THE EFFECT OF CULTURAL ORIENTATIONS OF INDIVIDUALS ON INTERCULTURAL SENSITIVITY AND COMMUNICATION PREDISPOSITIONS IN THE U.S. COLLEGE CLASSROOM CONTEXT

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the relationships between individuals with different cultural orientations (bicultural, independent, interdependent, and marginal) proposed by Kim et al. (1996) and intercultural sensitivity and perceived communication predispositions (classroom communication apprehension and argumentativeness). Cultural orientations of individuals were treated as rank-ordering (Bicultural = 4, Independent = 3, Interdependent = 2, and Marginal = 1). In the hypothesized path model, it is expected that one’s bicultural level increases one’s level of intercultural sensitivity, which, in turn, leads to a higher degree of argumentativeness and a lower level of classroom communication apprehension. Similarly, it is hypothesized that one’s bicultural level decreases one’s level of intercultural sensitivity, which, in turn, leads to a lower degree of argumentativeness and a higher level of classroom communication apprehension. Data to test the model were drawn from both the undergraduate and graduate East Asian international students studying in Hawaii. The data were partially consistent with the theoretical prediction made. The implications of the results for theory and practice are discussed.
Dedication

In loving memory of my parents, Saburo & Michiko Minami
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The completion of my dissertation and subsequent PhD program has been a long journey. It is true that “Life is what happens” when you are completing your dissertation. Life does not stand still, nor wait until you are finished and have time to manage it. Much has happened and changed in the time I have been involved with this project. I experienced some of the most important events in life through this journey: marriage, birth, and death. Although only my name appears on the cover of this dissertation, a great number of people have contributed to its production.

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

Introduction

As we enter the 21st century, many regional, national, and cultural boundaries are being stripped away, creating a world that is more diverse than ever before. There is a growing sense of urgency that we need to increase our understanding of people from diverse cultural backgrounds. From workplace to classroom, we find ourselves in increased contact with people who are culturally different. Differences in cultural beliefs, values, and communication styles often hinder our understanding of meanings that underlie human behaviors.

Many findings in social science are culturally specific and this discovery led scholars to argue that culture should be integrated as a factor in social science theories (Smith & Bond, 1998). Communication scholars have long overlooked “culture” as a source of influence on human communication behavior. However, with national societies becoming more diverse and international contacts becoming more popular, researches in communication can no longer assume an acultural or a unicultural viewpoint (Kim & Hubbard, 2007). The field of intercultural communication increasingly plays a central role, not only in communication, but also in the field of social sciences and education as a practical response to contemporary social changes.

Culture has been defined in various ways (Hall, 1976; Hofstede, 1980, 1983, 1984). Hofstede’s (1980, 1983) pioneer investigation that mapped 53 countries on four dimensions (power distance, individualism-collectivism, masculinity-femininity, and uncertainty avoidance) has inspired a great deal of further research. The dimension of individualism-collectivism (I-C) approach has produced the most research and has become a catchall default explanation for cultural differences in human behavior (Kagitcibasi, 1994). Kagitcibasi and Berry (1989)
indicated that I-C had been the major dimension and measurement of cross-cultural studies in the 1980s. According to Trandis, the I-C has been considered “the single most important dimension of cultural difference in social behavior across the diverse cultures of the world” (Trandis, 1988, p. 60). Namely, individualism-collectivism contrast has been used to describe cultural differences in preferred forms of communicative acts. Individualism and collectivism have been proposed as typical “U.S.” and “East Asian” value orientations influencing communication styles (Gudykunst, 2005; Kim, 2002). In other words, the promise of I-C condenses it an attractive construct and measure for explaining cross-cultural variation.

More recently, however, the validity of I-C as “a high level psychological concept” has been questioned (Fijneman, Willemsen, & Poortinga, 1995). Some researchers claimed that cross-cultural studies have operationalized cultural variability primarily by using the dimension of individualism-collectivism (e.g., the U.S. as an individualistic culture, Japan as a collectivistic culture). Cross-cultural communication researchers have used individualism-collectivism or culture-level analyses in order to explain for observed differences in behavior. Kagitcibasi (1987) emphasized that this is problematic, because culture is too diffuse or fuzzy concept and hence, a poor independent variable. In short, such operationalization runs the risk of being too vague and general. What can be said of the individual within a particular culture? While one can expect culture-level and individual-level value dimensions to be related conceptually, it is still an empirical question whether the culture-level description can be translated at an individual-level. In the absence of refined intervening variables, what in culture triggers one’s behavior is often not clear. Explanations resorting to individualism and collectivism appear to be particularly prone to this weakness, because the construct is being used so readily, almost synonymously with cultural differences in general.
The analytical gap between culture and individual behavior can be bridged with the study of individual-level correlates of cultural dimensions. In short, a major criticism of individualism-collectivism is that it is not used properly and it is used as a substitute for a variety of social and cultural independent variables in explaining and predicting behavior (Kagitcibasi, 1996). Many scholars and researchers use the typical method of comparing findings in different cultures to examine the impact of culture on communication behavior. Although useful in assessing whether cross-cultural differences exist, such method does not reveal and explain why culture has an effect (Gudykunst, 2005; Kim, 2002). Therefore, research should focus on to evaluate the effect of culture on communication behavior and to examine the mediating role of self-concepts (e.g., self-construals).

Self-concepts are considered as the mental representations of individuals’ personal qualities for the goal of defining themselves and controlling their behavior (Niedenthal & Beike, 1997). Recent cross-cultural research on the self has proposed that self-concept plays a key role and has a mediating effect on cultural behavior patterns (Singelis, 1994; Singelis & Brown, 1995; Ting-Toomey, 1988; Triandis, 1989). Drawing on recent analyses of the self in many cultures, for instance, Markus and Kitayama (1991) proposed two types of self-construal and argued for the systematic influence of those differing self-concepts on cognition, emotion, and motivation. Markus and Kitayama identified that an individual should have two distinct self-construals: independent and interdependent. The term self-construal refers to how individuals perceive themselves in the context of relationships with others. These two images of self were originally conceptualized as reflecting the emphasis on connectedness and relations often found in “non-Western” cultures (interdependent) and the separateness and uniqueness of the individual (independent) stressed in “the West.” People with an independent self-construal
perceive themselves as independent, separate selves with an emphasis on uniqueness, autonomy, and assertiveness. By contrast, individuals with an interdependent self-construal are responsive to others. They tend to perceive themselves as more integrated into a given situational context, and they attempt to maintain group harmony by fitting in. Individuals in the United States and other individualist cultures are likely to establish a well-elaborated and accessible independent self-construal while members of collectivist cultures are likely to elaborate interdependent self-construal (Markus & Kitayama, 1991; Triandis, 1989; Gudykunst, Matsumoto, Ting-Toomey, Nishida, Kim, & Heyman, 1996). However, Markus and Kitayama (1991) argued that the two construals of self are presumed to be present in every culture, but cultures vary in ways in which these orientations are weighted and organized in social life and displayed in individual thought and action. In other words, individuals who emphasize interdependent self-construal exist in individualistic cultures while individuals who underlie independent self-construal exist in collectivistic cultures (Gudykunst, 2004). Situations prime us to activate our independent or interdependent self-construal (Gardner, Gabriel, & Lee, 1999; Kanagawa, Cross, & Markus, 2001). The critical issue is which self-construal predominates to influence individual’s behavior in specific situations. Therefore, the variability of independent and interdependent self-construal appears to form one’s experience. It also functions as an anchoring point in terms of the way of interpreting communication behaviors.

Kim, Sharkey, and Singelis (1994) examined the intracultural variability of self-construals and the perceived importance of conversational constraints by comparing how conversational constraints are seen across individuals with individualistic and collectivistic orientations within a culture among student populations. The theory of conversational constraint is developed by Kim (1993) to explain how and why certain conversational strategies differ.
across various cultures and the effects of these differences. Kim and Sharkey (1995) also investigated the relationship between individual’s orientation toward independent and interdependent self-construals and perceived importance of conversational constraints in organizational communication situations in order to interpret the cultural interaction patterns in multicultural organizational settings. Results from the study indicated that self-construals seem well suited in explaining the expression of communicative behavior for both between- and within-culture variation. Gudykunst, et al., (1996) argued that in order to understand individual behavior, both culture-level factors (e.g., individualism and collectivism) as well as individual-level factors (e.g., independent self-construal and interdependent self-construal) that mediate the influence of culture must be taken into consideration (Gudykunst, et al., 1996). In short, self-construals is seen as a strong mediating variable or intervening process between culture and communication behavior (Kim, Aune, Kim, & Watanabe, 1999; Gudykunst, 2004). Because self-concept connects between the norms, values of culture, and the everyday behavior of individuals, Kim (2002) argues that it may be a promising tool of explaining intercultural conversational style.

Although self-construal has become one of the most influential elements in cross-cultural studies (Operario & Fiske, 1999), some flawed assumptions have been made regarding the individuals’ personal social identities (Kim, 2002). Such assumption claims that if one is individualistic (independent), such individual cannot be collectivistic (interdependent). For instance, Hofstede (1980) suggested individualism and collectivism as polar opposites of a single value dimension that differentiates world or national cultures. Hofstede forced a single bipolar dimension of individualism and considered collectivism as a nonexistence of individualism. Similarly, there has been a tendency to treat self-construals as bipolar opposites among various
studies. Although the development of self-construal related to communication behavior has been developed in literature, self-construal is extensively considered as a dichotomy. However, given the increased diversity of the US population and pluralism occurred due to ambiguous boundaries, recent investigations have started suggesting the two aspects of self-construal may coexist in an individual (Harrington & Liu, 2002; Kim et al., 1996; Liem, Lim, & Liem, 2000; Singelis, 1994; Yamada & Singelis, 1994). Halloran and Kashima (2004) conducted the study to test mortality salience would lead to worldview validation of values related to a salient social identity among Aboriginal Australians who possess both indigenous and mainstream Australian culture. The traditional Aboriginal worldview is characterized by collectivistic and relational values, whereas the worldview of mainstream Australian culture has been shown to be one of the most individualistic in the world. The results show that support for collectivistic values was stronger when Aboriginal identity is primed. On the other hand, the participants endorsed individualism when Australian identity is primed. In short, researchers have suggested that both types of self-construal may coexist within the same individual who can be primed to access relatively more independent or interdependent depending on contextual factors.

Given the inappropriate image of a single bipolar construct of self-construal on individual variation in behavior across various cultures, Kim et al. (1996) offered and examined a multidimensional framework of self-construal types: bicultural, independent, interdependent, and marginal. Individuals who can simultaneously maintain high and low degrees of independent and interdependent self-construal characteristics – bicultural individuals – may be viewed as a strength in multicultural society today because the mindfulness of living in at least two cultures can eliminate the dependence on a single culture for identity (Kim, 2002). As the world becomes more and more connected by communication, transportation, economy, media, and
immigration, the mixing of cultures or multiculturalism is likely to further increase within-culture variance in the future. Particularly, with countries becoming more interdependent and diverse, bicultural or multicultural identity will be acknowledged as a critical resource to be harnessed for professional or social advantage (Kim, 2002). However, there is an insufficiency of research on the effectiveness of bicultural individuals in their communication behavior.

The study of not only the effect of bicultural identity but also cultural orientations of individuals on communication behaviors is important in the field of human communication as well as education. As Kim (2002) says, “in the United States alone, evidence of multicultural people is everywhere.” Whether through immigration, sojourning, marriage, adoption, or birth, an extensive variety of people are actively carrying or maintaining two or more cultural frames of reference (Bennett, 1993). Such a multicultural nation demands citizens who appreciate and understand other people and their heritage – and who can communicate across national, cultural, and socioeconomic boundaries (American Education Council, 1995). In short, if the nation and its people are to thrive in the new environment of the 21st century, its colleges and universities must truly develop to be institutions without boundaries. Institutions can also help to cultivate a new generation of culturally competent people. Understanding the effect of cultural orientations of individuals and their communication behavior is an essential agenda for university administrators, admissions officers, international recruiters, academic advisors, and university faculty.

**Statement of the Problem**

Past research found that cultural background of individuals has been considered one of the factors for communication predisposition (Kim, 1999). Understanding cultural differences is essential not only to predict the different behaviors toward communication but also to expect the
intentions of those who interact and their choices of tasks and strategies (Kim, 2005). Those tasks and strategies are the important sources to improve one’s communication.

Although culture-level analyses have been popular in cross-cultural research, using only culture-level analyses is no longer acceptable for studying communication within and between cultures. In other words, focusing on culture-level generalizations is not enough to explain observed differences in strategy choices in conversation (Kim, Aune, Hunter, Kim, & Kim, 2001). Kim (2005) explained the reason for such inadequacy of generalization as because individuals within a culture are not always identical. Indeed, “what” aspect of culture triggers observed behavior is not clearly defined (Kim, Hunter, Miyahara, Horvath, Bresnahan, & Yoon, 1996). Therefore, evaluating the effect of culture (i.e. self-construal) on communication behavior is more important than considering why culture has an effect (Kim, 2005).

More individual-level analyses (independent and interdependent self-construals) have been used to explain individual behavior (Markus & Kitayama, 1991) as opposed to culture-level analysis. These cultural self-schemata explain whether or not inner characteristics or traits are the primary focus on behavior (Kim, 2001). For instance, Kim et al. (2001) studied the effect of culture and self-construal on the verbal communication predisposition of communication apprehension (CA) and argumentativeness among participants from Korea, Hawaii, and the mainland U.S. The results from the study indicated that the mainland U.S. participants showed highest independent orientations, while the Korean participants showed the highest interdependent orientations. Culture-level individualism was significantly and positively associated with independent self-construal in this study, and it was also significantly and negatively related to interdependent self-construal. In addition, interdependent self-construal significantly and negatively affected argumentativeness while interdependent self-construal did
not have this effect on CA (Kim, et al, 2001). In other words, the result revealed that culture-level individualism increases one’s construal of self as independent, which, in turn, leads to a higher degree of argumentativeness and a lower level of communication apprehension. They also found that culture-level collectivism increases one’s construal of self as interdependent, which, in turn, leads to a lower degree of argumentativeness although the study did not find a link between interdependence and CA.

It is important for cross-cultural research to emphasize individual-level analyses in order to theorize about differences across cultures (Bresnahan, Levine, Shearman, Lee, Park & Kiyomiya, 2005; Kim, et al., 2001). However, not only is the study about an individual’s differences in perceptions of oneself and others still in infancy, but also the research on how a person who identifies with both independent and interdependent characteristics – a bicultural individual – may develop conversational strategies is scarce. Kim (2002) argues, “as people struggle to come to terms with cultural pluralism, there is a growing recognition of identity challenges in the life of the bicultural and multicultural person and her or his potential communication patterns.” Indeed, the area has not yet been fully established empirically, especially in relation to communication styles. Hence, the present study examined four-typed cultural orientations of individuals suggested by Kim et al (1996). Those are bicultural, independent, interdependent, and marginal. The present study also explored the relationships between East Asian international students with those four cultural orientations, perceived classroom communication apprehension, argumentativeness, and intercultural sensitivity in the U.S. college classroom.

Furthermore, survival in such multicultural world and intercultural interaction requires the ability to see through the eyes and minds of people from different cultural backgrounds.
Interculturally sensitive persons are able to adjust better to a new environment within any cultural setting than do people with less sensitivity (Chen & Starosta, 1998). Hart and Burks (1972) and Hart, Carlton, and Eadie (1980) considered the concept of sensitivity as a mind-set applied in one’s everyday life whereby an individual accepts personal complexity, avoids communication inflexibility, interacts consciously, appreciates the idea exchanged, and tolerates intentional searching. Bennet (1993) views intercultural sensitivity not only as an affective and cognitive ability but also as a condition for being interculturally competent. Chen and Starosta (1998) conceptualized intercultural sensitivity to be a positive motivation to accommodate, understand, and appreciate cultural differences in promoting an appropriate and effective behavior in intercultural communication. They define that intercultural sensitivity is a dynamic and a multidimensional concept describing individual’s active aspiration to motivate himself/herself to understand, appreciate, and accept differences among cultures. Morgan and Weigel (1988) indicated that the major purpose of intercultural training programs is to develop intercultural sensitivity. Further, intercultural sensitivity has been viewed as a first step toward intercultural communication competence (Bennet, 1993; Hammer, 1989; Harris & Moran, 1989; Parker, Valley, & Geary, 1986). In short, intercultural sensitivity is a key to a positive result in intercultural encounters and a quality that permits people to achieve a multicultural mind-set. Therefore, the present study also explored the relationships between East Asian international students with those four cultural orientations and intercultural sensitivity. In addition, because intercultural sensitivity is considered as a first step toward intercultural communication competence, the present study treated intercultural sensitivity as a mediating variable in order to examine the relationships between individuals with those four cultural orientations, classroom communication apprehension, argumentativeness, and intercultural sensitivity.
In addition, much of the research on classroom interaction has focused mainly on children; the dynamics of classroom settings for young adults and adults have been less extensively researched (Fassinger, 1995). Research on multicultural classroom interaction other than English as second language (ESL) classrooms is relatively scarce. Only a few researchers have examined the college classroom as a special social context. Therefore, the present study examined the college classroom in the United States.

