Encountering Cultures

The impact of study tours to Asia on Australian teachers and teaching practice

by

Dr Christine Halse

Encountering Cultures: The impact of study tours to Asia on Australian teachers and teaching practice

Published in August 1999 by the Asia Education Foundation, Melbourne
Printed by the Asia Education Foundation, Melbourne

ISBN 0 7340 1756 1

Acknowledgments

A range of people contributed in various ways to bring the current study to fruition. Of decisive importance were the teachers whose stories form the basis of the study's analysis and who were part of a much larger number of teachers who participated in the Teacher In-Country Fellowships to Asia (TICFA) program conducted by the Asia Education Foundation (AEF) during 1998.

This group of teachers graciously consented to share with the wider world the expectations, experiences and the impact of the TICFA program on their learning and professional practice. Such a commitment involved participating in extended interviews on three different occasions that, at the instigation of some participants, often lasted as long as two hours each. The study would not have been possible without the cooperation of this anonymous group and their involvement and assistance is gratefully acknowledged and appreciated.

A special thanks must also go to the Asia Education Foundation for funding the project and particularly to Kathe Kirby whose desire to improve the AEF's TICFA program led her to initiate the study and whose support and patience I particularly valued.

Several other people were also crucial to the project. Two staff from the University of Western Sydney, Nepean - Kerry Clarke, from the School of Lifelong Learning and Educational Change, and Sandra Lawrence, from the Research Office - along with Karen Libbesson and Terri Bryson - spent several hundred hours diligently transcribing the recorded telephone interviews. Sandra also took responsibility for the final formatting and editing of the report and her skill and support is greatly appreciated. A particular thanks must also go to John Buchanan and Simon Jimenez who were the research assistants attached to the project and who played an instrumental role in generating the background information and the data collection.
It is hoped that this study, as the product of the combined efforts of all those above, will assist in developing a better understanding of the nature of teachers' learning during overseas study tours, and inform the future design and use of study tours in the professional development of Australian teachers to stimulate wider and more intimate cross-cultural understanding between Australia and Asia.

Dr Christine Halse

List of Acronyms

HSIE	Human Society and Its Environment
AEF	Asia Education Foundation
ASSIFS	Australian Studies in Schools Incentive Fellowship Scheme
DEETYA	Commonwealth Department of Employment, Education, Training and Youth Affairs
KLA	Key Learning Area
LOTE	Languages other than English
SOSE	Studies of Society and Environment
TICFA	Teacher In-Country Fellowship to Asia

Table of Contents

List of Tables

Summary of the Findings

Introduction

Encountering Cultures is a phenomenographic study of teachers' learning during short-term study tours to Asian countries, and the impact of their learning experiences on teachers' identity and teaching practice in Australian schools. The final report is a qualitative analysis based on in-depth interviews with nine teachers from across Australia who participated in the Teacher In-Country Fellowships to Asia (TICFA) program led by the Asia Education Foundation (AEF) during 1998. The interviews were conducted at three points over a twelve month period: shortly before the study tours, immediately after the teachers' return, and approximately eight months after the tours.

Previous research into the impact of study tours has been concerned with pre-service teaching practicums in Asia and, in general, has been limited in scope and focus. No prior research has been conducted into the learning experiences of, and educational outcomes implemented by, practising teachers who have participated in short-term study tours to Asia. Consequently, the study's purpose was to contribute to the limited body of scholarly knowledge about the nature and impact of short-term study tours with a view to generating new theoretical understandings about the learning processes embodied in study tours.

The research utilised a phenomenographic approach to the data collection and analysis. Phenomenography investigates the qualitative differences between individual views and experiences of particular phenomena. The current study explored participants' persepctives of learning - before, during and after the study tours - and the forms of educational change that were stimulated by such learning. Using phenomenographic techniques, the data was analysed to generate exhaustive 'categories of description' of the investigated phenomena so as to provide a structure for the research findings. In terms of directing future research, the resultant phenomenographic categories offer a framework for more extensive quantitative research.

Motives for participating in a study tour

A primary purpose of the TICFA tours is to better equip participants to teach about Asia. Teachers who attributed their involvement in a study tour to enhancing their teaching practice generally expressed their agenda in terms of developing their content base and/or conceptual understanding. For members of this group, the study tour was the active expression of a desire for 'authentic' factual information to 'legitimate' their 'authority' as studies of Asia teachers, or to gain insights that would help them to challenge and shape the attitudes and values of their students.

Yet enhancing teaching practice was only one of a range of motives that participants identified for undertaking a study tour. For some teachers, the decision was a result of the culture of their workplace rather than any specific aspiration to enhance their teaching. Teachers in this category explained that the study tour was either part of a whole school professional development strategy or a part of a broader process for meeting the pastoral care needs of an increasingly multi-cultural student population.

For some participants, the decision to undertake a study tour originated in a philosophical commitment to and desire to engage with the notion of Australia as part of Asia. Others had personal, pragmatic motives for participating in a study tour. As a preorganised and subsided tour, the TICFA program was seen by several participants as offering a relatively 'hassle-free' and inexpensive way of seeing the world.

It is important to stress that none of the above categories were mutually exclusive and that a combination of various factors generally shaped teachers' decisions to participate in a study tour. What *is* significant about the findings is that teachers' motivations were *much* more complex than merely a desire to learn more about Asia *or* to improve their teaching. Whilst a study tour *may* result in better teaching, the desire to improve their teaching was not, in the first instance, the reason why the majority of teachers decided to participate in a TICFA tour.

Teachers' Learning

The research found that study tours offered a particular form of learning that was experiential, informal, sometimes serendipitious in character and traversed diverse areas of knowledge (eg, history, social customs, religion, economics and transport etc) that have different degrees of relevance to the written school curricula. Thus, study tours offered a different *way* of learning different *types* of content and knowledge.
The research study also investigated the ways or processes for learning that teachers *anticipated* they would use during the study tour. Five categories of

learning processes were identified in the data:

a) learning as data acquisition;
b) learning as research;
c) learning as different ways of knowing;
d) learning as making connections, and
e) learning as experience.

Prior to their departure, all participants endorsed the experiential process for learning embedded in a study tour and expressed a strong belief in the inherent superiority of experiential learning over "book learning". Nevertheless, participants also indicated a personal preference for or inclination towards certain forms of learning although they anticipated that they would draw on a range of learning processes through-out the tour.

Teachers' preferences for particular ways of learning reflected their different views about the nature of knowledge. During interviews, participants communicated a clear sense of the *sort* of knowledge that they anticipated they would acquire by visiting their host country. For instance, although all participants believed that their study tour learning would involve the acquisition of new data, only a minority conceptualised knowledge in terms of making personal connections with people and cultures and learning culturally different 'ways of knowing'.

Nevertheless, on returning to Australia, teachers reported that the learning processes that they had *actually* used during the study tour were very different from those that they had *anticipated* employing prior to their departure. The table below illustrates this contrast.

Anticipated and actual learning processes (Refer to Table 6.1)

Anticipated learning processes	**Actual learning processes**
a) Learning as experience. b) Learning as data acquisition; c) Learning as research; d) Learning as different ways of knowing; and e) Learning as making connections.	a) Learning as experience b) Learning through comparison c) Learning as excitement d) Learning as an affective and inductive process e) Non-recognition of learning

A similar contrast was identified in participants' post-tour views of the knowledge available through intercultural encounters, and the study found that these were much more nuanced, complex and ambiguous than teachers had expected prior to departing for the host country.

The area in which participants reported the most significant increase in their knowledge was in their understanding of the contemporary life of their host country.

Teachers perceived that the 'lived experience' of directly engaging with the host country gave their understanding of the host country 'authenticity' and 'authority', as well as enhancing their awareness of the cultural values and forms within the country. In particular, participants' reported that the study tour generated affective learning that challenged their preconceived images and (mis) conceptions about the study tour country and stimulated 'real' insights into the social and cultural diversity of the country in ways that were distinct from, and superior to, the abstract, intellectualised perspectives available through more formal learning.

The overwhelming bulk of teachers participating in the study reported an increase in the *quantity* and *depth* of their knowledge about the study tour country. But teachers' learning also generated a strong awareness of their *ignorance* of the study tour country and the gaps in their pre-existing understanding, as well as a desire to redress these deficits through *further learning*. Before the study tour, participants generally *overestimated* their knowledge of the host country and seriously *undercalculated* the learning gap needed to acquire a rudimentary familiarity with the social, cultural and historical identity of the host country. As a consequence, many teachers returned from the study tour more conscious of the inadequacy of generalisations that occlude important cultural nuances and differences, and considerably more cautious about making simplistic generalisations about their host country.

All teachers in the research project reported that their learning during the study tour was a confronting process. It challenged their pre-conceptions and taken-for-granted assumptions about the host country and about their own identities as educators, educated individuals and informed practitioners. Their experiences often entailed unsettling engagements with the local culture. Moreover, accommodating and learning from such experiences was a provoking activity because it required participants to confront and overcome any personal discomfort that they might feel in encountering and engaging with different social and cultural norms.

An interesting finding of the study was that teachers' learning about their study tour country involved a parallel process of learning about Australian culture and society. In engaging with their host country, participants employed a referential process of cross-cultural comparison that involved comparing and cross-referencing their own culture and society with that of the host country. The result was the formulation of new perspectives of the 'other' and a re-formulation of the defining notions of teachers' own national identity. As a consequence, teachers' study tour learning highlighted new areas of both cultural variance *and* mutuality.

As previous research has indicated (see Chapter 2), it should not be assumed that intercultural encounters *automatically* lead to an increase in intercultural understanding or to a greater appreciation of the host country. *Encountering Cultures* found that there were substantial, individual variations in the nature, depth and intensity of participants' learning and in participants' psychological and socio-cultural capacity to accommodate the cultural differences that they encountered in the host country. For some teachers, the study tour was a transformative experience

that generated intense and passionate commitment to studies of Asia and to the further development of their learning about Asia. In rare instances, however, individual participants found that the 'cultural distance' between their own values and lifestyle and that of the host country an insurmountable barrier that inhibited their capacity for cross-cultural engagement, accommodation or learning. Such cases were the exception rather than the rule and often originated from commonplace, 'everyday' differences between the home and host cultures, such as different food, living standards, levels of cleanliness, etc. Nevertheless, where participants perceived the existence of an unbridgeable 'cultural gap', it impaired their capacity to learn or to recognise the learning opportunities that the host country offered, and reinforced cultural stereotypes and prejudices that diminished the capacity to 'enjoy' and find rewards in the study tour experience.

Implementing Learning

The research found that there was considerable variation in participants' implementation of their study tour learning when they returned to their schools. In broad terms, more than one third of participants become so passionate and enthusiastic about their host country that they incorporated aspects of their learning into all areas of their teaching, became keen supporters of studies of Asia in their schools, actively participated in their local Access Asia network, and planned to continue their learning through study tours, reading or formal study in the future. The study found that the majority of participants had or were planning to implement curriculum experiences related to the study tour with their students, but that a much smaller group but were undecided and/or ambivalent about how much time or interest they had to devote to addressing the host country with their classes in the future.

Whilst all participants in the study completed the required, post-tour unit, it was clearly apparent from the interviews with teachers that the process of implementing study tour learning is neither simple nor straightforward. Phenomenographic analysis of the data showed that each participant engaged in a hierarchical process of individual, post-tour professional development. The first stage of development involved assimilating new learning and giving a coherent form to their study tour experiences so that these could be intelligibly communicated to their students and to others. The duration of this reflective period depended on the nature of participants' study tour experiences and on the opportunities that teachers had to take 'time out' to assess and absorb the impact of their travels.

The second stage of professional development comprised a period of exploring different types of knowledge and pedagogical approaches for implementing their study tour learning. These endeavours also varied in character and in their contextual applications, and included incorporating new content into classroom practice, using 'authentic knowledge' and resources based on 'real-life' experiences, applying more critical approaches to the selection and use of teaching/learning

materials, leading professional development activities for colleagues, and introducing strategies to counteract cultural stereotyping with students and staff.

The third stage of professional development involved acknowledging and articulating the personal and professional impact of the study. In part, this was a progressive, incremental process that was grounded in and woven through the preceding stages discussed above. However, articulating the personal and professional impact of the study tour emerged as a necessary precondition for the final and fourth stage of learning implementation ie, the envisaging of broader and different ways in which study tour learning could be utilised *in the future*.

Not all teachers participated to the same extent in the professional development hierarchy detailed above. Nor was progression through the hierarchy necessarily linear and smooth. Participants' post-tour experiences varied depending on the nature of their study tour experience *and* on the unique, personal and professional contexts to which they returned. Paralleling the findings of previous research (Halse, 1996a, 1996b), teachers who worked in schools that were supportive of studies of Asia were much more likely to actively apply the new learning gained in-country.

The above findings underline that the study tours are a *starting point* rather than an *end point* for participants' professional development. Nevertheless, there were very few indicators that participants *explicitly* conceptualised the study tour as having a life beyond its temporal existence. Rather, some saw the experience as terminating with the implementation of a teaching unit. Such a finite, limited view of study tours not only underestimates the diversity and depth of learning that study tours can facilitate but fails to exploit the totality of the physical, emotional and financial investment enshrouded in the experience.

Conclusion

A primary purpose of any research is to generate new theory and/or insights into existing theoretical understandings. *Encountering Cultures* illuminates and expands current knowledge about the nature and impact of teachers' learning during study tours to Asia in the following ways ...

• Teachers' have complex, multiple motives for participating in a study tour to Asia and, despite the priorities of funding bodies and tour organisers, the improvement of classroom teaching about Asia is not necessarily foremost in the minds of the teachers who participated in the study, and perhaps also others who undertake study tours to Asia.

• Prior to the study tour, teachers had clear *preconceptions* about the type of learning processes that they would use during the tour, and these were based on lucid, preconceived notions about the *sort* of knowledge that they expected to acquire during their time in-country. Despite this, teachers reported that the learning

processes that were actually *used* during the study tour were much more complex and experiential than they had anticipated.

• Prior to their tour, teachers significantly *overestimated* their knowledge about the study tour country and *undercalculated* the learning necessary for cultural familiarity. The tour demonstrated that cultural learning was neither simple or easy, and that it involved a complex process of unsettling engagement with and accommodation of socio-cultural difference. In rare instances, however, participants' saw this 'cultural distance' as so immense that it impaired their capacity to learn or to recognise learning opportunities, and reinforced pre-existing stereotypes and preconceptions.

• The study tour experience provided teachers with new insights about and understandings of Australian culture and identity because the process of learning and accommodating the host country culture entailed constant reference, reflection and cross-cultural comparison with their home culture.

• Whilst all participants translated their study tour learnings into classroom practice, there was considerable difference in their longer-term commitment to and enthusiasm for studies of Asia, and the extent to which this converted into qualitative or quantitative curricula change. More pointedly, the research data found that study tours were a *starting-point* rather than *end-point* for teacher professional development. After the tour, participants unconsciously engaged in a hierarchical, four stage process of professional growth. The first stage entailed a period of reflection to assimilate and sequence their study tour learning in ways that would be relevant for the future. The second phase comprised a period of experimenting with pedagogical approaches and uses for their new learning in a range of contexts both inside and outside the classroom. The third stage involved a process of consciously acknowledging and articulating the personal and professional impact of the study tour and was a necessary precondition for the fourth stage of development which consisted of envisaging new uses and directions for using participants' study tour learning in the future.

In summary, the data illuminated useful patterns and trends that can be utilised to inform future policy and practice. But the study also showed that the nature and impact of short-term study tours on teachers and teaching comprises an intricate, dynamic amalgam of intersecting factors. Genuine cross-cultural learning and its effective application in schools is not a linear, uni-directional process that can be simplistically reduced to an uncomplicated binary of experience/application.

Chapter 1
Introduction

Scope and nature of the study

Encountering Cultures was commissioned by the AEF as a longitudinal, phenomenographic study that would generate qualitative insights into teachers' perceptions, learning and teaching practices before and after participating TICFA study tours to three countries in Asia. The purpose of the research was to explore the nature of teachers' learning about other cultures and societies prior to and during their participation in a TICFA study, and the impact of such learning on their professional practice as educators.

The research methodology is detailed in full in Chapter 4. By way of introduction, fifteen teachers, comprising five from each of the TICFA tours to India, China and Vietnam, voluntarily contributed to the study. From this group, the data collected from nine participants from across each of the study tours were used as the basis of the current report. The rationale for only drawing on the contributions of nine of the original fifteen participants (a process of data reduction) is outlined in Chapter 4.

The final participants in *Encountering Cultures* varied widely in age, background, teaching area, and prior experience with the study tour country. All participants in the current study are identified by a pseudonym and potentially identifying features have been modified in an effort to preserve the participants' anonymity.

The research methodology comprised three extended, open-ended telephone interviews. The first was conducted before the study tour; the second within one month of returning from the study tour, and the third approximately eight months after participants had resumed their work in schools. The interviews were subsequently transcribed and analysed to generate insights into the qualitatively different nature of teachers' perspectives, learning and practice in relation to the study tour experience.

The data collection generated over 350 pages of single-spaced transcriptions. To facilitate analysis, the data was coded and analysed using NUD*IST software.

Encountering Cultures was not designed as a traditional evaluation of the TICFA program, although organisers might use the findings to inform the future design and operation of TICFA tours. Nor do the findings (based on interviews with only nine teachers) claim to be representative of all tour participants. Rather, the study analyses and reports on the qualitatively different views and experiences of learning across a sample of study tour participants to illuminate the range of perceptions and preconceptions that shape teachers' engagement with 'other' cultures and which provide a platform for their students' curricula encounters with Asia.

Structure of the research report

Chapter 2 provides a survey of the current literature related to the educative experience of overseas sojourns, the issues of cultural understanding raised by such experiences, and the relevance of the TICFA program to recent initiatives in studies of Asia in Australian schools. In addition, a detailed explanation is provided of the phenomenographic approach used for data collection, analysis and reporting as well as a brief rationale for the methodology of telephone interviews as a means of data collection.

Chapter 3 provides an overview of the AEF's TICFA program and sets the context for the conduct of the study.

Chapter 4 describes how the research was conducted, explains the research focus and the issues that were explored, and outlines the research approach and methodology.

Chapter 5 reports on interviews conducted prior to the study tours and examines participants' expectations about the nature of the learning that would occur during their sojourn overseas.

Chapter 6 reports on interviews conducted shortly after the participants returned to Australia and analyses teachers' accounts of their learning during the study tour experience. In particular, Chapter 6 draws out the congruence and conflicts between teachers' expected learning (detailed in Chapter 5) and their actual learning as reported on returning to Australia.

Chapter 7 explores the nature and extent to which participants implemented their study tour learning in the twelve months after the study tour. Chapter 7 also overviews shifts in teachers' perceptions of the study tour that resulted from critical reflection, and the application of their learning during this period.

Chapter 2
Findings from the literature

Introduction

Study-tours and related overseas experiences, such as practicums, have become increasing common-place in initial teacher education and professional development in Australia as a means of offering an experiential encounter with the people, societies and cultures of other countries.

The advantages of experiential learning is widely documented in educational research and intercultural communication theory advocates extensive, intensive cultural immersion as a prerequisite for cross-cultural understanding (eg., Corson, 1997). The literature on international exchange programs also indicates that cross-cultural experiences facilitate cross-cultural knowledge and understanding (eg., Chiu, 1995). At the same time, studies of teachers' (mis)perceptions of 'other' cultures and societies suggest that Eurocentric values remain a pervasive influence in curriculum practice even amongst well intentioned teachers of Asian studies (eg., Halse, 1996a; Halse and Baumgart, 1996; Singh, 1995, 1996; Williamson-Fien, 1996). In combination, this research suggests that study tours to Asia present a potentially useful pedagogical strategy for developing teachers' knowledge and understanding of Asian cultures and societies, and that this is a necessary prerequisite for effective teaching and learning of studies of Asia in schools.

Concepts of Asia literacy

Numerically, culturally and technologically, Asia merits a sound understanding on the part of all people (FitzGerald, 1997). Australia, in particular, as a consequence of geographical proximity and contemporary patterns of immigration and trade, has confronted increasing pressure to increase its knowledge and understanding of Asia and to literally and metaphorically position herself in an Asian milieu (Broinowski, 1992; Kipp, Clyne & Pauwels, 1995; Bishop & McNamara, 1998).

At a time when transnational processes like globalisation have placed increased pressure on curricula to adopt wider frames of reference (Starkey, 1994; Osler, 1994), local and regional reconfigurations have argued for the schooling of an Asia-literate Australia.

What constitutes an effective form of Asia literacy, however, has been a subject of debate. Politicians, bureaucrats and others have tended to define Asia literacy as instrumental in purpose and involving the acquisition of sufficient cultural and language skills to enable effective communication with Asia to enhance Australia's

broader social, political and economic agendas and ambitions within the Asia-Pacific region (eg, Garnaut, 1989).

Others have challenged this position and contended that Asia literacy needs to be predicated on a critical re-interrogation of Australia's past and recent history of relations with Asian countries and peoples, and the manner by which this relationship is unquestioningly perpetuated in practices that continue to shape unproblematical notions of Australian identity. Such views share a concern that 'knowing more' about Asian cultures and societies can merely perpetuate essentialised, orientalist notions of an exotic 'other', or construct new perceptions that disregard differences among Asian (and Australian) cultures, histories and societies (Williamson-Fien, 1992, 1996; Halse & Baumgart, 1995; Dooley & Singh, 1996; Lo Bianco, 1996).

Stuart Hall (1997, p. 229) has highlighted the dilemma embedded in studies of Asia curricula by highlighting the ways by which cultures and peoples of difference are subjected to contradictory and dichotomous representations of "good/bad, civilized/primitive, ugly/excessively attractive, repelling-because-different/compelling-because-strange-and-exotic. And they are often required to be *both things at the same time*!" (emphasis in original). Lidchi (1997) develops Hall's argument by differentiating between the two ways in which representations of the 'other' are manifest: politically (through relationships of power), and poetically (through representations or discourses of exhibition). Neither manifestation is power-neutral. The poetic discourse, too, operates in sympathy with dynamics of power by unproblematically choosing or rejecting 'artefacts' and arbitrarily privileging certain cultural interpretations from a potential multiplicity of interpretations (Hall, 1997). Such (mis)representation contributes to imagined constructs of East and West that perpetuate orientalist and occidental essentialising (Chen, 1995; Rizvi, 1997, p. 21) and are typically based on superficial conceptions of the 'other' culture (Halse & Baumgart, 1996).

