participants discussed the volatility of the English language education sector. Entrepreneurs operating in the sector have to mitigate the business effects of currency changes, political events, natural disasters, and epidemics. Research on this volatility and how to manage the risk inherent in it will result in an interesting risk management case study from which prospective entrepreneurs and business people can learn risk management strategies.

5. *The English language education sector itself*

   This sector is an ideal space in which to study cross-cultural and cross-linguistic interactions for both women and men entrepreneurs. It is apparent from this research that the daily work in the sector is a significant source of culture learning for the participants but also a significant source of challenge and complexity.

There are a number of possible avenues for future research into the cross-cultural and cross-linguistic interactions of women entrepreneurs in the English language education sector.

1. *Using a different conceptualization of intercultural communicative competence*

   As noted in the data analysis and discussion, the model of intercultural communicative competence selected for this study did not prove to be overly productive. Working with a model of intercultural communicative competence that is less complex and more performance-based, such as the model proposed by Balboni and Caon (2014), may yield more useful and insightful interpretations of the data. Providing the same model for participants to respond to may likewise produce a larger and deeper set of data for analysis.

2. *Measuring the intercultural competence and intercultural communicative competence of participants*

   As noted several times in the study, the tool selected for the measurement of the participants' abilities to interact effectively across cultures, the Cross-Cultural Adaptability Inventory (CCAI), did not prove to be a useful data collection tool. One obvious challenge with the tool is that it did not map onto a current performance-based

framework for defining intercultural competence or intercultural communicative competence. A tool that is more effective at measuring performance in cross-cultural interactions needs to be identified through a detailed evaluation process for use in any future studies of participant intercultural competence and intercultural communicative competence. If such a tool does not exist, it needs to be developed.

3. *Different paths through which to build cultural awareness*

   The participants in this study all took different paths to build their current high level of cultural awareness. They learned a new language, lived and worked in different cultures, took training courses, managed multicultural schools, and had cross-cultural marriages, to name a few. Research on building cultural awareness typically focuses on cross-cultural training, study abroad experiences, or international management assignments. Understanding that cultural awareness is built through multiple experiences and exploring how these experiences build on each other will make research on cultural awareness more complex but also more realistic and thus more applicable.

4. *Culture brokering*

   As part of running their English language education businesses, the participants engaged in regular culture brokering activities, explaining their cultures to students, teachers, or clients. The role of culture brokering within the English language education sector, which is central to success in the sector, warrants deeper exploration. This expanded understanding of culture brokering can then be shared with women and men entrepreneurs operating in other sectors.

5. *Cross-cultural and cross-linguistic interactions, women entrepreneurs, and age*

   Emma and Gabriela both observed that their cross-cultural experiences as women entrepreneurs changed over time. They speculated that as they became older, they were less objectified by those with whom they were interacting, and therefore, their gender became less of a factor in their interactions. There are several possible layers to their observations that can be investigated. One is the relationship among the objectification of women, culture and age and whether the objectification changes from culture to culture and as a woman entrepreneur's age changes. A darker layer that could be studied is the relationship among the physical security of women (for example, freedom from sexual harassment), objectification, culture, and age. A larger participant group of women entrepreneurs operating cross-culturally and cross-linguistically, with both younger and older participants, would allow both of these layers to be studied.

From a practical perspective, and in support of the overall purpose of this study, a final area for future research is the strategies that women entrepreneurs use to navigate the entrepreneurial world and, more specifically, their cross-cultural and cross-linguistic interactions. All the participants provided concrete strategies and advice for other women entrepreneurs; expanding this list of strategies would be a valuable way to tie the research to a practical application in training, education, and support for women entrepreneurs.

8.6 Implications for Education, Training, and Support for Women Entrepreneurs

The study makes it clear that there is no single path to success as a woman entrepreneur in the English language education sector operating cross-culturally and cross-linguistically. The education, training, and support of women entrepreneurs who operate or will operate in the same sector—or in a similarly intense cross-cultural and cross-linguistic context—need to first focus on the dynamic complexity within which they are operating. Women entrepreneurs need to be aware of the multiple factors at play in the outcomes of their businesses and their experiences as entrepreneurs. They need to be aware of the personal factors, the business structure factors, the business characteristics, and the contextual factors that will impact their businesses. They further need to identify the factors within this mix that they can control or impact. They also need to separate their entrepreneur experiences, their woman entrepreneur experiences, their sector experiences, and their cross-cultural and cross-linguistic experiences to further understand them.