Moreover, the present study focused on East Asian international students from Japan, Korea, China (Hong Kong), and Taiwan pursuing degrees at U.S. colleges and universities in Hawaii. The reason for such a selected population was that those students were often considered to have similar communication patterns and social relationships that were heavily influenced by cultural foundations and value systems of collectivism. In the American college classroom context, those students often face different instructional approaches and classroom expectations. Those students tend to be silent or passive and avoid verbal communication in the classroom due to their different cultural value orientations (Liu, 2001).

**Definitions of Key Terms**

Communication apprehension. An individual’s level of fear or anxiety that is associated with either real or anticipated communication with another person or persons (McCroskey, 1977, p. 78).

Argumentativeness. A generally stable trait that predisposes individuals in communication situations to advocate positions on controversial issues and to attack verbally the position that others take on those issues (Infante & Rancer, 1982, p. 72).
Intercultural sensitivity. An ability to develop a positive emotion towards understanding and appreciating cultural differences that promotes appropriate and effective behavior in intercultural communication” (Chen & Starosta, 1997, p. 5).

Cultural orientations:

*Bicultural.* An individual with bicultural self-construal (*biculturals*) retains high independent self-construal and high interdependent self-construal.

*Independent.* An individual with high on independent self-construal and low on interdependent self-construal.

*Interdependent.* An individual with low on independent self-construal and high on interdependent self-construal.

*Marginal.* An individual with low on both independent and interdependent self-construal.

**Purpose of the Study**

Drawing from Kim’s (1996) four-typed cultural orientations of individuals (bicultural, independent, interdependent, and marginal), the primary goal of the present study was to investigate the relations between cultural orientations of individuals, communication predispositions including classroom communication apprehension and argumentativeness, and intercultural sensitivity. Another purpose of the present study was to examine perceptions of individuals with those four cultural orientations on communication attitudes including classroom communication apprehension and argumentativeness. In addition, the aim of the present study was to examine individuals with those four cultural orientations on perceived intercultural sensitivity.
Significance of the Study

The investigation of relationships between individuals who perceive themselves to embody these four types of cultural orientations and perceived classroom communication apprehension, argumentativeness, and intercultural sensitivity is important because the area of communication patterns of the bicultural or multicultural person has not yet been fully established empirically. By understanding such relationships, improvement of conceptualization in the area will be promised. In a multicultural society, the development of bicultural or expanded selves may be seen as strength or benefit because such their multiple perspectives can reduce inflexible culture-typed behaviors (Kim, 2002). Importantly, this research will educate university personnel and students who work in a relatively monocultural context that the cultural angle must be taken seriously.

The present study will also be beneficial to both domestic and international students, instructors, and administrators in the U.S. higher education when they interact and communicate with each other particularly in a classroom setting. In every classroom where interaction is considered as part of the learning process, instructors become facilitators. Facilitating in the intercultural or multicultural classroom offers unique challenge for instructors when people from different cultural backgrounds interact. A good grasp of who these students are, where they come from, and what they need, is essential for not only instructors but also anyone serving a diverse and unique population in the U.S. colleges or universities.

The present study will enhance understanding of the classroom consequences of low levels of verbal communication among college students, and raise the perceptions of acquiring knowledge and skills that differ substantially between people of different cultural orientations. Cross-cultural misunderstanding often happens from interactions between instructors and
students of different cultures because classroom interaction is a prototypical human phenomenon that is deeply ingrained in the culture of a society (Hofstede, 1993). Thus, a more culturally sensitive approach may be required for educators. The culturally sensitive approach can include the issues associated with grading on participation (e.g., better interpretation and evaluation of ‘participation points’), providing alternatives to oral assignments, and removing the stereotypes that quietness signifies ignorance or disinterest. In fact, educators need to possess appropriate intercultural communication skills as well as intercultural awareness to support the learning process.

The present study will also encourage those students of different cultural orientations who tend to avoid verbal communication in the U.S. college classroom. Possibly, their silence or avoidant communication styles may result from sensitivity to the social context including sensitivity to other’s evaluations and fitting in. Therefore, the present study may assist understand their communication avoidance in the classroom may be due to different cultural orientations and not personal deficiency.

In addition, the present study will be helpful to the academic institutions in developing or diversifying curriculum to foster bicultural/multicultural thinking and thereby improve student attitudes toward cultural diversity. An awareness of cultural diversity and its manifestation are an integral part of the entire curriculum and should not be limited to social studies, humanities, or language classes in order for students to learn how different cultural groups have influenced and contributed socially in all areas. In short, educators need not only explore new areas of study but also acquire new teaching methods and new class organization or management styles. Such educational interventions can also help to decrease cultural conflicts in the classroom and to develop a bicultural/multicultural perspective. The achievement of bicultural/multicultural
perspectives reflects a new mental and emotional consciousness that let students face and accept the diversity of cultural realities.

Furthermore, the present study will be a significant endeavor in fostering greater understanding of different cultures at colleges and universities in the U.S. higher education will be able to help students make associations between their families’ origins, their experiences as immigrants, and their own cultural identities, and also encourage greater cultural harmony on campus. By understanding the needs, new perspectives, and ideas of students, American colleges and universities can offer a richer and more diverse curriculum and skills required for globalization, and provide invaluable opportunities for everyone on campus to embrace the luxury of world culture first-hand. At the core of facilitating intercultural classroom or multicultural education, the significance of classroom dynamics remains if instructors are equipped to manage such classroom dynamics in order to enhance well-being, satisfaction, and effectiveness of each individual student. The present study will also serve as a future reference for researchers in the field of communication or education on the context of the interconnection between culture and communication.

**Research Question**

Important questions arise from the preceding discussion and serve as the central research question for this study. The research question below guided this present study. The overarching question addressed by the present study is: Does cultural orientations of individuals mediated by intercultural sensitivity predict communication apprehension in the classroom and argumentativeness among East Asian international students in the U.S. college classroom contexts?
Hypotheses and Hypothesized Model

The present study tested hypotheses that presented the relationships between communication predispositions (CA and argumentativeness), intercultural sensitivity, and individuals with four cultural orientations: bicultural, independent, interdependent, and marginal individuals. Kim (2002) discussed an individual who identifies with coexistence of both independent and interdependent self-construals comes to a deeper understanding and appreciation of his or her cultural identity than does a culture-typed or marginal individual. Kim continued to emphasize that individuals with high independent as well as high interdependent self-construals may be well aware of appropriate communication styles in different cultural contexts, showing a high flexibility for behavioral adaptation. It is reasonable to predict that individuals with bicultural orientations may develop a higher degree of intercultural sensitivity than individuals with other cultural identities such as culture-typed (independent and interdependent) and marginal orientations. East Asian international students who express high independent as well as high interdependent self-construal (bicultural orientations) may have adapted to U.S. culture and its education system and may have developed understanding of multi-perspectives as well as respect for cultural differences, which lead them to display a higher level of intercultural sensitivity than students with other cultural orientations. On the other hand, students with other cultural orientations, independent or interdependent, are likely to fulfill culturally mandated tasks (Kim, 2002). The marginal individuals may have little concern for the consequences of their actions (Triandis, 1976). Therefore, hypothesis 1 offers the following:

**Hypothesis 1**: Cultural orientations of individuals predict intercultural sensitivity. (East Asian international students with bicultural orientations will show higher level of intercultural
Furthermore, a bicultural person who identifies with both independent and interdependent characteristics may develop a repertoire of conversational strategies, display conversational adaptability across situations as well as a high flexibility for behavioral adaptation (Kim, 2002). In other words, bicultural individuals operating within the U.S. classroom context— independent cultural orientation—may adapt the lower degree of communication apprehension and higher degree of argumentativeness, which are considered an ideal approach from the Euro-American perspective. East Asian international students with high independent and high interdependent self-construal (bicultural orientations) may have adapted to U.S. culture and its education system, which lead them to exhibit a lower level of classroom communication apprehension (U.S. trait) than students with other cultural orientations. Similarly, those East Asian international students who simultaneously maintain high independent as well as high interdependent self-construal (bicultural orientations), which lead them to display higher level of argumentativeness (U.S. trait) in the classroom than students with other cultural orientations. On the other hand, individuals with the culture-typed orientations (independent and interdependent orientations) may feel that certain conversational styles are inconsistent with internalized culture-role standards (Kim, 2002). The marginal person who has low independent and interdependent self-construals may be alienated from both the U.S. mainstream culture and a non-western culture. Therefore, hypothesis 2 and 3 predicted a relationship between students with four cultural orientations and levels of communication apprehension and argumentativeness in the U.S. college classroom:
Hypothesis 2: Cultural orientations of individuals predict classroom communication apprehension. (East Asian international students with bicultural orientations will show the lower level of communication apprehension in the U.S. college classroom than individuals with independent, interdependent and marginal orientations).

Hypothesis 3: Cultural orientations of individuals predict argumentativeness. (East Asian international students with bicultural orientations will have the higher level of argumentativeness in the U.S. college classroom than individuals with independent, interdependent and marginal orientations).

Based on the literature, interculturally sensitive persons adjust better to a new cultural surrounding than do persons with less sensitivity (Chen & Starosta, 1998). According to Chen and Starosta (1991), intercultural sensitivity is a “a positive drive to accommodate, understand, and appreciate cultural differences in promoting an appropriate and effective behavior in intercultural communication.” From this definition, an individual who develops the abilities to be intercultural sensitivity may avoid communication inflexibility, interact consciously with others and appreciate the different ideas. It is possible to predict that those individuals from East Asian countries operating within the U.S. classroom context who indicate the higher degree of intercultural sensitivity may display conversational adaptability across situations. In other words, those individuals who develop the higher degree of intercultural sensitivity and may have adapted to the U.S. culture and its education system, which lead them to exhibit a lower level of classroom communication apprehension (U.S. trait) that those individuals with the lower degree of intercultural sensitivity. Similarly, those individuals who develop the higher degree of intercultural sensitivity may also display the higher level of argumentativeness in the U.S.
classroom context than those individuals with lower degree of intercultural sensitivity.

Therefore, hypotheses 4 and 5 predicted as following:

**Hypothesis 4:** Intercultural sensitivity predicts communication apprehension.

**Hypothesis 5:** Intercultural sensitivity predicts argumentativeness.

In addition, the present study will examine a theoretical model. The theoretical model describes relationships among four types of culture orientations of individuals (self-construals), intercultural sensitivity, and communication predispositions. Figure 1 shows the model:

![Theoretical model: Relationships among culture orientations, intercultural sensitivity, classroom communication apprehension, and argumentativeness.](image_url)

Figure 1. Theoretical model: Relationships among culture orientations, intercultural sensitivity, classroom communication apprehension, and argumentativeness.
Overview of the Dissertation

Chapter 1 introduces the topics of the present research, contextualizes the problem, and presents the hypotheses. It also addresses the purpose and significance of the study. Chapter 2 starts with a review of literature on communication apprehension in the classroom, argumentativeness, the U.S. college classroom as the context, the influence of culture on learning styles, classroom participation, intercultural sensitivity, the effect of culture and self-construals on communication predispositions, bicultural individuals, International students from East Asian countries, and international students and classroom communication. Chapter 3 describes the research design, the setting, the participants, the instruments, data collection procedures, and data analyses. This chapter also covers a discussion on the issues of validity and reliability. Chapter 4 reports the results of the study. First, it reports descriptive data from tests, followed by quantitative results from the survey. It also includes the result from path analysis. Chapter 5 discusses the results and draws conclusions, highlight theoretical and practical implications, and suggest limitations of study and future research directions.
CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

Communication Apprehension in the Classroom

Everyone who spends time in the classroom identifies that students have different tendencies to participate in, and enjoy, communicating. Some students appear to appreciate any opportunity for verbal activity; they enjoy talking and search for opportunities to be heard. These students always look prepared with responses to questions or comments about class material and noticeably like activities such as group discussions and oral presentations. At the other extreme are students, sometimes categorized as shy or quiet, who dislike, are anxious, or even fear communicating. These students never appear to answer questions verbally, choose to work alone on projects, and often remain practically unseen by teachers and fellow students. This tendency or predilection for some students to enjoy communicating and for others to dislike the activity is the focus of research known as communication apprehension.

Communication apprehension (CA) is defined as “an individual’s level of fear or anxiety associated with either real or anticipated communication with another person or persons” (McCroskey, 1977, p. 78). The fundamental idea is that the person with high level of CA tends to avoid communication in order not to suffer from the fear or anxiety that the person has learned from past experiences associated with communication encounters. Communication apprehension is discussed as an avoiding communication behavior, as compared to argumentativeness as an approaching behavior (Infante, 1982). Within the mainstream U.S. culture, previous studies draw a conclusion on the communication apprehension framework is that the results of communication apprehension and avoidance are negative (Kim, 2002). People with high CA are likely to be perceived by other people as less competent, less attractive, less sociable, and less composed than those with low CA (McCroskey, Daly, Richmond, & Cox, 1975). In addition, individuals
with high communication apprehension also have been known to cause teachers to have more negative expectations of them than of those with low CA (McCroskey & Daly, 1976).

Positive and successful classroom learning and teaching are based on communication between the teacher and the students. Instructors must communicate with their students to maximize learning. Through the process of communication by teachers, who interpret and the course content into a symbolic code and deliver it, which can be decoded and interpreted by students (McCroskey & Anderson, 1976). It is possible to argue that teachers who fail in this communication fail in their responsibility to educate students.

Student achievement is also partly determined by the student’s communication behaviors. According to McCroskey and Anderson (1976), firstly, classroom questioning contributes the student in clarifying and integrating concept. Secondly, student participation can determine the pace of content presentation through verbal and/or nonverbal feedbacks that communicate to the teacher whether learning has occurred. On the basis of this information, the instructor may decide to review previous material, offer additional information to explain concepts learned earlier, or introduce a new theories or concepts. Thirdly, in some classrooms in the U.S., student communication is perceived to be so important that it is directly linked to evaluation of source performance. In these classrooms, communication performance is directly influential on the course grade.

Research findings have been observed in elementary and middle school. Comadena and Prusank (1988) assessed the relationship between communication apprehension and academic achievement among elementary and middle school students in the U.S. The findings indicate that students with high CA either avoid or fail to participate meaningfully in classroom communication with teachers and peers. Those students who had high communication
apprehension received the lowest scores on all measures of academic achievement. Further, the results also indicate that communication apprehension increased with grade level. Communication apprehension increased 17% from second grade to eighth grade.

In addition, significant academic consequences for the college students with high communication apprehension are found. They tend to obtain lower grade point averages and have poorer attitudes about school (McCroskey & Anderson, 1976). There is also evidence that others’ negative evaluations have further impact in that teachers tend to expect less from students with communication apprehension, which lead them to lower achievement (McCroskey & Daly, 1976). Those students with high CA have been known to need clinical attention to fix the so-called deficiency (Comadena & Prusank, 1988). Because their feelings about communication, students with communication apprehension are in general less likely to seek help from teachers, which, in turn, they are less likely to express their instructional needs. Indeed, establishing effective communication in the classroom is therefore vital.