In relation to notions of Asia literacy, more nuanced theorising about Australian perceptions of Asia contends that whilst policy declarations about Asia literacy "no longer view Asia as a homogeneous mass", they nevertheless construct Asian cultures within an essentialist framework based on Australian economic interests whereby "supposedly outdated notions of peasants, poverty and manual labourers are replaced by a new essentialist type: the new rich" (Frost, 1992) or by "show-and-tell" approaches that do little "to promote a critical understanding of the orientalist assumptions that still persist in the popular Australian representations of Asia" (Rizvi, 1996, p. 187). Moreover, as Rizvi argues (1996, p. 188), Australian perceptions of Asia are grounded in the views that Australian's hold of their own identity and their relationship with others. Consequently, Rizvi argues that Asia literacy is

> *much more than learning about other cultures ... these projects should be about problematising the cultural politics of Asia-Australian relations or, as Viviani (1990, p.2) has suggested, about asking 'awkward questions about ourselves and others' ... Australians have to recognise that*

their attempts to negotiate a new relationship with Asia are tied inextricably to the way they see themselves as a multicultural society.

Constructions of Asia literacy

Just as there are different concepts (and implications) of Asia literacy, the construction of Asia literacy programs for schools and for teachers have varied widely in character. Muller (1996) notes the leadership role of the Asia Education Foundation in this process, particularly in relation to the establishment of the Access Asia schools program (p. 56). Similarly, an overview of state/territory initiatives in teacher education about Asia (Coté, 1997) notes that all education systems across Australia have or are in the process of implementing strategies for the study of Asian languages and cultures (p. 1).

The 'up-skilling' of teachers has been caste by some as fundamental to the development of an Asia literature society (FitzGerald, 1997). The need for continuing opportunities for pre and post initial teacher education was underlined by the results of a survey conducted by Hill and Thomas (1997) of 171 first year of Early Childhood or Primary Teacher education students. The study found that

- fewer than 25 percent of pre-service teachers had studied Asia in the previous two years. Apart from students of Asian LOTE, most of the students' curricular experiences of Asia were superficial. As a result, trainee teachers were complicit in a generational (and intergenerational) cycle of Asia-illiteracy.

- only about one student in five had studied an Asian language, for varying periods from 12 weeks to five years.

- approximately one student in eight had visited Asia, for periods ranging from one week to one year, and in circumstances as diverse as holidays and student exchange.

- only a little more than half of the teachers (55 percent) expressed any desire to learn more about Asia. Similarly, only 55 percent of these trainees felt that Asia should be studied in primary schools.

- only eight percent of the group felt competent to teach about Asia.

Hill and Thomas are cautious about drawing national extrapolations from their parochial cohort but infer from the results that many schools and jurisdictions may not be meeting the lofty goals set for developing Asia literacy among Australia's youth by the Federal and state/territory governments. A similar lack of Asia literacy was identified by Andressen (1997) amongst tertiary students who were drawn from a range of disciplines and were about to embark on studies of Asia - thereby

suggesting that Hill and Thomas' findings reflect a general pattern rather than an exception to the rule. Given that the sample groups for both studies comprise tertiary students, it is not unreasonable to hypothesise that, without intervention, the patterns identified by Hill, Thomas, and Andressen might remain a feature of the students' profile as they move into professional practice.

Hill and Thomas (1997) point out the difficulties of equipping teachers with the necessary range of curricular experiences needed to develop an Asia literate society. In particular, there is the need to construct curricula experiences that make visible the assumptions and generalisations that encumber western views of Asia (and Asian views of the west), and open these to scrutiny as a basis for transcending superficial or stereotypical views (Nozaki & Inokuchi, 1996). Such a process requires transformation, according to Orton (1995, p. 76), who asserts that developing Asia literacy entails "not something one can simply decide to do, but something one must learn to become". Within such a conceptual and constructional context, study tours to Asia constitute but one means of facilitating the transformation process amongst teaching practitioners that the literature identifies as a prerequisite for Asia literacy in schools.

Prior research on study tours for teachers

Study tours offer teachers an opportunity to directly encounter aspects of Asia in ways that are otherwise inaccessible and unavailable. Yet research on the impact of study tours on the personal and professional identities of practicing teachers has been limited. There have been no coherent studies that have sought to document the nature of the learning by teachers who participate in short-term, overseas, study tours, or the short and longer-term personal and professional changes - including the impact on curricular practices - stimulated by teachers' experiences during study tours.

A study of TICFA's predecessor, ASSIFS (Australian Studies in Schools Incentive Fellowship Scheme) (Fry, Baumgart, Elliott & Martin, 1995) found that participants considered themselves to be privileged to take part in such study tours. While changes in teaching practice immediately following the tour were not vast, the experience had a positive impact on the participants, their schools and students by serving as a catalyst for including learnings about the study tour country in the curriculum and equipping participants with contemporary illustrations to support their teaching. This study, however, did not track change through time on the part of the teachers.

The AEF elicits quantitative feedback from participants to document the outcomes generated by its in-country tours, such as curriculum units, presentations to staff, newsletters, journal articles, and so on. For instance, as a result of the study tours conducted in 1996 and 1997, 225 presentations were made to staff, parents or students of participants' schools - including 85 presentations to schools other than that

of the teachers. As a result of their involvement in the tours, participants conducted a total of 129 professional development workshops and generated 142 articles profiling their experiences, of which 74 appeared in school newsletters, 24 in local newspapers, 16 in commercial newspapers and 28 in educational journals (AEF records). The nature of such statistical data demonstrates that study tour participants' circulate knowledge about the tour, but the data do not illuminate the nature or extent to which this knowledge is a stimulus for change and transformation amongst teachers and schools.

A statistical analysis of content descriptors used by the five, major, data bases of social science publications indicates the paucity of research into short-term intercultural study tours undertaken by practising teachers[1]. Whilst the data bases revealed that a total of 4348 publications identified by the descriptor "cross-cultural" have been produced since 1991, only 15 of these dealt with cross-cultural teaching. Similarly, 8168 publications were identified by the descriptor "intercultural" but only 15 articles addressed issues of teaching in intercultural contexts. Moreover, many publications in this category focused on intercultural contexts involving minority groups *within* Western countries such as the United States. Of the other publications dealing with teachers in overseas contexts, the majority of publications (18 in total) dealt with the role and problems encountered by international teaching assistants working in United States universities whilst undertaking post-graduate study.

In part, the pattern of results appears to be due to the fact that the majority of overseas study programs cater for trainee teachers. Nevertheless, very little data about these programs have been published or sought to examine the subsequent impact of in-country practicum's on participants' teaching practice.
In the absence of a comprehensive body of literature addressing the effect of study tours on teachers, it is necessary to contemplate the potential generalisability of research findings about the overseas experiences of other groups. Such a strategy is legitimated by precedents, such as the research of Pearce (1983), which found similarities between the intercultural effects of travel on both tourists and longer-term sojourners in overseas countries.

[1] The data bases were ERIC (post 1992); Current Contents; Austrom; Psyclit Journals (post 1991) and Psyclit books (post 1991).

Attitudes to the country and culture visited

Adaptation to a new culture depends in part on whether one is a voluntary (eg., a new arrival who has migrated for professional or personal benefit) or involuntary (eg., a colonised community) member of the new culture (Ogbu, 1992). Study tours fall into the former category because they generally comprise voluntary participants who are therefore more likely to accommodate a new culture. Conversely, research by Ogbu (1992) suggests that where a study tour is an imposed requirement, participants may be less likely to adjust to the new culture than their voluntary colleagues.

For both categories of participants, pre-departure anxiety appears to be a common condition amongst those about to embark on a study tour or other overseas experience. Hill, Thomas and Coté (1997) surveyed participants participating in Indonesian practicum's (n = 86) and found that students had a number of concerns about the study tour experience prior to their departure overseas, including the language barrier (26 percent of respondents), health and safety issues (19 percent) and cultural/political issues (15 percent) (note: the tour occurred around the time of the Dili massacre).

Martin, Bradford and Rohrlich (1995) compared the pre-departure expectations of sojourners (n = 148) with their reported experiences based on thirteen aspects of overseas living. They found that expectations were consistently met or exceeded (ie, positively violated). For example, using foreign currency was less difficult than expected. Significantly, Martin, Bradford and Rohrlich (1995) also found that prior cultural experience was *not* a predictor of expectation fulfilment. Moreover, participants who anticipated a degree of difficulty with the new cultural environment were better able to adjust than those who anticipated that the transition would be easy and unproblematic. A similar conclusion was drawn by Li Chiu (1995) in a study of Asian students in their first year at a USA university (n = 39). Li Chiu found that moderate levels of pre-departure anxiety (ie, anticipatory fear) were more closely associated with the capacity to adapt to a new cultural context (ie, adaptive outcomes) than high or low levels of anticipatory fear.

In summary, the available research on cultural adjustment indicates several important features associated with overseas travel. These are:

a) that contact is a necessary but not sufficient precondition for increased intercultural cooperation and understanding;
b) that voluntary travellers are more likely to adjust to a new cultural environment than involuntary travellers;
c) that a degree of anxiety is a natural pre-departure condition for overseas travel; and
d) that travellers who anticipate a degree of difficulty in adjusting to a new or different culture are more likely to view the travel experience positively than those who expect that the experience will be smooth and unproblematic.

The development of intercultural learning and understanding

Intercultural sojourns provide an excellent opportunity for learning but the nature and extent of such learning hinges on the nature and extent of participants' experiences overseas. According to Baumgart, Halse and Buchanan (1997, p. 26) one of the aims of in-country tours is to equip teachers to "delve beyond the superficial and the tangible and to attempt to understand how meaning is conveyed and interpreted through various cultural manifestations". Hill, Thomas and Coté (1997), however, found that while interest in things Asian was heightened by the practicum experiences of respondents (*n* = 86), interest in food was much more stimulated than was interest in literature. Similarly, there were increased interest in language, followed by religion and art and less extensive increases of interest in politics and theatre. Such outcomes reflect the different levels of exposure to various cultural elements during participants' visit to the host country. Thus, the research of Hill, Thomas and Coté (1997) reinforces the fact that the participants' learning will depend on the nature, extent and character of their experiences in and interactions with the culture of the study tour country. Nevertheless, if growth in understanding of less visible cultural elements is slow in the context of an in-country experience, it is likely to be even slower again in the absence of such experiences.

Bochner (1983) posits that behaviour situations are mono- bi- or multi-cultural, and that individuals in multi-cultural settings will either sustain or resist changes to become or remain mono- bi- or multicultural. In other words, participation in a cross-cultural environment is a necessary but insufficient condition for broadening a participant's outlook. Similarly, in outlining a schema for intergroup relations, Brewer (1996) contends that contact is a necessary but not sufficient precondition for increased intercultural cooperation and understanding.

Among Australian 'graduates' of Asian practicums, reported outcomes include a greater sensitivity to cultural diversity and improved international understanding (McFarlane, 1997; Booth, 1997; Dockett & Perry, 1997), teamwork, (Dockett & Perry, 1997; Albon, 1997), and the opportunity to access experiences that were unattainable in Australia (Weckert, 1997). While researchers' findings display a consistency in their subjects' observations, little in the way of illustrative examples is available. From the responses of their cohort of in-country practicum participants, Hill and Thomas (1997) found that vast changes in attitude were not universal (some teachers reported having a high level of empathy for Asia prior to the in-country practicum) but that none of their respondents (n = 86) reported that the experience had reduced their esteem for Asia. Similarly, Hsaio-Ying (1995) found that sojourners in Japan (*n* = 321) reported an increase in their understanding of the host culture but that the visit did not necessarily make them feel more positively predisposed to the culture or contented within it. Thus, prior research suggests that intercultural encounters do not *automatically* lead to an increase in intercultural understanding or appreciation of the host country.

Negative reactions to the new culture can be minimised through prior training and intelligence on what to expect in domains ranging from climate to cultural interpretation (Madden & Myers, 1994), and by debriefing at the conclusion of the in-country tour (Hill & Thomas, 1997). Keally & Protheroe (1996), however, note that little longitudinal research has been conducted to test the effectiveness of pre-tour training (see also Furnham & Bochner, 1983. For additional research on the effectiveness of training programs in general, see Argyle, 1983; Dalle & Inglis, 1990; Smith, 1989, 1992).

Thus, whilst the existing research indicates that travel can stimulate intercultural learning, the nature of the learning will depend on the nature of the experience and may not necessarily result in increased intercultural understanding. In fact, in a small number of cases, intercultural encounters may result in more negative cultural attitudes although this can be minimised by information and support prior to and after travel.

The nature of the intercultural experience

Visitors to an unfamiliar culture are placed in a situation where they must contend with new sets of meanings as expressed through verbal and non-verbal language, as well as myriad rules regarding preferred, tolerated and taboo behaviours (Gallois & Callen, 1997; Argyle, 1983; Lustig & Koester, 1999). The mechanisms that serve to maintain membership of a culture also preserve the exclusion of others and, in doing so, present particular challenges to travellers.

Research into the effects of intercultural experience and adaptation has been of variable quality, according to Ward and Chang (1997, p. 525), who assert that "anecdotal musings and armchair theorizing have frequently highlighted the role of personality in the process of cross-cultural transition and adjustment". Moreover, much of the research has been conducted with 'sojourners' - a term that loosely defines those who have spent between six and twelve months in an unfamiliar cultural milieu (Ward, Okura, Kennedy and Kojima, 1998). Nevertheless, in the absence of more focused research on the effects of short-term study tours, the data on sojourners experiences offer a comparative basis for the current study.

A particular phenomena investigated by several researchers is the 'acculturation curve' (Hofstede, 1991) or 'u-curve', (Kenyon & Amrapala, 1993; Nash, 1991; Ward, Okura, Kennedy and Kojima, 1998; Zapf, 1993). The 'u-curve' is so named because it traces an identifiable 'trough' in morale during a sojourner's time in an unfamiliar culture (see also Schnell, 1996). Anderson (1994, p. 294) described the process by which the 'u-curve' operates in the following way.

> *Sojourners adrift in a sea of perceptual and behavioural anomalies and difference are in a state of ignorance. To adapt, they must learn the parameters of the new*

sociocultural system and acquire the sociocultural skills necessary for participating in it.

The length of engagement with an unfamiliar culture is a variable in the intensity of adjustment difficulties. Ward et al. (1997, p. 278) note the observation of the u-curve's first proponent, Lysgaard (1955), that adjustment difficulties appear to be greater for those residing in an unfamiliar environment for six-to-12 months than for those spending longer or shorter periods in the new cultural environment. This finding suggests that participants in short-term study tours may experience fewer adjustment difficulties than temporary residents in a new country.

Ward et al. (1997) also describe earlier research by Oberg (1960) which reported on various stages of intercultural adaptation. Oberg identified a euphoric or "honeymoon" stage followed by "a period of crisis, distress, hostility and withdrawal then by a stage of transition and finally by a period of adjustment, integration and enjoyment".

More recently, Ward et al. (1998) reported that the process of cultural adjustment replicates a w-curve. The w-curve is a graphical representation of the emotional and psychological highs and lows experienced by sojourners on entering a new culture and on returning to their 'home' culture and facing new adjustment demands. Dodd (1998) contends that travellers' initial adjustment to a new cultural context involves a period of disenchantment with the host culture and describes such a response as a 'fight' or 'flight' mechanism that is characterised by a tendency to strongly criticise the new culture or to withdraw from it. Similarly, a bonding to or rejection of the home culture may be manifest upon return. Reactions to the home culture at this stage include nostalgia for the country left behind, and loss of identity and disdain for the home culture. Negative reactions to one's home culture tend to be under-reported and take those affected by surprise (Lerstrom, 1995; Dodd, 1998; Gaw, 1995).

Familiarity with the processes of adjustment experienced in a host country offer a framework for understanding the potential adjustment phases experienced by Australian teachers participating in study tours. However, over the last two decades, the u-curve and w-curve theories have come under question (Ward et al., 1998; Nash, 1991; Anderson, 1994). Nash (1991), for example, established an experiment and control situation involving American students studying in France (n = 41) and in the United States (n = 32). Responses to the questionnaire administered by Nash did not confirm the u-curve. McKinlay (1996) came to similar conclusions with cohorts of national (US) (n = 26) and expatriate (n = 29) students at a British university. Building on these findings, Anderson (1994) posits that the u-curve theory is better represented by an upward learning curve (see also Furnham & Bochner, 1983; Kenyon & Amrapala, 1993).

McKinlay's (1996) findings also suggest that embarking on a course of study (even in one's own country) involves engaging with a new institutional culture that carries a range of associated tensions. Brash (1989) came to a similar conclusion about the universality of tension related to new institutional cultures in a comparison of Asian

and Australian students studying in Australia, and concluded that the variations were differences of degree only. Indeed, it is recognised that intercultural dissonance exists between institutions as well as between nations (Nash, 1991; Brash, 1989; Hawkins & Bransgrove, 1998; Gokora, 1989; Fearnley-Sander, 1995). This is the case in both western and other host nations (Jenkins, 1997) and has possible implications for sojourners trying to accommodate a new culture at both an institutional and international level. At least theoretically, there is a potential parallel with the experiences of TICFA recipients teaching in Asian schools who, in addition to accommodating difficulties arising from language barriers, also confront unfamiliar institutional organisations and professional expectations in terms of class sizes, teaching styles, student expectations, resources, and so on.

Recent research, however, has not unanimously rejected the u and w-curve theories as a description of cultural adjustment. Contrary to Nash (1991) and McKinlay's (1996) findings (above), Zapf (1993) examined patterns of culture shock and recovery among social workers (*n* = 85) that were relocated to remote, northern Canadian communities. His findings supported the u-curve theory. Zapf (1993) also tested results against individual variables of personal history and attitude and found that whilst these did not *predict* culture shock, they *were* linked to recovery.

A criticism of commonly held views about intercultural adaptation - particularly those emphasising 'culture shock' - is that they are deficit in nature (Anderson, 1994). In over viewing the field, Anderson (1994) outlines four schools of thought concerning the acquisition of intercultural competence. The first of these underscores the communication skills needed to avoid social gaffes that arise because of unfamiliarity with a new culture. The second model is more behaviourist in nature and examines those behaviours/practices which are unacceptable to host culture and likely to be extinguished/terminated (eg, inappropriate dress in religious places) as opposed to those behaviours that are acceptable and will be reinforced. A third model constructs the acquisition of cultural competence as a journey from the margins to the centre of the new culture. The fourth model is homeostatic in nature and reminiscent of Piaget's accommodation/ assimilation theories. Using metaphors from the physical sciences, this model contends that sojourners operate in a static condition until some force or event impacts on them to disturb this equilibrium. In response, sojourners seek to redress this imbalance and acquire new modes of behaviour and understanding. In short, the experience enables them to learn.

Anderson maintains that while each model or theory contributes to our understanding of the dynamics of intercultural learning, each has particular shortcomings and none are sufficient to explain in full the complexity of the processes involved in intercultural learning.

Recent theorising about intercultural adjustment has utilised a more rigorous yet nuanced model that traces the sociocultural and psychological adjustment involved in accommodating a new culture (Searle & Ward, 1990; Ward & Searle, 1991). Sociocultural adjustment corresponds to one's 'cultural literacy' or ability to negotiate and derive meaning from the 'new' culture. Cultural literacy is based on both a

foundational knowledge of the new culture (ie, how much is known prior to engaging with the culture) as well as a preparedness and ability to learn about the culture in the new and different ways encountered in a foreign environment. Psychological adjustment, on the other hand, refers to one's level of social and emotional wellbeing. A balanced sociocultural and psychological capacity is required for a smooth and effective adjustment to a new culture.

Gudykunst (1998) developed a similar model based on two cultural dissonance continua. The first of these, 'anxiety', is akin to low psychological adjustment, while the second, 'uncertainty', parallels sociocultural difficulties. According to Gudykunst, low levels of anxiety can lead to overconfidence in dealing with the new culture whereas visitors operating under conditions of high anxiety tend to regress to simplistic interpretations of the host culture. High levels of uncertainty leave visitors unable to interpret the host culture.

Building on the model of sociocultural and psychological adjustment, some theorists contend that that intercultural adjustment involves a learning curve. This perspective differs from earlier, more positivist models which imply that all visitors interacting with a host culture respond, to varying degrees, in similar ways eg, the u-curve or w-curve response. Anderson (1994) rejects the notion of the u-curve as a deficit model and advocates the 'learning curve' theory. She argues that the process of cultural adjustment involves confronting a series of cultural barriers that demand a response on the part of the visitor. Cultural barriers can be loosely translated as encounters with new or foreign experiences and behaviours that prompt the visitor to experiment with solutions that may or may not lead to overcoming the barrier. Anderson emphasises the positive, instructive potential of such intercultural experiences, and outlines the essential features of intercultural encounters as a cyclical experience that demands adjustments, learning, personal development, and engagement between the visitor and host culture.

Taylor (1994, p. 390) is less categorical than Anderson in his views of the u-curve and learning curve schools of thought. Rather than condemning the u-curve, he concludes that there is a learning dimension to 'culture shock' (the first phase of the u-curve) and that, in context, culture shock is

> *a neutral concept that becomes a precondition, acting as the core experience (not the totality) that the stranger must transcend to achieve a higher state of cultural awareness and self-awareness.*

The bulk of research into intercultural adjustment has been quantitative and has focused on identifying specific variables that may account for a visitor's capacity or inability to adjust in a new culture. For instance, Searle and Ward (1990) measured sociocultural and psychological adjustment using variables such as anticipated difficulties, distance between home and host culture, individual differences such as levels of extroversion, the degree of sojourner interaction with hosts or with other expatriates, and the nature and number of social interactions. They found that

factors such as the quality of host-sojourner relationships and extroversion accounted for differences in psychological adjustment, while cultural distance and expected difficulty were amongst the predictors of sociocultural adjustment. Other predictors of sociocultural adjustment include cultural knowledge and identity (Ward & Searle, 1991) and length of residence, cultural distance and identity (Ward & Kennedy, 1992). Similarly, predictors of psychological adjustment difficulties included isolation and cultural distance (Ward & Searle, 1991), and paucity or poor quality of intercultural relationships (Ward & Kennedy, 1992). A relationship appears to exist between strong host nation identification and high sociocultural adjustment, and between strong co-national identification and high psychological adjustment (Ward & Kennedy, 1994; Grisbacher, 1991). On the other hand, when sojourners' primary interaction was with co-nationals, their sociocultural adjustment was compromised (Grisbacher, 1991).