The model from the literature review from Puechner and Diegelmann (2007) on the theory and application of entrepreneurship research indicated three applications of research on entrepreneurship: education and training, support, and networking. Each of these is discussed in turn as they relate to this research.

A clear direction for the education and training of women entrepreneurs is the provision of strategies such as those suggested by the participants in this research for entrepreneurship, women's entrepreneurship, entrepreneurship in the English language education sector, and cross-cultural and cross-linguistic interactions. Strategies are practical and have immediate impact. They allow the women entrepreneurs to benefit from the experience and learning of

women entrepreneurs before them. They equip women entrepreneurs for the unpredictability inherent in what they are doing and allow them to mitigate factors they cannot otherwise control. Education and training should also address the practical aspects of running an enterprise in the English language education sector, such as managing human resources and marketing.

Finally, education and training should also provide women entrepreneurs with multiple paths to increased cultural awareness, be it cross-cultural communication training, training in the different conceptualizations of culture and its relationship to culture, opportunities to learn languages, or opportunities to communicate cross-culturally in safe learning environments.

Support programs for women entrepreneurs operating in the English language education sector should once again focus on the practical. The programs should be financial support programs, marketing support programs, and staffing support programs. Based on the participants in this particular study, they need practical support, not emotional support. They all receive strong emotional support from their respective personal networks. It is the practical support that is lacking.

Networking for women entrepreneurs operating in the English language education sector should not just provide the women with the opportunities to meet other women like themselves. They should also provide women with the opportunity to build both social and symbolic capital for themselves and their businesses. The networking should thus not just be with women entrepreneurs but with all entrepreneurs and with business people. It should not just be for entrepreneurs in the same sector but for entrepreneurs in a variety of sectors. Finally, the networking should build the profiles of the women and their businesses in their communities through publicity and recognition awards.

Being an entrepreneur is a challenging way to earn a living. Being a woman entrepreneur adds another challenge into the mix. And being a woman entrepreneur functioning cross-culturally and cross-linguistically is more challenging still. Realistic, relevant, and effective training, support, and networking for women entrepreneurs operating cross-linguistically and cross-culturally in the English language education sector will help them navigate these challenges and increase their chances of success.

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Appendix 1: Informed Consent Form for Participants

December 10, 2015

Dear Entrepreneur,

My name is Dianne Tyers, and I am completing my PhD at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education (OISE) at the University of Toronto. After reading the detailed information below, if you agree to participate in the research study, please complete and return the consent form. The form can be scanned and emailed as a PDF and sent to Dianne Tyers at xxxxxxxxxxxxxx.

Title of Research Project: The Experiences of Women Entrepreneurs in the English Language Education Sector: Understanding Cross-Cultural and Cross-Linguistic Implications Through a Multiple Narrative Case Study

Purpose of the Study: The study explores the cross-cultural and cross-linguistic experiences of women entrepreneurs operating businesses in the English language education sector. Specifically, the study is looking to find areas in which both culture and language impact the experiences of the entrepreneurs as they conduct their business on a daily basis. The goal of the research is to inform support, education, and training for women entrepreneurs operating cross-culturally and cross-linguistically with their businesses.

Participants: I will be recruiting five women entrepreneurs who are operating businesses in the English language education sector. Participant businesses will be of different sizes and different ages. Participant businesses can be located anywhere in Canada or internationally. Participant businesses may operate in only one country or multiple countries. Participants may be the sole owners or shareholders of their businesses or may be one of several owners or shareholders. Participants will be running any one of a sole proprietorship, partnership, or corporation.

Benefits: The benefits for participants for taking part in this research include gaining a better understanding of the influence of culture and language on their entrepreneurial initiatives in the English language education sector; receiving information on culture and the impact of culture on the business context in which they are operating; obtaining a greater self-awareness of their own understanding of culture; and receiving an abbreviated report of the research.

What Participants Will Do: All participants will complete a data collection tool to provide background information on their businesses. Participants will then complete a cultural awareness inventory and a language proficiency self-assessment grid. Next, participants will participate in six individual narrative interview sessions of no more than one hour each via Skype to explore their cross-cultural and cross-linguistic experiences with their businesses. For four of the interviews, participants will respond to critical incidents provided. For one of the interviews, participants will be asked to provide cultural artefacts which represent experiences they have had operating their businesses cross-culturally. Finally, after watching short video lectures on conceptualizations of culture, participants will take part in a focus group interview with all other participants.

