Managerial Competence within the Hospitality and Tourism Service Industries

Global cultural contextual analysis

John Saee

Routledge Advances in Management and Business Studies

Managerial Competence within the Hospitality and Tourism Service Industries

"Excellent reading and source of knowledge for researchers and business practitioners who deal with the issue of managing culturally diverse workforces in the domestic or international setting." – Henri Jolles, European School of Management, France

"A ground breaking research culminating in a new paradigm of managerial excellence on global managment" – Dr Willem Arthur Hamel, Chairman, Maximilian Press Publishing Company and President, Association of Management and International Association of Management, USA

This timely book examines cross-cultural managerial communication competence and its application within the service industry. Focusing particularly on the hospitality and tourism industry, John Saee examines the cross-cultural implications of competence across all managerial functions: planning, workplace communication, recruitment/promotion, induction, training, supervision, industrial relations, management of change, customer service, financial management and marketing.

This is the first detailed study – at a national level – of current psychological and sociological theories of intercultural communication, linked to an investigation of the management of cultural diversity in the workplace within a multicultural society, a study which has global implications. This cutting-edge research advances new modalities of best practice on managerial competence which can be equally applied to all other industries around the world confronted with cultural diversity in the workplace.

Incorporating well-structured discussion, the book demonstrates an excellent balance of theory and practical application, and takes an innovative angle on the analysis of host country managers' undergoing culture shock. It will be topical reading for students across many disciplines: including cross-cultural studies, international business and tourism; as well as for professional organisations providing support services to the hospitality and tourism industries.

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Routledge
Taylor & Francis Group
LONDON AND NEW YORK

First published 2006
by Routledge
2 Park Square, Milton Park, Abingdon, Oxon OX14 4RN

Simultaneously published in the USA and Canada
by Routledge
270 Madison Ave, New York, NY 10016

Routledge is an imprint of the Taylor & Francis Group, an informa business

British Library Cataloguing in Publication Data
A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library

Library of Congress Cataloging in Publication Data
A catalog record for this book has been requested

ISBN10: 0-415-38596-2 (hbk)
ISBN10: 0-203-96620-4 (ebk)

ISBN13: 978-0-415-38596-1 (hbk)
ISBN13: 978-0-203-96620-4 (ebk)

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Preface

This research study investigates the nature of intercultural managerial communication competence and its application within the service industry, in particular, the Australian hospitality and tourism service industries with regard to managerial functions such as planning, workplace communication, recruitment/promotion, induction, training, supervision, industrial relations, management of change, customer service, financial management and marketing. This is the first detailed study at a national level where current psychological and sociological theories of intercultural communication are critically examined and linked to an investigation of management of cultural diversity in a workplace in a particular service industry in a multicultural Australian society. This particular service industry represents a very significant economic sector in all industrial societies so that findings from this research will have global managerial implications.

Meanwhile, Australian hospitality and tourism industries represent a significantly high percentage of culturally diverse human resources. Also, coupled with a high degree of globalisation in terms of ownership and international clientele, as well as global trade (Noriander, 1990). These industries are also becoming increasingly important to the Australian economy. According to Tourism Training Australia (1998), hospitality and tourism are fast becoming Australia's predominant foreign exchange earner, generating considerable employment, wealth and prosperity for the nation as a whole. For example, "There are more than 500,000 people employed by the tourism and hospitality industry in Australia."

Equally, it is instructive to note that the revenue generated worldwide through global tourism and hospitality is phenomenal. The World Travel and Tourism Council (cited in Adam, 1998) indicates that "tourism and hospitality global revenue stands at $4.7 trillion, and is expected to rise to over $9 trillion in 2006. The number of jobs in the industry will jump up by 50 per cent to 385 million" (Adam, 1998, p.30). Further, research by WTTC (2005) predicts that by 2014, travel and tourism could generate 10.9 per cent of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and some 260 million jobs, representing 8.6 per cent of total employment worldwide.

Similarly, within the European continent, the tourism industry and other related activities, for example, represent 12 per cent of the GDP and twenty million jobs. The continuous growth of tourism into the European Union has

been enormous: twenty-five million international arrivals in 1950, 165 million in 1970, 693 million in 2001 and 1.5 billion forecast for the year 2020 (Cabrini, 2002).

From contemporary communication theories, implications were determined for managerial practices in a culturally diverse workplace and workforce. A profile of the Australian hospitality and tourism industries was produced, identifying the challenges of cultural diversity for managers. Based upon the published literature on theories of intercultural communication and competence, eight research objectives and eight research questions were determined for investigation in the context of management in the industries.

Research was conducted using a multiple case study of six major national and international organisations, involving in-depth interviews, ethnomethodology, historical analysis and documentary evidence. Senior managers representing different sectors of the Australian hospitality and tourism industries participated. The results suggested that these managers generally showed a limited understanding of the cross-cultural communication dimensions of management, precipitated by a lack of management training and education, for example, in communication theories. This apparent gap in theoretical and applied knowledge of intercultural communication competence was generally reflected in an inadequate ability to deal with cultural diversity in managerial functions such as planning, workplace communication, recruitment/promotion, induction, training, supervision, industrial relations, management of change, customer service, financial management and marketing as well as in their perceptions of corporate culture.

Arising from the grounded theory used in this study, two new models were developed of intercultural managerial communication competence and of competent managerial practice, respectively, for the management of cultural diversity in the workplace with global implications. These models can be applied to communication management and management of cultural diversity in other industries, domestic and international, and suggestions are made for future directions for research.

In summary, the study in this research project led to four major contributions. First, the study explained the psychological processes relating to the intercultural communication competence of members of the host culture, namely Australian hospitality and tourism managers. Second, the perceived knowledge of the representative managers about intercultural communication competence and its application to their daily managerial functions has been identified and examined. The managers in this study were found to have shortcomings in their ability to apply intercultural communication competence to their managerial functions. Third, there is now a greater understanding of how members of the host culture empathise with sojourners' psychological adaptation to that culture. Fourth, two new models of intercultural communication competence and competent managerial practice respectively for the management of cultural diversity in the workplace have been developed from both an analysis of published literature and the qualitative research findings, new models with global implications.

Acknowledgements

The author owes an enormous debt of gratitude to scholars and to my students from around the world who have through their writings and debates helped me to extend the frontiers of knowledge in an area of increasing importance such as intercultural managerial competence within contemporary global economy. In particular, the author wishes to record his deep appreciation to a number of colleagues for their support in this intellectual enterprise, including Olga Muzychenko, Elias Hadzilias, Shirley Saunders, Michael Kaye, Dennis Ottley, Will Hamel, Jean-Phillipe Ammeux, Daniel Buyl, Elian Chekroun, Pascal Amaye, David Hayward, Henri Jolles, Heinz Klandt, James Liberty, Frank Percy, Bruce Roberts, Terry Clague, Katherine Carpenter and Hannah Dolan.

1 Intercultural communication competence and managerial functions within the Australian hospitality and tourism service industries

> Human beings draw close to one another by their common nature, but habits and customs keep them apart.
>
> (Confucian saying cited in Irwin and More, 1994)

1.1 Statement of the research study

This research study investigates the nature of intercultural communication competence and its application within the Australian hospitality and tourism service industries to managerial functions such as planning, workplace communication, recruitment/promotion, induction, training, supervision, industrial relations, management of change, customer service, financial management and marketing as well as managers' perceptions of corporate culture.

"Intercultural communication" is defined in the study in this research as "involving interpersonal communication between people from different sociocultural systems and/or communication between members of different subsystems (e.g. ethnic or racial groups) within the same sociocultural system" (Gudykunst, 1987, p.848). "Competence" in this study is conceptualised in terms of the widely accepted definition of communication competence namely, fundamental competence: "an individual's ability to adapt effectively to the surrounding environment over time" (Spitzberg and Cupach, 1984, p.35). The central feature of this definition is the focus on adaptability, which is a widely accepted component of communication competence (Duran, 1992; Irwin, 1994, 1996; Lustig and Koester, 1993; Spitzberg and Cupach, 1984; Spitzberg and Duran, 1995; Wiemann and Bradac, 1989; Wiseman and Koester, 1993). Thus, for a manager working with a workforce and clientele of culturally diverse backgrounds it is important to develop an ability to be flexible and adaptable to different cultural contexts, by being sensitive to the cultural situation and acting accordingly (Adler, 1997; Fatehi, 1996; Jackson, 1993; Mahoney *et al.*, 1998). (Chapter 3 discusses theories of intercultural communication and intercultural communication competence.)

Scholars and policy makers suggest that increased intercultural understanding and improved intercultural communication have become increasingly important

to our world of blending cultures, experiences and business practices (Saee, 1998). These views have emerged from recognising increasing globalisation of economies and tourism around the world. More specifically, with reference to the Australian experience, statistics released by the Australian Bureau of Statistics in 1993 showed that the total export of Australian merchandise trade to Asian countries was around 58 per cent, and "continued to rise to 60.5 per cent (i.e. $43.3 billion) in 1995" (*Sydney Morning Herald*, 2 November, 1996, p.1). Meanwhile, inbound tourism to Australia totalled 3.2 million in 1995 (Bureau of Tourism Research, 1995).

Increasing numbers of people from the countries of Asia and other non-English-speaking countries are part of Australian workforces, including that of hospitality as employers, employees and clients. Tourism to Australia particularly of travellers from non-English backgrounds is rising at a phenomenal rate. In 1995, over half of the international visitors to Australia came from Asia, and six of Australia's top ten sources of markets were located in South East Asia. By the turn of the century, more than three in five visitors will live in Asia (Tourism Forecasting Council of Australia, 1996).

Overall, the reality of contemporary Australian cultural diversity (multiculturalism), coupled with the increasing globalisation of business, demands that Australian managers become interculturally competent to capitalise on increasing opportunities and benefits afforded by cultural diversity both nationally and internationally (Saee, 1998). However, little research undertaken to date in Australia has explored the challenges and complexities of intercultural communication, especially relating to the hospitality industry. The absence of either quantitative or qualitative research in relation to the nature of intercultural communication competence within Australian hospitality suggests that it would be useful to design a study to identify and isolate the key determining variables for effective intercultural communication by managers.

Such a study is even more significant because contemporary theories of intercultural communication focus on the sojourners/migrants' responsibility to develop intercultural communication competence rather than on any equivalent requirement on the part of members of the host culture. Thus the aim of this research study is to explore how Anglo Australian hospitality and tourism service industries managers understand and use intercultural communication in their managerial roles. An Australian hospitality and tourism service industries manager is defined in in this research study as an Australian citizen whose mother tongue is English and who holds a management position within the hospitality industry.

The hospitality and tourism industry is defined, in this study, in terms of a number of interrelated organisations namely, hotels, motels, clubs, restaurants, fast-food establishments, institutional catering organisations and leisure and tourism operations (Morrison, 1989). This definition is also consistent with the definition provided by the Australian Training Association (1998) in which it was argued that

> The hospitality industry is made up of many different sectors including food beverage, accommodation, whether national or international markets, and tourism sector. The industry also includes motels, hotels, resorts, and restaurants, clubs, and casinos. The tourism sector of the industry deals with travel, domestic and inbound tourism, and includes travel agencies, tourist information offices, tour wholesalers, attractions, meetings and conventions and tour guiding.
>
> (p.1)

Australian hospitality and tourism were chosen for this study on intercultural communication competence and managerial functions for the following three reasons:

1. The Australian hospitality and tourism represent a significantly high percentage of culturally diverse human resources.
2. The industry represents a high degree of globalisation in terms of ownership and international clientele, as well as global trade (Noriander, 1990).
3. The industry is becoming increasingly important to the Australian economy. In 2003/2004, tourism accounted for AU$32 billion of Australia's total gross domestic product (GDP). International tourism exports contribute 12.1 per cent of total export of goods and services. In 2003/2004, an increase of 1.2 per cent over the previous year. The Tourism Forecasting Committee predicts that the value of inbound tourism will increase from AU$18.5 billion in 2005 to AU$32.1 billion in 2014, representing an average growth of 6.3 per cent (ATEC, 2005).

Further, Russell (1997) reported that the "Tourism business contributed more than $28,500 a minute into the NSW economy" (p.1).

Equally, it is instructive to note that the revenue generated worldwide through the global tourism and hospitality is phenomenal. The World Travel and Tourism Council (cited in Adam, 1998) indicates that "tourism and hospitality global revenue stands at $4.7 trillion, and is expected to rise to over $9 trillion in 2006. The number of jobs in the industry will jump up by 50 per cent to 385 million" (Adam, 1998, p.30). This has obvious implications for the industries' future potential in terms of increased revenue and employment opportunities.

This introductory chapter provides a brief discussion of a number of foundation conceptual issues regarding the study of intercultural communication in this research study. The nature of cultural diversity within Australian society and its organisations, especially within the Australian hospitality and tourism service industries, is reviewed. Managerial functions within these industries are identified and related to cultural diversity in Australia. An overview is provided of differing perspectives/theories of intercultural communication. In addition, the structure of the study is outlined, including a justification for the study and an overview of the research methodology.

1.2 Cultural diversity within Australian society and its organisations with reference to the Australian hospitality and tourism service industries

Post-Second World War Australian society and Australian organisations have undergone massive transformations in terms of the cultural diversity of their workforce.

> The scale of cultural diversity of Australia's population is large: 42% of the population were born overseas or have at least one parent born overseas: approximately 23% were born overseas in a non-English speaking country or have at least one parent from such a country; about 17% speak a language other than English at home; in the last ten years more than 50,000 business migrants have settled in Australia; and about 21% of Australia's 800,000 small businesses are owned or operated by people of non-English speaking backgrounds.
>
> (Beresford, 1995, p.19)

The influx of these people of diverse cultural heritage has enriched Australian society with a wide variety of cultures, arts, languages, philosophies, music, new cuisines, fashions, technology, skills, education and entrepreneurship (Saee, 1993).

In relation to the composition of the Australian workforce, a report released by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (1996) showed that the Australian-born labour force was made up of 6,789,400 workers while some 2,227,300 Australian workers who participated in the workforce were born outside Australia. Non-English-speaking background workers (NESB) comprised 15 per cent of the total workforce (EMD, 1994).

In terms of the composition of the Australian hospitality and tourism service industries' workforce, statistics released by the Bureau of Tourism Research (1995) showed that around 536,000 persons are employed in the hospitality industry. In 1996, this represented 6.2 per cent of total jobs in Australia (Australian National Training Authority, 1996). The statistics on the breakdown of the hospitality workforce by ethnicity are currently unavailable. However present indications suggest that a significant percentage of the hospitality workforce is comprised of people from culturally diverse backgrounds.

Cox and Smolinski (1994) write of the beneficial effect on organisational performance of the effective management of cultural diversity, including greater innovativeness, increased problem-solving capacity, marketing success and attraction of higher-quality staff. Notwithstanding these potential benefits, it has been argued that Australian management has failed to capitalise on its multicultural workforce (Cox and Smolinski, 1994; Karpin, 1995).

1.3 Cultural diversity and managerial functions in Australia

A number of researchers have argued that effective management of a diverse workforce does not just contribute to the welfare and wellbeing of all employees but, more importantly, the return of such "investment" is very rewarding to the development and growth of the overall organisation (Deresky, 1994; Fernandez, 1993; Morrison, 1992).

Managing cultural diversity includes a process of creating and maintaining an environment that encourages all individuals to reach their full potential in pursuit of organisational objectives (Jenner, 1994; Thomas, 1994). In addition, management of diversity is about building specific skills, creating policies and drafting practices that produce the best from every employee. This will not be possible without effective intercultural communication management. By and large, communication is the key to the effective functioning of an organisation. As Thayer (1990) has stated "without communication, nothing can be achieved in an organisation and . . . everything an organisation does and is, is dependent on communication" (pp.6–7).

The association between management and communication can be approached by determining the amount of a manager's time spent on communication. Managers typically spend between 70–80 per cent of their time each day involved in communication processes in the workplace (Harris and Moran, 1991). This includes writing, talking and listening. In fact, all business ultimately comes down to transactions which depend almost entirely on how well managers understand each other (Harris and Moran, 1991). Thus communication underpins all managerial functions. Effective communication is therefore essential for maintaining and enhancing organisational performance in a culturally diverse workplace (Putnis and Petelin, 1996).

Both the Karpin inquiry (1995) and research by the Office of Multicultural Affairs (1994) concluded that, in general, Australian managers failed to utilise cultural diversity in their organisations. In this research study, it is argued that this deficiency will be reflected in Australian managers' key managerial functions of planning, workplace communication, recruitment/promotion, induction, training, supervision, industrial relations, management of change, customer service, marketing and financial management and in their perceptions of corporate culture (OMA, 1994). (See Chapter 2 for a description of each managerial function.) No specific research has been conducted on management practices in the Australian hospitality industries, nor has a single research study investigated intercultural communication competence and its application to managerial functions in Australia. However, some studies of the Australian hospitality industries have highlighted a broad range of managerial problems (Beresford, 1995; James Cook University, 1992). Given the absence of a single study of intercultural communication competence and its potential application to managerial functions within these industries, this research was designed specifically to explore these issues.

1.4 Cultural diversity and communication within the Australian hospitality and tourism service industries

Tourism and migration to Australia have presented considerable challenges for intercultural communication processes. More specifically, there is a growing cultural and ethnic diversity of hospitality and tourism consumers in Australia. "Inbound tourism alone accounted for 3.2 million international visitors to Australia in 1995 who spent over $11.9 billion in various hospitality related activities" (Bureau of Tourism Research, 1995). Similarly, an increasing number of Australians of culturally diverse backgrounds themselves travel, eat out and engage in other leisure activities serviced by the hospitality industry.

Further, Australia's tourism industry directly employed approximately 5 per cent of Australia's workforce in 1990 (Bureau of Tourism Research, 1993). Using the Australian Tourism Commission's 2000 international visitor targets (6.5 million overseas visitors), the Department of Tourism projected that by 2000, the tourism industry could employ 571,000 persons or 6.3 per cent of the total workforce. Migrants are estimated to contribute annually around 46,000 persons of the total new labourforce between 1991 and 2001 (James Cook University, 1992). Notable is the fact that "the hotel industry is facing increased cultural diversity in terms of ownership. There is a high degree of globalisation of hotel ownership taking place throughout the world" (Noriander, 1990).

Effective communication management in a culturally diverse workplace such as the Australian hospitality and tourism service industries is important to the performance of major managerial functions including planning, coordinating, leading, staff motivation and industrial relations. More particularly, the role of communication in the hospitality industry cannot be overemphasised (Brownell, 1991; George, 1993; Powers and Riegel, 1993; Sparks, 1994). However cultural diversity within the hospitality and tourism industries, as for any other Australian culturally diverse industry, poses communication problems. Potentially, some key problems that affect managers' intercultural communication competence result from factors such as: incorrect cultural assumptions; stereotyping; ethnocentrism; insensitivity to others' cultures; prejudice; discrimination; fear of the unknown; threatened identity; fear of rejection; fear of contradiction to one's belief system; misunderstanding of roles; perceptions of different values and behaviour; inaccurate interpretation of verbal and nonverbal behaviour; and uncertainty about gender roles within the cross-cultural setting. In addition, communication problems can arise due to a mismatch between corporate culture and a culturally diverse workforce (Saee, 1998).

Because the hospitality industry is labour-intensive and service-centred, it is a people enterprise. To realise the industry's potential, management needs to understand how ethnicity and culture affect human behaviour in general, and intercultural communication in particular. "Examples of situations where culture can influence both management and a multicultural workforce in the workplace are: communication problems in recruitment/promotion policies, planning, supervision, motivation for professional development and employee counseling

in the hospitality industry" (Tanke, 1990, pp.46–47). Gaining an understanding of these issues in the Australian hospitality and tourism industries is the focus of this research study.

1.5 Theoretical perspectives on intercultural communication

In terms of communication within Australian culturally diverse organisations, including the hospitality and tourism industries, there is first of all a popular view, promulgated by government policy makers and researchers, which emphasises the importance of English-language competence in a multicultural workforce. They suggest that acquiring the ability to speak and write English is enough: that is, any barriers between management and ethnic workers can be overcome by the use of a common language – English (Eyles *et al.*, 1989; Jupp, 1989; Harris, 1996; ROMMPAS, 1986). A major flaw in this view is that it represents a message-centred view of communication which is inadequate for complex contexts involving many human interactions such as the provision of hospitality services. The "English is enough" view does not take into account, for instance, the significance of cultural dimensions which both parties (i.e. migrant and Australian managers) need to contextualise as part of their meaning-centred view of communication, as people attempt to share their intentions (see Chapter 3).

In the past several decades, new theoretical perspectives have been developed to try to illuminate the nature of intercultural communication competence where migrants and the members of a host culture interact. These theories of intercultural communication have their origins in transdisciplinary areas of research and have been derived from the social sciences including cultural anthropology, sociology, general psychology, social psychology, philosophy, education and applied management.

Hall (1955, 1959, 1976) offers a cultural anthropological perspective on intercultural communication, in which he divided cultures of the world into "high-context" and "low-context" cultures and suggested that context influences interpersonal communication and hence intercultural communication (see Chapter 2). Irwin (1996) claimed that an understanding of the context in communication is crucial to avoid unnecessary frustration and misunderstanding. This raises a relevant point for investigation in this research study, namely, how do Australian hospitality and tourism managers consider differing cultural contexts when communicating with their culturally diverse employees and clientele?