In general terms, predictors of adjustment include equality of status, commonality of goals and intimacy of relations between groups (Kleinberg, 1983), sojourner attributes such as world-mindedness, respect, and personal or cultural motivation to visit the hosts' homeland (Grisbacher, 1991). Previous intercultural encounters also minimise adjustment problems for sojourners and prepare participants for smoother, further intercultural encounters in the future. In a meta-analysis of the literature, Searle and Ward (1990) reported that opportunities for learning host culture norms were facilitated by the existence of friendships with nationals, and amongst some groups of sojourners, loneliness was the greatest predictor of psychological distress although cultural difference (in phenomena such as religion, climate and language) was also a strong predictor of social difficulty.

Research by Searle and Ward (1990) found that extroversion was not a simple predictor of high levels of sociocultural adjustment. Rather, a "cultural fit" (p. 458) was required between an individual's personal characteristics and the social expectations of the host culture. Liberman (1994) found that Asian students in the US encountered similar difficulties in engaging with the relatively egalitarian culture of US universities. These findings were reinforced by Ward and Chang (1997) whose survey of expatriate Americans in Singapore (n = 139) found that discrepancies between the sojourner's level of extroversion and the host culture's societal norms resulted in higher levels of psychological maladjustment (i.e. depression).

It should not be assumed, however, that identifying the variables that inhibit or facilitate intercultural adjustment necessarily enables them to be modified and the individual's capacity for intercultural adjustment enhanced. Nevertheless, the quantitative research does indicate that a modified version of the u-curve offers a 'short-hand' for describing the experiences and processes involved in intercultural encounters and the learning process advocated by Anderson (1994). This interpretation is affirmed by Searle and Ward (1990) who, drawing on a meta-analysis of the literature, assert that psychological adjustment levels may conform to a curvilinear path akin to the u-curve but that sociocultural adjustment reflects increasing competence through time. Thus, at least some sojourners are initially unconsciously unskilled in negotiating the host culture and experience high levels of

psychological adjustment with low levels of sociocultural adjustment. This is followed by a conscious realisation of one's own cultural illiteracy and lack of skill in the new culture (ie, low sociocultural adjustment, low sociocultural adjustment). With time, the sojourner acquires cultural capital (Bourdieu, 1977) or social capital (Latham, 1998) to become consciously skilled in the new environment (high sociocultural levels, but low psychological levels). In the final stage, the visitor negotiates the new culture more or less subconsciously, a situation characterised by high levels of both sociocultural and psychological adjustment. As a consequence, movement through the u-curve involves a complex series of learning.

Whilst the available literature on intercultural adjustment relates to sojourners rather than teachers on short-term study tours, it indicates a series of principles or patterns that offer a preliminary framework for exploring teachers' perceptions of their study tour experience. In particular, the literature illustrates that

a) relocating to a foreign environment, even for a short period of time involves a degree of adjustment and accommodation;
b) a range of variables influence adjustment to a foreign culture, participants' sense of 'cultural fit' with the host country and, by implication, the extent to which they view the travel experience as a positive or negative upon returning home;
c) experiencing a new culture entails a series of 'highs' and 'lows' which vary in duration and intensity for different participants;
d) moving through the emotional troughs of adjustment involves a learning process, and that capacity and willingness to learn are crucial to this process; and that
e) a process of cultural 'readjustment' is involved on returning to the home culture.

Personal and professional outcomes of study tours

At least amongst pre-service teachers, study tours appear to satisfy a need. Among Hill et al.'s (1997) cohort (*n* = 86), the main reasons for applying to participate in a study tour were professional challenge (35 percent of respondents), experience with Asian culture (16 percent), adventure (15 percent) and TESOL experience (15 percent). One of the most important outcomes was assistance in gaining employment (50 percent of respondents) and a view that the study tour experience gave participants an 'edge' over teachers with otherwise similar qualifications (Hill et al., 1997).

However, the research into the impact of study tours on teaching practice is very limited. In their study of pre-service teachers undertaking practicum in Indonesia, Hill et al. (1997) reported a positive skew in participants' responses to the experience overall, and particularly in relation to their learning about assessment, evaluation, programming, team teaching, use of classroom language, and flexibility in teaching approaches. Travel can also provide teachers with cultural knowledge that they can utilise in their teaching. Wilson (1983) studied two teachers who incorporated their travel experiences into their teaching. Based on interviews with students, Wilson reported that the travel experience gave teachers more knowledge and that utilising their personal experiences in their teaching resulted in more interesting lessons for students. In particular, in-country experiences offer potential for securing contemporary perspectives and teaching aids that can enrich the delivery of knowledge and understandings to students (Hill & Thomas, 1997).

One of the most common outcomes of a study tour is an increased confidence to teach about the host country. Following practicum's in Indonesia, many teachers used strategies to incorporate studies of Asia into their teaching, as the following activities and percentages of teachers illustrate: Asian days (34%), posters, flags etc (33%), LOTE (29%), units of work (26%) as well as library resources (Hill & Thomas, 1997).

The unstated subtext of such statistics, however, is that participation in an overseas study tour does not *automatically* led to an increased focus on the study tour culture/country by teachers with their classes. Hill and Thomas do not report on this phenomenon nor can it be assumed that failure to teach about the study tour country lessens the impact or professional value of the experience for teachers. A range of external factors will influence the teachers' curricula choices, not least of which are mandatory syllabi requirements, curriculum priorities, and school policies and agendas.

Outcomes for in-country tour participants may be affective as well as cognitive. With reference to pre-service teachers, Thomas and Hill (1997) observed that

> *the experience of students working in a group environment within an unfamiliar culture and education system seems to have contributed to the development of empathy with*

> *children and adults confronted with cultural or language differences, to skills in flexibility in response to educational problem solving and to a more reflective, cooperative and perhaps critical approach to their teaching.*

Similarly, in-country practicum graduates reported that they had subsequently become more tolerant of language difficulties among ethnically diverse groups (Hill et al., 1997). Given the increasing multi-cultural profile of Australian schools, such outcomes represent a desirable direction for professional growth.

Study tour participants have also reported that their experiences in the host country led to positive personal outcomes such as improved levels of confidence, cooperation, tolerance and initiative. In contrast, ongoing contact (travel, correspondence etc) and exchange of information with Asian schools was less common because of logistical inhibitors (Hill et al., 1997). On the other hand, closer bonds have been generated by in-country visits. For instance, Hill and Thomas (1997) cite a Sydney-based practicum cohort who raised money to help rebuild host schools that were destroyed by a tropical cyclone.

Study tours and curriculum change

Schools and teachers tend to be resistant to change. Coercion and logical argument have proven ineffective in imposing changes on human behaviour (Lovat & Smith, 1995). Hargreaves (1994, p. 165) defines a teaching culture as the "beliefs, values, habits and assumed ways of doing things among communities of teachers who have had to deal with similar demands and constraints over many years". Such cultures are robust and teachers frequently greet change initiatives by "downshifting" (Caine & Caine, 1995, p.46) ie, a strategic retreat under stress to a defensive shunning of new approaches, ideas and information.

Peca (1994) has drawn parallels between the imposition of change and the grief process, and contends that, as in bereavement, individuals will display attributes such as denial, depression and anger when confronted with change. In such cases, conditions imposed from without can provide an excuse and sometimes an incentive for failure.

Goodson (1994, p. 16) argues that the curriculum is a "social artefact" that is neither politically neutral nor devoid of values. Rather, the curriculum reflects and reinforces the society in which it is located and is vulnerable to change as a result of shifts in political agendas and alliances or in the relative influence of various interest groups. To illustrate the point, speaking from post-apartheid South Africa, Wedekind et al (1996) contend that race and education have been seen "overwhelmingly as sites of political crisis and conflict, and not as an arena of pedagogic contest" (p. 422). Yet, the potential (or perception) that curriculum will challenge traditional social and political values can generate fear and concern within the community.

Ironically, curriculum change is hamstrung by and made subservient to several paradoxical social forces including society's apparent contempt for the values that it insists schools nurture; the failure of business to use the skills it demands of schools; the parallel movements towards globalism and tribalism; the concurrent synthesis of diversity and common standards; the simultaneous preoccupation with the future and nostalgia.

In addition, many teachers, particularly in secondary schools, consider themselves to be experts in only one or two areas of academic endeavour. Consequently, their ability to cope with change in learning areas is limited and characterised by a desire to preserve the status quo (Rosenholtz, 1991).

Ownership of change on the part of teachers will promote or frustrate the adoption of new curricular material (Lovat & Smith, 1995), particularly in a climate where teachers are increasingly being seen as technicians who are implementing curricula that is not of their own making (Hargreaves, 1997).

Study tours seem to offer a pedagogical strategy for change, although their effectiveness has yet to be demonstrated by empirical research. Nevertheless, drawing on theorising about the processes associated with curricula change (above), the implementation of learning is more likely because participation is voluntary rather than coerced. It establishes the teacher-as-expert; as opposed to much in servicing which presumes the teacher-as-novice and can leave teachers feeling powerless and irrelevant. Moreover, study tours seek to accommodate the diverse range of curricula and disciplinary interests of participants. Thus, at least in theory, study tour experiences can erode the current "Balkanization" of curriculum (Hargreaves, 1994: 212) by building bridges and connections across the arbitrary, subjective divisions between curriculum areas. Furthermore, a central issue in teacher renewal is the opportunity to reflect on one's practice (Schön, 1983), to share educational views, and to relinquish old habits by engaging in new, open-ended ventures (Caine & Caine, 1995). Such reflection, sharing and speculative initiatives are facilitated by the team teaching arrangements that characterise many in-country teaching programs.

Understanding study tours and teacher change: phenomenography and narrative as methodologies

As the discussion above illustrates, much prior research on sojourner or study tour experience has been quantitative and/or anecdotal in nature. Both methods embody particular dilemmas for understanding the nature and consequences of the learning by participants through their engagement with other cultures. Quantitative approaches, by definition, utilise an etic (ie, designed by the researcher) approach and investigate predetermined theories, dimensions or variables. In contrast, anecdotal accounts employ an emic approach (ie, the findings emerge from the data) but frequently resemble a random reporting of stories because they are not analysed with a view to generating new understandings or generalisable theories.

Because of the weakness of prior approaches, the current study utilises a phenomenographical approach to the collection and analysis of data. The phenomenographical method draws on Dewey's concept of experience and on the research processes used by Piaget in describing and analysing children's conceptions of certain phenomena at different stages of development. Phenomenography is premised on the belief that "each phenomenon, concept or principle can be understood in a limited number of qualitatively different ways" (Marton, 1988).

The phenomenographical approach had its antecedents in phenomenology that contends that there is no universal way by which new information is processed and that the process of making sense of and predicting the world is assisted by categorising events and objects. Experience, and the language used to express it, is heavily laden with subjectivity. The philosophical orientation of phenomenology is to investigate one's own experiences and its concern is primarily with the relations existing between individuals and the world around them.

In contrast, phenomenography utilises a more empirical approach whereby researchers study the experiences of others. For phenomenographers, the focus is on identifying the content of participants' thinking, and on documenting and categorising the qualitatively different ways by which participants experience, conceptualise, know about and have skills in managing particular phenomena.

A phenomenographical methodology is particularly appropriate for investigating the nature and impact of teachers' learning through engagement with other cultures. As a methodology, phenomenography consciously counters the tendency to assume that all view the world in the same way as oneself (Holstein & Gubrium, 1994). Rather, phenomenography seeks to identify and categorise qualitative differences in teachers' conceptions of their experiences and learning and to thereby facilitate the development of generalisable theories about teachers' perceptions without precluding the introduction of new categories of meaning in the future.

One way of reporting the processes of meaning making among participants is through the use of narrative inquiry. In the current study, the term 'narrative', is used to describe texts generated by individuals as they describe their lives and understandings. Such data generating processes result in descriptively thick texts for analysis.

Phenomenography, like ethnographic research, is not without its limitations. The researcher and participant is both subject to the forces that influence perceptions and understandings (Altheide & Johnson, 1994; Burns, 1994). In the words of Heath, for example (p. 9) "the ethnographic present never remains as it is described, nor does the description of the current times fully capture the influences and forces of history on the present". There are also those things that the informant does not choose, dare, or remember to mention - and there is the researcher.

Such limitations, however, are common to much if not all research practice. Nevertheless, phenomenography and participants' stories lend themselves to the investigation of 'life as experienced' through circumstances such as an overseas study and teaching tour. The use of semi-structured interviews, as a means of accessing participants' stories, provides a structure for illuminating commonalities between individual stories (Burns, 1994) whilst also giving participants the scope to share their individual and unique perceptions and experiences. Such qualitative research approaches also provide a mechanism for giving voice to participants' views and experiences (Altheide & Johnson, 1994). Moreover, phenomenography offers a methodology for transcending the tendency to merely 'parrot' ' participants' views with verbatim texts or to lapse into the anecdotal style that has characterises earlier qualitative studies of overseas study tours because the researcher's "task is to discover and construct meaning in those texts" (Clandinin & Connelly, 1994, p. 423).

The contribution of the study

Study tours offer a particular form of curriculum and way of learning. Consequently, the primary focus of the current research is to identify participants' pre-tour conceptions of learning, the nature of their learning during the study tour, and the impact of that learning in terms of personal and professional change upon their return to their schools.

In this way, the research seeks to shed light on the pedagogical value of study tours as a strategy for teacher learning and for enhancing the teaching of studies of Asia in schools. Such insights will serve to inform and assist policy development and planning by education sectors and other group which currently commit significant financial and human resources to funding, designing and delivering study tours for teachers to Asia.

Given the limited research into the nature and impact of short-term overseas sojourns, the current research seeks to make a contribution to this broader field both

in terms of methodology and substantive understandings. More directly, the current study fills a significant gap in the literature on teacher education and professional development, thereby providing knowledge and insights to enhance the repertoire of scholarly knowledge required to inform policy and curriculum initiatives in initial and in-service education. By investigating the learning stimulated through participation in overseas study tours, the study seeks to establish the qualitative insights that are necessary to design larger scale quantitative studies and to generate broader generalisations and theories about the contribution of study tours to teacher development, classroom practice and educational change.

Chapter 3
Background to the Study

The Asia Education Foundation and TICFA

In 1992, the Asia Education Foundation was established by the Asialink Centre at The University of Melbourne and Curriculum Corporation with funding from the Commonwealth Department of Employment, Education, Training and Youth Affairs (DEETYA). The AEF is a national organisation whose designated role is to work with schools, state and territory education sectors and institutions, philanthropic foundations and the corporate sector to:

- promote and support the study of Asia across all curriculum areas in Australian schools;
- develop Asia-related materials for Australian schools;
- promote the study of Asia within teacher education; and
- educate the broader community about the importance of studies of Asia.

As part of a broader, three-pronged strategy to achieve the above objectives, the AEF established a 'Partnerships and Professional Development Program' to develop creative alliances with education authorities and philanthropic, corporate, government and university bodies to support the studies of Asia in schools and the professional development of Australian educators. The TICFA program is part of the AEF's 'Partnerships and Professional Development Program'.

In addition to the involvement of the study tour participants, the TICFA program draws on an extensive network of partnerships between the AEF and education authorities and government and non-government sponsors in both Australia and Asia. An indication of the extent and complexity of the partnership arrangements underpinning TICFA is evident from list of participating partners and sponsors of the 1997-99 TICFA program provided in Appendix 4.

History of the TICFA program

The study tours are designed as a learning experience that participants will utilise to enhance the teaching and learning of studies of Asia in their schools. For this reason, teachers wanting to participate in a study tour undergo a selection process and are obliged to meet pre and post study tour obligations.

The AEF's TICFA program commenced in 1995. The extent of the program and the number of participants has increased from 61 educators participating in 5 study tour programs during 1995–96, to 134 educators participating in 9 study tour programs during 1998–99. Furthermore, the program was expanded in 1997–98 to include participants from New Zealand in partnership with the Asia 2000 Foundation of New Zealand.

Purpose of the TICFA program

The TICFA Program is an experiential learning program designed to provide professional development opportunities for Australian teachers to travel to Asian countries, and to gain contemporary in-country experience and knowledge that will form the basis of further research, be incorporated into curriculum practice in schools, and be disseminated to other colleagues and the wider community. The aims of the TICFA program are to

- provide opportunities for first hand experience of the peoples, cultures and issues of the countries of Asia and to enhance teachers' skills and discipline knowledge related to studies of Asia;

- promote the development of high quality learning and teaching materials which encourage Australian students to develop greater knowledge and understanding of the studies of Asia consistent with the *Studies of Asia: A Statement for Australian Schools* document;

- support the implementation of the school, network or state/territory action plans or emerging action plans based on identified priorities in studies of Asia;

- extend and develop a network of Asia-skilled leaders in Australia and in the countries of Asia; and

- disseminate widely the outcomes of the in-country experience program.

Tours are conducted by teachers, academics and experienced individuals or organisations who design, organise and implement each study tour. The Tour Organiser is frequently also the Tour Leader. AEF staff and state Advisers organise and lead some, although not all, of the tours.

Participating in the TICFA program

As a general rule, all primary and secondary teachers and administrators from participating education sectors are eligible to apply to join a TICFA tour. The TICFA program is designed for educators who are relatively unfamiliar with the tour country rather than "those who have lived in the country for several months or more, or those

who have visited the country several times" (AEF, 1998). It is not assumed that participants have prior knowledge of the countries of Asia or of studies of Asia before they participate in the TICFA program. Rather, an applicant's eligibility for a tour is generally based on their ability to use the in-country experience to inform their work, develop new curricula/units of work, to effect curriculum change and to disseminate their learning. However, the selection of participants is a state/territory sector decision. Consequently, the process and criteria for selecting study tour participants varies accordingly. Amongst the participants in the current study, for instance, were teachers who were fluent speakers of the host country's language and who had visited the country for extended periods previously, as well as teachers who had never travelled to Asia and confessed to knowing little about the host country before their visit.

Obligations of participants

The TICFA tour is intended as a 'first step' towards understanding the country visited, its people, and undertaking mutually beneficial activities. To enhance and further this process, participants undertake factual research/preparation before and after the study tour, detail the curricula expectations that they anticipate will result from the study tour experience and develop suitable curriculum/units of work related to the study tour country in a curriculum area of interest.

Nevertheless, the pre and post-tour obligations vary according to the study tour. For instance, participants in the China study tour prepare classes for teaching English to Chinese students as well as professional development activities in the teaching of English for delivery to Chinese teachers. Participants in the India study tour prepare classes about Australia that are subsequently delivered in Indian schools. Those participating in the Vietnam tour team-teach for ten days in a Hanoi school and their preparatory work involves communication (usually via technology) with their team-teaching colleague to plan their joint teaching unit. In addition, reading lists and articles are prepared and posted to participants to assist them in preparing for their sojourn.

The post-tour obligations of participants include the completion of an evaluation form and an interim and final report that details the applications of the study tour learning, including the development of curricula units, professional development for colleagues and others, etc.

In most states/territories, AEF Advisers are actively involved with participants in their pre and post-tour activities through preparatory meetings to familiarise participants with pertinent issues and to share individual learnings upon their return. The pre and post-tour components of the program are required and desirable but the extent of teachers' involvement varies. Participants in the current study, however, reported that the active support of the local AEF Adviser facilitated their participation in and completion of the pre and post-tour program components.

The context of the study: TICFA in 1998

A total of 117 participants were involved in the 1998 study tours to Asia conducted by the AEF. With the exception of Korea, all study tours occurred during the January school holidays in Australia. Table 3.1 details the number of participants in each tour and the study tour leader.

Table 3.1 *Overview of TICFA (1997/8)*

Study tour	Number of participants	Study tour leader
China	20	Kathe Kirby and Jing Yu
India	18	Maureen Welch and Ian Dawes
Indonesia	18	Tony Kiting and Kylie Seluka
Lao/Thailand	14	Julie Dyer and Karen Edwards
Vietnam	17	John Furness and Anne Bright
Korean Studies Workshop (July)	8	Lee Grafton
Korea Aust Teacher Exchange (Oct)	10	Rachel Kennedy

Participants in the current study comprise an anonymous sample of teachers from three of the above study tours.

Chapter 4
Conduct of the Research

The Research Focus

Encountering Cultures was a longitudinal study conducted over a period of twenty-six months. The purpose of the research was to generate qualitative insights into the diversity and commonalities of teachers' perceptions, learning and teaching practices before, during and after teachers' overseas sojourn with a view to providing clearer insights into the role of overseas study tours in shaping teachers' learning and teaching practice in studies of Asia curricula.

The study addressed the following, broad research question:

> **In what ways do short-term study tours in Asia impact on teachers and their teaching of studies of Asia curricula?**

The primary focus of the research was to document and analyse

- the motivations and learning expectations that teachers brought to the study tour experience;
- Teachers' perceptions of the cultures and peoples in their study tour country before and after their sojourn;
- the nature and stimulus of teachers' learning during the study tour, and their responses to such experiences; and
- the longer-term impact (if any) on teachers' personal and professional lives, in particular the ways in which the teachers' translated their experiences and learning into classroom practice and the teaching of studies of Asia, and the factors that facilitated or inhibited this process.

Recruitment of participants

The study's participants comprised a random sample of fifteen teachers drawn equally from three TICFA tours conducted by the AEF in January 1998. Participation in the research project was made by general invitation. A verbal initial outline of the project, its purpose and the role of teacher participants was given initially by the researcher to all study tour participants as part of a routine, preparatory, pre-tour teleconference conducted by the AEF.

To facilitate informed decision-making about the research project, potential participants were provided with an 'information package' comprising written details about the study's purpose, scope, the nature and extent of participants' involvement, and the uses that would be made of the data collected. As well, a copy of the areas of discussion for the initial, pre-tour interview (Appendix 1) were provided to facilitate potential participants' understanding of the nature of the study. Teachers who wished to be involved in the study were invited to discuss their involvement further with the researcher and then to complete and return the "Consent to Participate" form.

Both the initial verbal and subsequent written documentation made it clear that involvement in the research project was voluntary and not a condition for participation in the TICFA program, and that all efforts would be made to preserve the anonymity of participants in the study (Appendices 1 and 3).

Number of participants in the final study

From the original group of fifteen participants, the stories and experiences of nine teachers form the basis of the current report. In part, the process of 'data reduction' was a function of logistics. After the study tours, one participant withdrew from the project (for reasons unrelated to the research study or study tour experience) and a technological malfunction corrupted the audio recording of the first post-tour interview with a second participant. These developments made it necessary to alter the original plan to analyse and report on the experiences of all fifteen participants. Moreover, to help ensure the anominity of participants, it was decided to select the accounts of only nine participants from the remaining group for use in the final analysis and reporting of the findings.