Participants' Rights to Confidentiality: You and your business will be assigned pseudonyms. All identifying information about you and your business will be disguised for confidentiality purposes. Only I will know which participants have been assigned which pseudonyms. If at any time, you would like specific information that you provided during the data collection process excluded from the research data, you can inform me of this via email. That specific information or data will then be deleted from my field notes, transcripts, and other records.

Participants' Rights to Ask Questions about the Research: If you would like to ask questions about this research project or about your rights as a participant, you may do so at any time. Please contact me, Dianne Tyers, at xxxxxxx or xxxxxxx. You may also contact my supervisor, Dr. Antoinette Gagné, at xxxxxxx or xxxxxxx. Finally, you can contact the Research Oversight and Compliance Office—Human Research Ethics Program at 416-946-3273 or participants.ethics.review@utoronto.ca.

Participants' Rights to Withdraw from the Research: You may withdraw from the research at any time and for any reason prior to the publication of the research without any consequences. If you would like any data collected about you destroyed at the time of your withdrawal, I will do so promptly. In order to withdraw from the research, please send an email to xxxxxxxx. I will then send a confirmation of receipt of your email and your withdrawal from the research. If you do not receive this confirmation within 48 hours of sending your email, please contact me at xxxxxxxx. Please note that once the research findings are reported and/or published, you cannot withdraw from the research. Please note that if you withdraw from the research prior to its completion, you will not receive access to the brief report of the thesis findings.
Risks: There are no potential risks in your decision to participate in this study.

Please read and sign the attached consent form if you are willing to participate in this study.

Sincerely,

Dianne Tyers
OISE/UT

Please keep a copy of this consent form for your records.

I have read the description of the research project, and I understand that my participation may involve the following activities and conditions:

Activities
- Participate in a background information data collection process
- Complete a cultural awareness inventory and a language proficiency self-assessment grid
- Participate in six Skype interview sessions of no more than one hour each
- Watch a video lecture on conceptualizations of culture
- Participate in one focus group interview of no more than one hour

Conditions

I understand that any identifying information gathered on me will be kept strictly confidential and that my identity and my business's identity will be disguised through the use of pseudonyms during the collection, analysis, and reporting of the research data.

I understand that data collected may be used in academic publications or presentations. However, I understand that no identifying information related to me will be included in the publication or presentation.

I understand that I will receive an abbreviated final report upon the completion of the research.

I understand that I may withdraw from the research before the research is reported or published at any time with no penalty. However, once the study is reported or published, I understand that I may not withdraw.

_____   Yes, I agree to participate in the research.

Name: _____   Email address: _____

Signature: _____   Date: _____

Appendix 2: Entrepreneur Profile Questionnaire

Dear Entrepreneur:

This is the first of five emails about the initial data collection for my PhD. This first email is to collect background information about you as an entrepreneur. Please answer the following questions briefly in the body of the email. Point form is fine. If the question does not relate to you, then just say that it is not applicable. Once you have answered all 13 questions, send this email back to me.

Dianne

1. How old are you?
2. How old were you when you started your business?
3. What is your current education level (high school, college, university, master's, PhD)?
4. What was your level of education when you started your business?
5. How long have you worked in the language education sector (including running your business and any other work before that)?
6. What positions did you have in the language education sector prior to starting your business?
7. What is your current position in your business (list all of the positions you occupy including teacher, trainer, manager, director, marketing, finance, president, and so on)?
8. What positions have you held in the past in your business (list all of the positions you occupied including teacher, trainer, manager, director, marketing, finance, president, and so on)?
9. What languages do you speak, including your first language?
10. What languages have you studied?
11. What intercultural communication training have you taken?
12. Please provide a list of the countries you have visited over your lifespan and the purpose of these visits.
13. Please provide a list of the cultural groups with whom you have interacted in the language education sector and the purpose of these interactions.

Appendix 3: Business Profile Email

Dear Entrepreneur,

This is the second of five emails about the initial data collection for my PhD. This email is to collect background information about your business in the language education sector. Please answer the following questions briefly in the body of the email. Point form is fine. If the question does not relate to your business, then just say that it is not applicable. Once you have answered all seven questions, send this email back to me.