From sociology, Hofstede (1980) provides a more empirically based analysis of world cultures known as the cultural dimensions model. (See Chapter 2 for a further explanation of this theory.) According to Hofstede, a number of sociocultural factors are said to influence management and, by extension, intercultural communication such as:

1 Collectivism vs individualism
2 Small vs large power distance

3 Femininity vs masculinity
4 Weak vs strong uncertainty avoidance
5 Confucian dynamism (also referred to as long-term orientation vs short-term orientation)

Psychological theories of intercultural communication hold that a range of variables peculiar to each individual person determine stages of acculturation (i.e. gaining knowledge of the new culture), alienation, assimilation or adaptation to a dominant culture (Bochner, 1981, 1982; Brislin, 1981, 1993; Gudykunst, 1983, 1986; Harris and Moran, 1979; Kim, 1988; Lysgaard, 1955; Oberg, 1960; Searle and Ward, 1990; Ward and Kennedy, 1996). (For discussion of these theories see Chapter 3.) One particular psychological theory of intercultural communication competence is general systems theory (Kim, 1988, 1990; Kim and Ruben, 1988), in which individuals are considered to be systems which function through ongoing interaction with the environment and its inhabitants. Essentially, it has been argued that cultural strangers can develop intercultural communication competence through undergoing a process with four identifiable stages: shock, stress, adaptation and growth (Kim, 1988, 1990).

One major weakness of general systems theory, according to Kaye (1992), is that the responsibility for adaptation and therefore for developing intercultural communication competence appears essentially to lie with the stranger (migrant worker) and not with members of the host culture. In contrast Saee and Kaye (1994) argued that "Communication competence in intercultural contexts should be associated with members of the host culture (Australian managers) as well as with strangers (immigrant workers)" (p.15) and the emphasis in this research is on a study of members of the host culture.

Closely related to general systems theory, the adaptation model of intercultural communication is another psychological theoretical perspective emphasising uncertainty reduction (Gudykunst, 1983, 1986). This model is based on the generally applicable principle that interpersonal communication is enhanced under conditions of reduced uncertainty. Again the focus is on the reaction of the stranger/migrant worker. It is argued that strangers attempt to reduce their uncertainties by seeking "information" which is perceived as adequate for making necessary decisions within an interaction. Thus the uncertainty reduction approach also reinforces an emphasis of general systems theory that it is the responsibility of strangers rather than host-culture members to develop communication competence in intercultural settings. There has never been a study of uncertainty reduction theory applied to the managerial functions of Australian hospitality managers. An aim of this research study is to explore the degrees of uncertainty which these managers (or 'hosts') might experience in their daily intercultural encounters in the workplace.

Another intercultural communication theoretical perspective is convergence theory (Kincaid, 1988). Essentially, the principle of convergence states that if two or more individuals share information with one another, then over time they will tend to converge toward one another leading to a state of greater uniformity.

The main tenet of this theoretical principle is debatable, particularly "as it is hard to imagine that people of diverse cultural backgrounds would renounce their cultural heritage to communicate more effectively with members of the new host culture" (Saee and Kaye, 1994, p.16).

In summary, difficulties arising from the foregoing theoretical perspectives are that they tend to focus analysis on the migrant's assimilation to the host culture. They also ignore the two-way process inherent in communication and that there is a responsibility for developing competence by all parties involved in the communication process. Two other theoretical perspectives helpful for this study of members of the host culture are interpersonal theory and the psychological perspective of culture shock/adaptation processes.

Interpersonal theory is informed and sustained by the ideologies of intimacy (closeness) and performance (competence). The ideology of intimacy holds that closeness between people is a moral good and emphasises openness, authenticity, honesty, trust and empathy. The ideology of performance contends that improved performance is desirable and possible and emphasises communication and relational competence (Irwin, 1996; Irwin and More, 1994).

According to the psychological theory of culture shock/adaptation processes, there are recognised stages of cross-cultural learning/acculturation and adaptation which individual strangers/sojourners experience before they are able to develop intercultural competence in an alien culture. These stages are identified as: initial contact; superficial adjustment; depression; isolation; reintegration/compensation; autonomy/independence (see Chapter 3 for a discussion of these theories).

A manager's intercultural communication competence should ideally include an awareness of these stages and an ability to assist employees and clientele to deal with their experience of these stages. This research explores how psychological adaptation processes, as experienced by international guests during their visits to Australia, are understood by hospitality and tourism managers.

1.6 Justification for the study

Greater intercultural understanding and improved intercultural communication are increasingly important to our world of blending cultures, experiences and business practices. Trends towards globalisation of economies and tourism around the world parallel the expansion in international trade which now far exceeds any single national economy including those of major industrialised countries (Saee, 1998). Rates of growth in international trade increased from a mere US$250 billion in 1965 to US$7.4 trillion in 2002 (Saee, 2005).

The continued rise in international trade has simultaneously led to a situation of growing interdependence of national economies around the world. In addition, there has also been an increasing degree of migration and tourism around the world. In Australia, the momentum for globalisation has developed in recent decades. For example our trade with neighbouring Asian countries has been

growing significantly. Australia's exports to Asia continued to rise to AU$43.3 billion – 60.5 per cent of total exports in 1995 (*Sydney Morning Herald*, 2 November 1996, p.1). Australia's total exports to the world exceeded AU$90 billion dollars, with a strong growth rate of just over 8 per cent over the last five years (DFAT, 1996).

In Australia, as has been noted previously, there is an intercultural imperative related to the composition of the population and its workforce which is highly culturally diverse. More specifically, the Australian hospitality and tourism industries represent a high degree of cultural diversity because of multinational corporate links and culturally diverse employees as well as international clients. Increasing numbers of people from countries in Asia and other non-English-speaking countries participate in these industries as employers, employees and clients (Beresford, 1995).

The reality of contemporary Australian cultural diversity (multiculturalism), coupled with an increasing globalisation of businesses, means that managers need to become interculturally competent to capitalise on the enormous potential of opportunities and benefits afforded by cultural diversity both nationally and internationally. Unfortunately, research conducted here in Australia and overseas (Harris and Moran, 1991; Karpin, 1995) revealed that many corporate and government leaders have not changed their traditional ways of thinking about the nature of work, the worker and the management process itself. Meanwhile the majority of Australian managers appear to lack a sophisticated understanding of nuances inherent in cross-cultural dimensions of their work (Karpin, 1995). The Karpin Inquiry (1995) in Australia showed that the costs associated with the inability of Australian managers to manage cultural diversity within their organisations accounted for the loss of AU$1 billion in productivity per annum. The Karpin Inquiry also estimated that the skills of 450,000 postwar immigrants were unused or significantly underutilised. Research outside Australia (Frank, 1990) reported that there is a high failure rate of cross-national ventures. It is estimated that somewhere between 50 and 75 per cent of all mergers end in failure, due to lack of effective intercultural competence (Frank, 1990).

There are no published quantitative or qualitative findings in relation to intercultural communication competence and its application to managerial functions within the Australian hospitality and tourism industries (see databases e.g. ABI Inform; ABIX (Australasian Business Intelligence); APAIS (Australian Public Affairs Information Service); AUSTROM; Business Australia on Disk; CAB Abstracts; Current Contents; ECONLIT; First Search; and Uncover Journals Database). Thus a study to identify and isolate the key determining variables for effective intercultural communication and its application to managerial functions should increase understanding of issues that are significant for future productivity in a key Australian industry.

Such a study is even more significant because contemporary theories of intercultural communication focus on the sojourners/migrants' responsibility to develop intercultural communication competence rather than on responses of members of the host culture. As Durham (1989) argued,

> By placing the onus on those from ethnic/minority cultures to assimilate, those from the host culture can continue to view their culture's checklist as the unchangeable and 'correct' way to communicate. The problem increases at the organisational level, with systematic discrimination occurring if organisational members accept the dominant culture as the "reality" and other cultures by default as "non-reality".
>
> (p.52)

Durham (1989) further remarked that "intercultural studies are marred by being anecdotal, descriptive, prescriptive in nature; studies usually specify only short term adjustment; and little systematic validity is given to assertions of how personal skills help interpersonal success" (p.54). Thus the major aims of this study were to explore how Australian hospitality and tourism managers understand intercultural communication and how this understanding is used in their managerial roles.

1.7 Research methodology

The methodology adopted in this study is based on qualitative phenomenological research, a multiple case study method which included six hospitality and tourism organisations. The six organisations were selected to obtain a sample that reflected a broad range of managerial opinions within representative sections of the industry. The study used multiple sources of evidence. Finally, twelve managers at different levels of hierarchy across these six organisations were interviewed. Particular care was exercised to select Australian managers who represented the members of the host culture. For this study an Australian manager or member of the host culture was defined as a person whose first language, or mother tongue, is English and who is an Australian citizen. In addition, these selected managers were chosen because of their widely recognised management expertise or length of industry experience. This approach was consistent with the stated aim of this research study. In the absence of a fully developed conceptual framework on intercultural managerial competence, grounded theory was also incorporated in this study in an attempt to develop a new theory of managerial competence. (A detailed discussion of the research methodology is given in Chapter 5.)

1.8 Research aims

The aim of the research was to explore the nature of intercultural communication competence and its application to managerial functions of Australian hospitality and tourism managers. From interpersonal communication theory, theories of world cultures, uncertainty reduction theory and psychological adaptation theory, eight research objectives and eight research questions were identified and explored.

1.9 Research objectives

The specific objectives of the research were:

1 To ascertain potential problems, barriers and obstacles to effective intercultural communication competence, as experienced by the Australian hospitality and tourism managers;
2 To investigate the managers' understanding of intercultural communication in relation to dealing with staff and clients;
3 To determine, in what ways Australian hospitality organisations reflect cultural diversity within their corporate culture and hence their managerial functions;
4 To determine whether the organisations' managers deal effectively with culturally diverse staff and clientele as part of managerial functions e.g. planning, workplace communication, recruitment/promotion, induction, training, supervision, industrial relations, management of change, customer service, financial management and marketing.
5 To ascertain whether intercultural communication competence is influenced by the ability of the managers to establish interpersonal relationships with their culturally diverse workforce;
6 To determine, in what ways the managers experience uncertainty in their daily intercultural encounters in the workplace;
7 To determine whether they have an awareness of psychological adaptation processes, as experienced by international customers during their visits to Australia;
8 To make more general recommendations from this specific study for future research in the area of intercultural communication competence and cross-cultural management.

1.10 Research questions

The following specific research questions were investigated:

1 How do Australian hospitality and tourism managers define intercultural communication competence?
2 In what ways do Australian hospitality and tourism managers experience uncertainty in their daily intercultural encounters in the workplace?
3 How is the intercultural communication competence of Australian hospitality and tourism managers affected by the ability to establish interpersonal relationships?
4 How are psychological adaptation processes, likely to be experienced by international customers during their visits to Australia, understood by Australian hospitality and tourism managers?
5 In what ways do Australian hospitality and tourism managers consider a culturally diverse workforce a "challenge"?

6 How is cultural diversity reflected within Australian hospitality and tourism organisational culture?
7 In what ways has cultural diversity affected Australian hospitality and tourism management practices?

   7.1 In what ways is intercultural communication competence used by Australian hospitality and tourism managers in planning?
   7.2 In what ways is intercultural communication competence used by Australian hospitality and tourism managers in workplace communication?
   7.3 In what ways is intercultural communication competence used by Australian hospitality and tourism managers in recruitment/promotion?
   7.4 In what ways is intercultural communication competence used by Australian hospitality and tourism managers in induction?
   7.5 In what ways is intercultural communication competence used by Australian hospitality and tourism managers in training?
   7.6 In what ways is intercultural communication competence used by Australian hospitality and tourism managers in supervision?
   7.7 In what ways is intercultural communication competence used by Australian hospitality and tourism managers in industrial relations?
   7.8 In what ways is intercultural communication competence used by Australian hospitality and tourism managers in change management?
   7.9 In what ways is intercultural communication competence used by Australian hospitality and tourism managers in customer service?
   7.10 In what ways is intercultural communication competence used by Australian hospitality and tourism managers in financial management?
   7.11 In what ways is intercultural communication competence used by Australian hospitality and tourism managers in marketing?

8 What training strategies are available for Australian hospitality and tourism managers to advance their intercultural communication competence and enhance their management of cultural diversity?

1.11 Structure of the research study

Chapter 1 introduces the research problem, giving an outline of the contextual background of cultural diversity and of managerial intercultural communication within Australian culturally diverse organisations, especially within the Australian hospitality and tourism service industries. Managerial functions are linked to cultural diversity. Existing intercultural communication theories are reviewed briefly and the rationale for the research study together with a brief overview of the qualitative research methodology for this study given.

In Chapter 2, the interrelationship between culture and communication is introduced and elaborated. The chapter examines Hall's (1976) theory and Hofestede's (1980) theory on world cultures and Australia's multiculturalism

and Australia's dominant culture and implications for communication. It also investigates the potential impact of cultural values on corporate culture and managerial functions including planning, workplace communication, recruitment/promotion, induction, training, supervision, industrial relations, management of change, customer service, financial management and marketing.

Chapter 3 looks at current theories on intercultural communication and identifies their limitations in relation to the purpose of the research study.

Chapter 4 analyses the profile of the Australian hospitality and tourism service industries, including challenges of cultural diversity, current weaknesses of management practices within the organisations and the industries' training requirements, including intercultural communication and major tourism languages as well as the relationship of managerial communication to management performance within a culturally diverse workforce and clientele.

Chapter 5 discusses in detail the design of the research study, focusing on its aims and objectives, questions and methodology.

In Chapter 6, the results for each research question are given from multiple sources of evidence: interviews, transcripts of narratives and organisational documentation. This chapter goes on to analyse the results and research findings. Two new models of intercultural communication competence and competent managerial practice respectively for the management of cultural diversity in the workplace are proposed, predicated on the grounded theory.

Chapter 7 provides a summary and concluding remarks on the contributions of the study as well as directions for future research arising from this study.

1.12 Definitions of the terms used in this study

Acculturation The learning of a foreign culture.

Attribution confidence The level of confidence in interpreting others' intentions, behaviour, personality and communication (Kaye, 1994).

Cognitive complexity Refers to the number of interpersonal constructs we use to form an image or impression of someone. The greater the number of constructs, the more cognitively complex that user is considered to be (Kaye, 1994).

Competence Conceived in terms of an individual's ability to adapt appropriately to different others (Argyris, 1964; Argyris and Schon, 1974; Bochner and Kelly, 1974; Feingold, 1976; Hart and Burke, 1972; Irwin, 1981, 1991).

Cultural relativism Holds that social scientists and others interested in studying other cultures must not impose their values or judge cultures under study on the basis of their own cultural beliefs (Saee, 1993). They must, to use Weber's sociological terminology "verstehen", attempt to understand the beliefs and values of other cultural groups under investigation within the cultural and social context in which they appear. The validity of cultural phenomena must not be questioned merely because other people think or act differently (Saee, 1993).

Empathy Defined in terms of emotional identification with another individual

(Rogers, 1975), as the process of cognitive role-taking (McCall and Simmons, 1978) and as communicating a sense of understanding to another (Rogers, 1975). Empathy is the opposite of ethnocentricism in intercultural communication settings. An ethnocenthric communicator would view the world and his or her interactions with others from an excessively self-centred point of view, an approach considered to be a great obstacle to effective intercultural communication. Empathy has been recognised as important to both general communication competence (Berlo, 1960; Bochner and Kelly, 1974) and as a central characteristic of competent and effective intercultural communication (Kim and Gudykunst, 1988; Martin and Hammer, 1989; Saee, 2005).

Enculturation The learning of one's culture through socialisation (Saee, 1993).

Ethnocentrism A common perception held by many individuals and groups within communities/societies around the world that their culture is far superior to those of other cultures. There is a tendency for these people to perceive their own society and culture as the main centre of the universe. These people evaluate the beliefs, values and behaviour of different cultural groupings/individuals from the perspective of their own culture while rejecting persons who are culturally dissimilar. This type of bias to one's own culture is known as ethnocentrism (Saee, 1993). Most people in society are conditioned to assume that their own culture is superior to that of others or that their religion holds the ultimate "truth". Thus they perceive themselves to be more moral than others. Ethnocentrism is particularly strong among those communities/individuals who have little exposure to other cultures.

Interpersonal communication The verbal and nonverbal exchange and sharing of information (Kaye, 1994).

Interpersonal relationships Affiliations between persons which may be intimate (personal) or impersonal; private or professional (Kaye, 1994).

Intracultural communication Communication between two or more individuals of the same cultural background (Collier, 1989).

Isomorphic attributions When we give the same meaning to the behaviour of others that they give, we are making isomorphic attributions (Triandis, 1975, 1977).

Monochronic use of time Typical of low-context cultures, monochronic time is characterised by punctuality, tight scheduling and so on. In polychronic use of time, several activities can occur in parallel. A person might, for instance, have appointments with two or three people and also answer the phone, go out for coffee with a friend, and in general use the time in multiple, parallel forms, rather than do one thing at a time which is typical of low-context cultures (Hall, 1959, 1966, 1976).

Nonverbal communication The sharing, between two or more people, of facial, vocal, body signals and gestures and spatial signals (Kaye, 1994).

Polychronic use of time To have a sense of different "times" which is quite different from a monochronic use of time (previously defined).

Stereotypes Specific assumptions that support a larger prejudice. Stereotypes are often exaggerated and held nonconsciously (Bryan *et al.*, 1986) and they involve the association of psychological characteristics (Hamilton, 1981). In addition to psychological characteristics, stereotyping involves judgments about mannerisms, beliefs, values and personality traits (McKee, 1994). In other words, stereotyping is about labelling and categorising people according to fixed, general impressions of the groups they are associated with (Kaye, 1994).

Xenocentrism In contrast to ethnocentrism, there are people who believe that foreign culture, as reflected in foreign lifestyles, products or ideas, is far superior to their own cultural heritage. This is popularly known as xenocentrism (Saee, 1993).

2 Communication, culture and managerial functions

> Any culture is primarily a system for creating, sending, storing, and processing information. Communication underlies everything.
>
> (Hall, 1976)

Chapter One explained the focus of this study, outlining the research problem, the contextual framework for the study of intercultural communication and managerial functions within the Australian hospitality and tourism service industries and different perspectives/theories on intercultural communication. The research methodology was briefly described and key definitions were presented. The structure of the study was outlined with a brief account of the focus of each chapter. Chapter Two analyses a number of interrelated issues affecting intercultural communication competence and managerial functions. In particular, the following aspects are relevant: the nexus between communication and management; communication and culture; obstacles to intercultural communication; cultural diversity and communication; culture and management; Australia's multiculturalism; Australia's dominant culture; and managing a culturally diverse workforce in Australia with reference to key managerial functions such as planning, workplace communication, recruitment/promotion, induction, training, supervision, industrial relations, management of change, customer service, marketing and financial management.

2.1 The nexus between communication and management

A premise of this research study is that communication is at the heart of successful management (Egan, 1988; Irwin and More, 1994; Irwin, 1996). According to Jackson (1993), a manager is someone whose main responsibility is to organise other people's time within an organisation, in order to pursue the objectives of the organisation, and whose primary activity is to communicate with others to achieve these ends. Consequently, communication is central to the successful operation of an organisation and this includes interpersonal (face-to-face) communication, inter-group and inter-organisational communication. Yet according to Irwin and More (1994), "Much of what is written about organising, managing

and leading in modern organisations either explicitly or implicitly takes for granted a close connection between success in those activities and communication" (p.2). In addition, the importance of communication for managers cannot be overemphasised for one compelling reason: everything a manager does involves communicating (Robbins *et al.*, 1994). Thayer (1990) similarly advocated that "Without communication, nothing can be achieved in an organisation and that everything an organisation does and is, is dependent on communication" (pp.7–8).

The association between management and communication can be approached by determining the amount of a manager's time spent on communication. Research by Harris and Moran (1991), for example, showed that managers spend 75 per cent of their time each day on communicating. This includes writing, talking, and listening. In fact, all business ultimately comes down to transactions and interactions between individuals. The success of the transactions depends almost entirely on how well managers understand each other. Mutual understanding is thus seen as the most vital element in managing an organisation, whereas a manager's inability to empathise with others can lead to organisational dysfunctional problems (Saee and Kaye, 1994).

Managerial communication involves the use of human, financial and technical resources to understand and perform the communication function within corporations and between those corporations and their publics. Thus, managerial communication requires the administering and managing of communication resources (personal, group, organisational and technical) to facilitate communication in corporate contexts. The process of managerial communication, i.e. the way people perceive and interpret the information presented to them, is therefore critical to the building of successful professional relationships. Accurate and relevant information processing is clearly a crucial aspect of managerial decision making (Saee and Kaye, 1994).

An Australian study by Kriegler *et al.* (1988, cited in EMD, 1994) found, for example, that communication was a key factor in explaining the "productivity advance" of National Mutual, a large financial institution, and Mayne Nickless, including Vicstate Railex and Skyroad, a major transport corporation. The research indicated that in both corporations, management fostered an environment of openness and trust and used goal-oriented teams which were granted high levels of autonomy. Both corporations used structures to encourage and facilitate communication vertically and laterally between teams and, in each case, delegation of authority necessitated open communication between work groups and between work groups and management. The study also found that National Mutual and Mayne Nickless benefited from enhancement of communication channels by supervisors who believed in and practised participative management and who met regularly with subordinates (EMD Consulting, 1994). Further research (EMD Consultants, 1994) found that the Dulux company in Australia was able to increase its labour productivity substantially due to the improvements in corporate communication within its culturally diverse workforce.