The primary criteria for selection of the nine final accounts were to ensure that the analysis maintained the integrity and coherence of the initial group whilst also reflecting the diversity of participants' perspectives and experiences. An unforseen advantage of the data reduction was that it minimised the duplication of information and perspectives (data redundancy) and thereby enhanced the coherence of the analysis and the final report.

Research approach and methodology

The research utilised two established approaches to contemporary qualitative research: phenomenography, to identify the essential nature of teachers' perceptions, learning and practices, and participants' stories, to construct anecdotes or vignettes that illuminated the nature of teachers' perceptions, learning and teaching practices.

The data on which the current report is based comprised three components that addressed the following issues:

1. A telephone interview (1-2 hours) with individual participants before the study tour to discuss their pre-tour knowledge, views, perceptions and experiences of the study tour country and the teaching of studies of Asia curricula (Appendix 1).

2. A telephone interview (approximately 1 hour) soon after returning from the study tour to gather information about participants' immediate responses to and learnings from the study tour experience (Appendix 2).

3. A telephone interview (1-2 hours) with individual participants at eight - ten months after the study tour to discuss the ways in which the tour program had impacted on their personal and professional lives, particularly with respect to the teaching of studies of Asia, and the factors that supported or inhibited the application of their study tour learnings (Appendix 3).

Interview questions were deliberately designed to be open-ended to facilitate participants' freedom to raise issues that were of significance or particular relevance to their own experiences, learning and personal and professional development. Such a methodology was also utilised to encourage participants to use stories to illuminate and illustrate their experiences and learning.

Interviews were conducted by two interviewers who participated in comprehensive briefing sessions prior to commencing the interviews, and a collaborative debriefing and analysis of the first interviews to refine the interviewing technique and to ensure consistency in how the interviews were conducted throughout the study. Appropriate 'prompts' for each interview question were discussed and agreed upon by the interviewers and researcher but, as a general procedure, 'mirroring' techniques (ie, repeating the participant's responses) were used to minimise researcher interference with the data.

Given the constraints of the study's timeline and the fact that participants were drawn from across Australia, telephone rather than face-to-face interviews were conducted.

The original research design also incorporated an analysis of a reflective journal that was kept by participants during their overseas sojourn. Participants were given guidelines about the nature and purpose of the reflective journal and the type of issues that might be addressed in a reflective journal. On return from the TICFA tour, four participants declined to contribute their journals to the study, and five teachers preferred to contribute only selected portions and entries from their journal entries. The reasons for participants' decisions were of interest and may have illuminated particular aspects of the study tour experience. However, this issue was not explored because participants had been given an ethical assurance that they were free to withdraw from the study or any of its components at any time and without explanation.

An initial survey of the remaining journals revealed that the quality of data and insights that they might shed on the study tour experience were variable. Although participants had clearly made a concerted effort to keep their journal, many entries largely provided a 'travel log' of daily sights rather than a critical reflection on participants' learning.

Given that reflective journal writing is a common pedagogical approach in tertiary institutions, particularly teacher education, as well as in Australian schools, it was anticipated that the participants would have a relatively sophisticated understanding of the nature and requirements of reflective writing processes. This was often not the case. In hindsight, the nature of the journals contributed to the study revealed a methodological flaw in the research design which did not initiate teachers into reflective writing more fully, for example, by providing an intensive, workshop on reflective writing as part of a preparatory process for participating in the *Encountering Cultures* project.

As a result of the above factors, it was decided not to use the journals as part of the data analysis and to eliminate the analysis of teachers' 'in-tour' perceptions as proposed in the original research design. In lieu, the length and depth of the post-tour interviews were expanded to 'tap into' a fuller range of study tour experiences and reflections.

Analysis of interview data

In the first instance, themes and issues from the interviews were manually analysed and coded to identify commonalities, issues and differences in the experiences of participants in different TICFA programs. To ensure rigorous data analysis, a random sample of approximately five interviews from each of the three stages of the study were coded by both the researcher and two assistants. The separate codings were compared to refine and resolve coding discrepancies and to ensure consistency in the interpretation of the data. When the initial coding had been completed the researcher and assistant jointly reviewed the coding of all the interviews to ensure consensus, and three interviews from each phase of the study were reviewed by an independent researcher as a final check on the interpretation of the data and the accuracy of the coding categories selected (known as expert checking).

After coding, the interviews were processed using NUD*IST to further refine the analysis, to generate broader coding categories, and to identify dominant issues and pervasive relationships across the data. Subsequent re-codings and classification of newly emerging themes was undertaken by the researcher during this second phases of analysis.

In keeping with the narrative methodology, a key emphasis at all stages of the analysis was to identify anecdotes and vignettes that illuminated significant themes

and issues, and the qualitatively different nature of teachers' experiences, learning and pre and post-tour practice.

Limitations of the Study

Apart from the modifications to the research detailed above, the study was designed as a qualitative exploration of the expectations, experiences and effects of study tours on teacher participants. In any research, the integrity of the data can be corrupted merely by the presence of the researcher and the process of soliciting information (known as the Hawthorn Effect). Potentially, soliciting teachers' views of their study tour learning might also prompt them to address issues that they had not previously considered and, in doing so, to unwittingly instigate post hoc construction and learning. However, these difficulties were minimised in the current study by the pre-tour briefing and interviews, which acquainted participants with the issues and questions under investigation, and provided participants with the opportunity to consider and reflect on these during their study tour.

Whilst the findings reveal particular patterns and issues, a larger research project, employing a multi-method approach informed by the themes that emerged from the current study and other relevant literature, would be necessary before definitive, generalisable conclusions about the impact of study tours could be made. Such an approach is especially desirable given the wide variations between the nature and geographical location of each TICFA tour and the consequent nature of participants' experiential learning.

A 'common sense' view might suggest that a negative or unfavourable study tour experience might inhibit participants' learning. This perspective is explored in Chapter 6. Nevertheless, the phenomenographic focus of the current study is on the nature and conceptualisation of study tour learning by teachers, and the personal and professional impact of such learning. Thus, the research is premised on the belief that learning is possible even if the learning experience is not necessarily enjoyable - an assumption, perhaps, that is implicit in a considerable amount of daily, classroom practice in schools.

Chapter 5
Learning and Leaving

Learning is deeply embedded in the design of the TICFA tours. Participants are required to undertake pre-tour reading and preparation to participate in teaching, school visits, lectures and educational activities during the study tour, and to implement their new learning when they return to their schools.

Consequently, teachers' motivations for participating in TICFA tours are important, if implicit, statements about what they hope and/or expect to learn from their involvement an overseas study tour. The realisation of such hopes may be constrained by the scope and range of learning experiences offered during each study tour. Nevertheless, teachers' reasons for embarking on tours indicate the tangible and intangible, and the personal and professional rewards that they hope may flow from the experience. Thus, teachers motives for participating in the study tours provide insights into their perceptions of learning as well as their preconceptions about nature and value of learning available through sojourns overseas. These areas provide the focus for the following discussion.

Part 1: Learning expectations

The factors that comprised participant's motivation for undertaking the tours cannot be easily or clearly delineated. They originated in, and were manifested through, a complex interplay between participants' personal and professional identities and were grounded in a continuum of past history, current context and future desires.

For some teachers, the decision to participate in a TICFA tour was a natural extension of an existing commitment to studies of Asia and Asia literacy in their school. Hilary, for instance, worked in a school that had a history of "great involvement" in studies of Asia and several colleagues had already been on study tours to Asia. Such a past provided a more supportive environment for study tour participants. As Hilary explained, her colleagues

> *know how hard you work on those sort of things ... and they do know that its not an easy holiday. You are going to work and I suppose too the people who have been previously, they have come back with some fantastic resources or just knowledge and information and the other staff have benefited from that.*

In Hilary's case, her school had reached a stage where it was trying to address a wider range of countries and cultures in its curriculum. In this sense, her decision to participate in a study tour was grounded in a broader **school professional development strategy** that supported the enhancement of individual staff knowledge and expertise, and the sharing of this knowledge and learning with colleagues. This philosophy operated in concert with the curricula goal of extending the school's involvement in studies of Asia into new areas by "going a bit further and stepping into an Asian country that we really don't know a lot about".

Some teachers expressed the view that the study tour would make their teaching more interesting and "authentic" because they could draw on personal accounts, pictures and other resources that they gathered during their travels. For this group, the study tour was a strategy for both varying and credentialising the knowledge they could impart to students. Teachers in this category tended to see their study tour as an opportunity for a 'real-life' engagement with Asia that would **legitimate and give authority to their classroom practice** and to their perception of themselves as studies of Asia teachers.

Several teachers in the study reported that the desire to reorientate their curricula priorities and to reposition their professional identity as studies of Asia teachers was a response to changes in the student population in their schools. Reflecting the increasingly multi-cultural population of Australia, teachers reported a greater need for knowledge that would counter the growth in racism and prejudice in their schools, particularly post-Hanson/One Nation whilst also connecting the curriculum with the **diverse cultural origins of their students**. As one participants explained

> *we looked at four countries this year ... And the reason we chose those four countries was because ... within the last twelve months to two years, we have had a growing number of Chinese students so we thought we'd include them and so we thought we'd take two countries that we had represented at the school and two that we hadn't.*

But a shift in the demographic profile of their school was not the only reason that teachers decided to adopt a study of Asia focus. Participants reported a variety of reasons for their involvement in studies of Asia. These can be categorised along an cognitive/affective spectrum that have implications for their learning expectations during the study tours. At one end of the spectrum, teachers reported an intellectual and philosophical commitment to **Australia as part of the Asian region** and regarded the need to address issues of positionality and identity through the curricula as the inevitable consequence of this ideological stance. Consequently, the decision to participate in a study tour was guided less by a specific interest in a particular country and more by the desire and opportunity to satisfy a philosophical commitment through experiential understanding.

Hilary illustrated this first category of participants. Coming from a school with a significant Asian population and a curricula focus that incorporated the study of a

number of Asian countries, Hilary decided to take a study tour to India - country that was not addressed in the current teaching program at her school. An outsider might perceive only a tenuous relationship between her choice and the studies of Asia program in Hilary's school. But this did not present any conceptual difficulties for Hilary who positioned India as one of many possible geographic sites within the regional category of Asia and the more abstract notion of Australia-as-a-part-of-Asia that defined the scope of studies of Asia in her school. As she explained,

> *I think there is a big argument about whether Australia is an Asian country. I believe that we are really - we're in that region and I think India is an important Asian nation and I think we should have a knowledge of particularly our closest neighbours and India is not that far away.*

Elizabeth's motive for participating in a study tour was also positioned towards the intellectual end of the cognitive/affective spectrum. She believed that her own **lack of knowledge was impeding her professional practice** and inhibiting her students' learning, and hoped that the study tour would help to address this perceived professional deficit. Elizabeth related the following story to illustrate her agenda.

> *I've mentioned that there are other [religions] like Buddhism around and Islam ... the kids are really interested in that ... they're fascinated by it ... especially Budda and Hindu. I know absolutely nothing. I know I studied it at Uni but studying it and understanding it enough to teach it to kids are two different things ... So one of the kids actually [asked if the Buddhist] temples are the same in Indonesia and Vietnam as they are in Japan? ... I thought "That's an excellent question - I don't know".*

At the other end of the spectrum, several teachers explained that their reason for participating in a study tour resulted from the value that they attached to studies of Asia curricula as a tool for meeting broader affective agendas and for **shaping the attitudes and values of their students**. As Alison explained,

> *I think [students] need to be aware that there is a whole other world out there and especially the amount of poverty in the world. So, I would tend to want them to have a social conscience and in that respect, I would love them to learn more about India.*

Similar affective priorities can be identified in Donald's view that studies of Asia curricula offered means for developing racial tolerance amongst students.

> *Children ... are so easily influenced, you've got to get them and build this positive attitude before anything else develops.*

For this latter category of participants, the study tours presented an opportunity to engage actively with the potential that Asia offers for developing culturally tolerant attitudes and values in students.

Regardless of where participants located their involvement in studies of Asia on the cognitive/affective spectrum, many also indicated that **pragmatic motives** also influenced their decision to participate in a study tour. Donald, for instance, had long harboured a desire to travel to Asia. In fact, he and his partner hoped to travel to India in the future. Consequently, the chance to participate in a TICFA tour presented an opportunity to fulfil a pre-existing personal desire.

It would be inaccurate to categorise those participants who candidly conceded that personal travel agendas influenced their participation a TICFA tour as driven solely by self-interest. Participants' motivations for joining a study tour were rarely driven by single factors. Donald, for instance, also explained that the tour offered "a great opportunity to benefit my knowledge", and that he was attracted by the fact that an organised tour made his first visit to Asia less difficult and less confronting. Like others, an organised tour offered a degree of security for encountering an unfamiliar culture, as well as a process for managing the logistical unknowns that arise from travelling in a culturally unfamiliar environment. Donald's feelings reflected those of several of his colleagues.

> *I've heard people say it is reasonably easy to travel by yourself in India but I thought a country like China the only way to do it would be ... in a tour.*

For others participants, the TICFA tour offered particular personal, intellectual rewards by providing an opportunity to gain new knowledge, to build on prior experiences with the study tour country and to redress perceived inadequacies in participants' current understandings of the country. A search for **depth of knowledge** was invariably the explanation that participants presented to account for their decision participate in a tour to a country that they had already visited. For this group, the study tour was considered an opportunity to build on and develop existing information and understandings. Marie, for instance, explained that she participated in a TICFA tour because of the chance to access **"new things to learn"** and to enhance the knowledge that she had acquired during a previous visit to the country.

> *It's no use going back there because it's a cheap tour, I've still got to learn a lot about the country. It's a bit like every time you go back to a city or place in Australia, you actually learn a little more about it or see something that you haven't seen before. So it's always adding to the experience and I don't think that's a negative.*

The fact that the TICFA tours were specially designed as a study program to facilitate learning was also an attraction for participants. In the minds of several teachers, the tours' focus on learning promised more insights, depth and **'meaningful' encounters**

than the perceived superficiality of a tourist tour where the range of experiences was limited by the opportunities highlighted by a guidebook, official perspectives or out-dated snippets of information. Elizabeth, for instance, explained that she decided to apply for the study tour

> *... because I had been there [and] I thought it was a good chance to build on the little bit I had gained before because really you are only seeing it from a tourist's point of view and living out of a guidebook really and getting the party line. And I just wanted to have a much more in depth insight into what makes that country. Because you hear about it and the kids hear about [it] all the time without really knowing anything about it. And I don't know a lot about it either and most of what you hear is still to do with the war. So the world is still really caught up in that 70s event. I just think it would be really interesting to see their perceptions of the west and build on my own knowledge of what I'd picked up before as to how their system clicks because it is so different to ours. Before it was very closed door and you heard nothing about it and all of a sudden its open door and I just think its a chance of a lifetime to speak with people who can give you some information* .

Yet, as Elizabeth's account suggests, the search for depth of understanding was also embedded in the lure of the exotic and unfamiliar and a desire to reconcile more deeply embedded, contradictory perceptions of difference between East and West (specifically between Australia and the study tour country) by accessing insights into the 'other'. In themselves, such goals reflect a lingering, pervasive orientalist discourse - expressed through images of a romantic, mysterious, exotic East which are born out of imagined notions of identity that are untested by the empirical familiarity of substantive knowledge and/or personal encounter. Implicitly, the desire for 'depth' of knowledge to explain and account for such perceptions signals the potential for resolving existing (mis) perceptions of Asia as well as meeting the potentially profound conceptual challenges that might arise from personal engagement with the 'other'. Elizabeth articulated these tensions in her explanation of her desire to

> *just really understand where they are coming from. They are just more calmer. They don't seem as stressed ... I'd like to know why and what's the secret. That's what I meant by a different mentality. They just don't come across as being caught up with the things that worry our culture. Maybe I'm completely wrong and they are - but it doesn't come across. I'd like to get into a little bit of their philosophy. To find out what makes the people who they are. Because it is very different. I can't pinpoint exactly what it is, but it is different. They have a different way of thinking.*

Teachers' desire to explore the connections and disjunctions between East and West was rooted in a relational positioning of cultures, and a sense that history; development and difference were the intrinsic defining elements of cultural identity. Leanne, for instance, hoped that the study tour would provide an opportunity to explore differences that she had already identified and to develop new connections across the East/West divide.

> *With this fashion film, I found that really interesting because ... I could see where they were up to in western terms ... they had this fashion show and some were 70s and some were 80s [clothes] .... according to European fashions and they seem to be following in the European footsteps ... I could tell that they didn't have Italian fabrics and that told me a lot about where they are up to commercially. And where they are going with the aesthetics of clothing ... It will be interesting to see what other connections I can make.*

Teachers' frequently aligned notions of cultural comparison and difference with nostalgic, orientalist images of an exotic East, and these emerged as a recurring theme behind the seductive attractions of study tours. Yet, illustrating the intersection with different learning expectations, the desire to explore these understandings cannot be isolated from teachers' hopes to use their enhanced understanding to facilitate curricula change. The following commentary by Sarah illustrates this view and is characteristic of the perspectives of several other participants in the research study.

> *The civilisation is so old ... I read a few Asian books ... it was so totally different to our way of life - their values and their culture and just the age of it. I've bought some Chinese antique furniture ... and I studied a bit about China at school - you know China before the First World War type of period. I think it's the fact that its totally different to our civilisation and way of life and all that China has been through from the Emperor to now and of course being the biggest country in the world. I feel that the next century will probably be a Chinese century. So I would like to find out more about it ... hopefully with a better knowledge of things Asian, in particular Chinese, I will be able to facilitate that side or a particular Asian focus in the curriculum.*

Whilst teachers' stressed that different influences shaped their decision to participate in a study tour, there was unanimity that a primary motivation initially arose from a generalised sense of their own ignorance and a commensurate desire to learn more. Leanne's explanation was typical of her colleagues.

> *I suppose because it is something I don't know about and I just kept thinking in my mind that it is this big land mass and I knew nothing about it.*

Teachers' articulation of their perceived ignorance suggests a deficit model of identity. Seen in this light, study tours offered participants a strategy for redressing a perceived sense of personal lack. But ignorance was not regarded as an abstract, remote quality, ie., something that it would be nice *not* to have but not particularly troubling if you had it. Rather, participants proposed that ignorance of Asia had a daily and negative effect on their professional identities and practices. In moments of striking candour, teachers confessed that they felt that their ignorance of Asia perpetuated the East and West divide and inhibited their ability to teach and communicate with the increasing multi-cultural student population in their schools. Leanne's admission (below) is typical of the sentiments of several participants in the study and illustrates the ways in which teachers' perceived sense of ignorance impacted on their professional practice.

> *... this is a terrible thing to admit [but there are a lot] of Asian students and I just would never get to know them. Their names would be so foreign and they look alike and this sort of thing. And I thought this is terrible that this keeps happening ... I sort of feel that I've got such a level of ignorance about it that I should know more.*

As Leanne's interview extract illustrates, joining a TICFA tour was grounded in a nexus of professional responsibility and need, which was combined with an expectation that learning about Asia would redress a deficit in teachers' knowledge and experience, and assist in their daily dealings with students from Asian backgrounds in their schools. In short, the study tour was viewed as a professional development process to address a professional need.

Teachers' learning expectations were also expressed as a desire to reconcile into a coherent, contemporary framework a plethora of contradictory images and snippets of knowledge about Asia that had accumulated over an extended timeframe. Leanne illustrates this point. She explained that she wanted to resolve the contradictions between the critical portrayal of contemporary communist China that she encountered in recent books and films, as compared with the Utopian image of communist China that pervaded her undergraduate years at University and recent conversations with friends, with her personal sense (arising from maturity, age and experience) that "there is no Utopia".

Although professional factors were generally identified as a central reason for participating in a study tour, the anticipated benefits of the experience were blurred across the boundaries of teachers' personal and professional identities. Marie, for instance, identified that mutuality characterises teachers' personal and professional identities that makes it difficult to delineate their separateness.

> *Sometimes its a bit hard to distinguish between the personal and professional because if you are learning personally you are certainly learning professionally as well*.

Hilary elaborated on the intricate interplay between the professional and the personal in relation to teachers' learning expectations from the study tour ...

> *I have travelled fairly extensively and [India] has never really been at the top of the list, but I just think professionally it would be really good for me and personally I am looking forward to it. Probably more as I've done more reading .... I could honestly say I didn't know a lot about [India]. I suppose I know the basics ... but I don't know a whole lot. So personally I am looking forward to getting a little bit more knowledge, but professionally I'm looking forward to passing that on too.*

Alison also found it "hard to differentiate" between her personal and professional reasons for participating in a TICFA tour. On the one hand, her decision was a natural extension of her identity as a teacher, supported by "a lot of professional encouragement" and interest from colleagues in her school but it was also motivated by "a sense of just wanting more knowledge and just finding it interesting and the world opening up to me".

Learning expectations: the quest for knowledge

The preceding section provides an illustrative overview of the diversity of learning expectations held by teachers before they embarked on their TICFA tour. All participants saw the tours as a **quest for knowledge** although they varied in their reasons for seeking new knowledge and the use that they anticipated making of their new knowledge in the future. In general, however, these factors can be crystallised into two broad, phenomenographical categories. In the first instance, participants' learning expectations arose from a desire to enhance their professional identity as teachers and revolved around a pragmatic need for **work-related knowledge**.

Two sub-groups comprise this category. The first subgroup could be loosely labelled as **school organisation factors**. In this subgroup, a desire for work-related knowledge was shaped by a strong studies of Asia commitment in the participant's school, the desire of teachers and/or their school to extend the studies of Asia content taught to students, and support for study tour participants by colleagues who also saw studies of Asia as a priority and regarded the study-tour as a learning opportunity that would benefit both the individual participant and the collective school group.

The second sub-group of work-related knowledge that teachers hoped to acquire through the study tour was driven by **student-related** elements and included factors such as the necessity for skills to connect with and address demographic changes in the student population and an increase in the number of students of Asian descent in schools. Teachers whose learning expectations were encompassed by this category reported that they suffered from a strong sense of professional inadequacy because

they perceived that they lacked the knowledge and skills to meet their professional obligations to a changed, and changing, student body.

The second broad category that described teachers' anticipated learning from their study tour related to a quest for knowledge to enhance their **personal development**. This aspect of teachers' search for new understandings can also be conceptualised in terms of two intersecting sub-groups. The first subgroup comprised a desire for **empirical knowledge** that, depending on the entry-level of teachers' knowledge, took the form of a desire to build on existing understandings and/or to deepen teachers' current knowledge base. The second sub-group in the category related to the quest for personal development revolved around issues of **cultural identity and difference**. Learning expectations within this category were varied in form and nature, and were positioned along a cognitive/affective continuum that included a desire for greater understanding of orientalist notions of an exotic East; to test/reconcile contradictory images of Asia, to explore perceived differences between East and West, and an intellectual commitment to the notion that Australia had an Austral-Asian identity as a result of her geographical position within the region.