The construct of classroom communication apprehension (CCA) as defined by Neer (1987) refers to the avoidance of verbal participation in the classroom. Findings from various studies show that students with high levels of classroom communication apprehension are more likely to avoid participating in class discussions or keep a low profile on interaction when they do participate (Neer, 1990). Studies also suggest that instructional methods or strategies, which normally emphasize voluntary student participation, may discourage students with high levels of communication apprehension. Instructors may incorrectly view those students with CA, who talk less than their classmates or peers, as not being competent and intellectual (McCroskey Richmond, & Stewart, 1986). McCroskey and Anderson (1976) argued that such students are unnecessarily “placed at a competitive disadvantage because they are too apprehensive to engage
in the behaviors required to achieve success,” (p. 80). In short, the research on both CA and classroom communication apprehension (CCA) indicates that students with high apprehension may have a disadvantage in the American college classroom.

However, these communication propositions and research findings only explain communication behaviors from viewpoint of the mainstream U.S. culture and may not be applicable to people of different cultural orientations. For example, Klopf (1984) claims that the degrees of communication apprehension vary across cultures. While talk is considered to be positive and rewarded in individualistic culture, amount or frequency of talk is not seen as important as does the mainstream U.S. culture (Kim, 1999).

Past cross-cultural studies on the communication apprehension framework have been comparing other cultures as either higher or lower in communication apprehension than the U.S. culture. These studies exist related to Hawaii, Micronesia, Japan, Korea, China, Taiwan, the Philippines, Australia, Germany, England, Puerto Rico, South Africa, Finland, Sweden, and others (Kim, 1999). However, recent cross-cultural studies on self have discovered that cultural-level approach is not useful or appropriate for studying communication within and between cultures. Self-concept has a vital mediator effect on cultural variability on an individual’s communication behavior (Kim, Hunter, Miyahara, Horvath, Bresnahan, & Yoon, 1996; Singelis & Brown, 1995; Triandis, 1989). Indeed, with individual-level analyses, stereotypical cultural differences can be eliminated, and within-cultural variations can be explained.

**Argumentativeness**

Argumentativeness refers to “a generally stable trait that predisposes individuals in communication situations to advocate positions on controversial issues and to attack verbally the position that others take on those issues” (Infante & Rancer, 1982, p. 72). Argumentativeness is
considered to be a variable of approaching communication behavior. Infante and Rancer (1996) theorized argumentativeness as a subsection of assertiveness. Because all argument is considered assertive, but not all assertive behaviors contain argument. In addition, argumentativeness is seen as a personality trait, which affects the individual to recognize controversial issues in communication situation (Rancer, Baukus, & Infante, 1985). An individual's argumentative trait is the difference between the predisposition to approach arguments and the tendency to avoid arguments (Infante, Rancer, & Womack, 2003). One study showed that a person who has a high degree of argumentative tendency is also high on approach motivation while low on avoidance. On the other hand, a person who has a low degree of argumentativeness is also low on approach motivation and high on avoidance (Infante & Rancer, 1996).

Argumentativeness is also considered as an aggressive form of communication behavior although distinguished from verbal aggressiveness by the locus of attack (Suzuki & Rancer, 1994). Argumentativeness attacks the positions engaged by other people on other issues involving a predisposition to advocate and refute positions on debatable issues (Infante, 1982; Prunty et al., 1990). Verbal aggressiveness attacks the self-concepts of others to provoke them, embarrass them or harm their self-images and positions on the issues (Infante & Rancer, 1996). Rancer (2005) argued that those individuals approaching conflict from an argumentative stance rather than verbal aggressiveness are seen as more credible, eloquent, creative, and self-assured (Rancer, 2005). Research findings indicated that individuals with high argumentativeness perceive arguments as an exciting intellectual opportunity and as a way of decreasing or resolving conflict (Infante & Rancer, 1996; Prunty et al., 1990). On the other hand, a person with a low degree of argumentativeness feels uncomfortable about arguing who often tries to avoid
arguments, and would try to keep arguments from happening and view arguments as unfavorable and hostile acts (Infante & Rancer, 1996; Prunty et al., 1990).

Rancer and Infante (1985) argue that many situational factors can impact an individual’s motivation to argue. They list these situational factors as follows: characteristics and attributes of the opponent in the argument; typical concerns such as the ego-involvement in topic; knowledge of the topic; saliency of the argument to the individuals involved; environmental factors; and relational issues relevant to the participants in the argument. Within the mainstream U.S. culture, the results of previous research on argumentativeness clearly show the positive outcomes of being argumentative. According to Infante (1981, 1985), argumentativeness is positively related to learning, intellectual development, problem-solving, and credibility. Yet argumentativeness is negatively correlated with learning and intellectual development in many parts of the world. Similar to the trend in cross-cultural research on communication apprehension, past cross-cultural studies on argumentativeness framework have focused on comparing other cultures as either higher or lower in argumentativeness than the U.S. culture. For example, Americans were significantly more inclined to approach an argument situation and had a significantly stronger argumentative trait than the Japanese (Prunty, Klopf, & Ishii, 1990), Koreans (Jenkins, Klopf, & Park, 1991), and Taiwanese (Hsu, 2007). The Chinese shared similar behavior toward argumentation as the Japanese (Becker, 1986). Researchers have found that high-context communication cultures are characterized by fewer cases of verbal arguments or argumentation than low-context communication cultures (Becker, 1986). Prunty et al. (1990) indicated that argumentativeness is a Western practice. Kim and Hunter (1995) suggested that those high in interdependent self-construals are apt to avoid arguments because of their desire to preserve relational harmony and their motivation to save others’ face. Findings from the study by
Kim et al. (2001) on the effect of culture and self-construal on the argumentativeness indicated that interdependent-self construal negatively affected argumentativeness. In short, views of argumentativeness among the interdependent self differ from those high in independent self-construals.

The U.S. College Classroom as the Context: Expectation in the Classroom

Although there are many similarities between the U.S. classroom and classrooms in other cultures, the U.S. classroom is a distinctive combination of educational approaches and cultural beliefs that has been influenced by its country’s historical roots, by influential philosophers and theorists throughout the country’s brief history and by U.S. cultural values (Eland, Greenblatt, & Smithee, 2004). In understanding the culture of any classroom begins by distinguishing two different pedagogical approaches: teacher-centered classroom culture and learner-centered classroom culture. According to Huba and Freed (2000), in the teacher-centered classroom, knowledge primarily comes from the teacher. The teacher is the major source of information. This approach places much emphasis on the transmission of knowledge from teacher to students and students receive knowledge passively. In a teacher-centered classroom approach, because the instructor is the major source of knowledge, students are limited to only two kinds of answers – the right and wrong (Allen, 2003). Therefore, the tools used for assessment are written and oral exams. On the other hand, in the learner-centered paradigm, knowledge is the collective efforts brought by the teacher and the students. Under the guidance of the instructor, the students incorporate the collected information by using problem solving, critical thinking, and inquiry skills. In the learner-centered approach, the meaningfulness of knowledge and students are emphasized and students are enthusiastically involved in perusing knowledge. In such paradigm, the importance of obtaining right answers is overshadowed by the importance of creating better
questions. Thus, assessment tools are diverse in containing the multiple or various learning features including presentations, class participation, papers, quizzes, group projects, classmates’ evaluation besides written and oral exams.

These two pedagogical models provide overall parameters for comparing different classroom approaches across various cultures. Eland, Greenblatt, & Smithee, (2004) argued if these two approaches were placed on the poles of a cultural continuum, the U.S. classroom would be firmly at the learner-centered end of the spectrum. The globalization of information has an impact on the instructional tactics and learning style of students in the U.S. to some extent, however, many of those students are still influenced by the prevailing manner and style of education and learning to which they have been exposed (Njumbwa, 2001). As a result, international students coming to the United States discover that their expectations, attitudes, and learning styles contradict to their instructors and U.S. students. These differences can be foundations of cultural shock and cultural misunderstandings that hinder international students’ adaptation and adjustment to the U.S. campus (Taft, 1977).

Compared with classrooms in many other countries, U.S. classrooms “tend to reflect more of a Socratic ideal, where teacher and student interact a great deal in pursuit of knowledge” (Anderson & Powell, 1991). This is especially true in small classes. In short, student participation is a very vital part of the U.S. classroom. International students often report that the amount and type of interaction expected of them in the United States is different from their classroom experiences at home country or culture (Zhai, 2002). Students in the U.S. classrooms are assumed and are often required not only to know the content of their courses, but also to reflect independently about the content, and to express their own perspectives and opinions in class as well as in their written/oral assignment. If they disagree with the instructor or
classmates, they are free to express such disagreement in class. In fact, openly disagreeing or simply articulating one’s opinion in front of others can be very challenging tasks for international students who are expected and used to listening and taking notes in the classroom rather than speaking up.

The reason why participation is very important is that opinions of students are valued in learner-centered classroom context (Huba & Freed, 2000). Students are presumed to be a part of the class and their participation assists the instructors judge what/how much students are learning and how well they understand the concepts. Thus, instructors can interpret a lack of participation as failure to learn the course content or disinterest in the topic. In the learner-centered approach, the instructors may not be able to assure satisfactorily whether learning is occurred or the students truly understand the subject only by having them simply reading the book, listening to lecturers, and taking the exam.

Class participation is often one of the most difficult skills for some international students to learn because in teacher-centered classroom context, students are often expected to memorize texts, including those written by their college professors (Eland, Greenblatt, & Smithee, 2004). Their performance is determined by how well they read back precisely what the instructor has said. In addition, in the teacher-centered classroom, students are not expected to express their own ideas or disagree with the teacher. Their role is to listen intently. They are anticipated to perform their work diligently, and they feel deeply embarrassed if they seek guidance from instructors before they have fully completed assignments. Otherwise they would be forced to display their ignorance in public and suffer loss of face. Therefore, in the U.S. college classroom, many international students often encounter obstacles due to their lack of English language fluency, the inability to respond quickly before the subject of discussion changes, and difficulty
in following the professor’s frame of reference (Bevis, 2002). If this lack of class participation skills in the U.S. college classroom is joined with the view that instructors are to be held in awe, then the issue can be mirrored in the grades given for class participation.

The Influence of Culture on Learning Styles

Guild and Garger (1998) state that an individual learner's culture, family background, and socioeconomic level affect his or her learning. The context in which an individual grows up has an important impact on learning. With the globalization of higher education in the U.S., universities and colleges have become extremely diverse. Despite its diversity, and the implications for teaching and learning, there is a lack of understanding of the ways students from different cultural backgrounds approach their learning, or the ways they may vary in their learning behavior from domestic students (Ramburuth, 2001).

The debate about the concept of learning style has existed in the academic and instructional practice communities for over 90 years (Riding & Cheema, 1991). Learning styles research in the United States focused primarily on examining individual learning style preferences among white, male students from middle-class backgrounds (Swanson, 1995). With recent increased social and cultural diversity in college classrooms, researchers have begun to raise questions about the influence of culture in learning style differences. A number of studies have begun to suggest that group patterns do exist and culture plays an important part in the development of learning styles.

An array of definitions for the term “learning styles” can be found in the literature. As far back as ancient Greece, it was noted that students have different approaches to learning (Wretcher, Morrison, Riley, & Scheirton, 1997; Diaz & Cartnal, 1999). The most often quoted definition of learning styles is that of Keefe (1979): “Learning styles are characteristic cognitive,
affective, and physiological behaviors that serve as relatively stable indicators of how learners perceive, interact with, and respond to the learning environment” (p. 4). Connett (1983) defined learning style as “a consistent pattern of behavior but with a certain range of individual variability” (p. 9). Connett asserted that students adjust their learning styles according to the teaching style and the task at hand. Claxton and Raston (1978) stated that every person has a consistent way of responding to and using stimuli in the context of learning, which is created by the individual’s psychological make-up and sociocultural background. According to Guild and Garger (1998), style is said to be “the most important concept to demand attention in education in many years and is at the core of what it means to be a person” (p. 8). Learning style research therefore suggests that people make sense of the world in different ways, more importantly however, these ways are partly created by cultural experiences. As Oxford, Hollaway, and Horton-Murillo (1992) point out:

Although culture is not the single determinant, and although many other influences intervene, culture often does play a significant role in the learning styles unconsciously adopted by many participants in the culture (p. 441).

In short, learning styles appear to differ according to culture. Claxton and Murrell (1987) argued that learning style research has primarily been conducted from a “Western, white, middle class perspective and value system” (p. 71). However, in recent years, learning style has generated significant amount of attention and research as a resource in order to identify the significance of various individual characteristics on learner achievement.

Exemplar research is one that has taken a closer look at the traditional learning styles of indigenous populations. According to Tharp, Dalton, and Yamauchi (1994), an essential factor in the learning process of Native Americans is modeling and demonstration. These researchers
believe that in the classroom, lessons should include performance and demonstration. For example, traditional and contemporary Native American socialization emphasizes learning by observation (Tharp, Dalton, & Yamauchi, 1994). This observational learning style is closely related to the visual learning styles of Native American children described in previous studies, and their holistic cognitive learning patterns. Thus, inclusion of demonstration in class activities or lessons increases the conceptual comprehension, especially for students with limited proficiency in the language of instruction. Furthermore, observational learning style is a fundamental aspect of the complex of Native American socialization practices. Cazden and John (1971) discuss this preference for “learning by looking more than learning through language” (p. 256) as an aspect of Native American children’s superior visual abilities in the context of their every day practices.

Chan (1999) claims that educators in the U.S. still do not fully understand East Asian students who are normally less spontaneous and more likely to agree to their instructors. East Asian students in the U.S. higher education are often assumed as being quiet and prefer teacher-centered style of teaching. Those students tend to fear the loss of face, shame in the U.S. classroom. In other words, modesty approaches of those students make the American participative style of learning less acceptable to them. Xiao and Dyson (1999) noted that the collectivist culture in East Asia has guided to different instructional styles from the U.S. styles. East Asian students are generally taught in large groups, without tutorial or individual sessions, which, in turn, have influenced students’ incapability to express their own opinions. They also noted about a strong hierarchical relationship exists between instructor and student, which lead to a teacher-centered learning environment. Entwistle and Tait (1994) found that the learning style in East Asia emphasizes memorization as part of a learning process. From an early age, there is a
strong emphasis on imitation, memory, and repetitive practice (Cotazzi & Jin, 1996). A consequence of this style of learning is that East Asian students are often evaluated largely by examination with little weight on problem-solving practice (Chan, 1999). This has also led to East Asian students being less creativity. Ballard and Clanchy (1991) agreed that the East Asian culture and education system is known more for the preservation and replication of knowledge. On the other hand, the American/Western education system stresses on a theoretical and interrogative/questioning approach. Spizzica (1997) believed that different culture value different types of knowledge and skills differently. The ways to obtain knowledge and skills also vary across cultures.

Park (1997) conducted a comparative study of Chinese, Filipino, Korean, Vietnamese and Anglo students in American secondary schools. He carried out research indicating that Korean, Chinese, Filipino students were more visual than Anglo students; and that among high, middle and low achievers, high achievers were the most visual and low achievers were the least visual; and that Korean, Chinese, and Anglo students showed negative preferences for group learning while Vietnamese showed major preference and Filipino students showed minor preference for group learning showing statistically significant ethnic group differences. Other studies also identified cultural differences in the learning styles of African American, Mexican American, Southeast Asians, and aboriginal students (Bell, 1994; Park, 2000; Reid, 1987; Ryan, 1992).

Recognition of students’ learning styles is regarded by many educators as a vital part of an effective teaching strategy. Moreover, understanding students’ learning styles has been a concern to many educators because of research findings that have demonstrated that when teaching styles are compatible with student learning styles, students keep information longer, relate to it more effectively, possess a more constructive attitude to their subjects and are greater
achievers (Boles, Pillay & Raj, 1999; Charkins, O’Toole & Wetzel, 1985; Felder & Silverman, 1988). In fact, conflicts occur when a student has a learning style that differs from the instructional style of the teacher, especially when the teacher does not understand the cultural and personal reasons for this difference. Cross-cultural understanding of learning styles is crucial to success in teaching and learning in a diverse cultural classroom.

**Classroom Participation**

Some students eagerly participate in any classes. Yet, at the end of semester, many classes include those students who have not said a word since the first day of instructions. Research on classroom interaction is dominated by studies of children; few research has paid attention to the dynamics of classroom setting containing young adults and adults (Fassinger, 1995).