Dulux's Technical Division site at Clayton, Victoria provides paint products to motor car manufacturers, smash repair businesses and other industrial concerns. Its operating workforce comprises 220 people, 65 per cent of whom are from non-English-speaking backgrounds. The Clayton site has successfully implemented a number of process improvement systems. The main aspect of this change has been the establishment of cross-functional "Customer First Teams". The work teams are colour-coded and produce for specific clients. Communications have been improved by frequent meetings; language, literacy and numeracy training is being provided; and clear performance measures are identified and controlled by work teams.

Dulux's achievements are noteworthy. In the three years to 1992, Dulux Clayton has achieved an increase in goods delivered in full on time, i.e. from 60 per cent to 98 per cent; a reduction of 49 per cent in labour-per-product batch, i.e. from 79 to 40 hours; and a reduction of 88 per cent in products reworked, i.e. from 4.5 per cent to 0.5 per cent. Dulux is aware that these achievements are due to open communications and the ability to meet the individual needs of operators.

(EMD Consultants, 1994)

Similarly, research outside Australia of an organisation survey of 122 white-collar employees in an American engineering company (Putti, 1990) confirmed that members of an organisation who were kept well informed demonstrated increased commitment to excellence in work performance. This was largely because satisfaction with information encouraged a sense of belonging and identification with the values and objectives of the organisation. This research also found that high levels of commitment were linked to high levels of performance and low level levels of turnover and absenteeism (Putti, 1990).

Current research has highlighted the importance of effective communication in the conduct of managerial functions. Therefore it is appropriate to define what is meant by communication.

2.2 Communication

Literature reviews suggest that there is no single definition of communication. Dance and Larson (1976) in their reviews of the literature found 126 definitions of communication. Since then, countless others have been added to their list. Yet communication – our ability to share our ideas and feelings – is the foundation of human contact and hence human relationships. Harris and Moran (1991), for example, advocated that communication is a complex process of linking up or sharing perceptual fields between interacting persons. Samovar and Porter (1995) defined communication in the following way: "Communication occurs whenever meaning is attributed to behaviour or the residue of behaviour.

Behaviour residue is what remains as a record of our action" (pp.27–28). Dwyer (1993) conceptualised communication in terms of a two-way process by which information is exchanged between individuals, including any behaviour, verbal or nonverbal that is perceived by another. Meanwhile Littlejohn (1992) has identified fifteen conceptual components associated with communication: "(1) symbols/verbal/speech; (2) understanding; (3) interaction/relationship/social process; (4) reduction of uncertainty; (5) process; transfer/transmission/interchange; (7) linking/binding; (8) commonality; (9) channel/carrier/means/route; (10) replicating memories; (11) discriminative response/behaviour modifying response; (12) stimuli; (13) intentional; (14) time/situation; (15) power" (Littlejohn, 1992, p.7).

Overall, communication, in this research study, is conceived as a meaning-centred process with several characteristics:

1 Communication is a dynamic process. It is not static and passive, but rather it is continuous and active, often without a definable beginning or end. In this dynamic interplay, communicators are simultaneously perceiving others and expressing bodily signals or information about themselves (Saee and Kaye, 1994).
2 Communication is interactive. Interaction implies a reciprocal process in which each party attempts to influence the other – that is, each party simultaneously creates messages designed to elicit specific responses from the other (Samovar and Porter, 1995).
3 Communication is inevitable (Saee and Kaye, 1994; Watzlawick *et al.*, 1967). Whether intended or not, perceivers assign meaning to the actions and communication of others. Such meanings form the basis for future action and strategic communication.
4 Communication does not necessarily mean understanding. Even when two individuals agree that they are communicating or talking to each other, this does not mean that they have understood each other. Understanding occurs when the two individuals have shared interpretations of relationships, events or phenomena in their interpersonal worlds (Saee and Kaye, 1994).
5 Communication occurs in a context. Contextual factors like the time and place of communication may have cultural value and assist the communicators to interpret each other's intentions (Saee and Kaye, 1994). This view is further supported by Littlejohn (1989) where he argued that "Communication always occurs in context, and the nature of communication depends in large measure on this context" (p.152). Thus context provides us with what Shimanoff (1980) calls "a prescription that indicates what behavior is obligated, preferred, or prohibited" (p.57).

Given the enormous importance of context, particularly cultural context, for any interaction, this research study shows how communication can become "problematic" when it involves managers communicating across cultures. This is because cultural diversity compounds communication processes owing to

increased cultural variables. Therefore an understanding of the interplay between culture and communication is of great importance to this study of intercultural communication.

2.3 Culture and communication

One way to understand the interplay between culture and communication is through Bourdeau's metaphor of the journey and the map (Bourdeau, 1988). Cultures are both the maps of a place (the rules and conventions) and the journeys that take place there (actual practices). Samovar and Porter (1995) maintain that "culture and communication are so inextricably linked that most anthropologists believe that the terms are virtually synonymous. This relationship is the key factor to understanding intercultural communication" (p.45).

This view has been well articulated by the internationally renowned anthropologist Hall (1976) when he stated that any culture is primarily a system for creating, sending, storing and processing information. As such, communication underlies everything. People respond to the world through messages they receive; however, it is the culture which determines, to a considerable degree, the form, pattern and content of those messages. Culture also determines the content and style of the messages we send. Hall (1976) observed that there is not one aspect of human life that is not touched and altered by culture. Similarly, Samovar and Porter (1995) argued that culture governs and defines the conditions and circumstances under which various messages may or may not be sent, noticed or interpreted.

The content of our repertoire of communicative behaviours depends largely on the culture in which we have been raised. When cultures differ, communication practices may also differ. As Samovar and Porter (1995) pointed out, in modern society different people communicate in different ways as do people in different societies around the world and the way people communicate is the way they live. It is their culture. Who talks to whom? How? And about what? These are questions of communication and culture. So the nature of culture has arguably the most profound impact upon communication processes.

2.4 What is culture?

The meaning of "culture" is associated with wide-ranging anthropological interpretations. In 1871 the noted anthropologist Tyler defined culture as that complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, morals, law, custom and any other capabilities and habits acquired by a person as a member of society (cited in Adler, 1997). After cataloguing more than 100 definitions of culture, anthropologists Kroeber and Kluckhohn (1952) offered one of the most comprehensive and generally accepted definitions:

> Culture consists of patterns, explicit and implicit, of and for behavior acquired and transmitted by symbols, constituting the distinctive achievement of

> human groups, including their embodiment in artifacts; the essential core of culture consists of traditional (i.e. historically derived and selected) ideas and especially their attached values; culture systems may, on the one hand, be considered as products of action, on the other, as conditioning elements of future action.
>
> (p.181)

Hofstede (1980) investigated the nature of culture from a psychological perspective, defining it as "the collective programming of the mind which distinguishes the members of one category of one people from another". Culture provides significant knowledge and the techniques that enable humans to survive, both physically and socially, and to control in varying degrees the world around them. More particularly culture provides guidance, direction and order in all aspects of our lives (Saee, 1993, 1997).

Several features of culture are worth mentioning in this research study because of their special importance to intercultural communication:

1. Culture is learnt from infancy and members of a culture learn their patterns of behaviour and ways of thinking until they become internalised. Our culture-learning proceeds through interaction, observation and imitation. All of this learning according to Hoebel and Weaver (1979), "occurs as conscious or unconscious conditioning that leads one toward competence in a particular culture" (p.58). This process of learning one's culture is referred to as enculturation.
2. Culture can be transmitted from one member of a society to another. Some elements of culture are transmitted intergenerationally such as a parent teaching a child table manners (Mahoney *et al.*, 1998).
3. Culture is dynamic. As with communication, culture undergoes changes over time. As ideas and products evolve within a culture, they can produce change through the mechanisms of invention (i.e. discovery of new practices, tools or concepts) and diffusion (i.e. borrowing from another culture) (Saee, 1993).
4. The elements of culture are interrelated. For example, one element of British culture is its class system. Consistent with this system, British education is very elitist and focuses on training a relatively small number of students extremely well (Mahoney *et al.*, 1998).
5. Culture is ethnocentric. According to Keesing (1974), "Ethnocentrism is a "universal tendency" for any people to put their own culture and society in a central position of priority and worth" (p.46). This characteristic is a major challenge to effective intercultural communication because, for example, of the conflict that can be generated between people of different cultures. Other impediments to effective intercultural communication include fear of change, fear of the unknown, fear of threat to identity, fear of rejection, and/or fear of contradictions to a belief system. Many of these fears are deeply rooted in people's cultural value systems (Saee, 1998). Moreover, in

> explaining incompetent intercultural communication, Tubbs and Moss (1987) argued that "Misunderstandings arise when people are unaware of cultural differences, or even the possibility of such differences" (p.406). These misunderstandings reflect a mono-cultural perspective. "A mono-cultural perspective denies cultural differences, views cultural interactions as filled with errors not diversity, and forms cultural boundaries in which people remain their entire lives, unable to wander out" (Pearce and Kang, 1987, p.22).

Thus, a lack of understanding of the contextual elements of cultural diversity by the participants in the communication process can lead to serious communication difficulties. The degree of understanding of interrelationships between cultural diversity and communication by Australian hospitality and tourism managers is explored in this research study.

2.5 Major obstacles to intercultural communication

The main sources of misunderstanding among cultures arise from differences in values and priorities. Some of the most common misconceptions reflect the ways in which different cultures understand time, thought patterns and reasoning, personal space, material possessions, language and religion, as well as ethnocentric beliefs (Saee, 1998). The prospect of such misunderstandings occurring in the Australian hospitality and tourism industries because of cultural diversity could be a real issue for managers. Thus this study will investigate the potential of cultural diversity to present obstacles to the managerial performance of managers in this field.

2.5.1 Time

Different cultures assign varying levels of importance to the notion of time. Hall (1976) advanced the view that cultures organise time in one of two ways: either monochronic (M-time) or polychronic (P-time). M-time is characteristic of people of the western world. People of the western world tend to think of time as something fixed in nature, something around us and from which we cannot escape. Time is linear, segmented and manageable. Time is something we must not waste; we must be doing something or we feel guilty.

Every activity we perform in the west has time connotations. On the other hand, people from cultures where P-time applies, including Arabs, Spanish, Portuguese, Africans, Greeks, Mexicans, live quite differently and with a different emphasis on time. These people, for example, do not perceive appointments as iron-clad commitments (a characteristic of western thinking) and they often break them. Time to them is less tangible and hence feelings of wasted time are not as prevalent as in M-time cultures. Consequently, this leads to a lifestyle that is more spontaneous and unstructured (Samovar and Porter, 1995). Also certain societies feel that one should know one's business partner on a personal level

before a transaction can occur. Therefore rushing straight into business will not be rewarded, because deals are made on the basis of not only the best product or price but also the entity or person deemed most trustworthy (Saee, 1998).

2.5.2 Different modes of thinking and reasoning

Often difficulty arises between people involved in an intercultural communication owing to different structures of reasoning. For example, it has been shown that Asians and most Australians think in different ways where hierarchies and status are concerned. Australians interacting with Japanese, for example, have noted that the latter frequently appear to change their minds. They often concluded that the Japanese were too polite to express their opinions or held no opinions at all. This interpretation ignores the fact that Japanese reasoning tends to be contextual rather than abstract, which is a characteristic of occidental cultures (Irwin, 1996).

2.5.3 Stereotyping

Members of one culture can inappropriately stereotype member(s) from another culture rather than accurately seeing them as they really are. For example, Adler (1997) showed that on one particular management team, members falsely assumed that their American colleagues had more technological expertise than their Moroccan colleagues simply because Morocco is an economically and technologically less developed country. In a parallel situation, an Indian manager described the lack of respect granted him by many of his British colleagues who, he believed, "assume that I am underdeveloped simply because I come from an economically underdeveloped country" (Adler, 1997, p.133).

2.5.4 Personal space

Cultures maintain unwritten rules on the distance one member remains from another in face-to-face interactions, in queues and in public places. Although the distance is affected by the relationships of the people involved, one member of a culture may be offended if someone from another culture, in which personal distance rules are different, violates the space rule by "invading" his or her space. Americans are typically made uncomfortable by the closer conversation distance of Arabs and Africans; Arabs and Africans may perceive rejection in the lengthy personal distance of Americans (Saee, 1998).

2.5.5 Materialism

Most western cultures place importance on material acquisitions and tend to equate materialism with success. By contrast, there are some societies which place little or no value on material acquisitions. They regard materialism as vulgar and greedy; believe that it is lacking in taste to flaunt wealth; and they

cannot relate to the values held by those who subscribe to materialism (Saee, 1997, 1998).

2.5.6 Language

There are over 3,000 languages spoken throughout the world and language differences can produce barriers to cross-cultural understanding and international trade (Saee, 1998). Some examples of the difficulties associated with translation of English into a foreign language when commercialising a product include: when an American food chain called Taco Times Restaurant decided to expand into the Japanese market, it was discovered that "taco" meant idiot in the Japanese language. When the Mitsubishi Pajero was introduced into South America, it was not received with any great enthusiasm because the slogan "Have an affair with a Pajero" translated into a local dialect meant "Have an affair with a gay" (Selverajah and Cutbush-Sabine, 1991). The famous Pepsi-cola slogan "Come alive with Pepsi" was translated in Germany as "Come out of the grave" and in Taiwan as "Bring your ancestors back from the dead". General Motors' "Body by Fisher" became "Corpse by Fisher" in Flemish. "Let Hertz put you in the driver's seat" translated literally into Spanish means "Let Hertz make you a Chauffeur". "Nova" in Spanish means "It doesn't go". "Braniff's 747 Rendezvous Lounge" in Portuguese meant "Braniff's 747 Meet Your Mistress Lounge". The name of the soft drink "Fresca" is a slang word for "lesbians" in Mexico (Saee, 1993).

2.5.7 Nonverbal communication

People express their thoughts and feelings through nonverbal communication. Nonverbal communication, which includes facial expressions, distance between persons or the use of space, posture, gestures, personal appearance, clothing, etiquette and body contact, plays a crucial role in understanding people from different cultural backgrounds. Thus awareness of the likely significance of nonverbal communication is an indication of intercultural communication competence. As Basso (1990) argued, "For a stranger entering an alien society, a knowledge of when not to speak may be as basic to the production of culturally acceptable behaviour as a knowledge of what to say" (p.305).

Nonverbal communication includes appropriate use of gestures, body position and eye contact (Czinkota *et al.*, 1992). Harris and Moran (1991) cited a study by Albert Mehrabian on communication which found that "The total impact of a message on a receiver is based on: 7% words used, 38% how words are said – tone of voice, loudness, inflection and 55% non-verbal facial expressions, hand gestures, body position" (p.33). Another related study by Hall and Hall (1987a and b) showed that "As much as 80 to 90% of all information is transmitted between members of a culture by means other than language" (pp.9–10). A failure to understand these often subtle nonverbal cues has resulted in serious blunders. Consider for example the OK hand sign which is commonly used in the USA and Australia.

In France it signifies worthlessness and in Japan it symbolises money. In parts of South America, however, it is a vulgar gesture. One unfortunate international company learned this when it had an entire catalogue printed with an OK stamp on each page. Although the error was discovered it created a costly six-month delay while the catalogues were reprinted (Ricks, 1993; Saee, 1998).

2.5.8 Clothing

People's clothing conveys messages about who they are. Most occupations have their official and unofficial uniforms. For example, doctors and nurses normally dress in white. In European countries such as Germany and Britain, it is not uncommon for people of high status to wear a suit and a tie during working hours. In Islamic countries including Iran, people of high status, for example, do not wear a tie. Many Islamic countries have their own traditional dresses which are worn at official functions (Saee, 1998).

2.5.9 Posture

Posture and sitting habits offer insight into a culture's structure of respect and status. In many Asian cultures, bowing is much more than a greeting. It signifies that culture's concern with status and rank. In Japan, for example, low posture is an indicator of respect. The manner in which one sits can also communicate a message. In Ghana and in Turkey, sitting with one's legs crossed is extremely offensive. People in Thailand believe that since the bottoms of the feet are the lowest part of the body, they should never be pointed in the direction of another person (Samovar and Porter, 1995). Hand gestures have been the subject of exclusive studies, for example, Desmond Morris (1994) isolated twenty common hand gestures that had a different meaning in a range of cultures.

2.5.10 Facial expression

An understanding of the range of cultural differences in the presentation of the face is a significant feature of intercultural communication competence. The Chinese do not for example show emotion for reasons that are rooted deeply in their culture. The Chinese concept of saving face is very important in relationships. For the Chinese, displaying emotion through facial expression violates facesaving norms by disrupting harmony and causing conflict. In the west, a smile can be a sign of happiness or friendly affirmation. While these same meanings are found in Japanese culture, here a smile can also mask another emotion or be used to avoid answering a question (Samovar and Porter, 1995).

2.5.11 Eye contact

Eyes are used differently across cultures to convey meaning. In most Asian countries, for example, it is considered polite and respectful not to look a person

in the eye during conversation. This is particularly the case if the person is of higher status. In western societies including Australia, such a mannerism implies something totally different. It can indicate a guilty conscience or deviousness (Saee, 1993). A male–female relationship in a culture also determines customs of eye contact and gaze. In many Asian and Arab cultures it is considered taboo for women to look straight into men's eyes. Most men, in accordance with this custom, do not stare directly at women. This is in stark contrast to men in France and Italy who habitually stare at women in public (Samovar and Porter, 1995).

2.5.12 Touch

Meanings can also be conveyed by touch. Asian men, particularly the Vietnamese, express their friendship by touching and holding during conversation. This is not an accepted custom in Australia as men tend to keep their distance from another and such actions may cause embarrassment when communication takes place between two cultures. However, in Australia it is customary to wave a greeting to one another and to use hands to accompany and emphasise speech. Neither of these characteristics is polite in Vietnamese culture (Saee, 1993). In the Middle East, men greet each other by kissing and hugging. Such behaviour in Australia may be totally inappropriate (Saee, 1993, 1998).

In Thailand and in other places in Asia, the head is sacred and it is offensive to touch someone's head. For Muslims, the shoulder is an approved zone and is used for hugging and is a sign of brotherhood (Saee, 1998). In Korea, on the other hand, young people are socially forbidden from touching the shoulders of their elders (Samovar and Porter, 1995).

2.5.13 Smell

A sense of smell can also be a conduit for different meanings across cultures. In Bali, when lovers greet one another, they often breathe deeply in a kind of friendly sniffing. Burmese, Samoans, Mongols, Lapps and some Filipinos smell each others' cheeks to say hello. It is not uncommon for young Filipino lovers to trade small pieces of clothing on parting, so that the smell of the other person will evoke their affection for each other (Samovar and Porter, 1995).

Hall (1976) explains that in the Arab world, a person's smell is regarded as an extension of that person. To the Arab, good smells are pleasing and a way of being involved with each other. To smell one's friends is not only desirable but to deny your friend your breath is to act ashamed. Americans, on the other hand, are trained not to breathe in people's faces and would communicate shame to an Arab by acting in their normal polite way.

2.5.14 Religion

Religion is a major influence in the lives of millions of people around the world. "It affects the way in which members of a society relate to each other and to

outsiders. Approximately 80 per cent of the world's 5.5 billion people, in 1997 claimed some religious affiliation" (Mahoney *et al.*, 1998, p.375). For example, life in conservative Islamic countries is centred around Islamic religious precepts and laws and, therefore, all Moslems are required to observe these laws including Islamic laws relating to the conduct of their businesses (Saee, 1998).

2.5.15 Ethnocentric beliefs

The most damaging influence on human interactions and hence intercultural communication arises from ethnocentric values predicated on the belief that people of a particular race and religion are superior to all other races and only they are, as it were, "the centre of the universe". This belief system can be a major impediment to effective intercultural communication and can ultimately lead to strong prejudice and even hatred towards others (Saee, 1998). Lack of understanding of nonverbal communication differences in religion/values; language; different styles of reasoning; and stereotyping as mentioned previously can provide a basis for ethnocentric beliefs that then become obstacles to effective intercultural communication (Adler, 1997; Hall, 1976; Samovar and Porter, 1995).

In summary, major obstacles to intercultural communication can arise from cultural differences in respect to time, thought pattern and reasoning, personal space, material possessions, languages, religions and ethnocentric beliefs. This research study investigates these factors as potential sources of communication misunderstandings or "obstacles" encountered by Australian hospitality and tourism managers in the intercultural workplace.

2.6 Cultural diversity and communication

Misunderstanding between individuals from different cultural backgrounds may also lead to confrontation and conflict. In any culture, social expectations accompany communicative practices. Recognising the reality of such cultural differences, the noted anthropologist Hall (1976) divided world cultures into "high-context" and "low-context" cultures and suggested that context influences interpersonal communication. A high-context culture uses "high-context" communication i.e. information is contained in either the physical context or is internalised in the person. "High-context" cultures display the following characteristics:

- reliance on nonverbal cues for understanding factual meaning;
- deliberation and not speed is the essence of business negotiation;
- relationships are personal and based on trust;
- change is slow and seen as necessary only if it is essential;
- seniority is respected and the position of people in companies determines relationships.