As noted earlier, there was not a clear delineation between the role that personal and professional priorities played in shaping teachers' learning expectations. Participants repeatedly underlined the dialogical relationship between the personal and professional/work-related factors that shaped their participation in and expectations of TICFA tour. Participants' inability to separate their personal and professional identities is a clear, if implicit, statement that their conceptualisation of teacher identity was an intrinsic expression, rather than projection, of self.

Although the **quest for knowledge** was the most pervasive aspiration underlying teachers' participation in a study tour, participants tended to conceptualise knowledge primarily as the acquisition of *new* information that would increase their overall knowledge base - although teachers varied in the desired/anticipated ways in which they envisaged applying their new knowledge. In this respect, Hilary was typical of her colleagues.

> *I think I'm going to come away with so much it will be hard to slot it into categories. I am really looking forward to getting a lot of fairly in depth information ... and accurate [information]. I suppose the accurate part is really important. I know that when we are actually there [there will be] a lot of seminars on the politics and cultural considerations and different things, so I'm looking forward to getting really accurate information that I can use both for myself personally and for the class. The challenge will be to remember it all. So I was hoping to take a Walkman so I can record a few things. But also a network when you come back. Just having all those people, some who already have a vast knowledge and others ... well, if I forget, they'll remember. Just having a network of people that you can draw on when you come back will be great.*

However, several participants indicated that the tendency to see knowledge as 'hard' data possibly arose from the pragmatics of their professional identities. For instance, teachers repeatedly cited the possession of a substantive body of 'content' knowledge and supporting resources as essential for effective teaching and as the ultimate factor in curricula decision-making. As Hilary explained

> *Teaching is just basically if you can get the information [but if] the resources are not there ... accurate teaching [is not possible and] if you can't do something accurately you are better off leaving it.*

Regardless of the reason, teachers' conceptualisation of knowledge as the acquisition of empirical information has implications for their capacity to see merit in study tour experiences that move outside a limited sense of knowledge-as-information to more subtle and nuanced conceptualisations of knowledge. Similarly, participants' perceptions of 'meaningful' knowledge has potential implications for how teachers conceptualise learning and the learning process, and their expectations about how these would be accessed through the study tour experience.

****

Part 2: Anticipated Learning Process

Learning as data acquisition

Prior to their departure, all participants rated their knowledge of the study tour country fairly low but reported that their pre-tour preparation increased their knowledge base. All teachers reported that they anticipated a radical expansion of their knowledge and understanding as a result of the study tour.

Hilary captured the general pattern of participants' pre-tour conceptualisations of the learning processes associated with the study tour experience. On a scale of 1 (very low) to 5 (very high), she initially rated her knowledge of her designated tour country as "2". After undertaking some pre-tour reading, she rated her knowledge at "3" but anticipated that this would increase dramatically during the tour and hoped that "when I come back I can say 5".

Reflecting a conceptualisation of knowledge-as-information, several teachers reported that the pre-tour preparation helped to modify some of their pre-existing misinformation and understandings. For Alison, the decision to participate in a TICFA tour heightened her awareness of Asia and the ways in which cultural issues shaped her relations with her Asian students. She explained that she had "learnt so much already about it by becoming a bit more alert to it". Another participant offered a particularly illustrative example of how the pre-tour tapes significantly altered some of her fundamental misconceptions about India.

> *I had heard about the untouchables and I'm thinking what does that mean? Are they like the lepers out in the wild who are not welcome in the town? So it has helped me understand that ... it's more job related ... Even though its also got its roots in religion ... and you are born into it. You are born into that cast and really there is nothing much you can do to change it apart from lead a good life and perhaps you will move up a step in the next life.*

As the above interview extracts illustrate, participants saw the learning associated with the study tour as incremental and chronologically compartmentalised but substantively connected i.e., before departure, during pre-tour preparation and during the tour. Nevertheless, participants generally anticipated that their learning would occur primarily **during** the study tour and that, by implication, this learning had inherently more value and merit than their preliminary, pre-tour reading and/or discussions. Such perspectives were not necessarily an explicit expression of faith in experiential learning. Nevertheless, they communicate a view that the learning acquired during the study tour had more substantive depth and comparative merit over 'book-learning' as a learning strategy. Alison articulated the relative inadequacy of such formal learning processes by confessing that her "knowledge was a bit sketchy and you can only get so much from books". Leanne reflected a similar

theory of learning when she explained that “when you are in a country and you see what is normal, you get a different idea from the books”. Donald was particularly vocal about his faith in experiential learning. He contended that “there is no better way to learn than to see it first hand”.

Underpinning this philosophical standpoint was a clear differentiation between experiential learning and formal study. The former was seen as offering opportunities to acquire substantive content and information whilst the latter promised conceptual understanding because someone else had synthesised and interpreted the content and information. Alison was amongst those participants who explicitly enunciated a clear demarcation between the two forms of learning, and explained that conceptual insights were “more the sort of thing you find out through reading”. Yet, because the study tour experience provided opportunities for both formal study (through pre-reading and discussion) as well as experiential learning (during the tour), the tours inevitably brought into focus questions about the relative merits of both approaches to learning. As a consequence, the tours stimulated participants’ desire to test the comparative value of experiential learning against the more formal, structured learning approaches with which they were familiar. Hence, Alison was “very interested to see what you can pick up - perhaps you can pick up an enormous amount?”

Learning as different ways of knowing

Although a number of teachers articulated a view of knowledge-as-data and anticipated that the primary benefit of the study tour would be intellectual growth and information acquisition, they also recognised that the study tour would involve encounters with cultural difference and varying degrees of cultural accommodation. Yet such encounters tended to be disembodied from the intellectual process of learning and cast as an affective dimension of the tours. Hilary illustrated this conceptual distinction in terms of socio-cultural differences.

> *The other thing [that] I don't know if I'm looking forward to or dreading is just the sheer population. I don't like crowds much so I don't know how I'm going to go. I think I've got a bit of a challenge there. [and] ... I find the “cast” thing ... very interesting ... I suppose it all goes with religion - the Hinduism and I don't know how I feel about that.*

Many teachers strove to put aside the sense of unsettling that arose from recognition that socio-cultural differences were potentially confrontational in character. For Hilary, this process involved mentally highlighting the anticipated rewards of the study tour and resolving to ignore socio-cultural experiences that she might find potentially unpleasant.

> *I'm really trying to focus on positives. You hear about the poverty and you hear about the beggars and all of those*

> *sort of things - the dirt - and I imagine I will find those confronting. But I'm trying not to focus on them ... the poverty and the beggars - not that you get used to it - but you learn to handle it.*

Importantly, such a stance suggests that "learn[ing] to handle" socio-cultural difference may not necessarily involve accommodating or even acknowledging cultural differences. Rather, it could reflect an explicit decision not to participate in learning by consciously distancing oneself from direct engagement with the culture of the host country.

Learning as research

The diversity of learning possibilities embedded in the study tour presented a seductive collage to teachers that defied efforts at tidy categorisation. For Leanne, the study tour provoked a need to reflect on and evaluate a complex and contradictory tapestry of taken-for-granted images that had accumulated over time. This process involved assessing inclusions and/or omissions in her understanding, positioning these against parallel knowns, reassessing their validity, and seeking to 'fill in the gaps' in her knowledge and understanding. The learning process that Leanne alluded to, but did not explicitly articulate, paralleled the work of a researcher involved in sifting and searching for information, insights and understandings.

> *Before I started to think about it, I think my view of China was this sort of enormous land mass that was sort of closed off and I didn't really know what went on. And then I started thinking – well, the cities will be very much like Western cities. And then I started thinking that Bangkok is not like a Western city in lots of ways, so I will be interested to see [if China is similar].*

For study tour participants, however, the task of defining the scope of their research was problematic because the subject matter and images with which they were dealing was like a "jigsaw and there are so many pieces missing" (Leanne). Even the known pieces of information constituted an impressionistic assortment of snippets of information, mis-information and untested assumptions. The resultant images were eclectic and irregular - born out of a myriad of incidental encounters across time and space that traversed areas as diverse as the country's physical development and population, teaching methods in schools, issues of social interaction and practice, and food. The interview extract with Leanne (below) illuminates the pot-pourri of impressions, anxieties and preconceptions that teachers brought to their engagement with the study tour country.

> *I was talking to a woman [who said] a lot of teachers go over there thinking "This is just so backward the way they teach". But she said, "Just watch. There is so much we can learn from them and in lots of ways they are superior in*

> *their teaching methods" [then there is] how you come across to someone and pride and saving face and all those sorts of things ... This other layer of social interaction which is about, not so much communication or the truth, but more about maintaining dignity, appearing to be agreeable and those sorts of things .... How do you ever get through that? But I suppose you respond as you do to other people. Just as you feel, as you see them ... I'm a bit scared about the food .... I don't know about the water..... but I worry about getting sick.*

Other participants summarised their study tour country using a similarly sensual shower of images, as Yvonne's description of India illustrated.

> *India? The size of the country and its population. The poverty of the place. The film industry in Bombay. The computer industry ... the barrenness of a lot of the country. The Taj Mahal. A lot of the wonderful architecture.*

Paralleling the agenda of scholarly research, the study tour presented participants with a strategy for learning how to bring order to a chaotic collage of images. Nevertheless, participants also recognised that this process would never be complete because the range of learning opportunities "will be selective" (Leanne). This inevitability did not diminish teachers' enthusiasm for the learning potential of the study tours. Rather, it was a realistic acknowledgment of the limitations of any learning encounter and the difficulty of attaining total and complete knowledge.

However, a philosophical commitment to the study tour as a learning research process did not erase the anxiety of encountering the unfamiliar. Leanne vocalised the trepidation that was reported by the majority of study tour participants by comparing the security of travelling to the culturally familiar locales with the unsurity of engaging with culturally different contexts.

> *This year ... we thought we'd go ... to Japan and Vietnam ... and we went to America instead ... I remember thinking [that] I breathed a sigh of relief because I thought it won't be as hard - maybe because they speak English ... you can wear the clothes you normally wear [but] in so many ways - its much more like going home.*

Learning as making connections

Some participants also saw the acquisition of knowledge as a learning process based on building personal and professional connections. Such an approach involved seeking out commonalities that were familiar and that would serve as a empathetic bond. Alison, for example, found a connection point between her own interest in sewing and the designs and fabrics in her study tour country, and was anticipating learning about other connections. This group of participants saw learning as a more informal process involving personal interaction between the study tour country and participants' individual interests.

Learning as experience

In discussing both the learning that teachers anticipated gaining from the study tour and the difficulties that accompanied their participation, a number of teachers also revealed that they were open to the potential of accumulating a diverse range of knowledge through the serendipitious character of experiential learning. Whilst such unpredictability was potentially unsettling for some participants (as detailed above), it opened up exciting possibilities for other teachers. Elizabeth reflected on this element of the learning process.

> *The language barrier could be a problem - only because I have experienced that problem when we went to get the train ticket [when overseas previously] ... and nobody spoke English ... just little things like that in dealing with transportation. I guess ... I'm a little bit wary as to ... whether they see you as "a walking dollar bill" ... You don't really know what their perception of you is and that can affect the way that you perceive them. That ... has potential to create a problem. I guess ... I'm not overly worried about it too much. I think anything that happens is a learning experience. Whether it is something bad that has happened or something good, it's still all invaluable depending on your frame of mind. I'm pretty open, and if something goes wrong, then nine times out of ten its because I've done the wrong thing as the newcomer. Like I've breached a barrier. Maybe that could be a problem - not knowing what is expected or how they expect you to react. The 'Do I?' or 'Don't I?' sort of thing ... And I guess that is how you learn - by your mistakes.*

Nevertheless, a recurring theme in the pre-tour interviews with teachers was that the experiential learning potential of the study tours offered a means of assembling new configurations of knowledge and understandings that built on/developed prior knowledge and/or opened up new insights and possibilities. Leanne's articulation of this view was typical of that of her colleagues.

... management of the environment. ... the countryside ... teaching ... their methods ... the effect of communism on the people .. and what the interaction with the people will be like .. having something in common .. the cultural revolution ... I'm interested to see what they have got back .. or if that's an extreme .. or ... just in some parts of the country.

The Learning Process: different approaches

As detailed in the previous section, the anticipated (and possibly preferred) learning processes that teachers saw as part of the study tour experience fell into five categories:

a) learning as data acquisition;
b) learning as research;
c) learning as different ways of knowing;
d) learning as making connections, and
e) learning as experience.

Although participants expressed a preference for or inclination towards a particular form of learning, no teacher positioned his/her learning approach exclusively within a single category. Rather, teachers anticipated that they would utilise a range of learning processes throughout their stay in the host country.

To a significant degree, however, teachers' perspective of the learning process reflects their different views about the nature of knowledge. For instance, whilst all teachers believed that their study tour learning would entail the acquisition of new data, only 2-3 (a significant minority) envisaged that this would lead to making connections with the peoples and cultures in their study tour country, and an understanding of culturally different 'ways of knowing'.

Not surprisingly, all participants, to varying degrees, expressed a strong belief in the value of experiential learning as a strategy for enhancing their personal and professional identity, and in its comparative usefulness over 'book learning'. Prior to their departure overseas, the informal, unstructured and serendipitious nature of experiential learning did not perturb participants. Whether this view was maintained by the time teachers returned from their study tour is one of the issues that is addressed in the following Chapter.

Chapter 6
Return and Learning

Part 1: What teachers learned

When participants in the study were interviewed one-two months after returning from the study tour, they all reported a significant increase in the **quantity and depth of their knowledge** about the host country. For some teachers, the acquisition of new knowledge had been so intense that they reported suffering from "overload" and "couldn't retain it all". However, the majority of participants reported that the study tour experience had consolidated existing knowledge and given them more nuanced insights and understandings about the study tour country. Elizabeth, for instance, reported that her knowledge had

> *deepened ... when we got to chat to the locals [that] cemented lot of what I'd read but at times put on new slants that I hadn't noticed before.*

What were the substantive areas that participants' newly acquired understandings addressed? According to the majority of teachers, the most substantial increase in their knowledge base was a closer **understanding of contemporary life** in the host country, particularly in relation to the character of social relationships, modes of transport, life in schools, food, and so on. To this extent, as with any form of travel, the nature and extent of participants' learning was defined by the range of experiences that were possible given the duration of the tour. Participants accepted this reality and Elizabeth's views were typical of her study tour colleagues.

> *There is still an awful lot to learn ... even though we were there for a month, you are still mixing predominantly with our own group. You are really only picking up tidbits of information as you happen to stumble across them ... general [every] day things. They explained things like when you have finished eating you shouldn't put your chop sticks down. All that etiquette ... you can know history and details but unless you actually live there ... you don't know the real intricacies of daily life.*

Such findings parallel those of Thomas and Coté (1997) whose study of students undertaking practicum in Asia found that the nature of participants' experiences led to a general, increased interest in Asia but that there was greater interest in the social and cultural aspects of life that participants had had the opportunity to engage with directly. Thus, participants' interest in food was more stimulated than their interest in literature and there was progressively less interest in language, religion, art, politics or the theatre.

A pervading theme during the post-tour interviews with teachers was that the study tour ignited a desire to enhance their newly acquired knowledge of and insights into the host country. On returning from the study tour, Alison, for instance, rated her knowledge of contemporary China at 5 (on a five point scale) but assessed her knowledge of other aspects of the country (eg, the country's history) at a lower level. As a consequence, she resolved to undertake additional reading to address this perceived deficit. Similarly, Marie highlighted that her knowledge of contemporary Vietnam had increased but that there was a **need to learn more**.

> *My knowledge has increased in peoples, cultures and all of that and it's deepened, and there's also a very healthy respect to find out some more.*

David expressed similar feelings

> *There is still so much I have to learn but ... I've got a bit of a start on most teachers because I've been there and I've seen it. I'm certainly not an expert but ... it has certainly improved my knowledge to no end. But then again, I want to learn more now. I will continue my reading, I want to take Mandarin lessons. It has just stirred up a whole series of interests in me.*

Ironically, as the above interview extracts illustrate, the desire for further learning was also paralleled by participants' **heightened awareness of areas of ignorance** in their knowledge of the host country. For teachers, the acquisitions of new knowledge brought into focus the gaps and omissions in their knowledge about many aspects of the host country. In short, teachers' study tour learning served to highlight how little they knew.

Teachers' awareness of their *lack* of knowledge was in stark contrast to their view of their knowledge base before their departure for the host country. At that stage, teachers demonstrated a tendency to *over-estimate* the extent of their knowledge of their host country and to *under-estimate* the sheer volume of information needed to acquire a comprehensive understanding of the country. As a consequence, teachers were inclined to **under-calculate the learning gap** between existing and desired knowledge levels, and the degree of effort needed to fill this gap.

As a result, participants' reports of their learning were paralleled by an expressed **demand for more knowledge** to redress areas of ignorance that had been highlighted by the study tour experience, or to build on the known by learning more. However, teachers' preferred mode for obtaining this knowledge varied widely and included such strategies as further travel, reading, correspondence with contacts in the host country, and so on.

A particular focus during the post-tour interviews was to identify and explore those areas of knowledge and understanding that reputedly had the most impact on participants' understanding and views of the host country. A recurring theme in this respect was the extent to which teachers' **preconceived images of the study tour country were tempered** by new insights and understandings. For instance, prior to her departure, Betty's over-riding image of India was as a place with "crushing" numbers of people, and she was anxious about how she would cope in such a culturally different milieu. Whilst Betty's overall image of India as a nation with "people everywhere" did not alter, it was tempered by a range of experiences that demonstrated the inaccuracy of imposing categorical definitions on other cultures and communities. As Betty explained,

> *And yet ... there were times when you looked out the train window and had the dust flying in your face and you couldn't see a person.*

Hilary's preconceptions about her host country were also moderated by experience. In conversation, she particularly emphasised her new understanding of social classes in India.

> *I was expecting a lot more beggars and people like that. There were people like that but it was a bit like here ... and the fact that there is an upper and middle and a definite lower class...*

Whilst acknowledging that limited confrontation with poverty and disease may have been a consequence of the sites visited during the study tour, Hilary's lasting impression of India was that poverty was not as desperate, intense or widespread as she had believed prior to the study tour.

In a similar vein, participants reported a newly developed **awareness of the diversity within Asia**. Many had articulated an intellectual awareness of the diversity within Asia prior to their departure but few had consciously comprehended the full meaning or extent of that diversity until they physically confronted its reality. The following account, by Alison, illustrates the new cognisance of diversity that was typical amongst study tour participants

> *There is so much diversity ... we travelled from south to north so we went across the whole country and you got to see the change in people ... in the north, they are taller and thinner and have more chiselled faces [It was] just so diverse. In this one place you have a whole spectrum of ancient civilisations happening.*

Inevitably, new levels of awareness also highlighted participants' previous misconceptions about the study tour country. During her interview, Sarah reported on her **personal confrontation with the misperceptions** that she had previously held about China. Sarah had expected to find a developing nation that was struggling to move into the contemporary world of the West. Although Sarah felt that

there were strong similarities between some areas of China and “Australia in the 1950s”, this was not always the case. She was unexpectedly startled by the modernity of Beijing and Shanghai, and described them as “very much 1990s cities”. Her new understanding of development in China stimulated a re-evaluation of her pre-existing conception of the economic relativities between East and West, and she concluded that “Shanghai just made Sydney look like nothing”.

Sarah had various associations with Asia before her visit to China. But her newly gleaned awareness of the diversity within China invoked **caution about making broad, cultural generalisations**, as the following comment indicates.

> *I don't know that I've really leaned how to classify a typical Chinese person. That would be tough. I don't know if you could ...*

An integral part of accommodating cultural diversity involved **overcoming discomfort with cultural difference** and accepting expressions of diversity as equal in merit and value. For some participants, the development of such understandings required a shift in pre-existing attitudes and the way that teachers, like Alison, interacted with their host country.

> *When I first saw it, I was a bit scared because it really is a third world country and unsealed roads and not real shops and people on the street - everything that I expected but it was very real ... but after a while ... I just accepted it as being part of the place and I stopped being frightened [and] was excited by the place ... rather than remaining so apprehensive.*

Although participants were generally accepting of cultural difference, it did not follow that they were uncritical. It can be difficult to disconnect from the deeply embedded cultural traditions and paradigms of the West that served to filter participants’ views of their host country. Nevertheless, most teachers endeavoured to evaluate rationally their cognitive and affective responses to various phenomenon encountered during their study tour. Betty, for instance, was struck by the apparently low status of women in India - particularly given the county’s history and the fact that “there have been some important people like Indira Ghandi [and] a lot of high profile Indian women”. She had difficulty reconciling and accounting for such contradictions but, in terms of knowledge acquisition, such encounters left her with “a new awareness or perhaps ... more consciousness raising [that] only emerged as a consequence of the trip”.

In acquiring **more nuanced understandings of diversity and difference**, the study tours also confronted teachers with knowledge that eroded the pervasive assumptions and myths that they previously held. For instance, Hilary had presumed that

> *poor third world countries [would not be] able to organise their way out of a paper bag but they were very organised and often ... the red tape ... [was] ... over organised.*

Leanne also reported that new encounters and learning during the study tour **challenged taken-for-granted assumptions**. Her image of China, for instance, had "totally changed … It's a complete reversal". Leanne cited a number of cases to illustrate her point and her account echoes similar views by other study tour participants.

> *... another myth - [children] are certainly no more indulged than our kids. And they have to work a lot harder … all these books [on] 'how I survived terrible China' … it's such a distortion of it! There are still millions of people living there and living happily [the horror is] going on but it's not … all over China, and so … we get … a distortion of it all.*

A striking feature of participants' reports of their learning was the change in the nature and quality of their knowledge about the host country that resulted from their study tour. In contrast to their pre-tour understandings, participants' felt that their knowledge was no longer abstract or academic, but that it now had **authenticity and authority as a result of direct engagement** with the peoples, cultures and societies of their host country. As a consequence, teachers' knowledge of their study tour country was mediated by a humane dimension that it had previously lacked. Leanne articulated this transformation in discussing the recent economic collapse in China.