Students’ difficulty in classroom participation is often underestimated issues in the literature. Ferris and Tag (1996) state, “Difficulty in participating is often insufficiently addressed in the research” (p. 32). Moreover, substantial research focuses on the difficulties of English-as-second-language (ESL) students in their language classes (Gahala, 1986; Sato, 1982). Sato’s (1982) study revealed about graduate students from different cultural backgrounds. In considering that active participation is highly valued and encouraged by instructors in many U.S. institutions, expectations from graduate-level students are much higher compared to ESL students. International graduate students are not viewed as language learners in their academic courses, thereby they are often regarded as members of the academic community or junior scholars, and assumed to participate on an equal basis with native-English-speaking students (Sato, 1982).
Various studies argued that a lack of proficiency in English has been the greatest factors that influenced the adjustment of international students to U.S. academic culture (Chapman, Wan, & Xu, 1988; Heikinheimo & Shute, 1986; Xu, 1991). In addition to language difficulties, cultural differences are presumed to perform in shaping the classroom participation of international students. Students from European countries and Canada are found to adjust to U.S. academia more easily because of the similarity of their cultural backgrounds to U.S. students (Church, 1982; Spaulding & Flack, 1976). Many studies have investigated the experiences of students from east and Southeast Asian countries and how cultural background influences classroom behavior. In this regard, the silence of Asian students is well documented. Sato (1982) looked at the interaction of Asian and non-Asian students in two ESL classes at a U.S. college. The results from those studies showed that Asian students took considerably less speaking chances than did non-Asian students. In more recent study, Pinheiro (2001) noted that many students from various Asian countries viewed classroom discussion as “a matter of students reading articles and saying disconnected things in class” (p.7) and that they favored more organized discussions in which the instructor took a more active role. A study of Japanese students attending ESL courses at a U.S. college found that students “did not feel that speaking was a priority” (Dwyer & Heller-Murphy, 1996, p. 51). Lam (1994) looked at the turn-taking behavior of eight Chinese students from Taiwan participating in graduate classes at a U.S. university and found three patterns of participation: active, passive verbal, and silent. Morgenstern (1992) noted that although there were many opportunities for the study participants to contribute, the classroom discussions seemed to be dominated by certain students. Some students assumed that only those with the most knowledge and information should participate. In
Flowerdew and Miller’s (1996) study, native-English-speaking instructions in Hong Kong complained about the unresponsiveness of their Chinese students.

Studies of the experiences of mixed groups of international students indicated similar findings (Huntley, 1993; Jones, 1999). For example, Kao and Gansneder’s (1995) investigation of 355 international students found that ESL students contributed much fewer than native students and that participation was seen as a complicated behavior that is influenced by both culture and personality. Tapper’s (1996) qualitative study of 8 undergraduate students from El Salvador, the Netherlands, Guinea Bissau, Indonesia, Kuwait, Mexico, Singapore, and Taiwan showed that only one international student initiated interactions in class. Liu and Kuo’s (1996) survey of 51 international graduate students concluded that oral English proficiency and knowledge of subject matter were the most influential factors contributing to a students’ speaking up in class. The results also indicated although students have the potential to speak up, they were overcautious in risk taking and socializing. Similarly, Shaw and Bailey’s (1990) empirical study indicated that foreign students asked fewer questions than their U.S. peers.

The research cited mostly relies on surveys to examine classroom participating, and the interpretations of students have not been sufficiently explored through in-depth interviews or direct observations. An attempt to explain classroom participation through students’ perspectives and by taking into account various factors was Liu’s (2001) multicase ethnographic study. Liu interviewed 20 students from various Asian countries and observed 7 of them during one academic year; he identified four classroom participation patterns: total integration, conditional participation, marginal interaction, and silent observation. The classroom participation styles took place on a continuum, moving from the most active to the least active and silent. According to Liu, the participants’ behavior was not clear-cut and static; the classroom participation
behavior changed depending on their perception, influenced by multifaceted factors including cognitive, pedagogical, affective, sociocultural, and linguistic. In almost all studies, participation has generally referred to oral participation, which has been accepted as the norm. Such instructional style has led to an ideal of U.S. classrooms over others (Kubota, 2001). In summary, for those international students come from countries or cultures where oral participation may not be the common or appropriate practice in the classroom, participation can mean both verbal and nonverbal.

**Intercultural Sensitivity**

Bronfenbrenner, Harding, and Gallwey’s study (1958) was one of the early studies dealing with the concept of sensitivity. They proposed two major types of two major types of ability in social perception: 1) sensitivity to the generalized other; 2) and sensitivity to individual differences (i.e., interpersonal sensitivity). Sensitivity to the generalized other is a “kind of sensitivity to the social norms of one’s own group” (McClelland, 1958, p. 241), and interpersonal sensitivity is the skill to differentiate how others vary in their behavior, perceptions, or feelings (Bronfenbrenner et al., 1958).

Hart and Burks (1972) and Hart, Carlson, and Eadie (1980) regarded sensitivity as a fixed mental attitude, which an individual applies in one’s everyday life. They proposed that sensitive people should be able to admit personal complexity to avoid communication inflexibility, to be conscious in interaction, to appreciate the ideas exchanged, and to tolerate intentional searching. These components appear to be implanted in the cognitive, affective, and behavioral dimensions of intercultural encounter.

To define the concept of intercultural sensitivity, Bhawuk and Brislin (1992) stated:
To be effective in other cultures, people must be interested in other cultures, be sensitive enough to notice cultural differences and also be willing to modify their behavior as an indication of respect for people of other cultures. A reasonable term that summarizes these qualities of people is intercultural sensitivity (p. 416).

This suggests that intercultural sensitivity is a developmental process, in which an individual improves cognitive, affective, and behavioral abilities essential for successful intercultural communication. Such conceptualization was supported and elaborated by Bennett (1993). He conceived intercultural sensitivity as a developmental process that an individual is able to alter himself or herself affectively, cognitively, and behaviorally from ethnocentric stages to ethnorelative stages. Bennett argued that intercultural sensitivity consists of six developmental stages, namely, denial, defense, minimization, acceptance, adaptation, and integration of cultural difference. Bennett’s model of intercultural sensitivity not only involves the gradual transformation of affect and cognition, but also the behavioral capability to reach the stage of intercultural communication competence. Many scholars have been still investigating but they claim that Bennett’s perception on intercultural sensitivity appears identical with the concept of intercultural communication competence because it requires a cognitive capability as precondition to be a intercultural competent person (Chen, 1989, 1990, 1992; Hammer, 1989; Martin & Hammer, 1989; Ruben, 1976; Ruben & Kealey, 1979; Wiseman & Koester, 1993).

In short, Bennett (1993) views intercultural sensitivity not only as an affective and cognitive ability but also as a prerequisite for being interculturally competent. Morgan and Weigel (1988) indicated that the major purpose of intercultural training programs is to develop intercultural sensitivity. In other words, intercultural sensitivity has been considered as a first
step toward intercultural communication competence (Bennet, 1993; Hammer, 1989; Harris & Moran, 1989; Parker, Valley, & Geary, 1986).

However, literature on intercultural sensitivity shows insufficient empirical research, particularly research conducted within an intercultural environment when intercultural sensitivity can be influenced by a number of factors, such as cultural differences, intercultural experience, and personal intercultural training. Kapoor and Comadena (1996) surveyed 341 individualistic American and 301 collectivistic Mexican students using the construct of individualism-collectivism as proposed by Bhawuk and Brislin (1992). Their result found the construct of individualism-collectivism did not show a good validity for testing intercultural sensitivity. In another study, Loo (1999) investigated the differences in intercultural sensitivity between Canadians and Japanese using the Inventory of Cross-cultural Sensitivity (Cushner, 1986). Although the results of this study provided knowledge on how Canadians and Japanese differed on the level of intercultural sensitivity, Cushner’s measurement suffered a low internal reliability.

To counterbalance the weaknesses and to improve the validity of previous measurement intercultural sensitivity scales, Chen and Starosta (2000) conceptualized it as an affective aspect of intercultural communication competence. Chen and Starosta (1997) defined it as the “ability to develop a positive emotion towards understanding and appreciating cultural differences that promotes appropriate and effective behavior in intercultural communication” (p. 5). In building on this conceptualization, they developed an Intercultural Sensitivity Scale (Chen & Starosta, 2000) consisting of five dimensions: interaction engagement, respect for cultural differences, interaction confidence, interaction enjoyment, and interaction attentiveness. A study conducted
by Frits, Mollenberg, and Chen (2002) confirmed that the scale had a high level of reliability and validity.

A society is becoming a global community where there is more demand of cultural interdependency in the macro level and intercultural communication competent on the individual level is required in order to live in such culturally diverse community. Chen and Starosta systematically aimed to develop such goal by reconceptualizing the concept of intercultural sensitivity. The present study tested the Intercultural Sensitivity Instrument developed by Chen and Starosta in a different cultural setting.

**The Effect of Culture and Self-Construals on Communication Approach**

Culture has been defined in many ways “from a pattern of perceptions that influence communication to a site of contestation and conflict” (Martin & Nakayama, 2004, p. 74). Cultural identity incorporates “the worldview, value system, attitudes, and beliefs of a group with which such elements are shared” (Adler, 1998, p. 230). The area of intercultural communication research is dominated by the culture-level analysis and has been particularly affected by the ecological level, or the cross-cultural level of explanation only (Gudykunst, 2005). However, recent studies have focused more on individual-level analysis rather than only culture-level analysis, or have combined two analyses in order to investigate the relationship between the cultural dimensions of individualism and collectivism and independent and interdependent self-construal (Kim et al, 1996).

Kim (2005) discusses the idea that past research labeled cultures with individualistic and collectivistic dimensions by expecting all individuals within a culture are alike or identical. In addition, there is a notion that there are more individuals with independent self-construal in Western cultures than individuals in non-Western cultures (Marcus & Kitayama, 1991).
However, such a biased assumption is problematic when considering casual linkage between culture and behavior. Within the same culture, individuals differ in the degree to which they are “typical” and interpret the self in the “typical” way. In short, not every individual who is part of an individualistic culture will elaborate mainly as independent self-construals, nor will every person those who is part of a collectivistic culture identify primarily as interdependent self-construals.

In fact, recent cross-cultural studies of the self-concept reveal that exclusive focus on culture-level approach and its generalizations (i.e., individualism and collectivism) is no longer adequate for investigating communication styles across cultures (Gudykunst, et al, 1996; Kim et al, 1996; Kim, et al, 2001: Kim, Sharkey, & Singelis, 1994; Kitayama, Markus, Matsumoto, & Norasakkunkit, 1997; Markus & Kitayama, 1991; Singelis & Brown, 1995). In order to understand individual motivation for communicative act further, scholars and researchers need to consider both culture-level approach (e.g., individualism and collectivism) as well as individual-level factors that mediate the influence of culture. In other words, researchers should not assume all individuals within a culture are alike and are required to observe every individual because he or she may display different behavioral patterns regardless of his or her cultural background. Indeed, ecological fallacy is occurred when researchers practice a culture-level correlation to interpret individual behavior that can differ from cultural or ecological level patterns of behavior. Therefore, employing the concept of independent and interdependent self-construal is useful in investigating an individual’s orientation and his or her communication acts and predisposition.

As described earlier, communication apprehension and argumentativeness have been studied as approaching and avoiding communication behaviors respectively. It has been discovered that self-construal is linked to communication behavior: an interdependent self-
const has negative influences on argumentativeness, but not on communication apprehension (Kim et al., 2001). Furthermore, some researchers claim that individuals can retain both cultural orientations of individualism and collectivism (Gudykunst et al., 1996; Kim, et al., 1996; Singelis, 1994). In addition, both independent and interdependent self-construals also exist in a single person (Brewer & Gardner, 1996; Gudykunst, et al, 1996; Kim et al, 1996; Singelis & Brown, 1995).

**Bicultural Individuals: Cultural Orientations of Individuals**

There are many definitions of bicultural individuals, ranging from general to psychologically specific conceptualization. Berry (2003) briefly described that bicultural individuals may be those individuals who are immigrants, refugees, sojourners (e.g. international students, expatriates), indigenous people, ethnic minorities, and also those in interethnic or intercultural relationships, and mixed-ethnic individuals. However, it seems that there is no commonly agreed definition of bicultural individuals. According to Benet-Martinez, Leu, Lee and Morris (2002), bicultural individuals are those who have been exposed to and have adopted or internalized two cultures within themselves. Many individuals who are considered as bicultural inform that the two internalized cultures alternate in directing their thoughts and feelings (LaFramboise, Coleman, Gerton, 1993). Hong, Morris, Chiu and Benet-Martinez (2000) indicate that bicultural persons move between their two cultural orientations by involving in cultural frame switching, for example, adapting behaviors in response to the one cultural context. Bennett (1998) also describes those bicultural or multicultural people as having internalized two or more cultural frames of reference in addition to that in which they were initially socialized. Indeed, it may be assumed that bicultural individuals can rotate, switch or shift their cultural frame of reference without much deliberate effort.
Some scholars suppose that the development of a bicultural identity occurs through acculturation (Jackson, 2006). The major knowledge on biculturalism or bicultural persons research has been mostly based on acculturation research. Berry (2005) claims that acculturation is the twofold process of cultural and emotional change that occurs as a consequence of contact between two or more cultural groups and their individual members. Early conceptualizations of acculturation have assumed that assimilation to the mainstream or dominant society was the only psychologically healthy form of acculturation. In this approach, an individual are required to disregard his or her heritage cultures and completely adopt the new culture to eliminate acculturative stress and thereby, function well.

A more contemporary view of acculturation, however, has presented the notion of biculturalism – an acculturation framework in which a person recognizes and retains the knowledge and skills to serve and function within both cultural settings. The most widely used and researched acculturation framework to date is that proposed by Berry (Ponterotto, Casas, Suzuki, & Alexander, 2010). According to Berry’s model (1997), as an individual involve in his or her new surrounding, he or she is encountered with two issues: the degree to which they wish to hold on to their heritage culture and the degree to which they want to become engaged in the new culture or society. Berry proposes that there are four possible acculturation tactics: assimilation (when an individual chooses not to value one’s heritage culture and wholly prefers the adopted culture instead), separation (when one seeks to operate within one’s heritage culture almost exclusively and actively avoids interaction with the new society’s culture), marginalization (isolation of an individual from both the heritage and new society’s culture), and integration (when one holds positive attitudes toward the heritage and new society’s culture).
Acculturation scholars have long argued which approach for acculturating individuals results in ideal well-being and successful functioning. The integration strategy can be labeled as biculturalism. Researchers have empirically demonstrated that integration is the most psychologically optimal and adaptive approach for individuals to respond to the demands of acculturation (Berry, 1997; Berry, Phinney, Sam, & Vedder, 2006). Studies also demonstrated that the integration strategy is considered as the least stressful for individuals among the four acculturation strategies. In short, within acculturation research, biculturalism connotes an ideal state because it enables to have individuals function well in two cultural settings.

As briefly referred above, the prevailing assimilation ideology in the United States until the middle of the 20th century assumes immigrants to eliminate their own cultural and linguistic heritage in order to adopt the culture and values of the mainstream or dominant group, which constitutes the fundamental part of the nation state (Bourhis, Moise, Perreault, & Senecal, 1997; Kim, 2002). In addition, theories of European-American communication act have been affected deeply by the current ideology of a unidimensional model of cultural identity. These theories have often assumed and approached the individuals’ personal and social identity as conflict between individualism and collectivism. Most previous studies on cultural dimensions presume that cultural categories are linear and exclusive (e.g., Hofstede, 1980). Those existing scales of related constructs, individualism-collectivism and self-construals (as individual-level correlates of individualism and collectivism), are measured as unidimensional. However, Kim (2002) argued that such unidimensional viewpoint unable to reflect substitutes to assimilation, such as the rise of integrated or bicultural identities. Indeed, most studies on cultural identity fail to judge the likelihood that these constructs are multidimensional.
Recent empirical research has demonstrated the coexistence of both independent and interdependent self-construals in individuals (Brewer & Gardner, 1996; Gudykunst, Matsumoto, Ting-Toomey, Nishida, Kim & Heyman, 1996; Halloran & Kashima, 2004; Kim, Hunter, Miyahara, Horvath, Bresnahn & Yoon, 1996; Singelis & Brown, 1996; Yamada & Singelis, 1999). Empirical findings by Cross and Markus (1991) have also supported the existence of the dual construal of self. The study indicates bidimensionality of self-construal in their study of stress and coping behaviors of North American exchange students (high emphasis on independent self-construal) and East Asian exchange students (high emphasis on interdependent self-construal). The results from the study appeared that the East Asian students were capable of developing an internal, private, autonomous self-system (independent self-construal) while remaining to maintain the interdependent characteristics of their self-construal.