(Selverajah and Cutbush-Sabine, 1991)

Research by Harris and Moran (1991) illustrates some of the key characteristics of Japanese communication as a high-context culture. The following are examples:

- indirect and vague communication is more acceptable than direct and specific reference, with ambiguity in conversation preferred;
- sentences may be left unfinished to leave the other person to draw the conclusion in his or her own mind;
- the context of communication is often vague so as not to preclude personal interpretation;
- the listener may make noises of understanding and encouragement, and "hai" rarely means yes in agreement, simply a "Yes, I have heard you";
- the real business deals are often struck after the formal deliberations and while entertaining.

Using a more direct communication approach, Australian and/or American managers of Anglo cultures may find that communication skills acquired as a result of years of cultural conditioning do not apply in high-context cultures e.g. Japan, Saudi Arabia, China.

In contrast, a low-context culture employs low-context communication. Most information is contained in explicit codes, such as words. There is less reliance on nonverbal cues for understanding factual meanings, except for support or reinforcement. Speed is the essence of business negotiation. The relationship is founded on a contractual basis, with changes in work practices and speed and adaptation to changes in work practices viewed as desirable. North American cultures engage in low-context communication, both in Canada and the USA. English is thus a low-context language (Saee, 1998). Australian culture is thus regarded as low context.

Low-context cultures are more individualistic than group-oriented, and their personal nonverbal communication is characterised by large boundaries of personal space, little touching and so on. High-context cultures on the other hand are group-oriented. They also have a high sensory involvement, that is, they have much less pronounced interpersonal space defences, and they tend to initiate and receive more bodily contact when talking.

Unless Australian managers in multicultural organisations including those in hospitality and tourism are aware of these subtle differences originating from cultural context, communication misunderstandings between them and their employees could easily result (Saee, 1998). This raises an issue for investigation in this research study, namely, in what ways Australian hospitality and tourism managers consider cultural context to be part of their normal communication with culturally diverse employees and clientele.

2.7 Culture and management

This study argues that management practices across the globe are largely influenced by cultural factors. Andre Laurent (1983), a distinguished French

professor who studied the philosophies and behaviour of managers in nine Western European countries, the USA and three Asian countries (Indonesia, Japan and the People's Republic of China), has also confirmed the view that management practices in these countries mirrored their underlying cultural differences. For example, Laurent found that cultures that value hierarchical structuring as a means of social cohesion impose severe restrictions on communication flow. This value affected what information was communicated, how it was communicated and to whom. Laurent (1983) canvassed managers' views about the statement, "In order to have efficient work relationships it is often necessary to bypass the hierarchical line." As outlined in Table 2.1 Swedish managers did not see this as a problem. In contrast, Italian managers viewed bypassing the boss as an act of disrespect and insubordination.

In Laurent's study (1983) managers also differed in their response to the statement, "The main reason for a hierarchical structure is so that everybody knows who has authority over whom." Most managers from Southern Europe, Asia, Latin America and the Middle East strongly agreed, whereas managers from America, Germany, Sweden, the Netherlands and Great Britain disagreed with the statement. A comparison of their agreement rate across countries is given in Table 2.2.

Laurent also asked managers to respond to the statement, "It is important for a manager to have at hand precise answers to most of the questions that his [sic] subordinates may raise about their work."

He discovered little agreement among managers across countries. For example, more than four times as many Japanese and Indonesian managers as

Table 2.1 Bypassing the hierarchical line (%)

Disagreement rate across countries									
Sweden	*USA*	*Great Britain*	*France*	*Netherlands*	*Germany*	*Indonesia*	*Italy*	*China*	*Spain*
26	32	35	43	44	45	51	56	59	74

Source: Laurent (1983).

Table 2.2 Hierarchical structure and authority (%)

Agreement rate across countries										
USA	*Germany*	*Sweden*	*Netherlands*	*Great Britain*	*Spain*	*Italy*	*France*	*Japan*	*China*	*Indonesia*
17	26	30	31	34	34	42	43	50	70	83

Source: Laurent (1983).

American managers concurred with the statement. According to Asian Pacific managers, the manager who cannot answer subordinates' questions loses status. Most American managers regarded their role as that of a problem solver, believing that managers should help employees find better ways of solving problems rather than simply addressing their questions directly.

Laurent (1983) concluded that the cultural/national origin of European, North American and Asian managers considerably influenced their views on how effective managers should carry out their roles and functions. In addition, the extent to which managers viewed organisations as political, authoritarian, role-formalising or hierarchical relationship systems differed according to their country of origin/culture.

Another related study by England (1986) found that employees' work goals/motivation varied across cultures. In response to England's questions: "What about the nature of your working life? How important to you is it that your work life contains the following?", respondents in Germany, Japan and the United States ranked these eleven work goals as given in Table 2.3.

This table shows that cultural differences in these countries influenced work motivation in varied ways. In another study of management – performance appraisals in the USA, Saudi Arabia and Japan conducted by Harris and Moran (1991) – it was found that performance appraisal differed significantly across cultures. Table 2.4 compares differences in the conduct of performance appraisals in the USA, Saudi Arabia and Japan. It can be seen that there were significant variations in the conduct of performance appraisal by managers across these cultures. Thus this study confirmed the view that management practices differed across cultures. These findings have important implications for the management of cultural diversity within the Australian hospitality and tourism industries and for investigating the nature of managers' intercultural communication competence.

Table 2.3 Comparative work goals: German, Japanese and American respondents' rankings

Work goals	*Germany*	*Japan*	*USA*
Interesting work	3	2	1
Good pay	1	5	2
Good interpersonal relations	4	6	7
Good job security	2	4	3
A good match between you and your job	5	1	4
A lot of autonomy	8	3	8
Opportunity to learn	9	7	5
A lot of variety	6	9	6
Convenient work hours	6	8	9
Good physical working conditions	11	10	11
Promotion	10	11	10

Source: England (1986, p.181).

Table 2.4 Cultural variations: performance appraisals

Dimensions	*USA*	*Saudi Arabia*	*Japan*
General			
Objective of performance appraisal	Fairness, employee development	Placement	Direction of company/employee development
Who does appraisal	Supervisor	Manager several levels up. Appraiser has to know employee well.	Mentor and supervisor. Appraiser has to know employee well.
Authority of appraiser	Presumed in supervisory role or position. Supervisor takes slight lead.	Reputation important (prestige is determined by nationality, sex, family, tribe, title education). Authority of appraiser important: don't say "I don't know".	Respect accorded by employee to supervisor or appraiser. Done coequally.
How often	Once a year	Once a year	Developmental or periodically once a month. Evaluation appraisal after first 12 years.
Assumptions	Objective appraiser is fair	Subjective appraiser more important than objective. Connections are more important.	Objective and subjective. Japanese can be trained in anything.
Manner of communication and feedback	Criticism direct. Criticism may be in writing. Objective, authentic.	Criticism subtle. Older more likely to be direct. Criticism not given.	Criticism subtle. Criticism given verbally. Observe formalities in writing.
Rebuttals	American will rebut appraisal	Saudi Arabian will rebut	Japanese would rarely rebut
Praise	Given individually	Given individually	Given to entire group
Motivators	Money and position	Loyalty to supervisor	Internal excellence

Source: Harris and Moran (1991).

Earlier in 1980, Hofstede demonstrated how the underlying values of cultures across the world affected relationships, work, social values, and, by extension, intercultural communication. In his comprehensive study on worldwide socio-cultural factors influencing management, Hofstede (1980) compared work-related attitudes across a range of cultures. From his survey of 116,000

employees in forty countries, Hofstede isolated four major dimensions which were congruent with different cultural values of specific countries. These socio-cultural factors were:

1 collectivism vs individualism
2 small vs large power distance
3 weak vs strong uncertainty avoidance
4 femininity vs masculinity.

Individualism–collectivism refers to the extent to which people define themselves as autonomous individuals or through membership of groups. Societies based on individualism tend to emphasise individual initiative and achievement. In contrast, group-oriented societies focus on an individuals' commitment and loyalty to a group. In essence, people in individualist societies are primarily concerned with looking after themselves and their immediate family. In collectivist societies people belong to groups or collectives which look after them in exchange for loyalty (Hofstede and Bond, 1984; Irwin and More, 1994).
An important cultural difference is that in some collectivist cultures, such as Japan, classmates, neighbours, and fellow countrymen constitute important in-groups to a greater extent than in more individualistic cultures, such as Australia. An indication of this difference is provided by Mann *et al.* (1985), who asked children in Japan and Australia to divide chocolates between their own and another group formed by their classmates. The Japanese divided their chocolates *equally* between the two groups, while the Australians did not.

Thus Japanese society provides a striking illustration of the typical nature of collectivist societies with special reference to management practices. The collectivist nature of Japanese society is a major reason why Japanese companies, unlike those in Australia or in any other individualist societies, place extreme emphasis on groups, rather than individuals. According to Atsumi (1979), ostracism from their work groups for failing to adhere to the norms that produce speed, efficiency, quality output and long hours of work is much more serious for Japanese workers than it is for their counterparts elsewhere. Japanese society penalises the "loss of face" that is involved much more severely than such countries as Australia and the United States. Atonement for bringing dishonour, including hari-kiri, cannot be easily understood by the non-Japanese mind (Khan, 1991).

Another related feature of Japanese collectivist society is the belief in consensual management practice. Unlike in the United States or Australia, few managers in Japan have offices and, with very few exceptions, everyone works together in open spaces without separating walls (Cole, 1991; Marsh and Mannari, 1976). This arrangement means that most Japanese managers spend the majority of their time on the shopfloor communicating with their employees. Subordinates are able to voice ideas and suggestions to managers about how to improve specific aspects of work. This concern for involving employees and seeking their advice is part of the overall Japanese concern for consensus building throughout society (Mushashi, 1982; Schonberger, 1982).

Similarly, to a much greater extent than their American and Australian counterparts, Japanese managers are prepared to put a lot of effort into gathering ideas and expressing them in a way that is at least minimally acceptable to all (Takezawa and Whitehill, 1981). The consensus seeking that occurs in Japanese companies reflects cultural and social norms that all persons involved accept a form of decision making known as the "ringi" system. This is a unique procedure, whereby ideas are first tested with colleagues and peers until there is a broad agreement before being formally submitted to one's superior for approval (Mushashi, 1982; Ouchi, 1981). The decision is thus not a discrete and individual action, as is common in western companies, but rather something that evolves collectively from the group (Clark, 1979).

Related differences in management practices between collectivist and individualist societies include:

1 Motivation, where collectivist values are more discouraging of rewards and praise.
2 Collectivist family-like relationships such as in Japan lead to a stronger work ethic and voluntary overtime is not uncommon. The "Thank Goodness it's Friday" mentality (Khan, 1991) is negligible in these collectivist cultures compared to individualist societies.
3 Conflict management favours the suppression of conflict in collectivist society rather than resolution strategies commonly employed in an individualist society.

A more detailed analysis of individualism vs collectivism dimensions is provided in Table 2.5.

The management of cultural diversity and the development of competence in intercultural communication presuppose a need for managers to understand the importance of "power distance". Power distance indicates the extent to which a society accepts that power in institutions and organisations is distributed unequally. Small power distance represents the condition in which people want power to be equally shared and require justification of any differences (Mukhi *et al.*, 1988). Large power distance is represented by a greater acceptance of unequal power i.e. hierarchies in organisations. Large power distance occurs in Japan where paternalism is rife. This type of hierarchical structure, however, is not accepted by many Australian workers. A more detailed comparison of the power distance dimension is provided in Table 2.6.

Another important contributing factor to the effective management of cultural diversity and the development of competence in intercultural communication, is an awareness of "uncertainty avoidance". Uncertainty avoidance refers to people's conscious avoidance of ambiguous and uncertain situations which appear threatening. In societies characterised by high uncertainty avoidance, behaviours and ideas that deviate from the norm are not tolerated; faith is placed in "experts" and their knowledge; and it is believed that situations should be covered by formal rules and regulations (Dunford, 1992). A more

Table 2.5 The individualism dimension

Collectivist	*Individualist*
In society, people are born into extended families or clans who protect them in exchange for loyalty.	In society, everybody is supposed to take care of himself/herself and his/her immediate family.
"We" consciousness holds sway.	"I" consciousness holds sway.
Identity is based on the social system.	Identity is based in the individual.
The individual is emotionally dependent on organisations and institutions.	The individual is emotionally independent of organisations or institutions.
The involvement with organisations is moral.	The involvement with organisations is calculative.
The emphasis is on belonging to organisations; membership is the ideal.	The emphasis is on individual initiative and achievement; leadership is ideal.
Private life is invaded by organisations and clans to which one belongs; opinions are predetermined.	Everybody has the right to a private life and opinion.
Expertise, order, duty and security are provided by the organisation or clan.	Autonomy, variety, pleasure and individual financial security are sought in the system.
Friendships are predetermined by stable social relationships, but there is need for prestige within the relationships.	The need is for specific friendships.
Belief is placed in group decisions.	Belief is placed in individual decisions.
Value standards differ for in-groups and out-groups (particularism).	Value standards should apply to all (universalism).

Source: Hofstede (1980).

detailed comparison of the uncertainty avoidance dimension is provided in Table 2.7.

"Masculinity" and "femininity" are concepts which managers need to understand in addressing issues of cultural diversity and showing competence in intercultural communication. Masculinity connotes dominant social values of aggressiveness, acquisition of money and material possessions and not caring for others. A masculine society is one in which these values are strongly represented and where gender-based roles are clearly differentiated. By contrast, in a "feminine" society, nurturing is valued over the pursuit of wealth; human relationships are more important than the acquisition of material goods; and sympathy for the disadvantaged is valued. A more detailed comparison of feminine and masculine dimensions is provided in Table 2.8.

Hofstede (1980) characterised forty countries in terms of these four factors. The rating of Australia, Hong Kong, Japan, the Philippines, Singapore, Sweden, the United States and Yugoslavia in terms of these factors is given in Table 2.9. Hofstede ranked each country on each dimension, but the dichotomous treatment (high–low) in the table is sufficient to illustrate the considerable variation across countries.

Table 2.6 The power distance dimension

Small power distance	*Large power distance*
Inequality in society should be minimised.	There should be an order of inequality in this world in which everybody has a rightful place; high and low are protected by this order.
All people should be independent.	A few people should be independent; most should be dependent.
Hierarchy means inequality of the roles, established for convenience.	Hierarchy means existential inequality.
Superiors consider subordinates to be "people like me".	Superiors consider subordinates to be a different kind of people.
Superiors are accessible.	Superiors are inaccessible.
The use of power should be legitimate and is subject to the judgment as to whether it is good or evil.	Power is a basic fact of society that antedates good or evil. Its legitimacy is irrelevant.
All should have equal rights.	Powerholders are entitled to privileges.
Those in power should try to look less powerful than they are.	Those in power should try to look as powerful as possible.
The system is to blame.	The underdog is to blame.
The way to change a social system is to redistribute power.	The way to change a social system is to dethrone those in power.
People at various power levels feel less threatened and more prepared to trust people.	Other people are a potential threat to one's power and can rarely be trusted.
Latent harmony exists between the powerful and the powerless.	Latent conflict exists between the powerful and the powerless.
Co-operation among the powerless can be based on solidarity.	Co-operation among the powerless is difficult to attain because of their people low-faith-in-norm.

Source: Hofstede (1980).

Subsequent to his study on the four cultural dimensions of power distance, individualism, masculinity and uncertainty avoidance, Hofstede, in collaboration with Bond (1984), identified an additional cultural dimension by which nations can be classified: *Confucian dynamism*. Confucian dynamism (also referred to as long-term orientation vs short-term orientation) was identified through a questionnaire (labelled the Chinese Value Survey) and was developed on the basis of the traditional Confucian values believed to influence East Asian countries (including the People's Republic of China, South Korea, Japan, Hong Kong and Singapore).

Confucianism is not a religion, but a system of practical ethics. It is based on a set of pragmatic rules for daily life derived from experience. The key tenet of Confucian teachings is that unequal relationships between people create stability in society. The five basic relationships are ruler–subject, father–son, older brother–younger brother, husband–wife and older friend–younger friend. The junior owes the senior respect, and the senior owes the junior protection and consideration. The prototype for all social institutions is the family. A person is

Table 2.7 The uncertainty avoidance dimension

Weak uncertainty avoidance	*Strong uncertainty avoidance*
The uncertainty inherent in life is more easily accepted and each day is taken as it comes.	The uncertainty inherent in life is felt as a continuous threat that must be fought.
Ease and lower stress are experienced.	Higher anxiety and stress are experienced.
Time is free.	Time is money.
Hard work, as such, is not a virtue.	There is an inner urge to work hard.
Aggressive behaviour is frowned upon.	Aggressive behaviour of self and others is accepted.
Less showing emotions is preferred.	More showing of emotions is preferred.
Conflict and competition can be contained on the level of fair play and can be used constructively.	Conflict and competition can unleash aggression and should therefore be avoided.
More acceptance of dissent is entailed.	A strong need for consensus is involved.
Deviation is not considered threatening; greater tolerance is shown.	Deviant persons and ideas are dangerous; intolerance holds sway.
The ambiance is one of less nationalism.	Nationalism is pervasive.
More positive feelings toward younger people are seen.	Younger people are suspect.
There is more willingness to take risks in life.	There is great concern with security in life.
The accent is on relativism, empiricism.	The search is for ultimate, absolute truths and values.
There should be as few rules as possible.	There is a need for written rules and regulations.
If rules cannot be kept, we should change them.	If rules cannot be kept, we are sinners and should repent.
Belief is placed in generalists and common sense.	Belief is placed in experts and their knowledge.
The authorities are there to serve the citizens.	Ordinary citizens are incompetent compared with the authorities.

Source: Hofstede (1980).

identified foremost as a member of a family, as opposed to being just an individual.

Harmony in the family must be preserved, and harmony is the maintenance of one's *face*, that is, one's dignity, self-respect, and prestige. Treating others as one would like to be treated oneself is virtuous behaviour. *Virtue* with respect to one's tasks consists of attempting to obtain skills and education, working hard, not spending more than necessary, being patient, and persevering. It should be noted that individuals may have inner thoughts that differ from the group's norms and values; however, individuals may not act on those thoughts, because group harmony and not shaming the group are of paramount importance.

In this research study it is argued that understanding of world cultures

Table 2.8 Feminine and masculine dimensions

Feminine	*Masculine*
Men need not be assertive, but can also assume nurturing roles.	Men should be assertive. Women should be nurturing.
Sex roles in society are more fluid.	Sex roles in society are clearly differentiated.
There should be equality between the sexes.	Men should dominate in society.
Quality of life is important.	Performance is what counts.
You work in order to live.	You live in order to work.
People and environment are important.	Money and things are important.
Interdependence is the ideal.	Independence is the ideal.
One sympathises with the unfortunate.	One admires the successful achiever.
Small and slow are beautiful.	Big and fast are beautiful.
Unisex and androgyny are ideal.	Ostentatious manliness ("machismo") is appreciated.

Source: Hofstede (1980).

Table 2.9 National culture in four dimensions

Country	*Power*	*Uncertainty*	*Individualism*	*Masculinity*
Australia	Low	Low	High	High
Hong Kong	High	Low	Low	High
Japan	High	High	Low	High
Philippines	High	Low	Low	High
Singapore	High	Low	Low	Low
Sweden	Low	Low	High	Low
USA	Low	Low	High	High
Yugoslavia	High	High	Low	Low

Source: Hofstede (1980).

should generally help managers to improve competence in their intercultural encounters. More particularly, these findings have implications for effective management in the Australian hospitality and tourism industries and raise a significant issue for investigation, namely, in what ways managers consider that these socio-cultural dimensions feature in their overall managerial functions and their intercultural communication.

2.8 Australia's multiculturalism

According to Irwin (1996) "Multiculturalism is a striking characteristic of modern day Australia. Australia is now arguably the most multicultural nation on earth" (p.8). So what does multiculturalism mean and how does it affect communication and managerial functions? Broadly speaking, multiculturalism is perceived as a word which has different meanings for different people (Jupp, 1989). Definitions include:

> Multicultural is a term which describes the cultural and ethnic diversity of contemporary Australia. We are, and will remain, a multicultural society.
>
> (OMA, 1989)

> Multiculturalism is the belief that Australia is culturally pluralist society, that this should be recognised and fostered to an extent by various means including government.
>
> (Dave, 1988 cited in Saee, 1993)

> Multiculturalism is concerned with promoting respect for cultural differences and enhancement of social justice, and it is basically a policy of "fair go" for everyone.
>
> (OMA, 1989)

> Multiculturalism implies cultural and ethnic diversity within national societal cohesion i.e., individuals are encouraged to retain their cultures and languages but must also be able to function effectively as Australians.
>
> (OMA, 1989)

Nearly 25 per cent of the population in Australia is from a non-English-speaking background (NESB), either overseas-born or having at least one parent born in a non-English-speaking background (CEDA, 1993). Contemporary Australia is a nation made up of 140 cultural groupings. The cultural diversity is equally reflected within all Australian socio-economic sectors including the Australian hospitality and tourism service industries (Saee, 1997). In this research study, multiculturalism, is viewed as a co-existence of Australia's dominant Anglo culture coupled with all its minority cultures. This view of multiculturalism as cultural diversity is also supported by Irwin (1996) who stated that "clearly multiculturalism refers to a society in which groups can live side-by-side in this case in Australia, as Australians" (p.9).