Dianne

1. How old is your business? What year was it started?

2. How many locations do you have for business operations?

3. What are the location(s) of your business operations?

4. How is the ownership of your business structured?

5. Has the ownership of your business changed over time? If yes, what were the past ownership structures?

6. Which cultural backgrounds of students or clients did you serve in the last fiscal year? What percentage was each group as a percentage of the overall number of students or clients served?

7. Which language education services do you offer from the following list?
      i. Language instruction
      ii. Teacher education
      iii. Language assessment (specify assessments)
      iv. Curriculum development
      v. Materials development
      vi. Program review/evaluation
      vii. Other (please specify)

Appendix 4: Language Grid Email

Dear Entrepreneur,

This is the third of five emails about the initial data collection for my PhD. This email is to collect information about the languages you speak. You will need to complete the attached language proficiency grids. Complete one language proficiency grid for each language that you speak, including your first language. Put the language in the yellow box in the top left hand corner. Then highlight in yellow which boxes, A1 through C2, best describe your skills for each of listening, reading, spoken interaction, spoken production, and writing. You do not need to select the same box for different skills. For example, you can select A1 for listening and A2 for reading if you are better at reading than listening. Three language grids are provided. If you speak more than three languages, paste additional grids into the document.

Once you have completed the language grids, send the completed Word document back to me.

Dianne

Appendix 5: Language Grid

Instructions: Complete one language proficiency grid for each language that you speak, including your first language. Put the language in the yellow box. Then highlight in yellow which boxes, A1 through C2, best describe your skills for each of listening, reading, spoken interaction, spoken production, and writing. You do not need to select the same box for different skills. For example, you can select A1 for listening and A2 for reading if you are better at reading than listening. Three language grids are provided. If you speak more than three languages, paste additional grids into the document.

[Language]		A1	A2	B1	B2	C1	C2
U N D E R S T A N D I N G	**Listening**	I can recognize familiar words and very basic phrases concerning myself, my family and immediate concrete surroundings when people speak slowly and clearly.	I can understand phrases and the highest frequency vocabulary related to areas of most immediate personal relevance (e.g. very basic personal and family information, shopping, local area, employment). I can catch the main point in short, clear, simple messages and announcements.	I can understand the main points of clear standard speech on familiar matters regularly encountered in work, school, leisure, etc. I can understand the main point of many radio or TV programmes on current affairs or topics of personal or professional interest when the delivery is relatively slow and clear.	I can understand extended speech and lectures and follow even complex lines of argument provided the topic is reasonably familiar. I can understand most TV news and current affairs programmes. I can understand the majority of films in standard dialect.	I can understand extended speech even when it is not clearly structured and when relationships are only implied and not signalled explicitly. I can understand television programmes and films without too much effort.	I have no difficulty in understanding any kind of spoken language, whether live or broadcast, even when delivered at fast native speed, provided I have some time to get familiar with the accent.
	Reading	I can understand familiar names, words and very simple sentences, for example on notices and posters or in catalogues.	I can read very short, simple texts. I can find specific, predictable information in simple everyday material such as advertisements, prospectuses, menus and timetables and I can understand short simple personal letters.	I can understand texts that consist mainly of high frequency everyday or job-related language. I can understand the description of events, feelings and wishes in personal letters.	I can read articles and reports concerned with contemporary problems in which the writers adopt particular attitudes or viewpoints. I can understand contemporary literary prose.	I can understand long and complex factual and literary texts, appreciating distinctions of style. I can understand specialized articles and longer technical instructions, even when they do not relate to my field.	I can read with ease virtually all forms of the written language, including abstract, structurally or linguistically complex texts such as manuals, specialized articles and literary works.