The later part of Kim et al.’s (1996) study was constructed around the assumption that individuals may identify with dual construal of self, independent and interdependent characteristics. The study proposed and investigated a multidimensional framework of self-construal and conversational constraints. Kim (1993) proposed five universal conversational constraints: 1) clarity, 2) minimizing imposition, 3) consideration for the other’s feelings, 4) risking negative evaluation by the receiver, and 5) effectiveness. These five constraints hinge on the conception of if a culture is more social and relational oriented (collectivistic cultures), or task oriented (individualistic cultures). Results from the study revealed that four types of culture orientation were identified: bicultural, independent, interdependent, and marginal. They reported that the expanded framework illuminated communication behaviors more consistently than the bipolar independent and interdependent self-construal model. Individual with bicultural self-construal (biculturals) retains high independent self-construal and high interdependent self-
Independents are those who are high on independent self-construal and low on interdependent self-construal. Interdependents are those who are low on independent self-construal and high on interdependent self-construal. Marginals are those who are low on both independent and interdependent self-construal. There was a significant main effect of cultural orientation, with bicultural individuals, individuals simultaneously maintaining high independent and high interdependent construals (“biculturals”), expressing the highest level of overall conversational concern. Marginal individual expressed the lowest level of concern. Such findings infer a tendency for bicultural persons to be more adaptive in intercultural conversational settings.

According to Kim (2002), adaptability appears to be a significant aspect of bicultural communication competence. Bicultural individuals who identify with both independent and interdependent characteristics may develop a range of conversational tactics and utilize them to adapt to the demands of the different contexts. Indeed, having a range of individualistic and collectivistic cultural experiences and knowledge, either one type or the other, allows the individual to adapt more adequately in different situations. In contrast, the culture-typed person (e.g., independent or interdependent) may feel that certain communication styles are contradictory to the internalized social and culture values and he or she may feel psychological distress. A bicultural person may also exhibit more adaptive behavior and display higher levels of various types of competence than culture-typed individuals. As a result, an individual with both interdependent and independent characteristics may obtain a broader range of strategies from which to select and show greater communication competence. In other words, as a product of a multicultural society, bicultural individuals demonstrate an ability to adjust their self-construal so as to function successfully in different contexts.
Yamada and Singelis (1999) found that individuals who experience varying degrees of cultural contact who make different choices in adapting to cultural groups might depict distinctive self-construal patterns. Their results indicate that individuals who have been identified as Bicultural are high in both independent and interdependent self-construals; the Western group has a high independent and a low interdependent self; the Traditional group has a low independent and a high interdependent self; and the Culturally-alienated group has an underdeveloped sense of both their independent and interdependent self.

LaFromboise, Albright, and Harris (2010) conducted a study of poor mental health among American Indian adolescents administering the Living in Two World Survey (LTWS: LaFromboise, 1999). The LTWS was developed to measure the cultural competence of American Indian adolescents in both mainstream American culture (White American culture) and American Indian culture. Respondents who are adept at both Indian and White culture are labeled “bicultural,” respondents who are adept in Indian culture but not White culture are termed “traditional,” respondents who are adept in White culture but not Indian culture are labeled “acculturated,” and respondents who are adept in neither Indian nor White are termed “marginal.” The study found that those American Indian adolescents who have bicultural competence or who are adept in both Indian and White culture have significantly less hopelessness than do those with adeptness in only one culture or in neither culture.

International Students from East Asian Countries

International mobility has become the hallmark of the 21st century as the world increasingly becomes a global village. Riding this trend of globalization, a substantial number of international students have crossed their national boundaries to pursue educational experiences in other cultures. Literature on international students covers a wide range of topics including
numbers and distribution, special multicultural counseling programs, the need for training in library skills, and language training. The most prominent ones are the issues related to adjustment problems including academic and social adjustment processes, and preparation for returning home (Altbach, Kelly, & Lulat, 1985).

In the United States, the number of international students pursuing higher education has increased dramatically since the end of World War II. International students comprise approximately 3 percent of the total enrollment in the U.S. institutions of higher education (U.S. Department of Education). According to the Open Doors Annual Report (Institute of International Education), there were approximately 624,000 international students attending U.S. institutions of higher education during the 2007-2008 academic year. Half of these students were Asian, with students from East Asia having the greatest representation. East Asian students have been an important part of international student population in postsecondary institutions in the United States since World War II.

Paige (1990) defines international students, also termed foreign students, as “individuals who temporary reside in a country other than their country of citizenship or permanent residence in order to participate in international educational exchange as students, teachers, and researchers,” (p. 162). Underlying this definition is the short status of the sojourners, the purpose (e.g., education) of the sojourn, and the cultural differences between the sojourners and host nationals (p. 162). This definition distinguishes the international students from other kinds of international sojourners. As Paige suggests, this definition excludes refugees and immigrants “because they are no longer permanent residents or citizens of the countries they left, neither are they temporary sojourners in their new countries of residence” (p. 163).
There seems to be a general consent that international students are great risk groups who tend to have more psychological problems than their U.S. students (Schram & Lauver, 1988). Upon arrival in a new country, the reality of being a “foreigner” challenges an individual with a number of personal, social, and ecological changes. The experience of international students has generally been described within the framework of various problems. They have been reported to exhibit stress and high degree of social alienation, experience culture shock, display psychological symptoms linked with cross-cultural adaptation, and struggle in two cultures with difficulty (Marion, 1986).

International students who study in the United States have been the focuses of many studies over the years. Scholars across various disciplines have discussed over the significance of cultural differences between school cultures and practices in Western cultures/countries and those in East Asian nations (Littlewood, 2000; Marsella, DeVos, and Hsu, 1985; Ward and Kennedy, 1993). Because of a large cultural difference in terms of language, educational system, and communication styles, East Asian students in general, tend to have more difficulty in social interaction and adjustment on American campuses than their European counterparts (Abe, Talbot, & Geelhoed, 1998; Kinoshita & Bowman, 1998).

**International Students and Classroom Communication**

The educational environment mirrors the larger society and reflects its values, beliefs, traditions, and practices. Just as sojourners must learn the general rules, regulations, and skills for adapting to life in a new culture, they must develop the ability to apply these to their specific operational domains. For student sojourners, this requires special attention to the educational setting. Although there is an expanding literature on international education and increasing development of training materials to improve sensitivity among educators, in practice, it is the
responsibility of international students to adapt and to succeed in a new academic system (Banks and Banks, 1995).

Different educational practice and instructional procedures are mirrored across cultures, and Hostede’s (1980) research on work-related values and Triandis’ (1990) critical analysis of cultural variability provide interpretive frameworks for these differences. Two dimensions that apply strong influence on classroom communication and interactions are individualism-collectivism and power distance. In the broadest standpoint, students from individualist cultures are more likely to want to ‘stand out’ in class by asking questions, giving responses, and engaging in discussion and debate. They are often seen as competitive. Whereas students from collectivist cultures are more strongly encouraged to ‘fit in.’ They are less likely to be vocally interactive in classes and are not usually willing to draw attention to themselves. Collectivism has a strong link to power distance, and those students who are from high power distance cultures are also less likely to ask questions and debate. This is because it is not an appropriate to challenge to the instructor, which may cause the loss of face. Students from high power distance cultures, in contrast, are more strongly motivated to show high respect to teachers and to maintain formal and distant relationships with them. For instance, in low power distance cultures such as the United States, students can have contradicting ideas with their teachers and express their thoughts, but in high power distance cultures such as Japan, China and Korea, students are expected to respect their teachers as authority figures and accept what is taught without questioning. In addition, taking the opposing view in an argument usually means becoming a personal rival and adversary of the one on the other side in East Asian cultures, according to Becker (1991). It is not difficult to see that these differences in cultural values can lead to misperceptions across cultural groups. From one perspective, quiet but attentive students from
Collectivistic cultures may be viewed as uninterested or withdrawn by teachers from individualistic cultures. From another point of view, the numerous disruptions to instructors by students from individualistic cultures may be seen as rude and unmannered by their collectivistic classmates.

The empirical literature on intercultural education illustrates these differences. In the past few decades, an extensive amount of research has been conducted to explore and explain the possible relationships between second language learners’ linguistic knowledge and their communication performance. Researchers such as Brown (1987), Canale and Swain (1980), Ellis (1985, 1994), and Larsen-Freeman and Long (1991) agree that the complex nature of second language acquisition requires multiple explanations.

However, East Asian students in the United States are considered as English as a second language (ESL) learners only when they are placed in ESL classes (e.g., ESL composition or spoken English courses); they are not regarded as ESL students in their academic courses. Therefore, students’ classroom communication styles and participation behaviors are not the equal to their language classes and their content courses. East Asian students are held to the equivalent standard as other college students in academic courses. Active verbal classroom participation is highly motivated in U.S. universities, but there is the fact that many East Asian students tend to be quiet or silent in their academic classrooms causes many professors to speculate or misunderstand whether they do not have their opinions. Such misunderstandings occur between instructors and East Asian students because of their different interpretations of silence in class.

McCargar’s (1993) research with Indonesian, Chinese, Korean, Japanese, Persian, Arabic, Hispanic, and Thai who are English as a second language students demonstrated that there are
significant discrepancies between their expectations and those of their American teachers. The differences were most noticeable in connection with classroom participation and student-teacher relationships. For example, compared with the teachers, foreign students generally wanted more error correction, believed that they should agree with the instructor, and more strongly preferred acceptance of authority. On the other hand, the instructors were more likely to believe that students should have an internal locus of academic control. There were also evident differences across the student groups. For example, the Indonesian and Chinese students most strongly opposed the idea that students should be motivated to disagree with the teacher.

Liberman’s (1994) qualitative research with Asian students in the United States demonstrates the similar findings as McCargar’s quantitative results. His interviews revealed that international students were often judgmental of informal approach in the classroom, viewed lack of respect for professors, and insufficient focus in classroom interactions. They were also sometimes disapproving of their American classmates, particularly in regard to egotism. An undergraduate student from Japan mentioned, ‘American students seem to want to show off their knowledge and intelligence in class and are often overconfident and egotistical; discussions seem to be like competition’ (p. 184). On the other hand, interviews discovered that many students answered positively to a reduced importance on memory skills and a closer relationship with the instructors. They came to be especially eager about the dynamic learning environment and the capability to exchange their ideas with others. A student from Singapore commented, ‘They encourage learning. They try to get you interested in the process of learning. In Singapore, they don’t care if you are interested or not, you just learn it’ (p. 181). In general, the significant amount of Asian students in Liberman’s study accepted the critical thinking skills are accelerated in the U.S. education system.
Similarly, from the U.S. viewpoint, Pratt (1991) observed that teachers are viewed as facilitators who encourage student independence. The U.S. educational system is adaptive and provides the student who is the focus of the educational process. However, in China, the teacher is a transmitter of knowledge, a role model and the center of instructional practice. Therefore, if students are not successful in academic achievements, this is commonly viewed as motivation, effort and ability, not the responsibility of the teacher. In China, it is believed to be important that students should master educational material without asking questions. In other words, questioning is often considered as disruptive and disrespectful.

Similarly, contrasts have been made between the education system of North America and the Japan where there is larger social distance found between students and instructors. Differences are those: more vertical student-teacher relationships and a one way flow of communication, more formal approach in the classroom, and more stress on rote memory (Becker, 1990). While it is evident that there are various cross-cultural differences in educational expectations and instructional practices, these differences have not often been precisely understood by educators and academics. Cultural differences are frequently perceived in a stereotyped and negative manner, not only with regard to the educational practices of other cultures but also in association with the academic traditions of Asian international students attending colleges and universities in Western, English-speaking countries (Ballard and Clancy, 1984; Samuelowicz, 1987).

**Summary**

With fast changes in global economy, technology, transportation, and immigration regulations, the world is becoming smaller and interconnecting community. People find themselves in increased contact with those who are culturally different, working side by side.
Today, many colleges and universities in the U.S. contain a complex mix of students from
different cultures with an increase population of the minority and international students. In short,
people are more frequently involved in situations where intercultural communication is required.
Such frequent cultural intersect or cultural contact due to migration, globalization, travel, and the
resulting cultural diversity has also led to increasing numbers of individuals who have internalized more than one culture. These individuals can be described as bicultural or multicultural. There has been a considerable amount of research and literature on international students such as the problems of sojourners, the psychological reactions of sojourners to encountering a new cultural environment, the influence of social interaction and communication on sojourner adaptation, and the cultural learning process in the cross-cultural sojourn (Hammer, 1992). While adjustment difficulties of East Asian international students with their cultural differences at American campuses are well investigated, efforts to link their intercultural experiences to broader issues of bicultural orientations have been scarce. There is indeed a growing awareness of the identity challenges and communication patterns in the life of the bicultural and multicultural person. Although increasing prevalence and importance of biculturalism and multiculturalism have been acknowledged by a number of psychologists, communication scholars, and educators, such experience or phenomenon has rarely been investigated empirically. The study of not only bicultural individuals but also other cultural orientations of individuals provides the field of communication, education, and psychology with another window through which to understand individual variations on self-concept dynamics and complexity of culture.

Furthermore, the present study offers notions of people with bicultural or multicultural orientations. Individuals with the simultaneous coexistence of opposite cultural orientations, (e.g,
high in both independent and interdependent self-construals), may be seen as contradictory and insecure, because of a Western individualistic viewpoint that buries the individual against the group (Kim, 2002). However, the dual construal of self may be regarded as a benefit because such bicultural individuals can be constructive in dealing with culturally diverse others.

In addition, the present study provides knowledge and awareness of how most human communication theories and concepts, and educational practices are rooted in Western philosophical beliefs about persons. Recognition of the prevailing and predominant individualistic values and notions, which have influenced the way people research, may serve as a useful starting point for change. It is extremely important to paralleling the adoption of multicultural perspectives in theory as the developing notion of bicultural or multicultural communication competence in practice. In short, the present study may bring argument that culture may serve as the starting point of any communication related research.

Furthermore, much of the research on classroom interaction has focused mainly on children; the few research have paid attention to dynamics of classroom settings for young adults and adults extensively (Fassinger, 1995). Moreover, research on multicultural classroom interaction has mainly focused on English as second language (ESL) classrooms and research on other than ESL classroom is relatively scarce. Only a few researchers have examined the college classroom as a special social context. For that reason, the present study focused specifically on classroom communication styles of East Asian international students from Japan, Korea, China Hong Kong, and Taiwan pursuing degrees in the U.S. college classroom. Those international students were selected because they shared similar communication patterns and social relationships that were heavily influenced by cultural foundations and value systems of collectivism.
This chapter presented the theoretical background for the present study. The chapter reviewed some of the major approaches and models to understanding the complexities of identity and communication concepts that relate to cultural orientations of individuals. In the next chapter, the method of the present study is explained.
CHAPTER 3: METHOD

Introduction

The present study explored the effects of cultural orientations of individuals on communication predispositions and intercultural sensitivity in the U.S. college classroom among East Asian international students. This study utilized a quantitative research method. This chapter contains information regarding the participants, procedure, data collection, and data analysis.

Research Design

A quantitative research method employing survey was used in this study to gather data to answer the research question, test the five hypotheses and the hypothesized theoretical model. The survey method has certain advantages. For example, surveys are comparatively low-cost. Standardized questions in the questionnaire make reporting more precise by implementing uniform definitions on the participants (Barrieau, 2005). Standardization also confirms that similar data can be collected from different groups, and then interpreted reasonably. However, the survey method also has its own limitations because it is contingent on participants’ self-reports. Inaccuracies and errors in the collected data can be caused by intentional deception, poor memory or misunderstanding of the questions (Czaja & Blair, 2005).

The survey used in this study was carried out in two forms, one was the traditional paper-and-pencil survey, and the other was online survey. The traditional paper-and-pencil survey has been widely used in the communication research (e.g., Duronto et al., 2005; Gudykunst & Nishida, 2001; Hammer et al., 1998). Compared to the paper-and-pencil survey, internet-based research is less expensive and is able to provide a possible pool of a large number of participants (Ahern, 2005). However, a number of studies have reported lower response rates for internet-
based survey compared to traditional paper-and-pencil survey methods (Crawford, Couper, & Lamias, 2001). Several reminders were utilized in the present study because Kittleson (1997) note that the response rate of online survey can be increased by sending one to two follow-up memos to participants.