Dominant Anglo Australian cultural values pervade the country's multicultural social institutions, including parliamentary democracy, judiciary, education and management practices. This study explores issues of intercultural communication and managerial functions with particular reference to Australian members of the host culture, namely Anglo Australian managers, so it is appropriate at this stage to conceptualise some of the key cultural values of Anglo Australians.

2.9 Australia's Anglo culture: dominant culture

Among the highly informative papers and books written about Australian identity and culture (Goldberg and Smith, 1989; Horne, 1994; Kukathas, 1993; McGregor, 1980; Veltman, 1992), none has better encapsulated Australia's Anglo cultural values and heritage so succinctly and systematically than Willcoxon (1992). Some of the key features discussed in Willcoxon's research (1992) which characterise the Anglo cultural heritage of Australians include:

Personal control vs fate/destiny Australians increasingly believe that individuals have control over their own destiny. The image of the admired "little Aussie battler", however, expresses a fundamental contradiction: the "battler" strives to achieve control over his or her own life while being buffeted by the winds of circumstance and environment.

Change vs stability/tradition Although change and innovation is seen as desirable, especially when linked to the country's economic growth, there is a strong traditionalist element among Australians, as reflected in the frequency with which young Australians visit the lands of their forebears. The Australian sense of tradition has less to do with respect for form and ritual than with the desire of a "young" culture to augment its experience.

Time and its control vs human interaction While Australians expect punctuality on formal or business occasions, they may be less than punctual on informal or social occasions. When conflict arises between getting things done on time and spending additional time establishing or supporting a personal relationship, Australians will invariably opt for the personal relationship, considering the time spent in developing this a worthwhile investment for the future.

Equality/fairness vs hierarchy/rank/status This is perhaps one of the areas in which Australian values are most contradictory. Australians describe their society as classless and egalitarian. Egalitarianism is so greatly valued that there is a strong distaste for any sign of ambition or demonstration of perceived superiority in any area. Great delight is taken in cutting down "tall poppies", in reducing all to a lowest common denominator; and Australians are most likely to challenge and question status than work for it. They value fellowship rather than leadership and display little respect for exceptional qualities, except in sport and then mainly in team sports. Trust arises as a result of a person's capacity for loyalty and commitment and a personal assessment of qualities rather than from role status or achievement.

Paradoxically, however, Australians are quite status-conscious, as reflected in one of the first questions upon meeting – "What do you do?" – although they hate to be categorised, treated as socially unequal or patronised, especially if in lower occupational groupings.

Individualism/independence vs collectivism/dependence Australians, in general, have a fundamental belief that one has responsibility to family/friends/neighbours and that loyalty is not only appropriate but essential. They have a strong sense of community and value collective effort, as evident in the number of group-oriented social functions they participate in. In contrast to the group ethos, however, and perhaps based on the perceived need to develop a separate Australian identity, great respect is also shown for "characters" – for individuals who are both likeable and distinctive, perhaps for their humour, their willingness to "have a go" or to "buck authority". Although strongly group-oriented in groups of their own choosing, Australians tend to rebel against imposed order and groupings.

While Australians probably like to see themselves as independent

adventurers, they may equally well be described as sentimental dependents, as exemplified by the concept of "mateship". During the early days of Anglo-Celtic settlement, in the presence of hardship and the relative absence of women, male settlers developed a sense of mutual dependence on which the largely male-oriented tradition of "mateship" is probably based. Although the feeling will rarely be put into words, "true mates" will generally be bonded for life, with the friendship often founded on having "been through things together", frequently as youths. The rituals of mateship are almost always conducted in the absence of women.

Self-help/initiative vs birthright inheritance Australians treat inherited privilege with contempt and suspicion, valuing instead the person who "has a go", the self-made man (or woman) – as long as wealth or status doesn't make this person stand out from the crowd too obviously.

Competition vs co-operation Australians revel in competition on the sporting field, especially when a team game is involved. While this team spirit makes them slightly distrustful of competition in some contexts, they nevertheless value individual achievement based upon competence or ability – as long as the individual plays the game according to the rules of respect for others and doesn't become "too big for his/her boots" or "up himself/herself".

Future orientation vs past orientation Australians embrace life and generally live more for today than for tomorrow. There is, however, an underlying self-imposed spirit and policy of denial that can make them tenacious in the face of present adversity if they can see that the future is worth working for.

Action/work orientation vs "being" orientation The frequent foreigner's description of Australians as lazy workers probably applies mainly to certain predominantly male occupational groupings where the ability to "put one over" an organisation is admired. In general, Australians "work to live rather than live to work" and statutory conditions for workers reflect this, with regular tea breaks, rostered days off and so on.

Informality vs formality In manner Australians are very informal, characteristic of a people who spend as much time as possible relaxing outdoors. First names are almost always used in preference to family names, dress is casual often even in the workplace, and greetings are also very informal though ritualised. "G-day. How are you?" "Fine, and you?"

Directness/openness/honesty vs indirectness/ritual/"face" Australians pride themselves on their directness and show little concern for what others think of them or whether they are liked or not. They value verbal sparring, expect their interlocutors to express forthright opinions, and frequently use understatement or humour, mixed with cynicism or irony, to make a point. Conversation tends to be laconic, pithy and pointed and negative opinions of others are expressed openly. Friendliness and open curiosity are features of initial meetings with Australians, but the establishment of a good friendship takes some time. Australians, particularly men, rarely express feelings of affection verbally and often experience considerable discomfort when others verbally express liking or positive regard for them.

Practicality/efficiency vs idealism/theory The experience of opening up the hostile Australian "outback" is still influential in Australian life, for from it arose the myths and legends that lead Australians to see themselves as practical, tough, innovative, adaptable and adventurous. Comparatively little value is placed upon intellectual achievement. It is perhaps significant that a campaign has been launched in recent years to encourage Australians to value intellectual achievement, to think of a future Australia as a "clever country" rather than "the lucky country".

Materialism/acquisitiveness vs spiritualism/detachment Australians are becoming increasingly acquisitive and competitive with each other in a material sense. As evidenced by rapidly falling church attendances, except among recently arrived immigrant groups, organised religion is becoming less attractive to the majority of Australians, who place more emphasis upon present happiness than happiness in an afterlife.

Other values which characterise Australians of Anglo culture were found in a study of views of over fifty Australian chief executive officers (CEOs) conducted by the Australian Institute of Management (AIM, 1990; Irwin, 1996). This study used qualitative methodology to assess a climate of opinions on a range of issues and did not attempt any quantification of these opinions. Perhaps reflecting the backgrounds and interests of the CEOs surveyed, the outcomes of the study catalogued Australians" traditionally relaxed attitudes and apparent belief that their quality of life is independent of economic performance; their complacency and "she'll be right" mentality; their ready willingness to be adversarial rather than co-operative; their fundamental commitment to "a fair go for all" (which has often been interpreted as no one should work too hard or try too hard); and their apparent partial abandonment of the "work ethic". This study also highlighted Australians' ready reliance on the welfare net; their "knocker" mentality that denigrates the local product and "cuts down tall poppies"; their limited respect for achievement; and their placing of preeminent value on freedom rather than responsibility and their natural optimism.

It appears that such cultural values typified as Anglo culture have enormous implications for the way in which organisations are managed in Australia. Also, such cultural values are highly likely to influence management communication processes within Australian organisations with culturally diverse workforces.

2.10 Benefits of cultural diversity

Demographic trends in Australia indicate that the composition of the workforce is changing and becoming more culturally diverse. Today, the workforce is comprised of diverse groups whose members encompass a wide range of attitudes, needs, desires, values and work behaviours (Deluca and McDowell, 1992; Morrison, 1992; Rosen and Lovelace, 1991).

Cultural diversity can be seen as advantageous in organisations. As Cox and Smolinski (1994) pointed out,

> Selling goods and services in the increasingly diverse marketplace is facilitated by a well-utilised, diverse workforce; Firms gain a competitive advantage from the insights of employees from various cultural backgrounds who can assist organisations in understanding cultural effects on buying decisions and in mapping strategies to respond to them; and sales benefit if consumers have some opportunities to interact with organisational representatives of their own communities.
>
> (p.26)

Adler (1997) argued that "Diversity becomes most advantageous when the organisation wants to expand its perspective, its approach, its range of ideas, its operations, its product lines, or its marketing plans" (p.101). Potential advantages include enhanced creativity, flexibility and problem-solving ability, especially for complex problems involving many qualitative factors, together with improved effectiveness in working with culturally distinct client groups, and a heightened awareness of the dynamics and communication patterns within the organisations (Hayles, 1982).

Cultural diversity has presented many challenges and created significant intercultural communication problems for Australian managers. Irwin and More (1994) pointed out that, as cultural diversity is currently a feature of Australian organisational life, many managers increasingly worry that they lack information essential for effective intercultural interactions and that they cannot possibly "catch up" and learn all there is to know about cultural difference. They are also anxious that intercultural encounters might lead them to make expensive and embarrassing mistakes. Their worries do not end there. Irwin and More (1994) also suggested that, for those managers whose awareness of cultural variability is accompanied by only a little knowledge, there is the additional fear that they will not be able to change their behaviours to be like people from different cultural backgrounds. Of course, adapting to cultural diversity does not involve having to "be like them" or encouraging them to "be like us". An extreme reaction to cultural difference and to culture shock is fear and even relational paralysis. Research by Karpin (1995) and OMA (1994) also confirmed that, generally speaking, most Australian managers' inadequate intercultural competence is reflected in their inability to perform management functions within their culturally diverse workplaces in an effective manner. Let us examine briefly some examples where ineptness within Australian management functions has been identified.

2.11 Managing a culturally diverse workforce in Australia

A research study by the Office of Multicultural Affairs (1994) is the only major national study which has specifically investigated management of cultural diversity across a range of industries Australia-wide, and it is considered to be highly authoritative in terms of an analysis of management of cultural diversity. Its major findings have been referred to in the following description of each

managerial function. It appears that no comparable study has ever been conducted on corporate culture, managerial functions, and intercultural communication competence in the Australian hospitality and tourism service industries to ascertain the complexities of management of cultural diversity with particular reference to intercultural communication. Consequently, this research study was designed to explore the relationship between managerial functions and intercultural communication within the those industries.

2.12 Key managerial functions

A brief description is provided below of each managerial function in the light of a national study of management of cultural diversity across a range of industries by OMA (1994) that has relevance for the Australian hospitality and tourism service industries because of its culturally diverse workforce. In general, there is a dearth of research addressing how the industry's managers' intercultural communication competence or lack thereof affects their performance of these functions (2.12.1–2.12.11) in a culturally diverse workforce. Thus, these issues will be explored in this research study.

2.12.1 Planning

Planning involves setting goals, assigning tasks and coordinating activities (Dunford, 1992; Mullins, 1996; Phatak, 1997; Robbins, 1991). Any organisation seeking to reach its full potential needs to capitalise on the full range of available resources. This includes managing cultural diversity as a human resource. This in turn means that an organisation has to acknowledge and incorporate all available and relevant resources throughout the planning process.

However, research by OMA (1994) showed that planning processes in many Australian organisations are made more difficult by management and communication issues typical of culturally diverse organisations, including: attitudes of front-line managers; language barriers; past experiences of hierarchical organisational cultures; cultural attitudes towards people in different classes (e.g. respect, questioning a "superior"; and past experience in an employee's country of origin).

2.12.2 Workplace communication

Communication needs to be understood as a human interaction where the central concern is sharing meaning. As Timm (1980) put it, "Communication occurs any time someone attaches meaning to what is going on. Intentional communication efforts are successful to the degree that common meaning develops" (p.21). Thus, communication is the sharing of meanings and can be viewed in terms of interpersonal relationships (Penman, 1985). These relationships may occur in a context of cultural diversity, hence intercultural communication takes place. (Chapter Three discusses these in some detail.)

According to research by OMA (1994), all managers who participated in the project stressed the centrality of communication in achieving organisational objectives. However, the same study revealed significant communication problems relating to dealing with cultural diversity within these Australian organisations, including:

(a) Communication is complicated by the existence of a variety of competency levels in English and in languages other than English.
(b) In some situations information gets caught within language groups in the workplace and may be misinterpreted, resulting in variable levels of information.
(c) There is over-reliance on bilingual staff in the communication process, giving greater power to bilingual workers.
(d) Formal communication procedures tend to be slower and need reinforcement.
(e) Effective communication is limited by the assumption that problems in language and literacy exist only for NESB workers (OMA, 1994, p.15).

2.12.3 Recruitment/promotion

Recruitment/promotion is defined as searching for, and obtaining, potential job candidates in sufficient numbers and quality for the organisation to select the most appropriate people to fill its jobs (Goss, 1994). A number of studies in Australia and overseas have indicated that the steps and criteria followed by management to select and test applicants as well as promote employees are inadequate or inappropriate for multicultural applicants/employees (Loveman and Gabarro, 1991; Morrison, 1992; Rosen and Lovelace, 1991; Schreiber *et al.*, 1993).

Research by OMA (1994) showed that many Australian organisations are utilising inappropriate language and literacy screening mechanisms as part of their recruitment procedures which bear no relationship to the specific job requirements. Other research (Caudron, 1990; Morrison, 1992) found that managers have little or no understanding of techniques suitable for interviewing applicants from culturally diverse backgrounds.

2.12.4 Induction

Induction is the process by which a new employee is taken into the organisation and integrated as quickly and effectively as possible (Mukhi *et al.*, 1988). Research by OMA (1994) found that in many Australian organisations, new employees including multicultural employees are given written material in English, briefly introduced to colleagues and at this point induction ends. Similarly the same research study found that an NESB person is allocated to his or her language group for induction, and this limits the induction information to those present in the group (OMA, 1994).

2.12.5 Training

Training is used by management as a strategy to improve current and future employees' performance by increasing, through learning and education, employees' abilities to perform, usually by increasing their skills and knowledge (Schuler *et al.*, 1992). According to research by OMA (1994), many training programmes available in Australian organisations primarily focus on language and literacy training for their culturally diverse workforce. However, these programmes are not linked to the overall reward systems in the workplace. There is little feedback on the results of language and literacy training either to management or the employee concerned. More significantly, these training programmes do not have specific training objectives or adequate evaluation processes which leads to:

(a) courses being undervalued by participants;
(b) courses not being supported by supervisors; and
(c) less chance of staff being released for future programmes, and, ultimately, less provision of resources to allow for continuation of programmes.

Specifically in relation to employees of culturally diverse backgrounds, the OMA (1994) study found that skills and experience brought to Australia are often not known or utilised resulting in a waste of resources. Multicultural employees are generally anxious about participating in training because they fear the results will be used to dismiss them. In addition, many training programmes are often inaccessible to multicultural workers because of assumed language and literacy requirements. That is, training is often designed in a form that regards the audience as all the same, with an assumption that the form of information communication is equally accessible to all workers (OMA, 1994).

2.12.6 Supervision

The role of supervisor/manager is undergoing rapid change in contemporary Australian organisations, owing to increasing globalisation, continuous technological innovation and cultural diversity in the workplace. Supervisors/managers in Australia have been described as being ill equipped to deal with cultural diversity (Karpin, 1995). Research by OMA (1994) found that many problems stem from a tendency towards cultural stereotyping of ethnic/cultural behaviours by supervisors. The same research found that a range of strategies are required to manage social and cultural diversity, e.g. skills to communicate with and manage culturally diverse employees, or to distinguish between an individual's cultural behaviour compared to more general cultural behaviours. Thus supervisors require more sophisticated and effective techniques to identify and deal with stereotypical barriers, as will be explored in this research study.

2.12.7 Industrial relations

Industrial relations is an area in which individual employees are increasingly expected, even required, to negotiate the change process. This includes, for, example, participating on joint consultative committees and understanding and voting on enterprise agreements (EMD, 1994). In culturally diverse Australian workplaces, there is an increased need for communication skills, management skills and time to achieve effective and beneficial change. Research by OMA (1994) found that in many Australian organisations, the area of industrial relations is beset by many problems that can be linked to issues about cultural diversity. Problems in industrial relations include:

(a) Multicultural workers are poorly represented in the ranks of union organisers.
(b) There is a low participation rate by multicultural employees in bargaining and joint consultative committee structures.

Confusion and disputes arise when linguistic and cultural factors result in a poor grasp of industrial relations issues by the workforce (OMA, 1994, pp.40–41).

2.12.8 Management of change

A common assumption among management theorists is that conditions both outside and inside organisations are changing rapidly and profoundly (Ivancevich *et al.*, 1997; Robbins, 1991). Outside the organisation, environmental conditions are generally becoming less stable. They are even becoming turbulent. Economic conditions, availability and cost of materials and money, technological and product innovation and government regulation can change rapidly. Inside the organisation, employees are changing by bringing higher educational levels, placing greater emphasis on human values and questioning authority. The composition of the workforce itself is changing in terms of gender and ethnicity. Management, in response to these changing conditions introduces change to better position the organisation for dealing with issues arising from environmental challenges.

While these changes may be necessary and justifiable, research (OMA, 1994) has found that management of change in many Australian organisations is accompanied by problems including difficulties arising from cultural diversity. These problems include:

(a) The rate of change is affected by the cultural diversity of the workforce, usually leading to change that is slower than anticipated.
(b) Anxiety levels for multicultural employees are heightened if they are not fully informed or do not fully understand the reasons for the change.
(c) Perceptions can arise that multicultural employees will be targeted if management of change leads to a reduction in staff.

(d) The benefits derived from overseas' experience can contribute to management of change in some cases but these benefits are rarely used.
(e) In some case, there is a lack of involvement in the change process simply on the basis of language (OMA, 1994, p.45).

2.12.9 Customer service

Customer service is widely considered to be one of the key areas in which organisations can have a positive and significant impact on customer satisfaction and retention. Research by OMA (1994) found that problems related to customer service included:

(a) In many organisations, the overall customer service is poor, and although this is recognised it is not acted on.
(b) Customer service does not keep pace with the change in client mix in terms of ethnicity and other demographic variables.
(c) Very little training and support is provided to customer service staff (OMA, 1994, pp.49–50).

2.12.10 Financial management

Financial management-related activities include financial methods, budgets and audits; financial methods include financial statements, ratio analyses, and break-even analysis. Commonly used financial statements are balance statements, income statements, and cash flow, sources and uses of funds statements. These statements are used by managers to control the organisation's activities and by individuals outside the organisation to evaluate its effectiveness (Stoner *et al.*, 1994). Financial management is of great importance for the evaluation of organisational effectiveness, and in some organisations, financial management is seen as a catalyst for organisational innovation and entrepreneurial activities including diversification.

2.12.11 Marketing

Marketing is a crucial managerial function within organisations designed to satisfy customer needs and wants through the development of appropriate products and services (Kotler, 1997). The many problem areas for ethnic marketing identified by the OMA (1994) study include:

(a) Organisations refuse to acknowledge and accommodate existing cultural diversity in the Australian marketplace.
(b) There is no ethnic diversity in marketing strategies, e.g. in advertising, product design or packaging.

In addition, the research found that Australian organisations are diversifying their export base, resulting from a growing recognition of the need for, and

reliance on, exports as a significant factor in maintaining domestic economic growth. Nevertheless it was reported that managers do not recognise the value of cultural skills or lack the management skills to deal with cultural difference, in their export marketing drives (OMA, 1994). Some research studies have been conducted on marketing in relation to Australian hospitality and tourism managers and cultural diversity.

2.13 Corporate culture

Research studies have recognised a relationship between the culture and the success of an organisation. For example, Peters and Waterman (1984) concluded that "Without exception, the dominance and coherence of culture proved to be an essential quality of the excellent companies" (p.75). Kotter and Heskett (1992) advocated that corporate culture can have a significant impact on a firm's long-term economic performance. For example, analyses of the secrets of Japanese success refer not to specific technical areas such as finance, production or marketing but to the overall way organisations operate as cultural systems (Ouchi, 1981; Pascale and Athos, 1982). Deal and Kennedy's *Corporate Cultures* (1982) and Peters and Waterman's *In Search of Excellence* (1984), for example, reflect the recommendation that "A strong culture has almost always been the driving force behind continuing success" (Deal and Kennedy, 1982, p.5). Research conducted on Banker's Trust Australia (McBeth, 1988 cited in Ivancevich *et al.*, 1997) revealed that the reason why Banker's Trust Australia is regarded as one of the country's leading merchant banks is because of its strong corporate culture.

Having established that a strong corporate culture can be crucial to the success of an organisation, it is appropriate at this stage to define what is meant by corporate culture. Corporate culture has been conceptualised as a set of assumptions or an ideology shared by members in an organisation (Deal and Kennedy, 1982; Ouchi, 1981; Pascale and Athos, 1981). These assumptions are used by people to identify what is important and how things work in that organisation. Additionally, Lundberg and Woods (1990) advocated that managers who are culturally sensitive to their employees will substantially contribute to business success. However, studies show that Australian managers are not well equipped to manage cultural diversity in their organisations. This ineffective management of cultural diversity within most Australian organisations stems from the nature of corporate culture, which is basically monocultural and does not value cultural diversity. This was confirmed by a national study (Karpin, 1995) which found that there is a tendency by Australian management to value sameness rather than differences. This tendency is reflected in recruitment and promotion procedures. The existence of a comfort zone, and indeed of a glass ceiling for migrant workers and workers from non-English-speaking backgrounds, is supported by Australian literature (Karpin, 1995). In relation to the Australian hospitality and tourism service industries, there is a lack of research on corporate culture and the management of cultural diversity. These issues will be explored in this research study.