S P E A K I N G	**Spoken Interaction**	I can interact in a simple way provided the other person is prepared to repeat or rephrase things at a slower rate of speech and help me formulate what I'm trying to say. I can ask and answer simple questions in areas of immediate need or on very familiar topics.	I can communicate in simple and routine tasks requiring a simple and direct exchange of information on familiar topics and activities. I can handle very short social exchanges, even though I can't usually understand enough to keep the conversation going myself.	I can deal with most situations likely to arise whilst travelling in an area where the language is spoken. I can enter unprepared into conversation on topics that are familiar, of personal interest or pertinent to everyday life (e.g. family, hobbies, work, travel and current events).	I can interact with a degree of fluency and spontaneity that makes regular interaction with native speakers quite possible. I can take an active part in discussion in familiar contexts, accounting for and sustaining my views.	I can express myself fluently and spontaneously without much obvious searching for expressions. I can use language flexibly and effectively for social and professional purposes. I can formulate ideas and opinions with precision and relate my contribution skilfully to those of other speakers.	I can take part effortlessly in any conversation or discussion and have a good familiarity with idiomatic expressions and colloquialisms. I can express myself fluently and convey finer shades of meaning precisely. If I do have a problem, I can backtrack and restructure around the difficulty so smoothly that other people are hardly aware.
	Spoken Production	I can use simple phrases and sentences to describe where I live and people I know.	I can use a series of phrases and sentences to describe in simple terms my family and other people, living conditions, my educational background and my present or most recent job.	I can connect phrases in a simple way in order to describe experiences and events, my dreams, hopes and ambitions. I can briefly give reasons and explanations for opinions and plans. I can narrate a story or relate the plot of a book or film and describe my reactions.	I can present clear, detailed descriptions on a wide range of subjects related to my field of interest. I can explain a viewpoint on a topical issue giving the advantages and disadvantages of various options.	I can present clear, detailed descriptions of complex subjects integrating sub-themes, developing particular points and rounding off with an appropriate conclusion.	I can present a clear, smoothly-flowing description or argument in a style appropriate to the context and with an effective logical structure which helps the recipient to notice and remember significant points.
W R I T I N G	**Writing**	I can write a short, simple postcard, for example sending holiday greetings. I can fill in forms with personal details, for example entering my name, nationality and address on a hotel registration form.	I can write short, simple notes and messages relating to matters in areas of immediate needs. I can write a very simple personal letter, for example thanking someone for something.	I can write simple connected text on topics which are familiar or of personal interest. I can write personal letters describing experiences and impressions.	I can write clear, detailed text on a wide range of subjects related to my interests. I can write an essay or report, passing on information or giving reasons in support of or against a particular point of view. I can write letters highlighting the personal significance of events and experiences.	I can express myself in clear, well-structured text, expressing points of view at some length. I can write about complex subjects in a letter, an essay or a report, underlining what I consider to be the salient issues. I can select style appropriate to the reader in mind.	I can write clear, smoothly-flowing text in an appropriate style. I can write complex letters, reports or articles which present a case with an effective logical structure which helps the recipient to notice and remember significant points. I can write summaries and reviews of professional or literary works.

Appendix 6: Cross-Cultural Adaptability Inventory (CCAI) Email

Dear Entrepreneur,

This is the fourth of five emails about the initial data collection for my PhD. This email is about the cultural awareness self-assessment we will be using, the Cross-Cultural Adaptability Inventory (CCAI). This questionnaire allows you to assess yourself with respect to the following characteristics which are important in working cross-culturally: flexibility and openness, perceptual acuity, emotional resilience, and personal autonomy.

I have purchased the use of the assessment for you. You will receive an email from HRDQ, the company that manages the assessment. It will have a link in it to take you to the assessment page. You will be required to set up an account, and then you will have access to the questionnaire. The questionnaire has 50 questions.

Once you complete the questionnaire and click submit, you will be given the option to View Report. Once you click on this option, you will have the option to save the report as a PDF. Select this option and download the PDF. Then email the PDF to me. Results will be emailed to you along with a description of what the results mean. I will then need you to email me the results that you receive.

Dianne

Appendix 7: Narrative Interviewing Email

Dear Entrepreneur,

This is the fifth of five emails about the data collection for my PhD. This email is to provide you with information about the interview part of the data collection process. There are six interviews of no more than an hour each (they may be shorter). The interviews will be conducted through Skype (or an alternative if Skype is not available), and the audio only will be recorded.

The format for each interview is slightly different. Here is the format for each interview:

Interview #1: Open-Ended Interview
1. Tell me about your English language education business.
2. Why did you start your English language education business?
3. What are your experiences running an English language education business?
4. What are your experiences operating a business cross-culturally and cross-linguistically?

Interviews #2 and 3: Responding to Critical Incidents
Prior to the interview, you will read a critical incident provided by me. You will then answer the following questions.
1. What is your response to the critical incident?
2. Have you had any experiences that are similar to the critical incident?
3. Have you had any experiences that are very different from the critical incident?