**Participants**

The target population for the present study was international students from East Asian countries who were enrolled in colleges and universities in Hawaii. In the present study, the group of international students was composed of both male and female graduate and undergraduate students who held student visas (F-1 or J-1 visa). Thus, those who are resident aliens (e.g., holding a “green card”) or immigrants were not considered as the target population. The present study was also limited to those international students who were enrolled in colleges and universities in Hawaii, eliminating those who were studying at English language institutes or programs. East Asian countries include Japan, Korea, China (Hong Kong), and Taiwan.

A total of 114 students were recruited at University of Hawaii at Manoa. This research was conducted from August 2011 to February 2012 through both paper and online computer-based surveys. The mean age of these participants was 22.77 years ($SD = 7.98$). The sample consisted of 57.0% female ($N = 65$) and 43.0% male ($N = 49$). The nationality of the sample was as follows: 43.9% Japan ($N = 50$), 19.3% China ($N = 22$), 15.8% South Korea ($N = 18$), 15.8% Taiwan ($N = 18$), and 5.3% Hong Kong ($N = 6$). The majority of the participants hold F-1 visa (92.1%, $N = 104$) and 9.0% hold J-1 visa ($N = 10$). The average length of stay of participants was 2.72 years ($SD = 2.98$).
Procedure

Prior to recruiting the participants, the researcher sought approval from the Human Subject Review Committee at the University of Hawaii at Manoa. The survey portion of the study was planning to conduct at University of Hawaii at Manoa (UHM), University of Hawaii at Hilo (UHH), Kapiolani Community College (KCC), Windward Community College (WCC), Leeward Community College (LCC), East-West Center (EWC), Hawaii Pacific University (HPU), Chaminade University, and Brigham Young University Hawaii Campus (BYUH). Following approval, participants were recruited through the international students’ email listserv at the colleges and universities in Hawaii. The researcher also contacted the Office of International Student Services (ISS) on each campus to forward messages, including an online survey web address, to international students from East Asian countries. However, due to administrative issues, the survey was only conducted at UHM. The study was announced by the researcher through International Student Association meeting as well as coffee hour-gatherings held by the International Student Exchange Program. The researcher briefly explained the purpose of the study to the participants and assured the confidentiality and anonymity in their responses. Individuals interested in participating were directed to take the paper-and-pencil survey. In addition, in order to increase participate rate, the online survey using SONA system at Department of Communicology was conducted. Those students who met criteria for the study (international students from East Asia) were able to take the online survey for their partial credits or for extra credits toward their Communicology courses.

Participants were shown consent information on the first page of the website explaining that participation in this research was entirely voluntary and confidential. No identifying information was collected. Completion of the online materials indicated their consent to
participate. Participants were informed that they were allowed to download or print a copy of the consent form to keep. The estimated time of completing the whole survey was approximately fifteen to twenty minutes. All questionnaires were written in English.

Data Analysis

Analysis of Survey Data

**Measures of cultural orientations.** The independent and interdependent self-construal scales developed by Leung and Kim (1997) were used to measure cultural orientations of the participants. The scale with reported reliability estimates of .87 for independence scale and .82 for interdependence scale (Leung & Kim, 1997). The participants were asked to rate 15 items for the assessment of independent self-construal and 14 items for the assessment of interdependent self-construal. Those cultural orientations were grouped in four types: bicultural, independent, interdependent, and marginal. A median split was utilized to dichotomize self-construal scale scores for the total sample. The alpha reliability coefficient of the scale was .82 for independent self-construal and .84 for interdependent self-construal.

**Measures of classroom communication apprehension.** Student apprehension about participation in the classroom was measured using the Classroom Apprehension Participation Scale (CAPS) developed by Neer (1987) and adapted from the Personal Report of Communication Apprehension (PRCA-24) developed by McCroskey (1982) in the classroom context. The CAPS was designed to measure classroom apprehension along four dimensions: communication avoidance (e.g., “I always avoid speaking in class discussion if possible”), evaluation apprehension (e.g., “I am often afraid I will say something that is wrong during a discussion”), communication competence (e.g., “I have difficulty organizing my thoughts when I want to say something in class”), and communication confidence (e.g., “I like speaking during
class discussion because most students listen to what I say’). The CAPS is a 20-item questionnaire using a seven-point scale (strongly agree to strongly disagree). Alpha reliability for the CAPS reported by Neer is .94. The CAPS is selected over the PRCA-24 because, as Beatty and Andriate (1985) argue, situation-specific measures offer a more accurate assessment than generalized measures when the audience has accumulated experience with the specific situation at hand. The alpha reliability coefficient of the scale is .84.

Measures of argumentativeness. Fifteen items from Infante and Rancer’s (1982) argumentativeness scale was modified to meet the classroom context. Research using the Argumentativeness Scale has consistently reported high levels of reliability. The coefficient alpha reliability for the Argumentativeness Scale has been at least .85 in studies reviewed by Infante, Trebing, Shepherd, and Seeds (1984). Examples for these items are, “Arguing over controversial issues in a classroom discussion improves my intelligence,” “In a class discussion, I am energetic and enthusiastic to argue when I argue,” “Arguing with an instructor or another classmate creates more problems than it solves,” “I get an unpleasant feeling when I realize I am about to get into an argument in a class,” “I enjoy defending my point of view on an issue during a class discussion.” Respondents were asked to choose the best answer by using the seven-point scale from Strongly Disagree = 1 to Strongly Agree = 7. The reliability of the scale in assessing argumentativeness is moderately high: Cronbach’s alpha = .79.

Measures of intercultural sensitivity. The intercultural sensitivity items were those of Chen and Starosta’s (2000) Intercultural Sensitivity Scale. This scale contains 24 seven-point items with nine items reversed scored. The Intercultural Sensitivity Scale is intended to measure an individual’s feelings about interacting with people who have different cultural backgrounds. The alpha reliability coefficient of the scale was .88 (Chen & Starosta, 2000). The scale includes
five sub-scales, interaction engagement, respect for cultural differences, interaction confidence, interaction enjoyment, and interaction attentiveness. The 24 statements include “I enjoy interacting with people from different cultures,” “I respect the values of people from different cultures,” and “I am open-minded to people from different cultures.” The alpha reliability coefficient of the scale was .85.

**Test of a Theoretical Model**

This study also examined a theoretical model which describes four types of culture orientations (self-construals) which can affect intercultural sensitivity, and communication predispositions of individuals. Path analysis was applied in order to analyze the hypothesized relationships among four cultural orientations of individuals, intercultural sensitivity, classroom communication apprehension, and argumentativeness. Path analysis is a variation of multiple-regression analysis and consists of a family of models that depicts the influence of a set of variables on one another (Spaeth, 1975). Path analysis is considered an extension of the regression model, which can be used to test the fit of a correlation matrix with the causal model (Garson, 2004). It is used most frequently to analyze data relative to a pre-specified causal model (Stage, Carter, & Nora, 2004). Path analysis conducts a series of regressions to analyze influences on the dependent variables within the specified model. Using this type of analysis, it is possible for the initial dependent variables to serve as independent variables in later regressions within the model.

The primary strength of the path analysis methodology is that it allows for the study of direct and indirect effects simultaneously with multiple independent and dependent variables. Further, it allows the researcher to use software packages, such as LISREL (Hayduk, 1996; Jöreskog & Sörbom, 1984; Stage, 1990) or AMOS (Arbuckle, 1989), to draw a set of
hypothesized relationships that are then translated directly into equations needed for the analysis. During path analysis, a regression is conducted for each of the dependent or endogenous variables. A correlation matrix is then reproduced from the model, and this reproduced matrix is compared with the actual observed correlation matrix in order to determine the model fit (Stage et al., 2001).

**Scoring Procedures for Cultural Orientations**

Following the scoring procedure utilized by Kim et al. (1996) in determining four types of cultural orientations, score distributions from independent and interdependent self-construals were separated at the median, which provided four groups reflecting the four culture orientations. High independent and interdependent scores above the median are labeled biculturals; those scoring high independent/low interdependent are labeled as independents. Those people scoring low independent and high interdependent are regarded as interdependents. Finally, those participants scoring below the median on both scales are regarded as marginal with regard to their cultural orientation. The four-fold classification procedures use consideration of both balance (e.g., for bicultural, the two scores needed to be similar, both are above the median) and level (e.g., for bicultural, both are above the median). Based on the median split scoring procedures above, cultural orientations were treated as rank-ordering in order to create a new variable: Bicultural = 4, Independent = 3, Interdependent = 2, and Marginal = 1.

**A Hypothesized Path Model**

In the present study, the final dependent variables were classroom communication apprehension and argumentativeness (See Figure 2). The intent of this study was to model the direct and indirect effects of cultural orientations of individuals, intercultural sensitivity, and ethnocentrism on those final dependent variables. The only independent variables in the study
are cultural orientations of individuals which have four categorized ranked types: Bicultural, independent, interdependent, and marginal. Intercultural sensitivity was expected to be the mediating variable in the relationship between cultural orientations of individuals and classroom communication apprehension and argumentativeness. The Figure 2 illustrated a path diagram of the interrelationships among the variables. The present study sought to identify and explicate the mechanism that underlies an observed relationship between independent variable (cultural orientations of individuals) and dependent variables (classroom communication apprehension and argumentativeness) via the inclusion of mediator variable (intercultural sensitivity). The present study expected that when individuals identify with bicultural orientations, they showed the higher degree of intercultural sensitivity, which, in turn, leads to the higher degree of argumentativeness and the lower degree of classroom communication apprehension. The present study also expected that when individuals identify with independent, interdependent and marginal orientations, they indicated the lower degree of intercultural sensitivity, which, in turn, leads to the lower degree of argumentativeness and the higher degree of classroom communication apprehension.
Figure 2. Hypothesized Path Model: Directional relationships among culture orientations, intercultural sensitivity, classroom communication apprehension, and argumentativeness.
CHAPTER 4: RESULTS

Preliminary Analysis

Descriptive statistics of the variables are provided in Table 1 and correlations are provided in Table 2. Generally, participants reported a higher level of independence (M = 5.10, SD = .78) than interdependence (M = 4.62, SD = .85).

Analysis of Survey Data

Cultural orientations of individuals. To examine the cultural orientations of individuals, the participants were divided into four groups based on the self-construal scale: bicultural, independent, interdependent, and marginal in order to examine the cultural orientations of individuals. A median split was utilized to dichotomize self-construal scale scores for the total sample. The participants with high independence were those who scored in the upper half of the total sample in the independent self-construal scale (> 5.33), and the participants with low independence were those with scores in the lower half of the total sample (< 5.33). Similarly, the participants with high interdependence were scored in the upper half of the total sample in the interdependent self-construal scale (> 4.80), and the participants with low interdependence were those with scores in the lower half of the sample (< 4.80). Table 1 presents the medians for the cultural identity groups. The results of median split indicated 28 people were considered to be bicultural, 28 were independent, 29 were interdependent, and 28 were marginal (see Table 3).

Classroom communication apprehension. Regarding the classroom communication apprehension, participants with independent orientations (M = 3.62, SD = .69) reported the lowest level of apprehension. Participants with bicultural orientations reported slightly lower levels of apprehension (M = 3.74, SD = .63) than those with interdependent orientations (M =
3.87, SD = .55). Participants with marginal orientations reported highest communication apprehension (M = 3.96, SD = .68).

**Argumentativeness.** In term of argumentativeness, participants with bicultural orientations reported highest degree of argumentativeness (M = 5.24, SD = .67) followed by participants with independent cultural orientations (M = 5.14, SD = .59). Participants with marginal orientations were slightly higher degree of argumentativeness (M = 5.04, SD = .58) than participants with interdependent cultural orientations (M = 4.85, SD = .68).

**Intercultural sensitivity.** Regarding the intercultural sensitivity, participants with bicultural orientations (M = 4.67, SD = .78) reported the highest score followed by independent orientations (M = 4.52, SD = .69), interdependent orientations (M = 4.32, SD = .75) and marginal orientations (M = 4.18, SD = .62).

**Test of Hypotheses**

**Relationships Between Cultural Orientations of East Asian International Students and Intercultural Sensitivity (H1)**

A one-way ANOVA was conducted to examine relationships between cultural orientations of East Asian International Students and intercultural sensitivity. The results showed there was statistically significant, F (3, 92) = 3.94, p < .01, η² = .97.

**Relationships Between Cultural Orientations of East Asian International Students and CCA (H2)**

A one-way ANOVA was conducted to examine relationships between cultural orientations of East Asian International Students and classroom communication apprehension (CCA). There was no significant differences in the overall classroom communication apprehension scores, F (3, 96) = 1.34, p = ns, η² = .97.
Relationships Between Cultural Orientations of East Asian International Students and Argumentativeness (H3)

A one-way ANOVA was conducted to examine relationships between cultural orientations of East Asian International Students and argumentativeness. The results of a one-way ANOVA indicated no statistically significant differences found, $F (3, 97) = 1.24, p = ns, \eta^2 = .97$.

Test of the Hypothesized Path Model

A path analysis was conducted to test a theoretical model which describe relationships among four types of cultural orientations of individuals, intercultural sensitivity, classroom communication apprehension and argumentativeness. In this study, the variables measuring cultural orientations of individuals were treated as the exogenous variable. The model was hypothesized where the exogenous variable predicted the intercultural sensitivity, which, in turn, influenced perceived classroom communication apprehension and argumentativeness (see Figure 1). In short, the model predicted the mediating effect of intercultural sensitivity on classroom communication apprehension and argumentativeness from cultural orientations of individuals. More precisely, the model predicted that the participants with bicultural orientations show a higher level of intercultural sensitivity in the U.S. college classroom than individuals with other cultural orientations, which, in turn, leads to the lower degree of classroom communication apprehension and the higher degree of argumentativeness. This mediation implies a directional hypothesis whereby the exogenous variable influences a mediator, which, in turn, influences the endogenous variable (Holland, 1988; Sobel, 1990).

Two separate path analyses were conducted using MPlus 5.21. The first model included the direct effect of cultural orientation of individuals on classroom communication apprehension
and argumentativeness as well as the mediating role of intercultural sensitivity between cultural orientations of individuals and classroom communication apprehension and argumentativeness. The fit of the model is presented in Figure 2. This initial, just-identified model did not fit the data, $\chi^2 (0) = 0.00$, $p < .001$, CFI = 1.00, RMSEA = 0.00. The direct effect from cultural orientations of individuals on classroom communication apprehension ($\beta = .07$, $p = \text{ns.}$) and argumentativeness ($\beta = -1.04$, $p = \text{ns.}$) was not significant. However, the path from cultural orientations of individuals to intercultural sensitivity was significant, $\beta = .31$, $p < .001$. Both paths from intercultural sensitivity to classroom communication apprehension, $\beta = .50$, $p < .001$, and to argumentativeness, $\beta = .19$, $p < .001$, were statistically significant. In short, the indirect effect of cultural orientations of individuals was partially mediated by intercultural sensitivity. The initial, just-identified model was trimmed down to seek an optimal model.

The second model tested the mediating role of intercultural sensitivity between cultural orientations of individuals and classroom communication apprehension and argumentativeness. In this test, two direct paths from cultural orientations of individuals to classroom communication apprehension and argumentativeness were deleted. The fit of the model is shown in Figure 3., was good, $\chi^2 (2) = 2.68$, $p = .26$, CFI = .99, RMSEA = .05. All of these indexes indicated that the model fit the data very well and thus was an optimal model for the data.

Consistent with the hypothesized theoretical model, the path coefficient from cultural orientations of individuals to intercultural sensitivity was significant ($\beta = .31$, $p < .001$). As expected, there was a significant positive path coefficient from intercultural sensitivity to argumentativeness ($\beta = .21$, $p < .001$). Inconsistent with prediction, however, intercultural sensitivity was significantly positively linked to classroom communication apprehension ($\beta = .46$, $p < .001$). Cultural orientations of individuals had effects on intercultural sensitivity, which,
in turn, led to a certain degree of classroom communication apprehension (standardized indirect effect = .07, p < .05). Similarly, cultural orientations of individual had effects on intercultural sensitivity, which in turn, led to certain degree of argumentativeness (standardized indirect effect = .14, p < .01). After deleting two direct paths from cultural orientations of individuals to classroom communication apprehension and argumentativeness, the indirect effect of cultural orientations of individuals was fully mediated by intercultural sensitivity. The r-square results yield the model accounts for about 22% of the variance in argumentativeness while only a little more than 4% of the variance in classroom communication apprehension.
Table 1.