In conclusion, the inextricable interrelationship between culture and communication has been introduced and elaborated in this chapter. The centrality of communication in the conduct of all managerial functions was established. The chapter examined Hall's (1976) and Hofestede's (1980) theories on world cultures and Australia's multiculturalism and Australia's dominant culture and implications for intercultural communication competence. An investigation was made of the potential impact of cultural values on corporate culture and specific managerial functions. A number of authoritative research findings were discussed to demonstrate that Australian managers appear to lack competence in their management of cultural diversity and associated intercultural communication competence, and that this was reflected in their inability to perform managerial functions within their culturally diverse workplaces. It was established that there is a lack of research on intercultural communication competence and management of cultural diversity by Australian managers in the country's hospitality industry.

The next chapter looks at currently available intercultural communication theories in order to define the nature and scope of the meaning of intercultural communication so that the findings can be applied to this study of managerial practices. This research study of Australian managers' intercultural communication competence and managerial functions in the Australian hospitality and tourism service industries has been designed to take account of major implications of these theoretical perspectives. Qualitative data collected in this study has thus been collected and interpreted according to implications derived from the frameworks discussed in the next chapter.

3 Theoretical perspectives on intercultural communication

> Theories . . . are nets cast to catch what we call "the world": to rationalise, to explain. . . . We endeavour to make the mesh ever finer and finer.
>
> (Karl Popper cited in Schilpp, 1974)

In Chapter Two a number of interrelated issues affecting intercultural communication competence and managerial functions were identified. In particular, the following aspects were considered: the nexus between communication and management; communication and culture; obstacles to intercultural communication; cultural diversity and communication; culture and management; Australia's multiculturalism; its dominant culture and managing culturally diverse workforces with reference to specific key managerial functions, as already detailed. From this discussion a number of issues were identified to be of particular interest to researchers of management in the Australian hospitality industry.

This chapter provides a critical examination of current theoretical perspectives on intercultural communication that have implications for any study and analysis of Australian hospitality and tourism managers' intercultural communication competence. These theoretical perspectives on intercultural communication include psychological theory, namely culture shock theory; general systems theory; uncertainty reduction theory; convergence theory; and interpersonal theory. Before discussing the relevance of these theoretical approaches, it is important to comment on the role of English-language training and intercultural communication in the workplace.

3.1 English language as a "panacea" for ineffective intercultural communication

With the rapid globalisation of business and cultures, intercultural communication skills have become essential. The need for communication competence in culturally diverse workplaces has caused significant changes in the methods and materials used in communication training programmes around the world. In Australia, to improve communication within their culturally diverse workplaces, Australian organisations have tended to focus on English-language training to

remedy communication problems between managers and their migrant workers. In other words, most managers see language competency as a panacea for ineffective intercultural communication. Such a view has initially been promulgated by government policy makers and researchers who, for example, have emphasised the acquisition of English-language competence by a multicultural workforce. They suggest that English-language acquisition is enough: that is, any barriers between management and ethnic worker can be easily overcome by a competent use of English (Eyles *et al.*, 1989; Harris, 1996; Jupp, 1989; ROMMPAS, 1986). This view is clearly evident in the Report of the Committee for the Review of Migrant and Multicultural Programs and Services (ROMMPAS, 1986) released in 1986, which stated that "Proficiency in English is central to all aspects of life in Australia. Ideally, all immigrants should have the opportunity to learn English on their arrival to meet their employment and living requirements" (p.1). An important implication of the foregoing finding is the belief that gaining language skills determines how quickly an immigrant who comes from a non-English-speaking background (NESB) can adapt competently to a new environment and the workplace.

This "English language is enough" research study has its origins within the field of linguistics, initially pioneered by Sapir (1921) and Whorf (1956). For example, Whorf (1956) advocated that our thought processes and the way we see the world are shaped by the grammatical structure of the language. "All one's life one has been tricked by the structure of language into a certain way of perceiving reality" (p.27). While an organisation's focus on language training to remedy communication problems is laudable, language training is only a partial solution. As a primary strategy for facilitating communication in a multicultural workplace, English-language skills training is based on false assumptions: (1) the assumption that efficient communication between cultures is solely based on linguistic competence; (2) the assumption that communication, like typing, is purely a mechanical skill, unrelated to emotional and other interpersonal factors (Gouttefarde, 1992; Saee, 1998).

Thus an exclusive emphasis on language training will not necessarily enhance workplace communication. Speaking a language cannot be considered synonymous with communicating effectively in it. The ability to communicate competently in a particular context goes far beyond syntax and vocabulary and includes many cultural dimensions.

Maurice Bloch (1991), in writing about cognitive anthropology, has investigated the relationship of language to understanding culture, and has concluded (1) that much knowledge is fundamentally non-linguistic; (2) that concepts involve implicit networks of meanings which are formed through the experience of, and practice in, the external world; and (3) that, under certain circumstances, this non-linguistic knowledge can be rendered into language and thus take the form of explicit discourse. In other words, competence in speaking English at an appropriate level for the workplace may not guarantee that meanings are exchanged effectively about workplace knowledge, skills and attitudes. In addition, a view that links only language literacy to communication competence

denies that fluent English-speaking managers have a responsibility to communicate effectively within an Australian culturally diverse workforce such as exists in the hospitality industry.

The emphasis on immigrant workers mastering skills in written and spoken English while working, deflects both training and responsibility away from managers and thus represents at best a partial solution. Language training does not address the dynamics of intercultural communication processes. In addition, this approach to improving workplace communication does not provide a framework for the Australian managers to develop and assess their own intercultural communication competence, considering that they too are part of the communication process. The range of theoretical approaches to intercultural communication discussed in the following sections demonstrates that the "English language is enough" view is inadequate for any study and analysis of intercultural communication within the Australian hospitality industry.

3.2 Psychological theories of intercultural communication

Psychological theories of intercultural communication explain it in terms of individual rather than group behavioural adaptation (Bochner, 1981; Brislin, 1981; Gudykunst, 1984). The main focus of these studies was to emphasise personal and interpersonal traits and attributes as integral parts of intercultural communication processes. These theories proposed that variables in the individual person determined stages of acculturation, alienation, assimilation or adaptation to a dominant culture (Bochner, 1981, 1982; Brislin, 1979). Consequently, these theories provided an insight into the individual internal psychological responses when participating in intercultural communication settings.

Psychologists (Furnham and Bochner, 1989; Harris and Moran, 1979; Lysgaard, 1955; Oberg, 1960; Searle and Ward, 1990; Ward and Kennedy, 1996) maintained that there are recognised stages of cross-cultural learning/acculturation and adaptation which strangers/sojourners experience before they are able to develop intercultural competence in an alien culture. These stages of adaptive change through which individuals progress are depicted in a "curve", and sometimes a "U" curve, indicating that sojourners often undergo a reacculturation process (Gudykunst, 1988; Gullahorn and Gullahorn, 1963). These curves indicate patterns of change over time in the degree of satisfaction in living in the alien environment. The sojourner's level of adjustment, adaptation and well-being over time, produces a U-shape curve where satisfaction and well-being gradually decline but then increase again. Sojourners' typical stages of adjustment are identified as:

Initial contact At the point of initial contact with a different culture, the stranger fails to recognise new realities. The stranger's own culturally influenced worldview persists; the stranger sees one's own initial worldview in the second culture. The differences experienced by the stranger may be intriguing rather than threatening. In other words, strangers feel a high

degree of excitement and euphoria during this stage (Furnham and Bochner, 1989; Harris and Moran, 1979).

Initial culture shock This stage is characterised by a sense of increasing confusion and loss. The foreigner experiences disorientation from of a lack of familiarity with everyday cues such as language, gestures, foods and customs. Scholars writing about culture shock have often described individuals as lacking points of reference, social norms and rules to guide their actions and understand others' behaviour.

Strangers undergoing culture shock display certain symptoms. According to Oberg (1960):

> some of the symptoms of culture shock are: excessive washing of the hands; excessive concern over drinking water, food, dishes, and bedding; fear of physical contact with attendants; the absent-minded, far-away stare; feelings of helplessness and a desire for dependence on long-term residents of own nationality; fits of anger over delays and other minor frustrations; delay and outright refusal to learn the language of the host country; excessive fear of being cheated, robbed, or injured; great concern over minor pains and eruptions of the skin; and finally, that terrible longing to be back home, to be able to have a cup of coffee and a piece of apple pie, to walk into that corner drugstore, to visit one's relatives, and, in general, to talk to people who really make sense.
>
> (Oberg, 1960, p.176)

Thus the foreigner may experience periods of depression, withdrawal, severe homesickness, mounting tension, frustration and fatigue. This stage is referred to as the "disintegration stage" (Furnham and Bochner, 1989; March, 1995).

Superficial adjustment This stage is marked by the stranger's attempt to find a solution to a difficult situation. Thus the foreigner temporarily overcomes the negative effects of culture shock and has learnt how to "survive" in the host culture. The foreigner can communicate basic needs in the host language and appears to be settled. However, cultural differences begin to intrude and the foreigner experiences a loss of ties with his/her own culture.

Depression/isolation stage The foreigner experiences a growing loss of self-esteem due to awareness of deep cultural differences. The foreigner feels alienated from members of the host culture. Frequent misinterpretation of cultural cues and lack of ability to "fit in" occur because the foreigner feels a loss of control over his or her environment. His or her sense of identity and personality are threatened (Furnham and Bochner, 1989; Harris and Moran, 1979).

Reintegration/compensation stage The foreigner develops coping behaviour to deal with self-esteem. Cultural differences continue to cause the foreigner to make negative judgments, however. The foreigner may develop strategies to help deal with anxiety, nervousness, frustration and anger (Furnham and Bochner, 1989; March, 1995).

Autonomy/independence stage The foreigner accepts and sometimes even

> values differences between his own and the host culture. During this stage, the foreigner feels more relaxed and demonstrates self-confidence. The foreigner is capable of interacting socially in the host culture.

In a review of the U-curve literature, Church (1982) reported seven studies that found some evidence for these stages. Torbiorn (1982) studied the psychological adjustment of Swedish expatriate managers working abroad and his findings confirmed the U-curve model. A major study (Taft, 1988) of psychological adaptation of Soviet immigrants to Australia revealed that they experienced similar types of psychological adaptation. However, there is a dearth of research on psychological adaptation of international tourists visiting Australia. More importantly, research is lacking on Australian hospitality and tourism managers' awareness of psychological adaptation processes that may be experienced by international tourists coming to Australia. If the managers are aware of psychological adaptation to new cultures, as experienced by international clients (international tourists) during their visits to Australia, then they should be more able to assist them to deal with their experience of these stages. This issue was investigated in this research study.

3.3 General systems theory of intercultural communication

One of the leading theories of intercultural communication is known as general systems theory (Kim, 1988a and b, 1990; Kim and Ruben, 1988). Kim's theory, is deeply rooted in the disciplines of psychology and sociology, is predicated on a set of "open-systems" assumptions about the nature of humans as adaptive living entities. Individuals are viewed as open systems which function through ongoing interaction with the environment and other people. In particular, human beings are seen as having an inherent drive to adapt and grow. Adaptation is considered to be a fundamental life goal for humans, something that people do naturally and continually as they face the challenges from their environment (Slavin and Kriegman, 1992).

Upon entering a new and unfamiliar culture, strangers are faced with situations that deviate from their familiar and internalised original cultural scripts. Strangers discover that they lack a level of understanding of the communication system of the new host culture, and must therefore manage key challenging features of intercultural communication: namely, cultural differences, unfamiliarity and intergroup posture. According to Kim (1995) stress results from these cultural experiences:

> Because a stranger's cultural identity and attributes are placed against the backdrop of the systematic forces of the host culture, the cross-cultural experiences of new comers are unsettling. Strangers are, at least temporarily, in a state of disequilibrium, which is manifested in many emotional "lows" of uncertainty, confusion and anxiety. In the present open systems perspective, such disruptive experiences of a person reflect stress.
>
> (p.177)

Under stress, according to Lazarus (1966),

> a so-called defense mechanism is activated in strangers to hold the internal structure in balance by some form of protective psychological maneuvering. They attempt to avoid or minimize the anticipated or actual "pain" of disequilibrium by selective attention, self-deception, denial, avoidance, and withdrawal as well as by hostility, cynicism, and compulsively altruistic behavior.
>
> (p.262)

It may well be that Australian hospitality and tourism managers will experience unsettling, puzzling and indeed hostile interactions with clients because of these psychological effects.

In the general systems theoretical perspective, the capacity to manage intercultural challenges is referred to as adaptability – the capacity of an individual's internal psychic system to alter some of the old cultural ways to learn and accommodate some of the demands of the environment. Individuals seek new cultural ways of expression and try to find creative ways to manage the dynamics of cultural difference/unfamiliarity, intergroup posture and the accompanying stress. Accordingly, to be interculturally competent means to be able to manage such stress, regain internal balance and carry out the communication process in such a way that it contributes to successful outcomes in interactions with others (Gudykunst, 1988; Kim, 1988a and b). Generally, an individual's adaptability within intercultural encounters will affect the cognitive dimension (i.e. sense-making of cues inherent within such an encounter), the affective dimension (i.e. motivational and attitudinal predisposition in responding to intercultural encounters) and the operational (or behavioural) dimensions (abilities to be flexible and resourceful in carrying out what the individual is capable of in the cognitive and affective dimensions).

Stress and adaptation responses are followed by a subtle internal transformation as the individual is able to grow. Growth can be attributed to the development of increasing degrees of intercultural transformation (Kim, 1988a and b). Therefore, according to general systems theory, intercultural communication competence is explained not as communication competence in dealing with a specific culture but as the cognitive, affective and operational adaptability of an individual's internal system in all intercultural communication contexts.

Three interrelated aspects of the stranger's intercultural transformation are also specified in this theory as the key outcomes of the cross-cultural adaptation process (Kim, 1995). The first aspect is an increased functional fitness. Through repeated activities resulting in new cultural learning and internal reorganising, strangers in time achieve an increasing "synergy" (Kim, 1993) between their internal responses and the external demands in the host environment. Thus successfully adapted strangers have accomplished a desired level of competency in communicating and developing a satisfactory relationship with the host society.

Closely related to increased functional fitness, the second aspect is increased

psychological health in relation to the host environment. The psychological health of strangers is directly linked to their ability to communicate and accompanying functional fitness in the host society. Finally, the development of functional fitness and psychological health in strangers is likely to produce the third aspect of an emergent intercultural identity. According to Adler (1976), this emergent intercultural identity is based "not on belongingness which implies either owning or being owned by a single culture, but on a style of self-consciousness that situates oneself neither totally a part of nor totally apart from a given culture" (p.391).

Kim (1977) previously conducted a major study on communication patterns of foreign immigrants in the process of acculturation in the USA in which she empirically confirmed the general systems theory of intercultural communication. In this study, she tested nine propositions where two related to the previous discussion of linking language competence to intercultural communication competence (propositions 3 and 4).

1 The more immigrants participate in interpersonal communication with members of the host culture, the more complex will be their perception of the host society.
2 The more immigrants use mass media of the host society, the more complex will be their perception of that society.
3 The more competent immigrants are in the host language, the greater will be their participation in interpersonal communication with society members.
4 The more competent immigrants are in the host language, the greater will be their use of most mass media.
5 The greater the immigrant's acculturation motivation, the greater will be their participation in interpersonal communication with members of the host society.
6 The greater the immigrants' acculturation motivation, the greater will be their use of host mass media.
7 The greater the immigrants' interpersonal interaction potential, the greater will be their exposure to the host society.
8 The more access immigrants have to host mass media, the greater will be their exposure to those media.
9 The complexity with which immigrants perceive the host society will be influenced by language competence, acculturation motivation and channel accessibility, mediated by interpersonal and mass communication experience.

Results from this study showed that effects of all three main causal factors (language competence (propositions 1 and 2); acculturation motivation (propositions 3 and 4); channel accessibility (propositions 5 and 6) were all significantly related to intercultural communication. The study also showed that sex, age at time of migration, time spent in the host culture and education were the most important factors in predicting the immigrant's language competence, acculturation

motivation and accessibility to host communication channels. It would seem that the influence of interpersonal communication is stronger than that of the mass media in developing a subtle, complex and refined system for perceiving the host society. This may have significant implications for this study of the role and competence of Australian hospitality and tourism managers in intercultural communication. These issues will be considered further in the last section of this chapter.

One major limitation inherent within Kim's general systems theory is that, while her explanation of the stress, adaptation and growth dynamics of intercultural encounters is an incisive conceptual tool, the direction of analysis (stranger to host society) is one-way, whereas the process of intercultural communication is two-way (stranger to host and host to stranger). A notable limitation of Kim's analysis is her lack of emphasis on the nature of appropriate cross-cultural skills and relational competencies required for sojourners/migrant workers and members of the host culture. Consequently, general systems theory does not provide a comprehensive model which could be applied to explain adequately the issues for the study in this research study. Essentially, a general systems theory of intercultural communication fails to acknowledge that the responsibility for adaptation and therefore for developing intercultural communication competence should not only lie with the stranger (migrant worker) but also with the members of the host culture (Saee and Kaye, 1994). For this research study, an important aspect of the communication system (namely the role of the host) is overlooked by general systems theory.

3.4 Uncertainty reduction theory of intercultural communication

Closely related to the general systems adaptation model of intercultural communication is the theoretical perspective of uncertainty reduction (Berger and Calabrese, 1975; Gudykunst, 1983, 1986). According to this theory, a primary motivation for communication is the need to reduce uncertainty. According to Berger and Calabrese (1975), uncertainty is a cognitive phenomenon and uncertainty affects the way we think about strangers. According to this approach, there are two types of uncertainty present in initial interactions with strangers: (1) Predictive uncertainty is the uncertainty we have about predicting strangers' attitudes, feelings, beliefs, values, and behaviour. We need to be able, for example, to predict which of several alternative behaviour patterns strangers will choose to employ; (2) Explanatory uncertainty involves the uncertainty we have about explaining strangers' attitudes, feelings, and thoughts. Whenever we try to figure out why strangers behave the way they do, we are engaging in explanatory uncertainty reduction. It is important to note that we can never totally predict or explain another person's behaviour (Gudykunst, 1995; Wiseman, 1995).

According to the uncertainty reduction theory, we all have a maximum threshold (i.e. the highest amount of uncertainty we can tolerate for predicting

strangers' behaviour sufficiently so that we feel comfortable interacting with them) and a minimum threshold for uncertainty (i.e. the lowest amount of uncertainty we can tolerate and not feel bored or overconfident about our interactions with others). If our uncertainty is above the maximum threshold or below the minimum threshold, we will have difficulty in communicating effectively. Our uncertainty level should be between the minimum and maximum thresholds for effective, satisfying communication (Gudykunst, 1993).

Gudykunst (1993) has also introduced the concept of anxiety to his theory of uncertainty reduction. Gudykunst regards anxiety as the affective (emotional) equivalent of uncertainty which is experienced any time when we communicate with strangers. Anxiety is thus a "generalized or unspecified sense of 'disequilibium'; imbalance" (Gudykunst and Hammer, 1988, p.61). It stems from feeling uneasy, tense, worried or apprehensive about what might happen. Anxiety is an emotional (affective) response to situations based on the anticipation of negative consequences (Stephan and Stephan, 1985). Anxiety is one of the fundamental problems with which all humans must cope (Lazarus, 1991; May, 1977) and it tends to be higher in intergroup than interpersonal encounters (Ickes, 1984).

Managing anxiety can thus be related to developing trust which, in turn, may reduce uncertainty. Trust is "confidence that one will find what is desired from another, rather than what is feared" (Deutsch, 1973, p.149). When we trust others, we expect positive outcomes from interactions with them; when we have anxiety about interacting with others, we fear negative outcomes from our interacting with them. Essentially, we fear four types of negative consequences when interacting with strangers: (1) we may fear negative consequences for our self-concept; (2) we may fear negative behavioural consequences; (3) we may fear negative evaluations by strangers; and (4) we may fear negative evaluations by members of our in-group (Stephan and Stephan, 1985).

It is important for the study in this research to be aware that the amount of anxiety we experience when interacting with strangers can be argued to be, in part, a function of our intergroup attitudes. For example, the greater the prejudice and ethnocentrism of Australian hospitality and tourism managers, the greater could be their anxiety about interacting with strangers. This issue was also explored in this research.