> *You realise [that China] is its … people … when you hear about the economy going [then] that is sort of saddening [because] it's the people - not just an economy - and what it will mean to their lives and how hard it is.*

Embedded in teachers' deeper understanding of the diversity, difference and humanity of the host country was a greater **awareness of the culture and values** of communities within the country that they visited. Through lectures, tours, observations of daily life, work with colleagues in schools, and conversations with nations, teachers became familiar with the customs, behavioural expectations and priorities of the host country, and their impact and influence on daily life. According to participants, it was the intimacy and daily intensity of this engagement that had the greatest impact because it provided diverse opportunities to learn about different aspects of the local culture in a range of different contexts.

Although participants were struck by the internal diversity of the study tour countries, many were just as surprised by the commonalities with Australia that they discovered. Leanne, for instance, found connection points with teachers in China and was startled by "how much we had in common … saying the same sorts of thing and understanding each other".

That the study tours would stimulate an **increased awareness of cultural commonalities** was a learning outcome that was not expected by participants prior

to their departure. Nor had teachers anticipated the quantitative and qualitative extent of cross-cultural commonalities. As a result, many post-tour interviews were repeatedly punctuated by participants' reflections on and their surprise at incidences that highlighted the mutuality of values, priorities and practices between their host country and Australia.

Cultural difference presented similar challenges. Learning 'other ways of doing' prompted all participants to draw comparisons between life in Australia and the study tour country, and to assess the relative merits of each. Such a learning process inevitably involved a considerable degree of critical reflection and evaluation. Elizabeth illustrated this process in her discussion of Vietnamese life.

> *They make time for people - sit down, have a cup of tea, and I think we've lost that. It's just go go go. You don't mix with people, talk to strangers, try and get to know other people ... in [Australia] ... everyone is so caught up in their little house and their own little world and 'Hang you Jack' [In Vietnam] it's different. They just seem to be more concerned and family oriented. I guess that alleviates a lot of problems that perhaps our society has because I think we've lost a ... sense of family ... it gets buried with a lot of superficial stuff. And the kids are so keen over there to better themselves and to do anything possible that is going to better them [in Australia] ... their attitude is let's have a good time and 'Go party' ... they're worldly. They've lost that innocence ... [in Vietnam] work and study came first ... it was a very different outlook. I don't know if it is better - but it is different.*

In discussing China, Leanne also illustrated how cultural experiences prompted **cross-cultural comparisons**.

> *It pointed out our materialism - not that it is good or bad but just the difference it makes to your way of life … it gave me a perspective on our lives and our schools and our values. But it varied according to where we were ... [There was an] amazing respect for education ... amazing because I don't think everyone in [Australia] understands what an education is or values it ... [in China] education was for two things: the material world and … the spiritual ... [and parents said they wanted] their children … to be comfortable but … to have an enriched life through their education.*

The process of drawing cross-cultural comparisons not only underlined *known* differences and commonalities between the study tour country and Australia, but highlighted **new areas of variance and mutuality**. Yet, the process of recognising and acknowledging universal qualities that transcended cultural differences also incorporated a challenge to previously unarticulated preconceptions about the culture, society and position of Australia in the world. Consequently, shifts in

teachers' cultural understanding of the study tour country were framed by repeated cross-references and comparisons with parallel circumstances in Australia. In effect, teachers' engaged in a process of accommodating new understandings about the study tour country by positioning and relating these to known referents in Australia. As a result of this process, the acquisition of knowledge about the study tour country also entailed re-viewing, re-evaluating and re-learning established understandings of Australian identity and, more broadly, Anglo societies in the west. As a result of engaging in such a learning process, several participants reported that the study tour had radically altered their view of both the study tour country *and* the world. As Leanne explained, the study tour

> *changed the way I see the world ... it was just amazing. I would never have thought that it would … change my view of things so much.*

Two features of the above research findings warrant particular emphasis because of their significance in terms of theory generation and their potential for practical applications in the future. First, analysis of the interview data illustrated that the process of developing understanding about cultures and societies in Asia is a **referential practice** that engages participants in a process of comparing, contrasting and cross-referencing 'foreign/other' and 'familiar/own' cultures and societies. Secondly, this comparative process results in the **formulation of new perspectives of the 'other' *and* a re-formulation of the defining notions of participants' own national identity.**

A fundamental dilemma with cross-cultural comparisons is that they are susceptible to simplistic generalisations. Teachers' **increased awareness of the inadequacy of generalisations** (as detailed above) tempered tendencies to lapse into sweeping cultural assertions. Like other study tour participants, Leanne emphasised that cross-cultural comparisons were only relevant and applicable to the particular feature or locale under discussion. Thus, as a general rule, the study tour experience imbued participants with a consciousness of the degree to which broad **generalisations obliterate important cultural nuances and differences**.

But cultural encounters do not automatically lead to increased cultural understanding. Previous research (see Chapter 2) has identified that cross-cultural contact is a necessary but not sufficient precondition for increased intercultural cooperation and understanding (Bochner, 1983; Brewer, 1996). Nor does engagement with a culture necessarily make sojourners feel more positively predisposed or contented within the culture (Hsaio-Ying,1995). **Intercultural encounters do not *automatically* lead to an increase in intercultural understanding or appreciation of the host country**.

All teachers in the research project reported an increase in their knowledge of the study tour country. Despite this, one participant found the study tour such a confusing and frustrating experience that she did not want to engage with the host country again. She acknowledged that there was an improvement in her knowledge

of the host country as a result of the study tour. On a five point scale, she rated her knowledge of the study tour country at “1.5” before her departure, and “maybe 2.5” on her return. But an increase in knowledge was not equated with greater understanding.

> *There is so much I don't understand about how their systems operate and how little is being done in the country about human rights. Things also like basic sanitation ... I came away with a little more knowledge and less understanding ... There were presumptions before that I knew what was going on and I've come away thinking I haven't a clue what is going on. I don't understand the way they operate. I don't understand the way they function ... My awareness is that I don't know a thing ... You get this little glimpse in this little window of a few little places and a few people and there is no way you can come away saying you know about the whole ... You come away with impressions and if you get those impressions in a lot of different places then you say this is a common trait throughout the country, but that is all you can say. ... It’s like opening a can of worms. Once you've seen one you find there are strings and streams that you don't know about.*

This response to the study tour experience was atypical of other participants in the current study and thus warrants further exploration. The literature and prior research suggests some possible explanations. The teacher in question was not awarded a travel scholarship to her country of choice. Although she was relatively philosophical about this decision by “the powers that be”, she was nevertheless quite firm that she would have preferred to have revisited a country that she was already familiar with and would not have voluntarily selected the country in question as her first choice. Yet research by Ogbu (1992) shows that reticent sojourners are significantly less likely to find the experience of cultural engagement either rewarding or enjoyable.

Participants’ motives for joining a study tour can also impact on their capacity to see the experience as a learning opportunity. Several participants indicated that the opportunity to travel was part of their reason for joining a study tour. With candid honesty, the above teacher explained that the opportunity to travel was paramount in her decision to go on a study tour. Rather than professional considerations, she explained that her motives were entirely

> *Personal. I shouldn’t say that! I just love to travel. If I can get away somewhere in whatever capacity and whatever scenario, I’ll go. I’ll jump at the chance!*

In contrast, professional outcomes of the tour were less clearly articulated and more vaguely defined: “I hope [that] I can contribute something”.

A sense of **'cultural distance'** has also been identified by researchers as an important barrier to the socio-cultural adjustment of sojourners to new cultural contexts (Ward & Searle, 1991; Ward & Kennedy, 1992). As the above interview extract elucidates, participants can encounter a frustrating and insurmountable cultural gap between their own background and values, and those of the host country on a range of issues from "human rights" to "basic sanitation". Moreover, the sense of cultural distance can be reinforced by differences between participants' pre-departure perceptions of the study tour country and the realities they confront on arrival. The teacher above was explicit about this dilemma: "There were **presumptions** before that I knew what was going on and I've come away thinking I haven't a clue what is going on".

Certitude in the inassailablity of the 'cultural gap' and a lack of external imperatives to engage with the study tour as a learning experience has the potential to constrain cross-cultural understanding and the capacity to make connections with the host culture - thereby further eroding the ability to use travel as a learning opportunity. In such circumstances, the potential for study tours to offer enlightenment or new insights can be negated. Rather, the experience can intensify incomprehension of the host country and cement the desire to physically, emotionally and intellectually preserve a cultural distance at all costs.

Anecdotal accounts suggest that variables such as smooth travel arrangements, comfort, the availability of familiar food, etc shape teachers' views of a study tour and therefore their receptiveness to implementing their learning about the host country. Whilst such elements might influence participants' *enjoyment* of and *opinions* about the study tour experience, there these variables were not the decisive ingredient in stimulating intercultural learning or accommodation. In fact, research indicates that travellers who anticipate some difficulty in adjusting to a new or different culture are more likely to view their travels positively than those who expect a smooth, unproblematic experience (Martin, Bradford & Rohrlich, 1995; Li Chiu, 1995). Cultural adjustment involves confronting and responding to a succession of cultural barriers in the form of new/foreign experiences (Anderson,1994). The process of contemplating, experimenting and reflecting on alternative responses and solutions to each cultural barrier/experience results in intercultural experiences that are both cyclical and potentially instructive because they demand repeated adjustment, learning, personal development, and engagement between the visitor and host culture. (Anderson, 1994).

Prior research (see Chapter 2) has also demonstrated that the capacity for sociocultural and psychological adjustment are fundamental to the ability to accommodate new cultures and experiences (Searle & Ward, 1990; Ward & Searle, 1991). Effective sociocultural adjustment requires a degree of cultural literacy (ie, foundational knowledge) to enable travellers to negotiate with and learn from the different ways encountered in a foreign environment, and implicitly underlines the value of pre-tour preparation. Similarly, Searle and Ward (1990) found that a "cultural fit" (p. 458) was required between an individual's personal characteristics

and the social expectations of the host culture if the traveller's psychological adjustment is to be smooth.

A major challenge for study tour organisers is how to provide participants with experiences that are sufficiently non-confrontational to ensure effective cultural adjustment but sufficiently challenging to facilitate learning. The current study sort to explore this dilemma by investigating participants' responses to a 'critical incident' during one of the tours (ie, a difficult and lengthy train trip) and the journey's impact on the overall views of the tour by four participants whose references to the journey during interviews suggested that the train trip had the potential to 'overshadow' other aspects of the study tour experience.

The train trip was not originally part of the tour program but became necessary when existing travel arrangements had to be altered. The journey was scheduled to take 52 hours but delays lengthened the duration of the trip. Moreover, although participants were booked into a second-class carriage with air-conditioning and double bunks, the train was reconfigured before its departure and participants were reassigned third-class passage with triple bunks and no air-conditioning.

There was broad consensus amongst the three participants that the train trip was unavoidable and that conditions on the train were not of the organisers making. Nevertheless, participants varied considerably in the significance that they attached to the experience. At one end of the spectrum, teachers like Alison only mentioned the trip in passing, and then only to illustrate how incidental opportunities for learning occurred during the study tour.

> *We did have lots of opportunities to mix. Like on the train, we were in there with [local] families and they all spoke pretty good English. There were doctors among them who were very eloquent and very outgoing. They would initiate conversations with us.*

For Alison, the train trip was not a negative experience but, when asked, she conceded that it depended on "the way you choose to look at things".

Hilary was more articulate about the difficulties of the trip but indicated that she accommodated these philosophically and appreciated the experiences that the journey presented. Nevertheless, she noted that others viewed the journey differently.

> *It was a fairly long way ... but it was a great experience ... we were really comfortable. There wasn't any hassle about it. Everybody coped. It was interesting watching people's reactions ... when we first got on the train. There were a few people I thought were going to have a nervous breakdown ... but they calmed down after a while when they realised there wasn't anything they could do and it was all being taken care of...*

At first, Yvonne seemed to be more ambivalent about the trip. Nevertheless, she mentioned the journey several times during the interviews - suggesting its heightened importance in her consciousness - although she frequently reiterated that she accommodated the difficulties of the trip and found it less problematic than some of her fellow travellers. Nevertheless, Yvonne's interview transcripts, nevertheless, suggest that she found the journey less pleasant than Alison and Hilary (above). The following interview extracts illustrates Yvonne's positionality.

> *... it was pretty long and some people didn't enjoy it very much but it was OK. We played cards and we read so I didn't find it that bad. I was quite calm about the whole thing. I found it OK but I know some people really didn't like it at all. I was on the top [bunk] - like three up - so I didn't sleep very well but it wasn't disastrous. A lot of people didn't eat the food - it was pretty basic. And a couple of times when the train stopped we were able to get things but it was a good experience, but it was too long for the amount of time that we had there.*

In contrast to the preceding perspectives, Betty found the train trip not only difficult but also unpleasant. The fact that she provided a longer and more detailed account of the journey signals the fact that she viewed it as a more significant experience than some of her colleagues.

> *It was tough. I didn't sleep for two whole days ... We were so grotty by the end of the trip. You weren't conscious of it blowing in but you'd be playing cards and you'd look at your hands half an hour after washing them and you'd see the dirt. It was so dirty and so noisy ... The tea guys would come all through the night calling out if you wanted tea and they'd bring their big flasks in. Every station you stopped at the beggars got on the train and would just come through begging, or the shoe shine boys or the little kids would come through with their accordion ... and you just couldn't get rid of them ... I had a top bunk so I was up and down all the time ... You'd climb down ... and you would have to watch where you were putting your feet in case you trod on a sleeping beggar in the passageway. They weren't supposed to be on there but they were ... It was very tiring ... We got to our rooms at 9pm at night and we had to be at a school meeting at 7:30 the next day ... and we didn't have any clean clothes to stand up in because we'd gone through everything we had.*

Two pervading themes emerge from Betty's account. First, that physically foreign conditions (lack of cleanliness, clean clothes and privacy) can be disconcerting and limit participants' preparedness to engage fruitfully with a cross-cultural experience. Secondly, that being forced to engage with (and unable to escape from) aspects of a

local culture/society that participants find unpleasant can cause discomfort and inhibit the capacity for cross-cultural learning. Thus, where participants feel that an unbridgable 'cultural gap' exists between their own cultural practices and those of the host country, travel can be an unpleasant and even negative experience. Importantly, as the above interview extract reveals, the cause of Betty's discomfort was not simply the train trip *per se*. It was also the inescapable extent of the engagement with culturally foreign and disconcerting aspects of local culture (tea-boys, beggars, shoe-shine boys) that occurred during the journey. Under such conditions, cross-cultural engagement can reinforce participants' sense of cultural incompatibility, nurture cultural repugnance, and consolidate negative cultural stereotypes, as the following quote illustrates.

> *I just felt that you could never have a conversation with [a local] person where at the end of it they didn't ask you for something.*

In summary, Alison's impression of the train trip presents a striking contrast to Betty's view of the experience whilst Hilary and Yvonne offer more moderate perspectives. The differences between their reactions represents the spectrum of intercultural accommodation amongst study tour participants, and underlines that personal sociocultural and psychological factors are fundamental in shaping participants' individual views of a study tour. As the above accounts illustrate, different people *will* have *very* different reactions to the experiences that occur during overseas travel.

****

Part 2: Actual Learning Process

Experiential learning

Teachers in the current study participated in an experiential learning process and, as a group; participants felt that these generated a wealth of new knowledge, insights and understandings. The nature of the experiential learning process shaped the substance of participants' new knowledge with its focus on daily life, people and education although invariably broader social and political issues arose including matters related to the environment, politics, history and economic development.

Because the mode of learning constrained the nature of the knowledge acquired, participants were keen to supplement perceived areas of ignorance through additional learning by using whatever means were available. Interestingly, however, the majority of teachers who expressed a desire for further learning tended to explicitly articulate their intention/hope in terms of using experiential learning (ie, travel) as their primary learning process. Whether this preference arose from a newly awakened enthusiasm to see the world or from a belief in the superiority of experiential learning processes was not explored during the research study nor may it be conceptually feasible to separate these two elements.

Participants' articulation of their desire to learn was an implicit acknowledgment of the incompleteness of their knowledge and also a recognition that learning is not an ordered, linear or predictable process. Participants recognised the limitations of experiential learning. Sarah, for instance, argued that "To learn it all would be impossible". But she readily conceded that "just to touch on these things was interesting".

Learning as an affective, inductive process

Prior to their departure, the majority of participants conceptualised that their study tour would involve a cognitive, deductive process involving the acquisition of data. Consequently, they anticipated that they would return to Australia with stores of 'information' that they could impart to their students. Whilst teachers' reported learning a great deal of new knowledge, their interviews also underlined the **affective dimension of their learning** and the ways in which their experiences altered their own attitudes and values (as detailed above). Consequently, the nature of teachers' learning in the host country was achieved through an inductive process that was delineated only by their willingness to participate in the learning process.

Learning as excitement

Excitement was the fundamental quality that marked the learning processes of many participants. Their study tour renewed their enthusiasm for learning, and enabled them to recapture a child-like view of **learning as an exciting, rewarding and reinvigorating adventure**. Leanne demonstrated this emotion particularly powerfully...

> *It was the trip of a lifetime … Every day was a treat. We've seen some amazing things and had some amazing experiences … It was like being treated to these incredible experiences continually. It was just wonderful. You should go!*

Learning through comparison

The non-linear character of participants' study tour learning is best highlighted by the 'to-and-fro' learning that is intrinsic to cross-cultural comparison, and which involves repeated cross-referencing and cross-checking of elements in one culture against parallel elements in another culture. The process is one of constant comparison to identify commonalities and differences across cultures. Critical reflection is an integral part of cross-cultural comparison and, as detailed above, teachers' study tour experiences prompted them to reflect critically and re-evaluate their views of Australian culture and society.

Intuitively, participants accommodated and articulated new understandings about their host country by using Australia as a referent. Such comparisons also became a process for redefining and reassessing understanding of Australians and Australian identity. Leanne provided a revealing illustration of the operation of this intuitive, cognitive process in her description of the culture and society of China.

> *In some ways, they are more advanced than us ... they have more depth of character … having gone through communism and then … [there is a] belief that you can fix things and that you can manage things ... it made me think that in our society. We are a lot more fatalistic and pessimistic … and the energy … they just work and work and work ... not harder than us but in a more directed way. And much more for the group than the individual … it made me think a lot about the cult of the individual here … I think of our school and how hard we work trying to cater to every individual and develop every individual … Our hours are longer.... all [the teachers] we talked to taught two classes a day [for] 50 minutes or an hour ... but they had 60 kids in them so they had a lot of preparation and correction and … they had to correct their books every day so that took the time but they don't have the same face to face stress that we have [but] we are telling our kids to be individuals and I*

> *wonder if there is a limit to this … it's made me even firmer ... that we should have people behaving as groups. It's very important in society.*

Non-recognition of learning

It should not be assumed that the nature and extent of participants learning inevitably meant that they developed a passion for their study tour country. Although this was true in general, it was not always the case. One participant, for instance, remembered the study tour as a series of haunting "snapshots" that left her feeling negative about the country. She recounted one such image.

> *[It was] about 9pm one night and it was freezing cold ... there we were in our lovely warm bus with the heating on and we'd been travelling most of the day so we were a bit dozy and comfortable, and we were coming in through the traffic ... and there was this little boy out the window who was maybe ten or twelve ... he had no shoes on. He had a pair of shorts on and he had no shirt and he was trying to sell newspapers to people in cars ... He was blue with cold. He was shivering and this kid was doing a job for somebody. He probably got commission for the number of papers he sold.. That's a haunting memory.*

Nor were all cultural engagements seen as part of a learning process. The emotional impact of culturally disconcerting images in combination with a sense of 'cultural gap' had the potential to inhibit learning and to obstruct participants' capacity to see the study tour as learning, and to dismiss the possibility that cultural encounters constituted a "learning experience".

The research data also suggested that the non-recognition of experience as learning may also be the result of a fundamentally different conceptualisations of learning. One participant, for instance, rejected the idea that cultural engagement entailed a form of learning but purchased fifteen kilograms of books while she was away so that she could learn more about the host country. It is also possible that discomfort with cultural engagement will prompt travellers to lapse into the security of the known. Seen in this light, a participant who denied the learning potential of cross-cultural contact and preferred to find out about the country through books may also have been seeking to avoid the harsh realities of 'real life' learning in Asia.

The Learning Process: changed approaches

Analysis of the interview data showed that teachers drew on several learning processes during their study tour. Whilst particular teachers indicated stronger preferences for a particular learning process, no learning approach was used to the total exclusion of other approaches. Leanne was typical of teachers in this category. Her learning invariably incorporated cross-cultural comparisons (as detailed above) and involved an on-going reassessment of her home culture in the light of new insights, understandings, and familiarity with different 'ways of doing' in her host country.

Overall, teachers' descriptions of their learning experiences revealed that four categories of learning processes were utilised by study tour participants:

a) Experiential learning
b) Learning through comparison
c) Learning as excitement
d) Learning as an affective and inductive process

Of particular interest is the fact that the learning processes that teachers reported *actually* using were very different from those that they anticipated would be used prior to their departure. This change outlined in Table 6.1.

Table 6.1: *Anticipated and actual learning processes*

Anticipated learning processes	**Actual learning processes**
a) Learning as data acquisition; b) Learning as research; c) Learning as different ways of knowing; d) Learning as making connections, and e) Learning as experience.	a) Learning as experience b) Learning through comparison c) Learning as excitement d) Learning as an affective and inductive process e) Non-recognition of learning

Thus, an unexpected outcome of the study tours was a broadening of participants' views of and experiences with various different approaches to learning. The extent to which these were utilised in their classroom practice is addressed in Chapter 7.

Chapter 7
Reviewing Learning

For the final phase of the research, study tour participants were interviewed approximately eight months after returning to Australia. The interviews sought to elicit information about the longer term impact of the study tours on teachers' personal and professional lives, in particular the application of their study tour learning in their school, and the changes over time in their views of the study tour and their host country.

Part 1: Assimilating learning

The interviews revealed that in the months after returning to Australia, teachers confronted a recurring dilemma in attempting to apply their study tour learning. How could they make sense of the plethora of images, insights and information that they had accumulated during their sojourn overseas? For participants, assimilating their new knowledge involved sifting and sorting their experiences into a structure and framework that was comprehensible and accessible. Their encounters with the culture and society of the study tour country had traversed such broad territory. Thus, to varying degrees, all participants expressed the need for **a phase of cognitive and affective synthesis and assimilation** so that they could give their study tour experience a form that would be understood by others and utilised in their teaching. The process of **bringing order to the chaos of their learning** involved a crucial period of reflection, although the amount of time those different participants required for this process varied widely. In itself, **the need to engage in a period of critical reflection** was indicative of the deep learning that characterised the majority of accounts of the study tour experience.