Interview #4: Responding to Cultural Artefacts
You will show one or more cultural artefacts (memorabilia) in an interview and answer these questions.
1. Why is this cultural artefact important to you?
2. What experience does this cultural artefact represent?

I would like to schedule the interviews between January 13 and 27. It would work best to schedule some breaks between interviews, rather than scheduling them one after another. Please contact me with dates and times that work for you. I can work around your time zone differences.

Once all of the personal interviews are done, there is one final thing: a group interview. I will provide information about that once all of the individual interviews are complete.

Dianne

Appendix 8: Critical Incidents

Read the following critical incidents. Be prepared to discuss the following questions about each critical incident:

1. What is your response to the critical incident?
2. Have you had any experiences that are similar to the critical incident?
3. Have you had any experiences that are very different from the critical incident?

Critical Incident #1:
Janine, a language education consulting company owner, travelled to Dubai to meet with a prospective client. The client, Omar, was a Saudi Arabian businessman who ran several language schools in Dubai. He was looking for a consultant to develop a curriculum for the schools as well as all of the administrative processes and accompanying documents. Janine had been introduced to Omar by a client in Canada. Omar spoke very limited English. He employed an interpreter, Bashar, to facilitate the discussion. Janine spent three days working with Omar and Bashar to delineate the parameters of the consulting work that needed to be done. They visited the schools, interviewed teachers and students, reviewed textbooks, and discussed the regulatory requirements of the region. Janine built value for the work that she could do for the schools, identifying the gaps that needed to be filled and the importance of having a strong internal school structure. She also emphasized her expertise in building both curriculum and administrative processes and documents. At the end of the three days, Janine put together a proposal for the work that needed to be done, as well as a budget. Factored into the budget was the tight, three-month time frame in which Omar wanted the work done. Janine presented the proposal to Omar, explaining the steps in detail and how the budget was constructed. Omar listened to the proposal but did not comment on it. Omar and Bashar spoke in Arabic about the proposal, but Bashar did not translate their communication. Bashar indicated that Omar would think about the proposal and the meeting was adjourned. There was no further communication from Omar despite repeated follow-up contact from Janine.

Critical Incident #2
Mary, an owner of a teacher training company, was part of a three-person Canadian project team conducting a two-week teacher training program in an unnamed country. The other members of the project team were John and Ann. The project team had a corresponding three-person project team from the host country as their liaisons and chaperones. The host country project team was in the presence of the Canadian project team at all times except when the team members were in their individual hotel rooms. John and Ann were a married couple in their mid-thirties; Mary was a single female in her early forties. The members of the host country project team were all male. One, the interpreter, was in his twenties. The second, the project manager, was in his forties. And the third, with political seniority, was in his fifties. Throughout the first week of the project, the host country project manager became increasingly sexually aggressive towards Mary. He invaded her personal space, made suggestive jokes, and grabbed her arms and hands at every opportunity. His behaviour was particularly inappropriate when he had been drinking, which was during lunch and dinner. The interpreter noticed the project manager's behaviour; the interpreter made sure he was near Mary whenever possible to get between her and the project manager. John and Ann noted the behaviour and were increasingly worried about it. John finally spoke to

all three host country team members and indicated that the project manager's behaviour was inappropriate and had to stop. John indicated that if the inappropriate behaviour did not stop, Mary would stop the training immediately. The senior host team member agreed that the behaviour was inappropriate and gave the project manager a severe dressing down. The project manager behaved appropriately during the second week, except for the final day. On the final day, the project manager got drunk at the farewell dinner and cornered Mary. She managed to get away unharmed.

Critical Incident #3A

Mary was trying to get a taxi. It was cold outside, and Mary was tired. She wanted nothing more than to get back to the hotel. She had been travelling for almost a week, from one city to the next. In each city, she checked in on a different group of teachers, observing their teaching, coaching them, talking through their cross-cultural challenges, and mediating challenges with the local management staff. Mary flagged down a taxi. The taxi slowed down as if to stop. The driver looked over at Mary and saw that Mary was not a local. There was no hiding the blue, round eyes and light hair. The driver sped up and drove on by. Mary shook her head in disgust, and looked for the next taxi. After the third taxi drove by, Mary was angry. When the fourth taxi drove by, Mary yelled angrily at it and held up her middle finger. This was infantile, she knew, but it felt good. Ten minutes and countless taxis later, one driver stopped and picked Mary up.