In conceptualising uncertainty reduction theory, it has been argued that reducing uncertainty and reducing/controlling anxiety are necessary and sufficient conditions for intercultural adaptations (Gudykunst, 1983; Gudykunst and Hammer, 1988). Gudykunst (1983) postulated eight variables that were necessarily and sufficiently related to reducing both uncertainty and anxiety: knowledge of host culture, shared networks, intergroup attitudes, favourable contact, stereotypes, cultural identity, cultural similarity, and second-language competence. He claimed that only four variables influenced uncertainty reduction: intimacy, attraction, display of nonverbal affiliative expressiveness, and the use of appropriate uncertainty reduction strategies (Gudykunst, 1983). He associated another four variables with reducing anxiety: strangers' motivation to live permanently in the host culture; host nationals' intergroup attitudes; host culture

policy toward strangers; and strangers' psychological differentiation (Gudykunst, 1983). All these conditions, according to Gudykunst, must be satisfied for intercultural adaptation to take place effectively and competently.

In a detailed discussion of the theoretical perspective of uncertainty/anxiety reduction and intercultural communication, Gudykunst (1988) argued that the necessary and sufficient conditions for intercultural adaptation included both interpersonal and intergroup factors. Thus his theoretical conceptualisation subsumes six assumptions and thirteen axioms. These assumptions and axioms contribute to understanding the nature of intercultural communication. Gudykunst (1988) attempted to define the concept of stranger and to investigate possible psychological processes involved in developing intercultural communication competence (or not).

Assumption 1 At least one participant in an intergroup encounter is a stranger vis-à-vis the in-group being approached.

Assumption 2 Stranger's (i.e. migrant's/sojourner's) initial experiences with a new group are experienced as a series of crises; that is, strangers are not cognitively sure of how to behave (i.e. cognitive uncertainty) and they experience the feeling of a lack of security (i.e. anxiety).

Assumption 3 It is assumed that uncertainty and anxiety are independent aspects of the intercultural communication process. While social cognitive (i.e. uncertainty reduction) and affective processes (i.e. reducing anxiety) are related, the influence of social cognitive processes on intercultural communication is mediated through behavioural intentions and the influence of affective processes is not. As such it is possible for strangers to reduce uncertainty, but still have high levels of anxiety and vice versa.

Assumption 4 A stranger's behaviour in a new culture takes place at high levels of awareness. In a familiar cultural context, much of the behaviour individuals engage in is habitual. Habits are situation-behaviour sequences that are or have become automatic. The individual is not usually "conscious" of these sequences (Triandis, 1980). However, individuals may become conscious of their habitual behaviour when they enter new situations (e.g. interact with a member of another culture) because then they are interacting with individuals who do not share their implicit theories. This heightened awareness can make individuals more conscious of their behaviour or their emotional unease when communicating with people from other cultures than when communicating with someone from their own culture.

Assumption 5 Communication between members of an in-group (i.e. dominant cultural group) and strangers (i.e. migrants/sojourners) is based, at least in part, upon perceptions away from group membership. This in-group behaviour varies along a continuum from purely interpersonal (i.e. no behaviour in the group is attributed to group membership) to purely intergroup (i.e. all behaviour between members of groups is attributed to group membership). Both these interpersonal and intergroup factors, according to Gudykunst (1988), are salient in every encounter, and as such, these attributions influence intergroup communication (i.e. intercultural communication).

Assumption 6 Strangers overestimate the influence of group membership in explaining the behaviour of members of other groups. Strangers' attributions during the process of intercultural adaptation are highly influenced by their perceptions of cultural differences and, therefore, the dispositional factor used to explain the behaviour of a national of a host culture is often that of culture.

Axiom 1 Ethnic identity influences the level of anxiety experienced by a stranger in a new culture; the stronger the identification with the native culture, the greater the level of anxiety.

Axiom 2 The expectations individuals form for each other influence their behaviour (see expectancy theory, Berger and Zelditch, 1985).

Expectations involve looking forward or anticipating something (positive or negative) in the future. Expectations are a function of knowledge, beliefs/attitudes, stereotypes, self-conceptions (including ethnolinguistic identity), roles, prior interactions and status characteristics. An increase in a stranger's positive expectations will produce an increase in attributional confidence regarding the behaviour of members of other groups and a decrease in the level of anxiety experienced when interacting with them.

Simard (1981, cited in Gudykunst, 1984) suggested that people are more confident in predicting the behaviour of culturally similar individuals than they are in predicting that of the culturally dissimilar. Gudykunst's study (1983) showed that individuals know how to get to know others when they come from the same culture, but are not sure how to do this with people from different cultures. Similarly, a study by Stephan and Stephan (1985) demonstrated that the greater the perceived dissimilarity, the more anxiety individuals experienced during intergroup contact.

Axiom 3 Similarity between a stranger's in-groups and other groups will increase that person's attributional confidence regarding members of other groups' behaviour and reduce his/her anxiety when interacting with them. Attraction and shared networks can be related to attributional confidence, even when the communicators are culturally dissimilar.

Axiom 4 The more networks a stranger shares with members of other groups the greater attributional confidence they will feel regarding members of other groups' behaviour and reduce anxiety. Any interpersonal relationship and intimacy that the stranger develops with members of other groups will lower that stranger's level of anxiety.

Axiom 5 Interpersonal salience in relationships that a stranger forms with members of other groups moderates the effects of group dissimilarities, increasing confidence regarding members of other groups' behaviour, as well as decreasing any anxiety experienced in interaction.

Axiom 6 A stranger's second-language competence will also boost attributional confidence and decrease anxiety when interacting with members of other groups, making the stranger better able to cope with uncertainty.

Axiom 7 Self-monitoring is another factor that can produce an increase in attributional confidence regarding members of other groups' behaviour and a decrease in the level of anxiety experienced in interaction.

Personality traits can influence uncertainty reduction processes, including self-monitoring, psychological differentiation, tolerance for ambiguity, certainty–uncertainty orientation and cognitive complexity. Self-monitoring is characterised by self-observation and self-control guided by situational cues to social appropriateness (Snyder, 1974).

Axiom 8 Increased cognitive complexity can also enhance a stranger's confidence in these situations. Hellriegel and Slocum's (1978) research found that there is a negative association between cognitive complexity and perceived uncertainty. Detweiler (1980) demonstrated that narrow categorizers make stronger and more confident attributions about members of out-groups who cause a negative outcome than do wide categorizers.

Axiom 9 Tolerance for ambiguity will similarly enhance confidence regarding members of other groups' behaviour and decrease the anxiety experienced during interactions.

Individuals with a lower tolerance for ambiguity have a greater tendency to seek supportive rather than objective information (McPherson, 1983). Other research showed that uncertainty-oriented individuals seek cognitive information more than certainty-oriented individuals (Sorrentino and Hewitt, 1984).

Axiom 10 An increase in a stranger's attributional confidence regarding members of other groups' behaviour will produce an increase in intergroup adaptation and effectiveness.

Axiom 11 A decrease in the level of anxiety a stranger experiences when interacting with members of other groups will produce an increase in intergroup adaptation and effectiveness.

There are two major outcomes which emerge from research on the nature of intergroup communication. These are (a) adaptation to new intergroup situation; and (b) increased effectiveness of communication hence intercultural communication competence. Adaptation is defined as a consequence of an ongoing process in which a system strives to adjust and readjust itself to challenges, changes and irritants in the environment (Ruben, 1976). Research concerning sojourners in the United States by Gudykunst *et al.* (1977) revealed that there are three behavioural dimensions to intercultural communication effectiveness: the ability to establish interpersonal relationships, the ability to communicate effectively, and the ability to deal with psychological stress. This implies the following two axioms:

Axiom 12 An increase in collectivism will produce an increase in the differences in attributional confidence between in-group and outgroup communication.

There are cross-cultural variations in interpersonal and intergroup communication. Individualism–collectivism is the major dimension of cultural variability developed by theorists across disciplines that influence intergroup processes (Hofstede, 1980; Kluckhohn and Strodtbeck, 1961; Triandis, 1986). In individualistic cultures, individuals take care of themselves and members of their immediate family; while in collectivist cultures, the

in-groups to which individuals belong take care of them in exchange for loyalty (Hofstede, 1980). Hofstede empirically derived four cultural dimensions: individualism–collectivism, power distance, uncertainty avoidance and masculinity–femininity (see Chapter 2).

Axiom 13 An increase in uncertainty avoidance will produce an increase in the level of anxiety a stranger experiences when interacting with members of other groups.

According to Gudykunst (1993) "to manage our uncertainty and anxiety, we must be conscious (i.e., mindful) of our communication" (p.14). Communication, as defined in this research study, is a process involving the exchange of messages and the creation of meaning. When we communicate, we attach meaning to the messages we construct and transmit to others and we interpret the messages we receive from others. Most of the time we communicate we are not always aware of our cognitive processing. One reason we are not highly aware of the nature of cognitive processing is that much of our everyday communication is based on our unconscious, taken-for-granted and implicit assumptions about how communication takes place, that we have learned in the past. In other words, we often communicate mindlessly or automatically.

Bargh (1989) has argued that automatic information processing can involve various combinations of attention, awareness, intention and control. On the other hand, when we are aware of our communication behaviour, we become mindful to some extent. Mindfulness involves "(a) creation of new categories; (b) openness to new information; and (b) awareness of more than one perspective" (Langer, 1989, p.62). One condition that contributes to being mindless is the use of broad categories. Categorisation is often based on characteristics, either physical (e.g. gender, race) or cultural (e.g. ethnic background). In addition, we can categorise others in terms of their attitudes (e.g. liberal or conservative) or approaches to life (e.g. Christian; Moslem; Buddhist).

Langer (1989) pointed out that "categorizing is a fundamental and natural human activity. It is the way we come to know the world. Any attempt to eliminate bias by attempting to eliminate the perception of differences is doomed to failure" (p.154). Thus being mindful involves making more rather than fewer, distinctions. When we are on automatic pilot, we tend to use broad categories to predict other people's behaviour, for example, their culture, ethnicity, gender, or the role they are playing. When we are mindful, we can create new, more specific categories.

Mindfulness involves being open to new information (Langer, 1989). When we behave on automatic pilot in a particular situation, we tend to see the same thing occurring in the situation that we saw the previous time in the same situation. If we are consciously open to new information, however, we are more able to see the subtle differences in our own and other people's behaviour. It has been argued that the more we think about how to behave in situations, the more appropriate and effective our behaviour tends to be (Cegala and Waldron, 1992).

In addition, to being mindful, we must also recognise that more than one

perspective can be used to understand or explain our interaction with others (Langer, 1989). When we communicate on automatic pilot, we fail to see alternative perspectives. The mindset we bring to communication situations can limit our ability to recognise the choices we actually have about how to behave in most situations (Langer, 1989). When we communicate mindfully, however, we can look for the options that are available to us and not be limited by only those that immediately come to mind in the situation. When we are communicating mindfully, we have the potential to use all the communication resources available to us rather than limit ourselves to our usual responses.

Recent research (Gao and Gudykunst, 1990) has tended to show that reduction of uncertainty and anxiety exert independent influences on cultural adaptation and that the reduction of uncertainty and anxiety is a necessary and sufficient condition for adaptation. The effects of other factors (e.g. knowledge of the host culture) seem to be mediated through reduction of uncertainty and anxiety. However, a major limitation of uncertainty reduction theory concerns the chief cause of miscommunication or maladaptation. According to Gudykunst (1983, 1986, 1988), the cause of cultural maladaptation can be traced to the stranger who has not learned or interpreted the host culture sufficiently to adapt to cultural differences. The need to focus on the onus and responsibility of members of the host culture for developing intercultural communication competence is lacking in Gudykunst's theory of uncertainty reduction, as it was in general systems theory as we have seen.

Notwithstanding this limitation, Gudykunst (1983, 1986, 1988, 1997) has made a significant contribution in the literature to understanding issues of uncertainty and anxiety management. As noted earlier, in all initial interactions involving strangers and members of the host culture, differing degrees of uncertainty and anxiety are experienced by those involved and dealing with uncertainty/anxiety is a fundamental concern in intercultural communication (Lazarus, 1991). Management of anxiety and uncertainty is one of the major influences on effective communication.

This research studies the ways that Australian hospitality and tourism managers experience and deal with uncertainty in their interactions with their international tourists/multicultural employees. Gudykunst's assumptions and axioms (Gudykunst, 1988) help us to understand the complexity of the nature of intercultural communication competence from an assimilationist perspective in which reduction of uncertainty features primarily. However, this perspective is limited by its focus on adaptation by the stranger rather than the host and so fails to explain the role of the host culture in the process of cultural adaptation. In this research study, this theoretical perspective will be applied in helping to understand the role of members of a host culture (Australian hospitality managers) in cultural adaptation in the workplace.

3.5 Convergence theory of intercultural communication

Another leading theory of intercultural communication is convergence theory, as advanced by Kincaid (1987). Convergence theory, according to Kincaid:

> was created in order to overcome many of the biases that have been evident in the traditional linear, transmission models of communication. This theoretical perspective was derived from the basic concepts of information theory, cybernetics, and general theory systems theory. Its foundations can be traced to symbolic interactionism sociology, and to small group dynamics in psychology, and, at a macro level of analysis, to Durkheim's (1966) theory of collective consciousness.
>
> (p.209)

Convergence theory is developed as the fundamental self-organising process of social systems. Convergence principles and the network perspective are integrated into a single, coherent theory of communication, organisation and culture by means of the application of concepts and principles from nonequilibrium thermodynamics. The concept and measure of entropy is applied directly to the statistical distribution of beliefs, values and behaviours of intact cultures and to the structures of their communication networks. This allows the development of a general mathematical model of communication, organisation, and culture which is consistent with network-convergence theory.

According to convergence theory, communication creates a network of relations among people that makes up the structure of society. Networks connect groups with another and enable them to exchange information. Groups cluster together according to common beliefs, values and behaviour (Littlejohn, 1989). There are two key elements in convergence theory: communication is a dynamic process of convergence and social systems are networks of interconnected individuals who are linked by patterned flows of information (Kincaid, 1987; Rogers and Kincaid, 1981). Individuals give different meanings to the information which they share with others. Initial differences in mutual understanding are reduced through a dynamic process of feedback. Although feedback processes reduce differences in meaning among people, the inherent uncertainty involved in information exchange including the feedback process itself implies that some differences in interpretation of meaning will always remain.

It is important to note that the underlying assumption of convergence theory is that that the communication process results in a change in the statistical distribution of the beliefs, values and behaviour of a particular culture. The essence of convergence theory (Kincaid, 1987) is that if communication in a society is unrestricted then convergence among members in terms of beliefs will be evident. However, if information sharing is restricted then differences among communicators will be evident resulting in the rise of entropy and disorder. Kincaid (1987) cited an extensive list of bipolar opposites, (originally developed by Gatlin, 1972), to delineate the entropy concept:

Random	Nonrandom
Disorganised	Organised
Disordered	Ordered
Mixed	Separated
Equiprobable	Divergence from equiprobability
Independent	Divergence from independence
Configurational variety	Restricted arrangements
Freedom of choice	Constraint
Uncertainty	Reliability
Higher error probability	Fidelity
Potential information	Stored information

According to convergence theory, communication may be described as a series of converging cycles of information exchange among participants who through their unrestricted interactions, would converge over time toward a greater degree of mutual understanding, agreement and collective action (Kincaid, 1987).

From the viewpoint of intercultural communication, convergence theory examines the conditions that affect the degree of convergence (commonness) and entropy (disorder) in a cultural system. However, communicators in social systems cannot openly discuss and analyse issues about all topics all the time. Thus, convergence theory also examines conditions like time and energy that can restrict the degree of convergence that can be reached at any one time by communicators in a cultural system. Four principles of communication embodied within convergence theory include: (1) social psychological (personal interdependencies); (2) cognitive (mutual agreement); (3) behavioural (collective action); and (4) organisation. All these principles are relevant for analysing the managerial functions of Australian hospitality and tourism managers and their intercultural communication competence.

Essentially, the principle of convergence states that, if two or more individuals share information with one another then, over time, they will tend to converge toward one another leading to a state of greater uniformity. Based on this principle, convergence theory has been concerned with determining factors which facilitate or inhibit convergence. With particular reference to intercultural communication, convergence theory advocates that "divergence leads to cultural diversity which in turn results in marked entropy within interpersonal systems or organisations. Conversely, convergence within systems leads to uniformity which ultimately serves to weaken entropic forces" (Kincaid, 1987, p.289).

For this study, it is important to note that convergence emphasises the provision of opportunity for unrestricted communication between members of immigrant cultural groups and the host culture. Such unrestricted communication is presumed to maximise the likelihood of convergence of the immigrant groups' values with those of the host culture. As a result, it has been argued that both immigrant and host groups would in turn converge toward a state of greater uniformity.

This conclusion is debatable, particularly as it requires people to renounce their cultural heritage. In addition, convergence theory places a great deal of

emphasis on the "unrestricted" flow of information, stating that dialogue is a less restrictive stream of information than monologue. Convergence theory specifies conditions that lead to a level of similarity. One implication associated with this perspective is that, as with everything in life, there are limits. So there are limits on the degree of convergence that can be achieved in a certain topic. There is a certain amount of time and energy that can be applied to increasing convergence in a society. Thus there is a significant cost in keeping the same level of convergence, let alone attempting to increase it. Moreover, Kaye (1992) rightly pointed out that, while convergence theory distinguishes the extent to which unrestricted or restricted communication would affect first-generation or second-generation immigrants, it bears strong resemblance to the "melting pot" theory of assimilation, except that it specifically identifies conditions which foster homogenisation or alternatively, the maintenance of cultural diversity.

Most notably, the theoretical construct of convergence is also flawed in terms of its lack of emphasis on the influence of cultural diversity within intercultural communication settings, as all interacting undoubtedly bring with them their own "cultural baggage". In addition, convergence theory does not address the issue of power relationships between people and the impact of power differences in a communication process involving two or more individuals of dissimilar cultural heritage e.g. between immigrant workers and members of the host culture such as Australian hospitality and tourism managers.

In summary, general systems theory, uncertainty reduction theory and convergence theory tend to emphasise the migrant's assimilation to the host culture, for example, immigrant workers' assimilation to the dominant Australian English-speaking culture. Further, these theories of intercultural communication also ignore the two-way process inherent in communication as well as the responsibility for developing competency by all parties involved in the communication process, especially the member(s) of the host culture, namely the Australian managers studied in this research. Further, intercultural communication processes can be further understood in terms of interpersonal theory where the nature of relationships is the focus of analysis.

3.6 Interpersonal theory of intercultural communication

Any analysis of intercultural communication requires an understanding of current theoretical perspectives on interpersonal communication relationships. According to Irwin (1996):

> the study of intercultural communication . . . [has been] considerably influenced by interpersonal communication theory and research. Interpersonal communication theory is informed and sustained by the ideologies of intimacy (closeness) and performance (competence). The ideology of intimacy, which holds that closeness between people is a moral good, leads to interest in openness, authenticity, honesty, trust, and empathy. The ideology of

> performance, which holds that improved performance is desirable and possible, leads to interest in communication and relational competence.
>
> (p.26)

Following Irwin's (1996) emphasis on a humanist approach to communication relationships, it has been argued that "interpersonal communication is central to the effective management of a team or organization" (Jackson, 1993, p.3). According to interpersonal theory there are three key features of the communication process:

> the "context" of the communication, the behaviour or "conduct" of the individuals who communicate, and, arguably the most important, the different perceptions of people when they communicate: what we call the 'content' of communication, the latter [sic] is key in this definition and has great bearing on cross-cultural communication.
>
> (Jackson, 1993, p.7)

In this model of interpersonal communication, "context" is the framework of rules, culture, social structure and technology within which people live and work. Again the context may be quite different from one culture to another (Jackson, 1993).

"Conduct" is what one sees or the behavioural aspects of communication: what people actually do. This can also include the skills which people require in order to communicate effectively. These aspects of behaviour might be different between individuals of different cultural backgrounds.

"Content" is what one does not see. Content includes the perceptions, motivations, attitudes and objectives of the individuals, that are prerequisites to acting in a particular way. These aspects are part of the person which have been acquired or generated through the experiences of living and working in a particular culture and environment and might be quite different between people from different cultures and countries.

These three interrelated aspects/features of interpersonal communication are important for explaining the dimensions of intercultural communication competence.

Other communication researchers have also focused on the nature of communication relationships. For example, Littlejohn (1989) conceptualised interpersonal communication in terms of three elements: "(a) the communicators; (b) their discourse; and (c) their relationship" (Littlejohn, 1989, p.152). Understanding interpersonal communication is important because it helps us to define our relationships with people; moreover, we have some kind of relationship with everyone around us (Dimbleby and Burton, 1992). This focus on relationship was expressed by Forgas (1985), who maintained that "true interpersonal communication takes place at the level of mutuality where there is some degree of real personal involvement and intimacy exists between partners" (p.226). Other theorists have defined interpersonal communication as communication that

occurs between individuals who consider one another as unique (Adler *et al.*, 1992; Knapp and Miller, 1985).

According to Littlejohn (1989), the nature of the "relationship is at the heart of interpersonal communication" (p.250). This is because when two people communicate with one another, in addition to whatever else they may be doing and achieving, they are also defining their relationship. People in a relationship are always creating a set of expectations, reinforcing old ones, or changing existing patterns of interaction.

Watzlawick *et al.* (1967, cited in Littlejohn, 1989) presented five basic axioms about communication which have direct implications for intercultural communication. The first axiom states that one cannot not communicate. We are always affecting others' perceptions, whether we want to or not. Any perceivable behaviour is potentially communicative. The second axiom states that every conversation no matter how brief involves two messages: a content message; and a relationship message. When two people are interacting, each is relating information to the other, and simultaneously each is reacting to perceived changes in the relationship. This simultaneous relationship talk, which is often nonverbal, is metacommunication.