Reliability, Means, and Standard Deviations of Variable (N = 114)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>α</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Self-Construal (Independent)</td>
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<td>5.10</td>
<td>0.78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-Construal (Interdependent)</td>
<td>0.84</td>
<td>4.62</td>
<td>0.85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Classroom Communication</td>
<td>0.84</td>
<td>3.74</td>
<td>0.63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apprehension</td>
<td>0.79</td>
<td>5.24</td>
<td>0.67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Argumentativeness</td>
<td>0.89</td>
<td>4.70</td>
<td>0.78</td>
</tr>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cultural Orientations</th>
<th>Classroom Communication Apprehension</th>
<th>Argumentativeness</th>
<th>Intercultural Sensitivity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>SD</td>
<td>Mean</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bicultural</td>
<td>3.74</td>
<td>0.63</td>
<td>5.24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Independent</td>
<td>3.62</td>
<td>0.69</td>
<td>5.14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interdependent</td>
<td>3.87</td>
<td>0.55</td>
<td>4.85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marginal</td>
<td>3.96</td>
<td>0.68</td>
<td>5.04</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Table 2.

Correlations among the variables

<table>
<thead>
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<th></th>
<th>(1)</th>
<th>(2)</th>
<th>(3)</th>
<th>(4)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(1) Cultural orientations of individuals</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(2) Intercultural sensitivity</td>
<td>.10</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(3) Classroom communication apprehension</td>
<td>-.15</td>
<td>-.08</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(4) Argumentativeness</td>
<td>.16</td>
<td>.46**</td>
<td>-.24*</td>
<td>1.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: N = 114  
* p < .05, ** p < .01 (two-tailed).
Figure 3.
Path Analysis of the Theoretical Model (Just-Identified Model)

Note: Each path coefficient is significant at $p < .05$. Covariates and their effects are not presented in the figure.
Figure 4.

Path Analysis of the Theoretical Model

Note: Each path coefficient is significant at \( p < .05 \). Covariates and their effects are not presented in the figure.
CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION

Introduction

To date, only a limited number of studies have examined the role of cultural orientations of individuals and their communication styles in the U.S. college classrooms. Thus, the purpose of the present study was to examine communication predispositions and intercultural sensitivity of people with different cultural orientations (bicultural, independent, interdependent, and marginal) among East Asian international students in the U.S. college classroom. To achieve this, the hypothesized model among cultural orientations of individuals, communication predispositions, and intercultural sensitivity was investigated. Overall results show that the hypothesized set of relationships was consistent with data. The modified model indicates mediation process. In other words, East Asian international students with bicultural orientations show higher degree of intercultural sensitivity in the U.S. college classroom than students with independent, interdependent, and marginal orientations (see Table 1 and Figure 4). This influences predispositions toward verbal communication although cultural orientations of individuals do not directly influence classroom communication apprehension and argumentativeness. In this section, each hypothesis will be examined briefly along with the more detailed discussion of the hypothesized model.

Cultural Orientations of Individuals and Intercultural Sensitivity

The first hypothesis investigated whether or not the four types of cultural orientations of individuals influence the degree of intercultural sensitivity. More precisely, the study predicted that participants with bicultural orientations show the highest degree of intercultural sensitivity among participants with other cultural orientations. As expected, there was a significant positive relationship between cultural orientations of individuals and intercultural sensitivity (see below
for further discussion). Individuals with independent cultural orientation followed by interdependent cultural orientation showed a moderately high degree of intercultural sensitivity. Lastly, individuals with marginal orientations indicate the lowest level of intercultural sensitivity among other cultural orientations. These findings support the notion those bicultural individuals develop adaptability and demonstrate the ability to promote effective behavior in intercultural communication settings (Berry, 1997; Kim, 2002). They also demonstrate the skill to adjust their self-construal in order to function successfully in different cultural context. On the other hand, those individuals with marginal orientations seemed less flexible in intercultural interaction due to their isolation from their own culture and new culture.

**Cultural Orientations of Individuals and Communication Predispositions**

The findings of this study revealed no support for the second and third hypotheses. The second and third hypotheses examined communication predispositions and cultural orientations of individuals (bicultural, independent, interdependent, and marginal), respectively in light of people’s motivations to avoid and to approach classroom communication (i.e., classroom communication apprehension as an avoidance motivation and argumentativeness as an approach motivation). Both results from the path analysis and one-way ANOVA did not show any significant link between cultural orientations of individuals, classroom communication apprehension and argumentativeness in the U.S. college classroom. Although there was no direct link between cultural orientations of individuals and communication predispositions, results from the path analysis showed the mediation process from cultural orientations of individuals to communication predisposition (classroom communication apprehension and argumentativeness) through intercultural sensitivity. In short, results from the path analysis indicated that cultural
orientations of individuals lead to intercultural sensitivity, which influences predispositions toward verbal communication in the U.S. college classrooms (see below for further discussion).

**Intercultural Sensitivity and Communication Predispositions**

The fourth and fifth hypotheses investigated relationships between intercultural sensitivity and people’s motivations to avoid and approach communication in the U.S. college classroom (i.e., communication apprehension as an avoidance motivation and argumentativeness as an approach motivation). Both results from the path analysis and one-way ANOVA show significant links between intercultural sensitivity and the degree of communication predispositions. The findings showed a positive link between the degrees of intercultural sensitivity and the levels of argumentativeness in the U.S. college classroom (see below for further discussion). The findings are consistent with the ideas that those individuals who established intercultural sensitivity may have developed communication and behavioral flexibility and skills in approaching an argument situation in order to succeed in the U.S. educational culture. Contrary to the prediction, results indicated the levels of intercultural sensitivity positively and significantly affected the degree of classroom communication apprehension (see below for further discussion).

**The Theoretical Model**

The hypothesized model was tested with path analysis. The major findings were consistent with the results from the one-way ANOVA mentioned above. First, the results indicated there were no direct links between cultural orientations of individuals between communication dispositions (i.e., classroom communication apprehension and argumentativeness). Second, there was a significant relationship between cultural orientations of individuals and intercultural
sensitivity. Third, intercultural sensitivity positively affected classroom communication apprehension. Fourth, intercultural sensitivity positively affected argumentativeness.

Firstly, the findings are consistent with the idea that individuals with bicultural orientations may have developed the ability to adjust their behaviors to those of another culture. In other words, those participants with bicultural orientations may have integrated U.S. cultural values and norms, and developed new roles and skills to meet its demands, especially by the U.S. educational culture and its system, while maintaining their own cultural values.

Secondly, the findings are also consistent with the ideas that those bicultural orientation individuals who established intercultural sensitivity may have developed communication and behavioral flexibility and skills in approaching an argument situation in order to succeed in the U.S. educational culture. Contrary to the prediction, however, the results indicated the levels of intercultural sensitivity positively and significantly affected the degree of classroom communication apprehension. More precisely, those bicultural orientation individuals with the higher level of intercultural sensitivity showed the higher degree of classroom communication apprehension in the U.S. college classroom context. There seems to be at least one plausible explanation for this. Chen and Starosta (1996) claimed that the individuals must possess to six affective elements to be interculturally sensitive and empathy is a core component of intercultural sensitivity. Empathy refers to the ability to step into one’s culturally-different counterparts’ mind to develop the same thoughts and emotions in interaction (Chen & Starosta, 1996). Thus, it is possible that those individuals who developed intercultural sensitivity may be found to be more concerned for others’ feelings and reactions, more accurate in observing the internal states of their counterparts, and more able to show active listening. In short, according to
Chen and Starosta (2000, p.112), “the more empathic a person is, the more interculturally sensitive one will be.”

Despite a surprising positive link between intercultural sensitivity and classroom communication apprehension, the role of cultural orientations of individuals and intercultural sensitivity in this model underscores the centrality of “being interculturally sensitive” in accounting for communication predispositions in the U.S. college classroom context. In short, it is important to note the mediation role of intercultural sensitivity. Consistent with the existing literature, data from the present study fit a model in which the influence of cultural orientations of individuals was fully mediated by intercultural sensitivity. In other words, those students from East Asian countries with bicultural orientations developed the higher degree of intercultural sensitivity, which, in turn, led to develop the higher level of argumentativeness and classroom communication apprehension. Many theoretical approaches in intercultural communication invoke intercultural sensitivity processes and components as behavioral flexibility, which refers to the ability to choose an appropriate response to different situations (Bochner and Kelly, 1974). Such adaptability or behavioral flexibility is an important component that leads individuals to be interculturally competent (Chen, 1989, 1990; Martin, 1987). In short, intercultural sensitive persons are able to choose the persona from their repertoire of selves that matches the dynamics of the culturally diverse situation. To understand individual behavior in intercultural setting or interaction in the U.S. college classroom, intercultural sensitivity factors that mediate cultural orientations of individuals may need to be taken into consideration.

Implications for Theory and Practice

This research study focused on the relationships between cultural orientations of individuals, intercultural sensitivity, classroom communication apprehension, and
argumentativeness in the U.S. college classroom among East Asian international students. Overall, the results were consistent with literature but expand the theoretical base of knowledge by adding bicultural and marginal orientations of individuals, focusing on East Asian international students (i.e., interdependent self-construal), and including intercultural sensitivity as a mediating variable. The findings of this study provide important insights with regard to how cultural orientations of individuals influence intercultural sensitivity, which, in turn, lead to people’s motivations to avoid and to approach classroom communication. Results indicate that cultural orientations of individuals were the predictor of intercultural sensitivity and that lead to the predictor of communication predispositions. Based on the findings from the present study, several important implications for the scholarship and practice are evident. The following sections summarize this study’s important theoretical contributions as well as implications to the field of instructional and intercultural communication as well as multicultural, international and higher education.

**Theoretical Implications**

The present study examined the relationships between four types of cultural orientations of individuals (bicultural, independent, interdependent, and marginal), perceived intercultural sensitivity, classroom communication apprehension, and argumentativeness in the U.S. college classroom context. The results from the study can provide significant contributions to the field of intercultural communication because the area of communication patterns of the bicultural or multicultural person has not yet been fully established empirically. Tajfel (1982) claimed that identification with two different cultural groups can be problematic because cultural group members can have conflicts in attitudes, values, and behaviors between their own group and the majority group. If an individual tries to participate both in the in-group and the out-group (e.g.,
mainstream and ethnocultural), such an individual may fail to have a sense of belonging and in turn lose of self-esteem. From a Western individualistic point of view, individuals with the coexistence of opposite cultural orientations, independent and interdependent self-construals, may be seen as conflicting and unstable (Kim, 2002). In short, in the mainstream U.S. culture worldview, the assumption of “one person, one culture,” has been strongly associated with cultural orientations or cultural identity of individuals. Based on these viewpoints, acquiring a second or multiple cultures are considered as negative and subtractive because individuals should make their cultural identity distinct from others and must choose one. However, as the present study indicates the coexistence of individualistic and interdependent orientations can be viewed as an advantage because such bicultural individuals tend to develop an intercultural sensitive outlook that permits the recognition, acceptance, and appreciation of unfamiliar or culturally different views and ideas. Because of their behavioral and communication flexibility, those interculturally sensitive individuals can be constructive in dealing with a culturally diverse population as well as situations. In short, in paralleling with the current literature on intercultural sensitivity, those individuals who acquire a greater awareness of their own and other cultures obtain the skills required for communicating effectively without psychological stress or conflict. It can be viewed as a first step toward intercultural communication competence.

In addition to such contributions to the field, the findings from the present study provide important implications for instructional communication. Within the U.S. classroom context, a general conclusion is that communication approach (e.g., argumentativeness) is the one of the components that leads to the goals of intercultural communication competence. Competence was defined by scholars as the acquired ability to interact successfully (Foote & Cootrell, 1955; Holland & Baird, 1986). Communication scholars, Spitzberg and Cupach (1984) defined
intercultural communication competence as a context-specific behavior. Chen and Staroasta (1998) defined as “the ability to effectively and appropriately execute communication competence to elicit a desired response in a specific environment.” Talkativeness is positively valued in U.S. society and in the educational context (McCroskey & Richmond, 1995). It is not surprising that such verbal communication behavior is required to “survive” in the academic setting in the U.S. higher education. Those students who achieved bicultural orientations developed the ability in intercultural sensitivity that allows them communication and behavioral flexibility in various contexts. This affects their communication approach in the U.S. college classroom settings. On the other hand, those students with interdependent or marginal orientations have not achieved or did not achieve such skills in intercultural sensitivity that leads them to communication flexibility in the U.S. college classroom. In other words, interdependent and marginal individuals, who are low in intercultural sensitivity and less vocal or verbal in the U.S. cultural or classroom context, are considered to be less attractive. In the era of the multicultural society, cultural diversity has to be acknowledged, understood, and appropriately handled in the U.S. college classrooms. Many theorists and researchers have shaped Western, ethnocentric bias toward advocating the independent self or individualistic cultural orientations (Sampson, 1977, 1988; Sharkey & Singelis, 1995). When extending this conceptualization of cultural orientations of self portrays the low levels of communication approach in the U.S. college classroom context. Such notions are often considered as a negative tendency of individuals who needs to be “fixed” in order to survive in the U.S. college. Nevertheless, as the findings from the present study indicated, any generalization related to the differences in verbal communication approach could be frame of reference to cultural orientations of individuals.
In addition, the findings from the present study support the notion that verbal communication motivation function differently across cultures. The implications for these relationships between cultural orientations of individuals and communication predisposition are extensive. The idea that mainstream culture defines the degree of verbal communication is considered as standard or normal was supported. Furthermore, the findings from the present study provide the significant insight with regard to who will be required to adjust to whose level of verbal communicativeness, and whose verbal style will be believed as unusual, irrational, or inferior. Differences in such views can be a root of intercultural misunderstanding.

**Practical Implications**

Like numerous theoretical implications, this study offers key practical implications as well. First, results of this project provide support that cultural orientations of individuals influence intercultural sensitivity that are related to verbal communication success in the U.S college classroom. Although the idea of relationship between intercultural sensitivity and verbal communication success or communication competence in the U.S. college classroom seems clear, not all research has made this explicit connection, particularly in the higher education settings and among East Asian international student population. Based on such findings, it is important first of all that educational institutions and instructors in the U.S. recognize cultural differences brought to the educational process by international students. Second, educational institutions and instructors in the U.S. may need to assist those international students who are in the process of transitioning if their cultural orientations have bicultural orientations. Third, they also emphasize the importance of intercultural sensitivity with underlying behavioral and communication flexibility, thereby appreciating and understanding different cultural viewpoints.
Additionally, in order to respond to cultural diversity in the classroom, instructors must not ignore those individuals with marginal and interdependent cultural orientations. Those individuals may be labeled as being quiet, not active, and not prepared for the class by the instructors and fellow classmates. It is important for instructors and other classmates to recognize much of our communication behavior in the classroom is not interpreted in the way we intend it by people from different cultural backgrounds. Besides, some instructors may knowingly or unknowingly communicate their cultural biases in the classroom. Therefore, to organize a culturally responsive classroom and diverse instructional approach, instructors also should possess effective communication strategies and intercultural sensitivity. In short, instructors should be aware of his or her cultural values and be concerned about imposing his or her own cultural framework on his or her students.

Lastly, the present study provides important implications for culture, communication, and education. It is important for educators to acknowledge that the educational process mirrors cultural power. The things we study and do not study, the way we communicate in the classroom, and relationships between instructors and students involve issues of power. Whose communication styles sets the climate and tone in the classroom? Why are interactions between instructors and students often embedded in a hierarchical relationship? The answers to such questions must do with issues of power. It is very important to be aware that everyone’s culture is not treated the same in a classroom as well as curriculum in the U.S. higher education.