Because of the necessity for critical reflection, when interviewed immediately after the study tour return, several participants struggled to explain the nature of their learning, its impact on them or how it might be translated into classroom practice. Teachers who were thrust immediately back into the hurley-burley of school soon after their return had particular difficulty in finding the 'mental space' to reflect on their experiences. In contrast, those who were able to take a short break before recommencing teaching reported that they were better able to assimilate the study tour experience, to absorb its impact and meaning, and to think strategically about its potential contribution to their future professional identity and practice.

The study tours were too short to allow participants to undergo the 'u-curve' response identified amongst longer-term sojourners (see Chapter 2). However, the majority of participants reported the need for a period of **readjustment on returning to Australia and on re-entering western society**. Some attributed their need to jet-lag

and tiredness. Others, like Betty, were more vocal about the difficulties involved in coming to terms with their travel experiences.

> *I'm more rational now than I was in the first two months when I came back. When I came back I hit a real downer and I was so negative about things that I had seen and done ... not why did I go but tiredness and frustration in everything. I just didn't want to know. It's not a country I want to go to, I don't like it ... I'm sort of coming out of that a bit now.*

The interview data suggested that if a study tour was traumatic or difficult, a more prolonged process of critical reflection, assimilation and sorting was required. This process could be be arduous and stressful. Betty, for instance, explained that it took nearly a term to accommodate the profound problems that she had encountered in India, and that it was not until this process was completed that she came to terms with the experience and felt relaxed enough to use her experiences in her teaching and to work on the required post-tour study unit.

Consequently, **implementing study tour learning is not a simplistic or linear process** that can easily be reduced to planning, writing and teaching units of work. Whilst the development and implementation of a unit of work was the required outcome of the study tour, an essential precursor its production was a period of intense, reflective engagement with the learning arising from the study tour, and the patterning and assimilation of this reflection into the personal and professional identities of participants in ways that were meaningful and accessible for them and for use in their schools. Invariably, participants differed widely in the time, capacity and commitment that they had available to achieve this end.

Thus, the study tours also involved a process of personal and professional identity construction but this process was overlaid by a range of contextual issues in teachers' lives that impacted on their capacity to effectively implement their study tour learning.

****

Part 2: Implementing Learning

A powerful finding that emerged from the interview data was that teachers heightened awareness of the cultural complexities of their host country made many of them unsure of how their study tour learning might be translated into classroom practice. Teachers were troubled about how to order their multi-dimensional insights in ways that were comprehensible to their students. **Reducing cultural complexities to an accessible, meaningful form without trivialising** is a primary challenge for studies of Asia teachers. Elizabeth, who taught lower primary students, tackled the **pedagogical task** by moving from simple concrete understandings to more complex, socio-cultural concepts and comparisons. The use of a cross-cultural framework helped Elizabeth to make sense of her study tour learning for both for herself and her students. Her strategy was typical of that used by several of her fellow travellers.

> *At first I thought "What on earth am I going to do with them because they are so young, and … because they are very immature in Year two ... we did the rice gluing. You know, seventy grains of rice on Vietnam as opposed to eighteen on Australia. And I talked through my photos that I'd enlarged and we looked at different types of transport [and discussed why various forms of transport were used]. We … focused on why they had that type of transport as opposed to [other options] and why it was suited to their country. Rather than just a straight comparison [we examined that there was] actually a valid reason [for cross-cultural differences].*

Reflecting on her post-tour teaching, Sarah thought she probably would not have contemplated addressing studies of Asia with 5-6 year olds without participating in a study tour. Yet, as a result of that experience, she developed a substantial program about China that included a school assembly where her students performed, in Chinese, the version of "Twinkle, twinkle, little star" that Sarah had learned during her travels. For Sarah, the study tour was the **stimulus to address a new curriculum area**.

Perhaps the most frequently reported application of teachers' study tour learning was in their ability to use **'authentic knowledge' based on 'real-life' experience** to illuminate and enliven their teaching practice. As Marie explained

> *It was the just the little things you've seen ... that personalises [teaching] because you could talk to the kids [and say] "When I was in such-and-such" and "This is what I saw". They're just little things ... like an elephant bathing in a river [but] you've just got that personal knowledge of it or ... travelling on the train - you know what it's like and that*

> *really makes it great for the kids and they, kind of, tune in more.*

It did not follow that participation in a study tour automatically produced a quantitative increase in studies of Asia content in schools. Various **contextual constraints inhibited substantial curricula change** including state/school curriculum priorities, programming arrangements, teacher attitude, and so on (see also Halse, 1996a, 1996b). The following examples illustrate the point. Marie, for instance, encountered resistance from her students about the re-occurrence of studies of Asia and found it "hard to put Asia up there all the time". Another participant saw the requirement to teach a unit about the study tour country as "an obligation", and argued that there were limited opportunities to incorporate Asia-related study in her teaching, and that the multi-cultural profile of her class made single country studies inappropriate.

Nevertheless, the overwhelming majority of teachers reported that they found the application of their new knowledge a rewarding experience that both enhanced their own learning and improved their teaching. Donald explained that he "really enjoyed" teaching his unit and that the task "increased the knowledge that I had, you know, and really benefited my teaching". The process of applying new knowledge and insights to teaching provided a mechanism for consolidating and developing further learning. Even one participant who was unenthusiastic about the obligation to teach a unit of work, found that **teaching enhanced knowledge and professional expertise**, as illustrated by the following interview extract.

> *When I taught the unit, I learnt a heap from what I already knew because I had to look up some stuff that I didn't know about and pass that on to the kids, and we discovered things together.*

Such consolidation was reinforced by the use of resources and materials that teachers collected during the study tour. Most participants accumulated **a wealth of unique resources**. Elizabeth, for instance, enlarged the photographs she had taken for use as stimulus with her students. Donald used the videos that he had shot for class activities and discussion. From the teachers' perspective, the use of these resources provided a structured opportunity to re-evaluate various encounters and experiences and, perhaps, to interpret them differently in the light of feedback and perspectives of their students.

The new understandings and access to alternative resources made many teachers more **critical of commercially available materials**. Marie, for instance, had intended using commercially produced material on Vietnam with her class but changed her mind. Informed by new insights into the actuality and complexity of Vietnamese life, she decided that commercial material was

> *too narrow … it lacks the visual impact … it's just too hard for [the children] to actually imagine … what it's actually like*

> *… the illustrations are very cute and somehow Westernised and cleaned up.*

In lieu, she opted to use a range of material collected during her travels which included pictures and information scanned into the computer. As a result, the knowledge that she addressed with her class traversed a broader range of areas/topics and was based on a more complex collection of stimulus materials that were drawn directly from Marie's personal cultural encounters.

Significantly, the **process of cross-cultural learning** that teachers reported using during their tour (see Chapter 6) was directly implemented in many classrooms. Thus, the method of cross-cultural comparison that teachers' employed during their study tour became the basis for **new content and new pedagogical approaches**. The interview extract with Elizabeth (above) illustrates one such application of cross-cultural learning in the classroom. Hilary offered another example, utilised with older children, that was built around the problem of how urban environments provide an infrastructure to cope with population. The focus, however, was

> *on the similarity rather that the differences … we looked at … why cities are built, where they are built … the historical reasons behind the development of cities … the location of particular cities … in Australia and in India. The kids did a lot of research … services [of] those cities … their features, the fact that they provided places for entertainment and they provided places to purchase food and all those sort of type things … We just looked how all urban environments, in their own way, do that.*

For several participants, the study tour was the beginning of **on-going interaction** with the study tour country. Leanne, for instance, established communication with a school in China and an exchange of letters commenced - albeit with some difficulty because of the need to translate correspondence. Although the process was "harder than imagined" the potential rewards from such interaction have made Leanne determined to "just keep pushing ahead and develop links and have visitors and that sort of thing".

Several teachers reported that the impact of their study tour learning was not limited to the written curriculum. Their new knowledge and understandings made them more sensitive and responsive to the socio-cultural needs of an increasingly multi-cultural student body, and to the **subtle innuendos of the hidden curriculum found in the playground and staffroom**. Leanne's account echoes that of her fellow travellers.

> *I deal a lot with Asian students and I've become a lot more aware of racism and things like that … It gave me an awareness ... and I realise how subtle it is ... So I've got a much sharper understanding of the cultural things and the racism and certainly of Asian students. I share a lot more with them.*

After the study tour, an increasing area of concern for many participants was to **counteract cultural stereotyping**. Elizabeth explained that this was her personal curricula priority.

> *Everything presented to the kids is a negative ... when it comes to Asia. It's always gangs. And who do you see when there is a knife attack? It's an Asian! All this sort of stuff. Drugs. Violence. The media need to take a changed outlook ... I think it's all the more reason where in schools like ours where there is very limited multicultural interaction ... [the study tour] hasn't changed my emphasis but it has just been brought more to the fore ... It keeps that momentum going ... I'm really gung-ho ... if I can get one kid to think differently, then I'll have done my job.*

Encountering different approaches to teaching and learning in their host country prompted some teachers to **re-evaluate their educational priorities**. Leanne, for instance, questioned the prevalence of what she described as the "cult of the individual" in Australian education. She determined to be more directive in deciding what was important for children to learn and to be firmer in her exceptions of student behaviour and performance. She encapsulated the shift in her educational approach in the following way: "I think they're so lucky to be getting this education, you've got to behave in the right way to get it and so everyone else can get it".

As the foregoing suggests, the study found that **a qualitative change in teaching and learning** resulted from the study tours and that this was applied to students across all ages/grades. In terms of content, teachers utilised their new knowledge to address a wider range of more complex social, political and economic issues with their students. Similarly, drawing on their new acquired insights into the complexity of the issues currently confronting Asian cultures and societies, teachers made greater use of problem-based learning as a pedagogical approach. The qualitative shift in teachers' approaches is epitomised by Elizabeth (above) and her account of moving away from simplistic, concrete activities to more complex, problem-solving based on an analysis of cross-cultural similarities and differences.

****

Part 3: Changing schools and communities

A underlying goal of the TICFA program is that teachers' individual experiences would provide the basis for the **professional development of their colleagues** and the further infiltration of studies of Asia in their school. The majority of teachers in the study provided some school-based professional development for their colleagues on their return and this varied in scope from a short report to more extensive sessions. However, the extent to which the TICFA tour acted as a stimulus for wider curricula and teacher changed differed according to the school context. The stories of Marie and Yvonne illustrate the two extremes of the spectrum. In Marie's case, several colleagues picked up on the work that she was doing with her class and introduced a parallel focus with their own students. It was different for Yvonne who felt that whilst her colleagues did not "object" to studies of Asia, they were "very disinterested in the whole Asia scene ... [and there was] no commitment at all on the part of the school".

Yvonne attributed her colleagues disinterest to the fact that other areas had been identified as school curricula priorities and this limited the 'space' available for a studies of Asia focus. Nevertheless, the more amorphous, ambivalence of her colleagues and Principal was disheartening for Yvonne and weakened her enthusiasm for stimulating change.

Yvonne emphasised that her experience was "indicative of [her] particular school rather than other schools - where other people have gone on study tours and have had different results". Nevertheless, her account highlights the parallels between study tours and other forms of professional development where collegial support, particularly from senior school staff, is a pre-requisite for wider, whole school change. Thus, as with any professional development exercise, the findings of the current study confirm that it is invalid to assume that the professional development of individual teachers *automatically* flows to other practitioners in a school.

Sarah did not encounter the difficulties experienced by Yvonne. Being a Principal automatically placed Sarah into a leadership role that empowered her to enact change in a range of contexts.

> *It is quite an advantage [being a Principal] because Principals can influence curriculum and … other Principals. I do have time out of class so I can go to these other schools … so I would say that probably there are advantages.*

As a result of her status, Sarah was able to exert considerable influence over the shape of studies of Asia in her school.

> *I was really keen to impress upon the teachers that really old Chinese stuff had to go from our library and that they were to just use the newer stuff … to avoid the stereotyping*

> *- the hats in the field type of thing. Also that China was a mixture of the old and the new, and the urban and the rural as well. So that was a point that I was continually making that children in Beijing in a way are not so very different from children in [our capital cities] but children in Yunnan were very different.*

A particular consequence of the study tour that participants frequently reported was an improvement in their capacity to manage cultural issues in their school and beyond. Teachers' heightened awareness of issues of cultural identity impacted on their dealings with Asian groups outside of the classroom. Elizabeth recounted the transformation in her own views and understanding as a means of explaining her increased interaction with the local Vietnamese community since the study tour.

> *It has made me appreciate deeper the [Vietnamese] kids around our area ... I've got a real deeper respect for them and what they have come through. And what they have achieved, and their work ethic and the kids' study ethic. ... that is why they achieve so well over here - because they bring those values with them ... They would outstrip our kids. So I really have a much deeper admiration for the people.*

****

Part 4: Personal and professional benefits

In addition to enhancing their personal understanding and professional practice, several teachers reported that a particular longer-term benefit of the study tour was its contribution to **improving their curriculum vitae**. In the months after the study tour, Donald directly experienced the advantages of improving his professional profile. He won an appointment to a new position and attributed his success, in part, to having undertaken a study tour.

> *Professionally ... it opened up a wider area for me ... It was a definite advantage to my professional career ... It certainly helped me get the job [because] they like to think I've got some knowledge of the Studies of Asia. I'm certainly not an expert [but] I've built up some resources and some contacts to help fellow staff...*

For other participants, the shared experience of a study tour **extended their professional horizons** beyond the limitations of their school. In the light of their recent experiences, several participants saw their local Access Asia network in a new light. Whilst always valued as a form of support, study tour participants reported an increasing use of and reliance on their Access Asia network. Marie, for example, found that the TICFA tour built new connections with members of her network and increased the value that she saw in her network as a source of knowledge, expertise and resources. Similarly, Hilary, discussing her Access Asia network, reported that there were "twenty-two people that I feel that I could call on which I think is just such a huge benefit". For teachers like Yvonne, who returned to a less supportive school environment, the Access Asia network became a vital means of sustaining her interest in and commitment to studies of Asia.

The boundaries of the personal and professional identity can be hazy (see also Halse, 1996b). Teachers like Hilary reported that the study tour stimulated a significant shift in both her professional and personal sense of self. She described it as

> *a whole change in attitude. Before I went, I would have to say I never had any really great desire to go ... but now I find that I could see myself going back and I'm definitely a lot more interested in reading anything I can get my hands on about the country ... there's an added incentive to find out and learn.*

In some instances, the study tour stimulated particular and **unexpected changes in participants' personal lives**. Before her departure, Leanne had been particularly worried about having to eat unfamiliar food and about getting sick. Yet she subsequently became a devotee of Chinese cuisine and her new passion for Chinese food initiated a significant change in her lifestyle and domestic arrangements.

> *I loved the food - that was an amazing thing ... I've never liked Chinese food but I'm cooking it all the time now ... So we have garlic and ginger and use the wok and have stir fry vegetables and I bought a rice cooker so that has been really nice. I realised how we didn't eat enough vegetables before. That was quite interesting - I really like rice now and vegetables. So that was big change.*

Donald's newly awakened enthusiasm for his host country pervaded all aspects of his personal life.

> *I just have such a fascination for China and for all things Chinese. My bedroom is just surrounded in things Chinese - flags and photographs and posters and pictures of the Great Wall. Personally, I was just amazed. I rave about it whenever I talk about it ... it was really one of the most incredible things I have ever done and I am so fortunate to have visited a country like that.*

For Alison, the study tour was a particularly formative, personal experience that facilitated a new degree of personal confidence that also filtered through to her professional practice.

> *Being there forced me to fend for myself a bit more ... really wasn't so hard. And in my workplace ... I am a lot more independent in a positive way ... it put things into perspective for me in terms of ... what should I be achieving in my life.*

****

Part 5: Future learning

As a consequence of the exhilaration stimulated by the study tour and participants' heightened awareness of the gaps in their knowledge base, several teachers were **enthusiastic to learn more** about their host country and to end their knowledge of Asia in general by participating in other tours. Donald was typical of this category of teacher.

> *I definitely want to go on another one of the study tours. I don't know when. Maybe in two years time. Actually, I'd like to go back to China but ... I'm thinking either Laos or Thailand or India. I'm aware of the importance of Asia in the curriculum and I want to explore my options further. I've had my knowledge of China and my skills in teaching [about] it … really increased and I want … to increase these skills [through an] awareness of other countries as well.*

Sarah's response was similar and, at the time of her interview, she had already organised a trip to Vietnam for the following year.

Final overview

In broad terms, the study found that more than a third of the study tour participants become so passionate and enthusiastic about their host country that they incorporated aspects of their learning into all areas of their teaching, become more active in supporting studies of Asia in their schools and local network, and intended to participate in future study tours. A smaller number had or were planning to implement additional work with their students, whilst a few teachers had completed the required unit of work but were undecided about how much time and attention they would devote to the area in the future.

The process of implementing study tour learning was neither simple nor straightforward. A phenomenographical analysis of participants' post-tour experiences reveals that, to varying degrees, teachers' engaged in a hierarchical process of individual, post-tour professional development.

The **first stage** of teachers' development entailed a phase of assimilating their new learning to put their experiences in a coherent form that could be intelligibly communicated to their students and others. The duration of the reflective period differed according to the nature of participants' experiences and their opportunity to take 'time out' to assess and absorb the impact of their travels.

The **second stage** comprised a period of pedagogical and knowledge exploration during which teachers investigated alternative approaches for implementing their new knowledge and understanding. These endeavours varied widely in character and in terms of the context in which they were applied, and included the use of new content, the use of 'authentic knowledge' and resources based on participants' 'real-life' experiences, more critical selection of teaching/learning materials, professional development activities for colleagues and the introduction of strategies to counteract cultural stereotyping with staff and students.

The **third stage** involved acknowledging and articulating the personal and professional impact of the study. In part, this was a progressive process that was grounded in and filtered through the preceding stages. However, the articulation of the personal and professional impact of the study tour was a necessary precondition for envisaging the final and fourth stage of learning implementation ie, further applications and learning in the future.

It should not be assumed that all teachers participated to the same extent in the professional development hierarchy detailed above, or that progression through the hierarchy was smooth. Participants' post-tour experiences varied widely depending on the nature of their study tour experience and the unique, personal and professional contexts to which they returned.

Nevertheless, the research findings underline the reality that the study tours were a starting point rather than an end point for participants' professional development. Thus, to see the study tour as an experience that terminates with the implementation

of the teaching unit underestimates the diversity and depth of potential learning that overseas travel can facilitate, as well as making inadequate use of the extensive financial, physical and emotional investment associated with study tour learning.

The findings also highlight that the learning that arises from overseas study tours is multi-dimensional and impacts to varying extents and in different ways on participants' personal and professional identities. Thus, the different profile and needs of participants, in combination with the experiential nature of study tours, encourages diverse rather than uniform outcomes. For the majority of participants in the current study, however, the opportunity to engage directly with Asia had a significant impact on their knowledge and understanding of the culture and society of the host country, inspired more critical and analytical approaches to their professional practice, and stimulated further personal and professional development.

References

AEF (1998). *Teacher In-Country Fellowships to Asia (TICFA) 1998–9: Information for Applicants*. Melbourne: Asia Education Foundation.

Albon, Rozz (1997). First impressions. A Narrative of the 1993 Indonesian practicum. In Bob Hill, Noel Thomas, and Joost Coté, (Eds) *Into Asia: Australian teaching practicums in Asia.* Carlton, Vic: AEF.

Altheide, David and Hohnson, John (1994). Criteria for assessing interpretive validity in qualitative research. In Norman Denzin and Yvonna Lincoln (Eds). *Handbook of qualitative research*. Thousand Oaks, Calif: Sage Publications.

Anderson, L. (1994). A new look at an old construct. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations, 18,* 3, 293-328.

Andressen, Curtis (1997). Mental maps of Asia: The Geographical knowledge of Australian university students. *Asian Studies Review, 21*, 1. 115-129.

Argyle, Michael, (1983). Inter-cultural communication. In Stephen Bochner (Ed). *Cultures in conflict*. Oxford: Pergamon Press.

Armes, K. and Ward, C. (1989). Cross-cultural transitions and sojourner adjustment in Singapore. *Journal of Social Psychology, 129*. 273-275.

Asaoka, Takako (1987). *Communication problems between Japanese and Australians at a dinner party*. Clayton, Vic: Japanese Studies Centre.

Atkinson, Paul (1992). *Understanding ethnographic texts*. Newbury Park: Sage Publications.

Baumgart, Neil and Elliott, Alison (1996). *Promoting the study of Asia across the curriculum : an Evaluation of the first three years of the Asia Education Foundation.* Sydney: University of Western Sydney.

Baumgart, Neil, Halse, Christine and Buchanan, John (1998). *Studies of Asia: Future perspectives.* Kingswood, NSW: University of Western Sydney, Nepean.

Bishop, Bernie and McNamara, Deborah (Eds) (1998). *The Asia-Australia survey 1997-98*. South Melbourne: MacMillan Education Australia Pty Ltd.

Bochner, Stephen (1983). The Social psychology of cross-cultural relations. In Stephen Bochner (Ed). *Cultures in conflict*. Oxford: Pergamon Press.

Booth, Edward (1997). Visitors and Hosts in Fiji: A Professional and Cross-Cultural Learning Experience. In Bob Hill, Noel Thomas, and Joost Coté, (Eds) *Into Asia: Australian teaching practicums in Asia.* Carlton, Vic: AEF.

Bourdieu, P. (1977). Cultural reproduction and social reproduction. In J. Karabel & A. Halsey (Eds), *Power and ideology in education*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Brash, Elton (1989). Adjustment to living and studying in Australia. In Bruce Williams (Ed) *Overseas students in Australia: Policy and practice*. Canberra: International Development Program of Australian Universities and Colleges Limited.

Brewer, Marilynn (1996). When contact is not enough: Social identity and intergroup cooperation. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations, 20*, 3/4. 291-303.

Broinowski, A. (1992). *The Yellow Lady: Australian Impressions of Asia,* Melbourne: Oxford University Press.

Broome, Benjamin (1991). Building shared meaning: Implications of a relational approach to empathy for teaching intercultural communication. *Communication Education, 40*, 3, 235-249.

Burns, Robert (1994). *Introduction to research methods*. Melbourne: Longman.

Caine, R. and Caine, G (1995). Reinventing Schools through Brain-Based Learning. *Educational Leadership, 52*, 7. April, 1995.

Chen, Xiaomai (1995). *Occidentalism*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Chiu, M. (1995). The Influence of anticipatory fear on foreign student adjustment: An Exploratory study. *The International Journal of Intercultural Relations, 19,* 1, 1-44.