Critical Incident #3B

Maria was eating at restaurant with a group of local friends. At least she wanted to eat with her friends. However, her meal had not arrived. The meals of all of her friends had arrived ten minutes ago. The waiter indicated that Maria's dinner would come shortly. No one could explain why Maria's dinner had not also arrived, since it was the same food as two of her friends chose. Another ten minutes passed. Her friends asked the waiter again where Maria's food was. The waiter indicated that it would come shortly. Just as the last of Maria's friends finished his meal, Maria's food arrived. It was cold. Maria was angry. She took several bites of her food. She then indicated to her friends that she was ready to go. She jammed her chopsticks straight up in the bowl of food that she was now not going to eat. She knew this was the ultimate insult to the restaurant staff, the equivalent of cursing them. Her friends were shocked by her gesture, but she didn't care. She turned and calmly walked out.

Critical Incident #4A

Janice and Elisa arrived at the airport, picked up their luggage, cleared customs and made their way to the taxi stand. They were directed towards a row of beige taxis with pink roofs. They looked at each other and laughed. They had read about "lady taxis," taxis driven by women for women passengers arriving on their own. The driver wore a bright pink head scarf. She smiled as they got in the car. Janice handed the driver a piece of paper with the name of the hotel on it and a map. She pointed to where they wanted to go and said the name of the hotel. The driver nodded in understanding and they both smiled. They headed off. The driver checked the map multiple times. The driver made a call on her cell phone. A conversation ensued, presumably over the location of the hotel, as the driver made numerous references to the map. Janice leaned forward to ask, "Okay?" The driver smiled and said "Okay." Three minutes later they pulled up at the hotel. Janice and the driver smiled as they exchanged cash for a receipt.

Critical Incident #4B
The taxi driver was taciturn. He took the piece of paper with the name of the hotel and the map. He briefly glanced at the paper. Janice asked with a smile, "Okay?" The driver, still taciturn, grunted and waived his finger back and forth in her face. Janice sank back into the seat and prepared for a long, silent taxi ride. Arriving at the hotel, the driver gave Janice a receipt. She gave him the amount on the receipt. The driver waived his finger back and forth again and pushed the money back at her. She had no idea what he was trying to communicate. She added more money and the same thing happened. She held up her fingers, to count out numbers, hoping the driver would indicate the right number. It still didn't work. The hotel bell boy opened the door and Janice, hoping he spoke English, said "I don't know how much to pay." She showed him the receipt and the money she had tried to give the driver. The bell boy had a brief conversation with the driver. The bell boy took Janice's money, told her to add ten more, and gave it to the driver, who finally accepted it.

Appendix 9: Asynchronous Focus Group Emails

Dear Entrepreneur,

Here is the next step in my PhD data collection process.

1. Watch a mini-lecture on frameworks for understanding culture and language at xxxxxx.

2. Take notes on your response to the information in the lecture as you watch. Your responses can be agreement or disagreement with the information, ideas on how it applies to your work, or stories/experiences you have had that relate to the information.

Tomorrow, I will post information on how to record your responses to the video so that you and the other participants can all share your responses.

Dianne

Dear Entrepreneur,

Here are the instructions for participating in the asynchronous focus group on the mini-lecture.

Go to www.voicethread.com. Open an account for yourself.

IMPORTANT: When you set up your VoiceThread account, please use the pseudonym I have given you to hide your identity in the data collection.

Once you have an account, log in to Voice Thread. Then put the following link into the address bar of the browser: xxxxxxxxx. IMPORTANT: You have to be logged in before you put the address in; otherwise, it won't work.

In the Voice Thread, you will see one slide for each of the culture and language frameworks I introduced in the video lecture. For each slide, if you click on the "+" icon, you will be given different ways that you can comment. I would prefer it if you could comment by audio—to do this, click on the microphone. It will count down and then start recording. If you have comments for each slide, that would be great. Comments can be stories that relate to the framework and/or your response to the framework (did you like it or not). You can also listen to the comments made by other participants and you can respond to what they say.

Check in on Voice Thread three or four times between now and March 19th. Respond to the new comments that are there so that we create an asynchronous group discussion.

Let me know if you have any questions.

Dianne