**Limitations of the Study and Future Directions for Research**

Several limitations to this study should be discussed. First, the sample size was minimal (N = 114) in this study. Since the targeting samples were very specific – only international students from East Asian countries including Japan, Korea, China, Hong Kong, and Taiwan – the
response rate for the questionnaire was relatively low. The current sample size may not be
powerful enough to draw generalization. Furthermore, the East Asian international students
sample was collected only from the University of Hawaii at Manoa (UHM). This selection bias
may also decrease the generalizability of the results of this study because international students
from UHM are only a subset of the international student population in the U.S. Therefore, in
order to be representative of the population, future studies should strive for larger samples of
East Asian international students from various locations in the U.S.

Second, the present study was conducted in an academic setting in Hawaii. With strong
Asian influence in Hawaii compared to the mainland U.S., the respondents from East Asian
countries may not experience and may not encounter extreme cultural differences. Therefore, the
study might have different findings if conducted in cross-cultural academic settings or a
university environment in the mainland U.S. Future research should examine a wider variety of
different populations with differing socio-cultural backgrounds and locations.

Third, the current study focused only on two constructs of communication
predispositions: communication apprehension and argumentativeness. Future studies should
examine how other communication predispositions such as communication adaptability are
related to individuals with different cultural orientations.

Fourth, the r-square results suggest the model accounts for about 22% of the variance in
argumentativeness but only a little more than 4% of the variance in classroom communication
apprehension. The findings suggest that there may be other factors influencing those two
variables other than cultural orientations of individuals and intercultural sensitivity. One of the
possible variables influencing verbal communication styles in the classroom may be classroom
climate (Friedman, 1980). Creating a warm, easygoing climate in the classroom may help those
students with low degrees of verbal communication motivation. Having a culturally sensitive environment, for example, students can get to know one another at the beginning of the semester. Other examples of classroom climate would be having students speak as a group rather than individually, allowing students to work with classmates with whom they feel comfortable, and having students speak from their seats rather than from the front of the room.

Fifth, the present study utilized a self-construal scale to measure cultural orientations of individuals. However, there may be other personality measures that affect cultural orientations of individuals. Therefore, future research should explore another way to operationalize cultural orientations of individuals.

Lastly, since the study examined the perceived communication predispositions and intercultural sensitivity, the results may not be the same as the actual communication behaviors of the respondents. Future studies will need to investigate actual communication behaviors of individuals with different cultural orientations.

Conclusion

The increasing flow of international exchange by individuals, education, and businesses demands a greater emphasis on intercultural sensitivity and intercultural communication competence more than ever before. Globalization has significantly changed both macro and micro-level communication and the ways in which is defined oneself within the larger society. In addition, education is an essential context for intercultural communication, since instructors and students come from a variety of cultural backgrounds and bring a variety of outlooks to the classroom. If instructors and students communicate in ways that are not sensitive to cultural differences, the educational institutions may end up reproducing the social and cultural inequality in the American society. The significant question brought by the findings reported in
this study concern the strategies to handle students with marginal or interdependent cultural orientations who may be considered as quiet students by instructors. Instructors may perceive those less verbal students in the classroom to be less competent than more talkative students (Richmond & McCroskey, 1998). It is important for instructors to recognize that student communicative behaviors influence how they perceive and communicate with their students. Furthermore, it is also important for instructors to be aware that some students prefer not to communicate and/or are afraid of communicating. Therefore, instructors may need to find methods to enhance their perceptual accuracy of students and increase their awareness of the instructor-student communication dynamic so that they can more skillfully adapt their teaching style to enhance learning.
REFERENCES


Cushner, K. (1986). *The inventory of cross-cultural sensitivity*. School of Education, Kent State University, OH.


Huba, M. E., & Freed, J. E. (2000). *Learner-Centered Assessment on College Campuses: Shifting the focus from teaching to learning.* Allyn and Bacon


P. O. Nwosu (Eds.), *Transcultural Realities: Interdisciplinary Perspectives on Cross-Cultural Relations* (pp. 3-31). Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications.


1-39.


APPENDIX A: EMAIL COVER LETTER

Dear Student:

My name is Aki M. Kuioka and I am a doctorate candidate in education at University of Hawaii at Manoa. I am currently completing my doctoral dissertation on the effect of cultural orientations of individuals on communication predispositions and intercultural sensitivity. As part of my dissertation project, I would like to invite you to participate in an online survey regarding communication predispositions and intercultural sensitivity.

This survey will take approximately 20-25 minutes to complete. The data collected in this study will address a critical research gap regarding cultural orientations of individuals and communication styles and intercultural sensitivity. Participant’s name will not be used. The responses will be combined in a summary format so that the answer will remain confidential. The results of this study will be analyzed as part of my doctoral dissertation, may be reproduced in professional journals. You may review the data at any time prior to my oral defense and/or written publication by contacting me at email listed below after September 2010.

Participation in this study is voluntary and you may withdraw from part or all of this study at any time without penalty. The Committee on Human Studies has reviewed my request to conduct this project. If you have any questions concerning your rights as a human subject, please feel free to contact, (808) 956-5007.

Thank you for your time in completing this survey. You participation will make a significant impact to our understanding of cultural orientations of individuals, communication predispositions, and intercultural sensitivity. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me directly at akuioka@hawaii.edu.

Please follow the link below to learn more about the survey and consent to participate.

Sincerely,

Aki Leslie Kuioka
Doctorate Candidate, College of Education, Educational Foundations
University of Hawaii at Manoa
APPENDIX B: INFORMED CONSENT FORM

Title: The Effect of Cultural Orientations of Individuals on Communication Predispositions and Intercultural Sensitivity

Investigator: Aki L. Kuioka

You are being invited to take part in a research study. Before you decide whether or not to take part, it is important for you to understand why the research is being done and what it will involve. Please take time to read the following information carefully.

The Purpose of the Study
The purpose of this study is to gain a better understanding of the effect of cultural orientations of individuals on communication attitudes and intercultural sensitivity. The data collected in this study will address a critical research gap regarding cultural orientations of individuals and communication styles and intercultural sensitivity.

Description of Procedures
If you agree to participate in this study, your participation will last for about 20-25 minutes and will involve completing an online survey. If you agree to participate, you will complete a survey concerning cultural orientations, communication predispositions, and intercultural sensitivity. By clicking on the agree button below you will directed to the website where you will complete the survey and submit it. You may skip question that you do not wish to answer or that makes you feel uncomfortable.

Voluntary Participation
Your participation in this study is completely voluntary and you may refuse to participate or choose to stop participating at any time. If you decide to not participate in the study or leave the study early, it will not result in any penalty.

Withdrawal from the Study
You can stop participating in the study at any time, for any reason, if you so decide. If you decide to stop participating, you will still be eligible to receive the promised pay for agreeing to be in the project. Your decision to stop participating, or to refuse to answer particular questions, will not affect your relationship with the researchers, University of Hawaii, or any other group associated with this project. In the event you withdraw from the study, all associated data collected will be immediately destroyed wherever possible.

Confidentiality
All information you supply during in the online survey will remain confidential. It will be used for academic research purposes only. No name will be associated with completed survey.

Risks
There are no foreseeable risks at this time from participating in this study.
Benefits of Research
If you decide to participate in this study, there may no direct benefit to you. If is hoped that the information gained in this study will benefit the field of communication and education by providing valuable information on the context of the interconnection between culture and communication. By understanding the factors how cultural orientations of individuals influence communication styles and intercultural sensitivity, particularly, in educational setting, colleges and universities can offer a richer and more diverse curriculum and provide invaluable opportunity for everyone on campus to embrace the luxury of world culture first-hand.

Questions About the Research?
If you have questions about the research in general or about your role in the study, please feel free to contact me at akuoka@hawaii.edu or 956-6354. This research has been reviewed and approved by the Committee on Human Studies at University of Hawaii. If you have any questions about the rights of research subjects, you cannot obtain satisfactory answers to your questions, have comments or complaints about your participation in this study, please contact the Committee on Human Studies, (808) 956-5007.

Subject Signature
By typing your name in the entry boxes below then pressing the SUBMIT button, you indicate that you voluntarily agree to participate in this study, that the study has been explained to you, that you have been given the time to read the document and that your questions have been satisfactorily answered.

Your Last Name: ____________________________

Your First Name: ____________________________


APPENDIX C: SURVEY

PERSONAL REACTION INVENTORY

General Directions: This survey consists of five sections. Please read the instructions in each section carefully before answering the questions. This is not a test, so there are no right or wrong answers.

SECTION 1

Directions: Using the scale below, indicate to what degree you disagree/agree with each statement provided. It may be helpful to think of “groups” as your peer group. Please use scale below:

1 = strongly disagree  7 = strongly agree

<p>| | | | | | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>I should be judged on my own merit.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>I voice my opinions in group discussions.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>I feel uncomfortable disagreeing with my group.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>I conceal my negative emotions so I won't cause unhappiness among the members of my group.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>My personal identity, independent of others, is very important to me.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>I prefer to be self-reliant rather than dependent on others.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>I act as a unique person, separate from others.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>I don't like depending on others.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>My relationships with those in my group are more important than my personal accomplishments.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>My happiness depends on the happiness of those in my group.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>I often consider how I can be helpful to specific others in my group.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>I take responsibility for my own actions.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>It is important for me to act as an independent person.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>I have an opinion about most things: I know what I like and I know what I don't like.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>I enjoy being unique and different from others.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>I don't change my opinions in conformity with those of the majority.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>Speaking up in a work/task group is not a problem for me.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>Having a lively imagination is important to me.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>Understanding myself is a major goal in my life.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>I enjoy being admired for my unique qualities.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>I am careful to maintain harmony in my group.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>When with my group, I watch my words so I won't offend anyone.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>I would sacrifice my self-interests for the benefit of my group.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24</td>
<td>I try to meet the demands of my group, even if it means controlling my own desires.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td>It is important to consult close friends and get their ideas before making decisions.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26</td>
<td>I should take into consideration my parents' advice when making education and career plans.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27</td>
<td>I act as fellow group members prefer I act.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28</td>
<td>The security of being an accepted member of a group is very important to me.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
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<tr>
<td>29</td>
<td>If my brother or sisters fails, I feel responsible.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### SECTION 2

Instructions: This questionnaire contains statements about arguing controversial issues. Indicate how often each statement is true for you personally by circling the appropriate number the best represents your level of agreement with the item. Use the following scale:

Remember, consider each item in terms of arguing controversial issues in the classroom.

1 = strongly disagree    7 = strongly agree

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>I worry that the instructor will call on me during class.</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>If I have a question I want answered, I usually wait for someone else to ask it in class.</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>I don't like speaking in class because I feel that I do not have as much to say as most other students.</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>I usually do not speak in class unless called on by the instructor.</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>I have difficulty organizing my thoughts when I want to say something in class.</td>
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<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>I enjoy assuming the role of leader during a class discussion.</td>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>I often hesitate to speak during class discussions because many other students seem to be more fluent than me.</td>
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<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>I don't like speaking in class even when I think I know an answer to a question asked by the instructor.</td>
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<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>I like participating in discussion because I feel I can convince others about what I am saying.</td>
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<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>I always avoid speaking in class discussion if possible.</td>
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<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>If the instructor called on me during discussion I would feel at a loss for words or wouldn't know what to say.</td>
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<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>I participate in class discussion more often than most other students.</td>
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<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>I am often afraid that the instructor or the class may not understand what I am trying to say during discussion.</td>
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<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>I would rather listen than participate in a class discussion.</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>I like speaking during class discussion because most students listen to what I say.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>I am hesitant about speaking in class unless the instructor specifically asks for questions from the class.</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>I am often afraid I will say something that is wrong during a discussion.</td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>I would speak during a class discussion even if I was not required to do so for part of my grade in the course.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>I usually feel too tense or nervous to participate in class.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>I avoid enrolling in classes that I think require class participation.</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### SECTION 3

Directions: Indicate how characteristic or descriptive each of the following statements is of you by circling the appropriate number. Use the following scale:
1 = strongly disagree 7 = strongly agree

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. While in an argument in a class discussion, I worry that the person I am arguing with will form a negative opinion for me.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Arguing over controversial issues in a class discussion improves my intelligence.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. I enjoy avoiding arguments in a class discussion.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. In a class discussion, I am energetic and enthusiastic when I argue.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Once I finish an argument in a class discussion, I promise myself that I will not get into another.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Arguing with another classmate or instructor creates more problems than it solves.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. I have a pleasant, good feeling when I win a point in an argument during a class discussion.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. When I finish arguing with a classmate, I feel nervous and upset.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. I enjoy a good argument over a controversial issue in a class discussion.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. I get an unpleasant feeling when I realize I am about to get into an argument in a class.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. I enjoy defending my point of view on an issue during a class discussion.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. I am happy when I keep an argument from happening in a class discussion.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. I do not like to miss the opportunity to miss a controversial issue in class.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. I prefer being with people who rarely disagree with me.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. I consider an argument an exciting intellectual challenge.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16. I find myself unable to think of effective points during an argument.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17. I feel refreshed and satisfied after an argument on a controversial issue.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18. I have the ability to do well in an argument in the class.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19. I try to avoid getting into arguments in the class.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20. I feel excitement when I expect that a conversation I am in is leading to an argument.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**SECTION 4**

Below is a series of statements concerning intercultural communication. There are no right or wrong answers. Please indicate the degree to which you agree or disagree with the statement and place a circle the appropriate number. Use the following scale:

1 = strongly disagree 7 = strongly agree

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. I enjoy interacting with people from different cultures.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. I think people from other cultures are narrow-minded.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. I am pretty sure of myself in interacting with people from different cultures.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. I find it very hard to talk in front of people from different cultures.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. I always know what to say when interacting with people from different cultures.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. I can be as sociable as I want to be when interacting with people from different cultures.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. I don’t like to be with people from different cultures.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. I respect the values of people from different cultures.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
I get upset easily when interacting with people from different cultures.

I feel confident when interacting with people from different cultures.

I tend to wait before forming an impression of culturally-distinct counterparts.

I often get discouraged when I am with people from different cultures.

I am open-minded to people from different cultures.

I am very observant when interacting with people from different cultures.

I often feel useless when interacting with people from different cultures.

I respect the ways people from different cultures behave.

I try to obtain as much information as I can when interacting with people from different cultures.

I would not accept the opinions of people from different cultures.

I am sensitive to my culturally-distinct counterpart’s subtle meanings during our interaction.

I think my culture is better than other cultures.

I am careful to maintain harmony in my group.

I avoid those situations where I will have to deal with culturally-distinct persons.

I often show my culturally-distinct counterpart my understanding through verbal or nonverbal cues.

I have a feeling of enjoyment towards differences between my culturally-distinct counterpart and me.

**SECTION 5**

Here we ask you for some background information about yourself. These questions are just to see if our sample is like the general population. Please keep in mind that your answers are strictly confidential.

1. Sex □ male □ female

2. Age: ___________ years old

3. Country of Origin (country where you are born):
   □ Japan □ South Korea □ China □ Hong Kong □ Taiwan
   □ Others (please specify): ____________________

4. Name of the country where you grew up and how long?

________________________________________________________________________

5. Nationality:
   □ Japan □ South Korea □ China □ Hong Kong □ Taiwan
   □ Others (please specify): ____________________

6. Citizenship:

________________________________________________________________________

7. What is your ethnic background?
8. What is your native language? ________________________________

9. Types of visa you are holding currently (if you have one):
   - None
   - F-1
   - J-1
   - Other (please specify) ____________________________

10. How long have you been studying in Hawaii? ________________________________

11. How long have you been living in the United States? ________________________________

12. What is your level of education?
   - Undergraduate: □ Freshman □ Sophomore □ Junior □ Senior
   - Graduate: □ Master □ PhD

13. What is your major? ________________________________

14. When are you planning to graduate?
   - Fall 10 □ Spring 11 □ Summer 11 □ in 2 years □ in 3 years
   - in 4 years □ more than 5 years

15. How long have you been studying English? ________________________________

16. Have you studied and used oral English communication before coming to Hawaii? If so, how long and where?
   - Yes □ No □
   - If yes, how long? _______________ And where? _______________

17. Have you attended international school? If so, how long and where?
   - Yes □ No □
   - If yes, how long? _______________ And where? _______________

18. Have you been abroad before coming to Hawaii? If so, how long and where?
   - Yes □ No □
   - If yes, how long? _______________ And where? _______________

THANK YOU FOR YOUR PARTICIPATION!