Clandinin, Jean and Connelly, Michael (1994). Personal experience methods. In Norman Denzin and Yvonna Lincoln (Eds). *Handbook of qualitative research*. Thousand Oaks, Calif: Sage Publications.

Corson, D. (1997). Reclaiming reality: laying the ideology of cultural compatibility. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, *21*, 105-111.

Coté, Joost (1997). Practicum vulnerability: A Retrospective assessment of the "Indonesian Practicum", 1988-1993. In Bob Hill, Noel Thomas, and Joost Coté, (Eds) *Into Asia: Australian teaching practicums in Asia.* Carlton, Vic: AEF.

Dockett, Sue. and Perry, Bob (1997). An Anti-bias approach: Early childhood practicum experiences in Singapore. In Bob Hill, Noel Thomas, and Joost Coté, (Eds) *Into Asia: Australian teaching practicums in Asia.* Carlton, Vic: AEF.

Dodd, Carley (1998) *Dynamics of intercultural communication (5th Ed).* Boston: McGraw-Hill.

Dooley, K and Singh, P (1996) Personal perspectives. Experience and knowledge in Asian studies. *Curriculum Perspectives, 16*, 3, 63-67.

Fearnley-Sander, Mary (1995). The Vietnam practicum. *Pacific-Asian Education, 7*, 1 & 2, 31-33, 37-40.

Fearnley-Sander, Mary (1997). The Vietnam Practicum. In Bob Hill, Noel Thomas, and Joost Coté, (Eds) *Into Asia: Australian teaching practicums in Asia.* Carlton, Vic: AEF.

FitzGerald, Stephen (1997). *Is Australia an Asian country?* St Leonards, NSW: Allen & Unwin.

Frost, S. (1992) Economic rationalism, cultural relativism and the policy discourse of 'Asia literacy'. Paper to the Asia Research Centre, Murdoch University, Perth, 15 October.

Fry, Geraldine, Baumgart, Neil, Elliott, Alison and Martin, Andrew (1995). *Evaluation report on Asian Studies in Schools Incentive Fellowships Scheme (ASSIFS).* Kingswood, University of Western Sydney, Nepean.

Fullan, M. and Hargreaves, A. (1991). *What's worth fighting for in your school? Working together for improvement*. Buckingham: Open University Press.

Furnham, Adrian and Bochner, Stephen (1983). Social difficulty in a foreign culture: an empirical analysis of culture shock. In Stephen Bochner (Ed) *Cultures in conflict*. Oxford: Pergamon Press.

Gaertner, Samuel, Dovidio, John and Bachman, Betty (1996). Revisiting the contact hypothesis: The Induction of a common ingroup identity. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations, 20*, 3/4. 271-290.

Gallois, Cynthia and Callen, Victor (1997). *Communication and culture*. Chichester, UK: John Wiley & Sons Ltd.

Garnaut, R. (1989). *Australia and the Northeast Asian Ascendancy*. AGIPS: Canberra.

Gaw, Kevin (1995). *Reverse Culture Shock in Students Returning from Overseas.* Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Psychological Association (103rd, New York, NY, August 11-15, 1995).

Gokcora, Deniz (1989). A Descriptive Study of Communication and Teaching Strategies Used by Two Types of International Teaching Assistants at the University of Minnesota, and Their Cultural Perceptions of Teaching and Teachers. Paper presented at the National Conference on the Training and Employment of Teaching Assistants (2nd, Seattle, WA, November 15-18, 1989).

Goodson, Ivor (1994). *Studying Curriculum*. Buckingham: Open University Press.

Grisbacher, John (1991). Effects of Social Interaction with Host and Conationals on the Psychological Adjustment of Sojourning Students: A Review of the Literature. Psy.D. research paper, Biola University.

Gudykunst, William (1998). Applying Anxiety/Uncertainty Management (AUM) Theory to intercultural adjustment training. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations, 22*, 2, 227-250.

Hall, S. (1997). The Spectacle of the 'other'. In S. Hall (Ed) *Representation: Cultural representations and signifying practices*. London: Sage Publications.

Halse, C. & Baumgart, N. (1996). International Education and Culture: Getting the Balance Right. *Unicorn*, *22*, 39-48.

Halse, Christine (1996a). *Changing teachers and teacher practice: Including studies of Asian in primary curriculum*. Sydney: UWS, Nepean.

Halse, Christine (1996b). *Cultures of change: Teachers' stories of implementing studies of Asia*. Sydney: UWS, Nepean.

Hargreaves, A. (1997). The Four ages of professionalism and professional learning. *Unicorn, 23*, 2, 86-114.

Hargreaves, Andy (1994). *Changing teachers, changing times: Teachers' work and culture in the postmodern age*. Cassell: London.

Hawkins, K. & Bransgrove, T. (1998). International students in Australian universities. *Unicorn, 24*, 1, 65-70.

Hill, Bob and Thomas, Noel (1997). Overseas Practicums and Australian universities. In Bob Hill, Noel Thomas and Joost Coté (Eds) *Into Asia: Australian teaching practicums in Asia.* Carlton, Vic: AEF.

Hill, Bob, Thomas, Noel and Coté, Joost (1997). After the pract: Survey of former participants in overseas practicums. In Bob Hill, Noel Thomas and Joost Coté (Eds) *Into Asia: Australian teaching practicums in Asia.* Carlton, Vic: AEF.

Hofstede, Geert (1991). *Culture and organisations*. Berkshire, UK: McGraw-Hill.

Holstein, James and Gubrium, Jaber (1994). Phenomonology, ethnomethodology, and interpretive practice. In Norman Denzin and Yvonna Lincoln (Eds). *Handbook of qualitative research*. Thousand Oaks, Calif: Sage Publications.

Hsiao-Ying, T. (1995). Sojourner adjustment: The case of foreigners in Japan, *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology, 26,* 5, 523-536.

Jenkins, Susan (1997). Cultural and Pragmatic Miscues: A Case Study of International Teaching Assistant and Academic Faculty Miscommunication. ED 411684.

Jolley, Ainsley (1997). *Exporting education to Asia*. Melbourne: University Press.

Kealley, Daniel and Protheroe, David (1996). The Effectiveness of cross-cultural training for expatriates: An Assessment of the literature on the issue. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations, 20*, 2, 141-165.

Kenyon, Chris and Amrapala, Araya (1993). (3rd Ed) *More than G'day: A Guide for people working with international students*. Canberra: Good and Better Publishing.

Kipp, S., Clyne, M. & Pauwels, A. (1995). *Immigration and Australia's language resources*. Canberra : Australian Government Publishing Service.

Kleinberg, Otto (1983). Contact between ethnic groups: A Historical perspective of some aspects of theory and research. In Stephen Bochner (Ed). *Cultures in conflict*. Oxford: Pergamon Press.

Latham, Mark. (1998). *Civilising global capital: new thinking for Australian Labor*. St Leonards, N.S.W. : Allen & Unwin.

Lerstrom, Alan (1995). *International Study Transitions: Creating and Leading a Reentry Workshop*. Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the Speech Communication Association (81st, San Antonio, TX, November 18-21, 1995).

Li Chiu, Martha (1995). The Influence of anticipatory fear on foreign student adjustment: An Exploratory study. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations, 19*, 1. 1-44.

Liberman, Kenneth (1994). Asian student perspectives on American university instruction. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations, 18*, 2, 173-192.

Lidchi, H. (1997). The Poetics and politics of exhibiting other cultures. In Stuart Hall (Ed) *Representation: Cultural representations and signifying practices*. London: Sage Publications.

Lo Bianco, J. (1996). Asia-literacy, Australian studies and a plural nation: Articulating perspectives on social education of young Australians. *Curriculum Perspectives, 16*, 3, 55-59.

Lovat, Terence, and Smith, David (1995). *Curriculum: Action on reflection revisited* (3rd ed.). Wentworth Falls, NSW: Social Science Press.

Lustig, Myron and Koester, Jolene (1999). *Intercultural competence: Interpersonal communication across cultures (3rd Ed).* New York: Longman.

Lysagaard, S. (1955). Adjustment in a foreign society: Norwegian Fullbright grantees visiting the Untied States. *International Social Science Bulletin, 7*. 45-51.

Madden, Carolyn and Myers, Cynthia (Eds) (1994). *Discourse and Performance of International Teaching Assistants*. Alexandria, VA: Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages, Inc.

Manning, Peter and Cullum-Swan, Betsy (1994). Narrative, content and semiotic analysis. In Norman Denzin and Yvonna Lincoln (Eds). *Handbook of qualitative research*. Thousand Oaks, Calif: Sage Publications.

Martin, Judith, Bradford, L. and Rohrlich, Beulah (1995). Comparing predeparture expectations and post-sojourn reports: a Longitudinal study of U.S. students abroad. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations, 19*, 1, 87-110.

Martin, Judith, Bradford, L. and Rohrlich, Beulah (1995). Comparing predeparture expectations and post-sojourn reports: a Longitudinal study of U.S. students abroad. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations, 19*, 1, 87-110.

Marton, F. (1988) Phenomenography: a research approach to investigating different understandings of reality. In Sherman, R. & Webb, R. (Eds). *Qualitative Research in Education: Focus and Methods.* London: Falmer Press.

McFarlane, John (1997). Project Pranakorn Thailand. In Bob Hill, Noel Thomas, and Joost Coté, (Eds) *Into Asia: Australian teaching practicums in Asia.* Carlton, Vic: AEF.

McKinlay, N. and others (1996). An Exploratory Investigation of the Effects of a Cultural Orientation Programme on the Psychological Well-Being of International University Students. *Higher Education, 31*, 3, 379-95 Apr 1996.

Muller, W. (1996). Asian studies in Australian school curriculum: An ongoing challenge, *Unicorn, 22*, 4, 49-59.

Nash, Dennison (1991). The Course of sojourner adaptation: A New test of the u-curve hypothesis. *Human Organisation, 50*, 3, 283-286.

Nozaki, Y. & Inokuchi, H. (1996). On Critical Asian literacy. *Curriculum Perspectives, 16,* 3, 72-76.

Oberg, (K. (1960). Cultural shock: Adjustment to new cultural environments. *Practical Anthropology, 7*, 177-182.

Ogbu, John (1992). Adaptation to minority status and impact on school success. *Theory into Practice, 31*, 4, 287-295.

Okazaki, Luff (1990). *The adjustment of Japanese sojourners in Australia: a comparative study of high school exchange students*. Clayton Vic: Monash University.

Orton, J. (1995). Becoming "Asia-literate": From rhetoric to reality. *Asian Studies Review, 19*, 2, 73-84.

Osler, Audrey (1994). Education for development: Redefining citizenship in a pluralist society. In Audrey Osler (Ed). *Development education*. London: Cassell.

Pearce, Philip (1983). Tourists and their hosts: Some social and psychological effects of inter-cultural contact. In Stephen Bochner (Ed) *Cultures in conflict*. Oxford: Pergamon Press.

Peca, K. (1994). Focusing in the Individual Change Process in School Restructuring. Keynote address at the Texas Education Agency Institute in Reading All Students: Building School District Capacity (Austin, TX, June 28, 1994).
Pruegger, Valerie and Rogers, Tim (1994). Cross-cultural sensitivity training: Methods and assessment. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations, 18*, 3, 369-387.

Rich, B., Lubinski, C. and Otto, A. (1994). *Pedagogical content knowledge curricular knowledge and teacher change*. Proceedings of the annual meeting of the North American chapter of the international group for the psychology of mathematics education. Baton Rouge, November 5-8, 1994.

Rizvi, F. (1996). Racism, reorientation and cultural politics. In Vasta, E. & Castles, S. (Eds), *The teeth are smiling*: *The persistence of racism in multicultural Australia.* Sydney: Allen & Unwin, 173-188.

Rizvi, F. (1997). Beyond the east-west divide: Education and the dynamics of Australia-Asia relations. *Australian Educational Researcher, 24*, 1, 13-26.

Rizvi, Fazal (1996). Racism, Reorientation and cultural politics. In Vasta, E. & Castles, S. (Eds) *The teeth are smiling: The persistence of racism in multicultural Australia*. Sydney: Allen & Unwin, 173-188.

Rosenholtz, Susan (1991). *Teachers' workplace : the social organization of schools*. New York : Teachers College Press.

Schnell, Jim (1996). *Understanding the Shock in "Culture Shock."* ED 398616.

Schön, D. (1983). *The Reflective Practitioner: How Professionals Think in Action.* New York: Basic Books.

Schwandt, Thomas (1994). Constructivist, interpretivist approaches to human inquiry. In Norman Denzin and Yvonna Lincoln (Eds). *Handbook of qualitative research*. Thousand Oaks, Calif: Sage Publications.

Searle, Wendy and Ward, Colleen (1990). The prediction of psychological and sociocultural adjustment during cross-cultural transitions. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations, 14,* 4, 449-464.

Singh, M.G. (1995). *Translating Studies of Asia: A Curriculum Statement for Negotiation in Australian Schools*. Canberra: Australian Curriculum Studies Association.

Singh, M.G. (1996). Australia-Asia relations and education. *Curriculum Perspectives, 16,* 3, 53-55.

Smith, Delores (1994). Understanding Individuals and Families: A Cross-Cultural Perspective. *Journal of Home Economics, 86*, 1. 3-8.

Smith, Rosslyn and others (1992). *Crossing Pedagogical Oceans: International Teaching Assistants in U.S. Undergraduate Education. ASHE-ERIC Higher Education Report No. 8, 1992*. Association for the Study of Higher Education.; ERIC Clearinghouse on Higher Education, Washington, D.C.; George Washington Univ., Washington, DC. School of Education and Human Development.

Smith, Rosslyn, (Ed) and others (1989). *University of Wyoming/NAFSA Institute on Foreign TA Training. Working Papers, Volume III*. Wyoming Univ., Laramie: National Association for Foreign Student Affairs, Washington, D.C.

Sorimachi, Ayumi (1994). Subjective feelings of cultural adjustment among Japanese high school students returning from foreign countries--Determining factors and changes over time. *Japanese Journal of Counselling Science, 27,* 1, 1-10.

Starkey, Hugh (1994). Development education and human rights education. In Audrey Osler (Ed). *Development education*. London: Cassell.

Steffey, Betty (1995). The History and context of the curriculum audit. In Larry Frase, Fenwick English and William Poston (Eds.) *The Curriculum management audit.* Lancaster, Pennsylvania: Technomic Publishing Company.

Taylor, Edward (1994). A Learning model for becoming interculturally competent. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations, 18*, 3, 389-408.

Vasta, E. & Castles, S. (Eds) (1996). *The teeth are smiling: The persistence of racism in multicultural Australia*. Sydney: Allen & Unwin.

Ward, Colleen and Kennedy, Antony (1992). Locus of control, mood disturbance, and social difficulty during cross-cultural transitions. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations, 16*, 2, 175-194.

Ward, Colleen and Kennedy, Antony (1994). Acculturation strategies, psychological adjustment, and sociocultural competence during cross-cultural transitions. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations, 18*, 3, 329-343.

Ward, Colleen and Searle, Wendy (1991). The Impact of value discrepancies and cultural identity on psychological and sociocultural adjustment of sojourners. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations, 15*, 209-225.

Ward, Colleen, and Chang, Weining (1997) "Cultural fit": A New perspective on personality and sojourner adjustment. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations, 21,* 4, 525-533.

Ward, Colleen, Okura, Yakuta, Kennedy, Antony and Kojima, Takahiro (1998). The U-Curve on trial: A Longitudinal study of psychological and sociocultural adjustment during cross-cultural transition. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations, 22*, 3, 277-291.

Weckert, Chris (1997). "A Mind-blowing experience": In-country evaluation of an overseas practicum. In Bob Hill, Noel Thomas, and Joost Coté, (Eds) *Into Asia: Australian teaching practicums in Asia.* Carlton, Vic: AEF.

Wedekind, V., Lubisi, C., Harley, K. and Gutlig, J. (1996). Political Change, Social Integration and Curriculum: a South African Case Study. *Journal of Curriculum Studies, 28*, 4, 419-436.

Williamson-Fien, J. (1992). Japanese history in Australian school textbooks. *Asian Studies Review, 16*, 1, 63-72.

Williamson-Fien, J. (1996). Studies of Asia: 'Trafficking in otherness' or articulating a 'Geography of the Possible'. *Curriculum Perspectives*, *16,* 3, 67-72.

Wilson, Angene (1983). A Case-study of two teachers with cross-cultural experience: They know more. *Educational Research Quarterly, 8*, 1, 78-85.

Yook, Eunkyong (1995). Culture Shock in the Basic Communication Course: A Case Study of Malaysian Students. Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the Central States Communication Association (Indianapolis, IN, April 19-23, 1995).

Zapf, Michael (1993). Remote practice and culture shock: Social workers moving to isolated northern regions. *Social Work, 38*, 6, 694-704.

Appendix 1

Encountering Cultures: study tours and teacher development
Pre-tour telephone interview questions

Through teachers' stories and reflections on their own experiences, the research study "Encountering Cultures" will explore the role of overseas study tour programs in stimulating personal and professional changes in teachers.

The pre-tour interviews will traverse the broad questions below. Personal differences in perspectives or experiences may influence the relevance of particular questions or prompt discussion of additional issues that you consider significant. Please feel free to raise additional issues, or to decline to answer questions that are not relevant to your experience or that you feel uncomfortable discussing.

Introduction

- Tell me about yourself and your personal involvement with Asia and your professional experiences with studies of Asia curricula?

Undertaking the study tour program

- What awakened your interest in the study tour program?
- Were personal or professional factors more important in your decision?
- What support have others indicated/given for your involvement in the in-country study program?
- Using a scale of 1 (nothing) to 5 (a lot), where would you rate your knowledge of the study tour country before you started the program?
- What preparation have you done for the program?

Teaching studies of Asia and related curricula

- What is your experience of teaching about Asia?
- What issues/problems/ challenges have you encountered in your teaching about Asia?
- Given other curricula demands, why is a knowledge of the study tour country relevant/important to Australian students?

Expectations of the study tour

- Describe your current image/knowledge of the peoples, cultures of the study tour country.
- What do you expect to learn about the study tour country during the tour?
- What do you anticipate will be the personal and professional consequences of the study tour?
- Are there any other issues about participating in the study tour that you would like to share?

Appendix 2

Post tour telephone interview questions

The following broad questions are designed to stimulate discussion about your study tour. The questions are deliberately open-ended to enable you to raise issues that are relevant to your own perspectives, experiences and learning. Please do not hesitate to raise additional issues, or to decline to answer questions that are not relevant or that you feel uncomfortable discussing.

The study tour experience

- How was the study tour?
- What were the most memorable parts? Why?
- Using a scale of 1 (nothing) to 5 (a lot), where would you rate your knowledge of the study tour country after the study tour?
- How adequate was your preparation for the program?

Teaching studies of Asia and related curricula

- In what ways do you feel that the study tour will change your approach/emphasis when teaching studies of Asia curricula?
- After your visit, how important do you feel that knowledge of the study tour country is to Australia students? Why?

Changes in expectations of the study tour

- Has your image/knowledge of the peoples, cultures of the study tour country changed as a result of your visit? In what ways?
- Describe what you consider to be your most significant learnings during the study tour. What experience/s prompted these learnings?
- What do you anticipate will be the personal and professional consequences of the study tour?
- Are there any other issues about participating in the study tour that you would like to share?
- What recommendations would you make to future participants to improve the learning and experiences during study tours?

Appendix 3

Eight months later: telephone interview questions

The purpose of this interview is to gain feedback about the ways in which the study tour impacted on your personal and professional life. Specifically, this component of the study seeks to identify how you may have implemented what you learned during the study tour program into your teaching and the factors that facilitated or inhibited you in this task. This component of the research hopes to identify the contribution of the study tours to classroom practice, and areas of additional post-tour support for teachers. The open-ended discussion questions are designed to enable you to raise issues relevant to your own experiences.

Study tours and teachers' lives

- Do you think the study tour has made you a different person and teacher? In what ways?
- What aspects of your learning during the study tour have you implemented?

Teaching studies of Asia: content

- As a result of the study tour, in what ways (if any) have you altered the content (ie, knowledge and understandings, skills, attitudes, values) that you emphasise in teaching studies of Asia?
- What factors/experiences prompted these changes?
- What factors inhibited/facilitated the changes?
- What other changes would you *like* to make in the future?

Teaching studies of Asia: processes

- As a result of the study tour, in what ways (if any) have you altered the processes (ie., teaching methods and strategies, resources etc) that you emphasise in teaching studies of Asia?
- What factors/experiences prompted these changes?
- What factors inhibited/facilitated these changes?
- What other changes would you *like* to make in the future?

Appendix 4

Partners of the TICFA Program, 1997-1999

Corporate and Philanthropic

Singapore Airlines
Lonely Planet Publications
Korea Foundation, South Korea
Malla Treks, Nepal
Neerja International, India
Hotel Sofitel, Melbourne
KPMG

Government Agencies

Australia–India Council
Australia Korea Foundation
National Centre for South Asian Studies

China

Yunnan Province Education Authority
Mojiang No 1 Middle School, Yunnan

India

National Council for Educational, Research and Training
Australian International Education Foundation, New Delhi

Indonesia

IKIP Jakarta
Ministry of Education and Culture

Japan

Ministry of Education
Aichi Prefectural Government
Osaka City Government

South Korea

Cheju do Provincial Education Commission
Chungbuk National University
Korea University

Lao PDR

Lao Australia English Language Project
Ministry of Education

Taiwan

Taipei Economic and Cultural Office
China Youth Corps

Vietnam

Hanoi National Pedagogic University

New Zealand

Asia 2000 Foundation of New Zealand

Australian Education Departments

Department of Education and Community Services, ACT
Department of Education and Training, New South Wales
Department of Education, Northern Territory
Education Queensland
Department of Education, Training and Employment, South Australia
Department of Education, Community and Cultural Development, Tasmania
Department of Education, Victoria
Education Department of Western Australia

Australian Catholic/Independent Education Jurisdictions

Catholic Education Office, Archdiocese of Canberra and Goulburn
Catholic Education Office, Diocese of Parramatta
Catholic Education Office, Sydney
Catholic Education Office, South Australia
Catholic Education Office, Archdiocese of Hobart
Catholic Education Commission of Victoria
Catholic Education Office of Western Australia
Association of Independent Schools of the act Inc
Association of Independent Schools of NSW Limited
Association of Independent Schools of Queensland Inc
South Australian Independent Schools Board Inc
Association of Independent Schools of Tasmania Inc
Association of Independent Schools of Victoria Inc
Association of Independent Schools of Western Australia Inc