Burgoon and Hale (1984) conducted a major survey of the interpersonal communication literature to identify dimensions of this relational level of communication. They isolated twelve common aspects of relationships that appear to be communicated, labelling them the fundamental topoi of relational communication. These encompass varying dimensions of dominance, intimacy, affection, involvement, inclusion, trust, superficiality, emotional arousal, composure, similarity, formality and orientation toward task versus social elements of the relationship. These findings were further arranged into four basic, independent dimensions of relational communication:

(a) emotional arousal, composure, and formality;
(b) intimacy and similarity;
(c) immediacy (liking);
(d) dominance–submission.

(Burgoon and Hale, 1984, pp.193–214)

Burgoon and Hale (1984) further studied the question of how nonverbal behaviours specifically affect these perceptions of relationships. Four behaviours appear to be related to metacommunication. Proximity can be crucial in communicating intimacy, attraction, trust, caring, dominance, persuasiveness and aggressiveness. Smiling appears particularly important in communicating emotional arousal, composure and formality, as well as intimacy and liking. Touching, too, communicates intimacy. Eye contact is like an exclamation point intensifying the effect of other nonverbal behaviours (Burgoon and Hale, 1984, pp.351–378).

Watzlawick *et al.*'s third axiom states that interaction is always organised into meaning patterns by the communicators (cited in Littlejohn, 1989). This is

referred to as punctuation. Interaction sequences, like sentences, cannot be understood as a string of isolated elements. To make sense they must be punctuated.

Watzlawick *et al.*'s fourth axiom was that people use both digital and analogic codes (cited in Littlejohn, 1989). Digital coding is arbitrary, because the sign and the referent, though associated, have no intrinsic relation to each other. The most common digital code in human communication is a language. Sounds, words, and phrases are digital signs arranged to communicate meanings. The analogic code is different. Analogic signs are not arbitrary as digital ones are. Analogic signs can actually resemble the object, as in the case of drawing a picture in the air with your hands, or they can be part of the object or condition being signified, as in the case of crying.

The fifth axiom of communication put forward by Watzlawick *et al.* (1967, cited in Littlejohn, 1989) relates to the matching and meshing of messages in an interaction. The axiom states that where communicators in a relationship behave similarly and differences are minimised, the relationship is said to be symmetrical. When communicator responses are not similar and differences are maximised, a complementary relationship is said to exist.

Other scholars represent a meaning-centred approach to interpersonal communication and the nature of relationships. Martin and Nakayama (1997) conceptualised four key characteristics underlying communication: (1) communication is a process not a product i.e. a continuing event; (2) communication is a set of constructed meanings i.e. messages have layers of meanings; (3) communication involves the use of shared meanings. As Irwin (1996) explained:

> sharing meanings does not necessarily involve gaining agreement. When communicating is thought of as the sharing of meanings, what is meant is that each participant in the communication context becomes aware of the meanings about a matter or issue held by the other participant(s). While sharing meanings may bring about agreement it can just as readily and appropriately lead to disagreement. What is important is that communicating will lead to clarification and enhanced understanding. And Communication is both verbal and non-verbal.
>
> (p.22)

Negotiation of meaning is another feature of intercultural communication competence that will be explored in this research study.

Perception also plays a crucial role in communication and negotiation of meaning. There are two main ways in which perception is part of communication. (1) When we communicate we are communicating mainly about things, events and people external to us. We have to perceive the external world (we have to be aware of things and understand them) before we can communicate about them. (2) When we communicate with other people, we are involved in a perceptual process through listening, looking or perhaps reading. We therefore perceive other people's messages and the way they communicate (Jackson,

1993). As has been previously mentioned, a person's communicative behaviour is affected by his or her perception of the relationship with the other communicator. A person interacting with another has two levels of perception, which Laing (1967) called perspectives. One can observe and interpret another person's behaviour in a direct perspective. One also experiences the experiences of other people when one assigns meaning to what one imagines they are thinking and feeling. Laing (1967) called this a metaperspective. He articulated the process of perspective as:

> I cannot avoid trying to understand your experience, because although I do not experience your experience, which is invisible to me (and nontastable, nontouchable, nonsmellable, and inaudible), yet I experience you as experiencing. I do not experience your experience. But I experience you experiencing. I experience myself as experienced by you. And I experience you as experiencing yourself as experienced by me, and so on.
>
> (1967, p.5)

Since our perception of other people influences how we communicate with them, psychological researchers have advanced the notion of person perception. This is predicated on implicit personality theory.

According to implicit personality theory (Hartley, 1993), individuals have a coherent picture of which personality characteristics tend to go together in other people. For instance, if one hears someone described as warm, then one is also liable to perceive that person as popular, happy, successful, etc. It is argued that some of these associations seem to be strong, whereas others are relatively weak. For example, if one asks people to judge the intelligence of others based on a selection of photographs, then they will tend to choose people wearing glasses as more intelligent than those without. This has implications for intercultural communication competence to be explored in this research study.

Overall, engagement in interpersonal communication is central to developing a relationship through the exchange of personal information. Personal information exchange is a two-way process involving information seeking and self-disclosure. According to humanistic psychologists Cissna and Anderson (1990), "interpersonal understanding occurs through self-disclosure, feedback, and sensitivity to the disclosures of others. Misunderstanding and dissatisfaction in relationships are promoted by dishonesty, lack of congruence between one's actions and feeling, poor feedback, and inhibited self-disclosure" (p.128).

Relational development is also said to be affected by social penetration. This means that relationships become more intimate over time as partners disclose more and more information about themselves. Miler and Sunnafrank (1982) defined interpersonal communication in terms of penetration, arguing that

> If the communicators continue their relationship – that is, if they are sufficiently motivated to exert the effort to continue it, and if their interpersonal skills are tuned finely enough to permit its growth their relationship may

> undergo certain qualitative changes. When such changes accompany relational development, communicative transactions become increasingly interpersonal.
>
> (pp.222–223)

As relationships develop, communication can move from relatively shallow, nonintimate levels to deeper, more personal ones (Altman and Taylor, 1987). As the relationship progresses, the partners share more aspects of themselves, providing breadth as well as depth through exchange of information, feelings and activities. In his later work, Altman (1993) suggested a modification to social penetration theory by pointing out that relationships generally do not advance simply toward greater openness. "Rather, partners go back and forth between sharing and distance as they manage the tension between the need for privacy and the need for connection" (p.26). Thus, interpersonal communication is an ever-changing transactional sharing that develops between people who are constructing meaning with each other and come to know one another better as their relationships tend to move from impersonal to personal (Caputo, 1994).

There has been much debate over the definition of an interpersonal communication event. However, it is generally agreed that there are, in addition to the points raised previously, "two features which separate interpersonal communication events from other types of communication contexts: (1), the participants must be able to receive and provide immediate feedback; and (2), they must be able to adapt to each other in an instant" (Gibson and Hanna, 1992, p.118). Adler *et al.* (1992) emphasise immediate feedback in their view of interpersonal communication:

> Interpersonal communication has been described as an ongoing, transactional process in which individuals simultaneously send and receive, so that the meaning of a particular message is influenced by the history and the experiences of the participants. Interpersonal communication is best defined by the quality of the interaction and not the number of people, or the setting in which they meet. Interpersonal relationships are unique, irreplaceable, interdependent, scarce and intrinsically rewarding.
>
> (p.25)

Gudykunst (1995) believes that both interpersonal and intergroup factors influence all of our communication. He further suggests that the identity that we use when communicating helps to determine whether it is interpersonal or intergroup (intercultural) communication. By this he means that, if we predominantly use our personal identity when communicating with someone, then we are engaging in interpersonal communication, if however, we predominantly use our social identity, then it is an intercultural communication.

Since communication in interpersonal relationships is central to life, Fogel (1993) argued that individuals seek to develop their relationships with others. Effective communication in these relationships is particularly vital to a

stranger's cognitive, affective and behavioural learning. Through formal and informal contacts and relationships, strangers can also find social support for handling difficulties as well as opportunities for making additional contacts (Adelman, 1988; Wellman, 1992). Interpersonal networks exert social control by determining the language that strangers must use and by conveying implicit or explicit messages of social approval and disapproval (Heckathorn, 1990; Ho and Sung, 1990).

Considerable evidence exists to link strangers' adaptation to a new culture and their interpersonal relationship patterns. Studies of international students and visitors have indicated a positive association between the number of natives in strangers' relational networks and their positive feelings towards the host society at large. Also, the degree of interpersonal involvement with members of a host culture has been found to be an important indicator of sojourners' cognitive learning. Selltiz *et al.* (1963), for example, reported that international students in the United States who associated extensively and formed close friendships with host nationals score higher on measures of adjustment than those who have less association with host nationals or who do not have host friends. In Morris's (1960) study, students who were high on measures of social relations with host nationals scored high on an index of satisfaction with various aspects of their experience in the host country.

A similar linkage between interpersonal communication and elements of host communication competence has been observed in studies of long-term settlers in the United States and elsewhere (Kim, 1980, 1989; Kim and Gudykunst, 1988; Oehlkers, 1991; Searle and Ward, 1990; Shah, 1991). A consistent finding from these studies is that there is a positive relationship between participation in host interpersonal communication activities and other aspects of adaptation, such as the variables of host communication competence and psychological health. Studies conducted outside Australia have clearly supported the view that a stranger establishing interpersonal relationships with members of the host culture can increase effective intercultural competence. However no study has been undertaken in Australia with particular reference to Australian hospitality and tourism managers to establish how their intercultural communication competence might be affected by the ability to establish interpersonal relationships in their culturally diverse workplaces. This research study is designed to explore this issue. Finally, as intercultural communication competence is the focus of analysis in the study, approaches to defining the construct are discussed in the next section.

3.7 Intercultural communication competence defined

Intercultural communication competence is a difficult concept to define adequately and precisely, with scholars of communication proposing numerous conceptualisations. For example, Gardner (1962, cited in Gudykunst and Kim, 1997) characterised people who are effective in communicating with strangers as universal communicators who possess the following inner personal traits: (a)

an unusual degree of integration or stability; (b) a central organisation of the extrovert type; (c) a value system which includes the "value of all men and [women]"; (d) socialisation on the basis of cultural universals; and (e) a marked telepathic or intuition sensitivity (p.248).

Kleinjans (1972, cited in Gudykunst and Kim, 1997) described the effective communicator as one who (1) sees people first and representatives of cultures second; (2) knows people are basically good; (3) knows the value of other cultures as well as that of his or her own; (4) has control over his or her visceral reactions; (5) speaks with hopefulness and candour; and (6) has inner security and is able to feel comfortable being different from other people. This view of intercultural communication competence coincided with Kim's (1991) psychological definition that it:

> should be located within a person as his or her overall capacity to facilitate the communication process between people from differing cultural backgrounds and to contribute to successful interaction outcomes. Here [intercultural communication competence] is considered a necessary, but not sufficient, condition for achieving success in intercultural encounters – just as a highly competent driver may not always be able to prevent accidents due to factors external to the driver (such as hazardous road conditions or serious mistakes made by other incompetent drivers).
>
> (p.263)

In this conceptualisation, intercultural communication competence is intrinsic to the psychology of a person.

On the other hand, Gudykunst (1991) took rather a different approach to the concept of competence by arguing that judgments of competence emerge from the interactions in which we engage. He pointed out that one communicator's view of her or his communication competence may not be the same as that of the person with whom he or she is communicating. To complicate the matter further, the outsider observing the two parties involved in the communication process might have quite a different perception of their competence. Gudykunst (1991, cited in Gudykunst and Kim, 1997) argued that "Understanding communication competence, therefore, minimally requires that we take into consideration our own and the other person's perspective" (p.252). He further maintained that if our views of our competence differ from those of the people with whom we are communicating, then competence is an impression we have of ourselves and others. In other words, "competence is not something intrinsic to a person's nature of behaviour" (Spitzberg and Cupach, 1984, p.115). This view of competence is consistent with the approach adopted in this research study.

There are, according to Gudykunst (1991; Gudykunst and Kim, 1997) several implications of this view of competence:

> First, competence does not actually reside in the performance; it is an evaluation of the performance by someone. . . . Second, the fact that someone is making the evaluation means that it is subject to error, bias, and judgment

> inferences; different judges using the same criteria may evaluate the performance differently. Third, since the evaluation always must be with reference to some set of implicit or explicit criteria, the evaluation cannot be understood or validated without knowledge of the criteria being employed; thus, the same performance may be judged to be competent by one standard and incompetent by another.
>
> (McFall, 1982, pp.13–14)

This conceptualisation of competence suggests that specific skills we have do not ensure that we will be perceived as competent in any particular interaction.

Ruben (1976) put forward a number of behavioural dimensions necessary for intercultural communication competence: (1) display of respect, involving the ability to show positive regard and express respect for another person; (2) interaction posture, the "ability to respond to others in a descriptive, nonevaluating, and non-judgmental way" (p.340); and (3) interaction management, "displayed through taking turns in discussion and initiating and terminating interaction based on a reasonably accurate assessment of the needs and desires of others" (p.341). Ruben and Kealey (1979) further defined intercultural communication competence in terms of an individual's empathy, respect, ability to perform role behaviours, nonjudgmentalness, openness, tolerance for ambiguity and interaction management.

In contrast, Spitzberg and Cupach (1984) isolated three key variables of perceived competence: motivation, knowledge and skills. Motivation implies "fundamental states of being in humans which, if unsatisfied, generate feelings of deprivation" (Turner, 1988, p.23). The needs that drive humans to communicate include those for: (1) a sense of security; (2) predictability; (3) a sense of group inclusion; (4) avoiding anxiety; (5) a sense of a common shared world; (6) symbolic/material gratification; and (7) the sustenance of our self-conceptions/self-identity.

To communicate effectively also requires that we have particular knowledge. The knowledge component of competence refers to our awareness of what we need to do to communicate in an appropriate and effective way. This includes knowledge of: (1) how to gather information; (2) group differences; (3) personal similarities; and (4) alternative interpretations for others' behaviour. Several skills have also been identified (Bellah *et al.*, 1985; Berger, 1979; Coleman and DePaulo, 1991; Gudykunst and Kim, 1997) which can be applied to improve our intercultural communication competence by reducing uncertainty and anxiety. To reduce our anxiety, we must be able to be mindful, to tolerate ambiguity and to calm ourselves. According to Gudykunst (1991; Gudykunst and Kim, 1997), to reduce our uncertainty, we must be able to be mindful and to explain and make accurate predictions of strangers' behaviour.

Further, Lustig and Koester (1993) defined intercultural communication in terms of a "symbolic, interpretive, transactional, contextual process in which people create shared meanings" (Lustig and Koester 1993, p.25). Communication is symbolic because it uses symbol systems such as language and nonverbal

actions; it is interpretive because individuals interpret and create their own meanings from the communication behaviour of others, and in this sense create their own meanings; it is transactual because constant interaction involving feedback and negotiation is the process by which shared meanings are created; and it is contextual because it occurs within a setting or situation which has social, cultural and possibly historical characteristics which influence the process. What is important to note in this definition, according to Irwin (1996), is that:

> reaching agreement is not a necessary objective of communicating. Sharing meanings does not necessarily involve gaining agreement. When communicating is thought of as the sharing of meanings, what is meant is that each participant in the communication context becomes aware of the meanings about a matter or issue held by the other participant(s). While sharing meanings may bring about agreement it can just as readily and appropriately lead to disagreement. What is important is that communicating will lead to clarification and enhanced understanding.
>
> (p.26)

Gudykunst *et al.* (1977) isolated three behavioural dimensions associated with perceived competence: (1) the ability to deal with psychological stress which includes the ability to deal with frustration, anxiety, pressures to conform, social alienation, financial difficulties, and interpersonal conflicts; (2) the ability to communicate effectively which entails being able to enter into meaningful dialogue with other people, to initiate interaction with strangers, to deal with communication misunderstandings, and to deal with different communication styles; (3) the ability to establish meaningful interpersonal relationships – to develop satisfying relationships with others, to understand the feelings of others, to work effectively with others, and to deal with different social customs. Essentially, Gudykunst (1991; Gudykunst and Kim, 1997) defined intercultural communication competence in terms of minimising misunderstandings.

Intercultural communication is defined in this research study as "involving interpersonal communication between people from different sociocultural systems and/or communication between members of different subsystems (e.g. ethnic or racial groups) within the same sociocultural system" (Gudykunst, 1987, p.848). While different conceptualisations of competence have been briefly discussed, a widely accepted definition of communication competence as fundamental competence is adopted for this study. Intercultural communication competence is thus defined as "an individual's ability to adapt effectively to the surrounding environment over time" (Spitzberg and Cupach, 1984, p.35). The central feature of this definition is the focus on adaptability, which is a widely accepted component of communication competence (Duran, 1992; Irwin, 1994, 1996; Lustig and Koester, 1993; Spitzberg and Cupach, 1984; Spitzberg and Duran, 1995; Wiemann and Bradac, 1989; Wiseman and Koester, 1993). Thus, for a manager working with a workforce and clientele of culturally diverse backgrounds it is important to develop an ability to be flexible and adaptable to dif-

ferent cultural contexts, by being sensitive to the cultural situation and acting accordingly (Jackson, 1993).

3.8 Conclusion

This chapter provided a critical examination of current leading intercultural communication theories that might have implications for an analysis of Australian hospitality and tourism managers' intercultural communication competence. In particular, the "English language alone is enough" research study for intercultural communication competence was considered. It was argued that a study only of English-language training would not provide an adequate conceptual framework for an analysis of how both immigrant workers and Australian hospitality and tourism managers might improve their intercultural communication competence. Psychological theories of culture shock were discussed to identify particular implications for the hospitality and tourism managers in terms of their awareness of these issues and their implementation of intervening strategies, if any, for example, to assist international guests while staying in Australian hotels. The chapter also explored the scope and application of the general systems theory of intercultural communication. According to general systems theory, it is argued that cultural strangers (migrant workers) can develop intercultural communication competence through undergoing a process with four identifiable stages: culture shock, stress, adaptation and growth. However, the problem with this theory was that it failed to account for the intercultural communication competence of members of the host culture. This aspect of the system (the hosts) would need to be incorporated in order to apply a general systems theory analysis to the study of Australian hospitality and tourism managers in this research study.

An examination of the convergence theory of intercultural communication also failed to provide a satisfactory mode of explanation for the intercultural communication competence of the members of the host culture. Convergence theory emphasised the assimilation of migrants/sojourners to the host culture such as immigrant workers to the dominant Australian English-speaking culture. Convergence theory also denied that all parties involved in the communication process have a responsibility for developing competency, especially in this case the member(s) of the host culture (Australian hospitality and tourism managers). In addition, convergence theory did not address the issue of power and its impact on communication between migrant workers and members of the host culture such as managers.

The central focus on uncertainty in all human encounters as a fundamental condition of human nature was captured in a discussion of the theoretical perspective of uncertainty reduction (Berger and Calabrese, 1975; Gudykunst, 1983, 1986). In the study in this research study an investigation is made of how Australian hospitality and tourism managers deal with "uncertainty" arising from their communication in a culturally diverse workplace. Essentially, uncertainty reduction theory, like convergence theory, failed to recognise that

members of the host culture have a responsibility to develop intercultural communication competence.

In addition, interpersonal theories of communication were introduced to extend the explanation of the dynamics of intercultural communication. The centrality of interpersonal communication for defining and developing relationships raised the issue of how the intercultural communication competence of Australian managers might be affected by the ability to establish interpersonal relationships with their culturally diverse workforces. It was argued that any analysis of intercultural communication requires attention to the nature of interpersonal relationships. In particular, theories of construction of meaning and reciprocal creation and negotiation of meaning provide significant hallmarks of effective intercultural communication competence. Managers' views on their interpersonal communication with staff are explored in the study. Finally, a definition of intercultural communication competence emphasising sensitivity, flexibility and adaptability was provided.

The next chapter discusses the profile of the Australian hospitality and tourism service industries, including the link between managerial communication and management performance within the hospitality industry; challenges of cultural diversity and current weaknesses of Australian hospitality management practices; as well as training opportunities in intercultural communication and tourism languages in order to locate the study of intercultural communication in this research study in a specific workplace context – the Australian hospitality and tourism service industries.

4 Profile of the Australian hospitality and tourism service industries

Challenges of cultural diversity

The previous chapter examined current leading intercultural communication theories with implications for any study of Australian hospitality and tourism managers' intercultural communication competence. This chapter looks at the overall setting in which these theories will be applied. In particular, it profiles the Australian hospitality and tourism service industries. The present challenges of cultural diversity facing the industries, with possible implications for management, are discussed. The chapter also examines the centrality of management communication for effective management performance including management of cultural diversity within these hospitality and tourism service industries identifying current management practices. In addition, an analysis is provided of currently available training in hospitality and tourism in Australia in response to the industry's changing profile including courses in intercultural communication and major tourism languages.

4.1 Introduction to the Australian hospitality and tourism service industries

The Australian tourism/hospitality industry is a significant export earner for Australia providing substantial employment opportunities. The industry provides over half a million jobs and represents 6.5 per cent of Australia's GDP and more than AU$45 billion in gross expenditure (Tourism Forecasting Council, 1996). Meanwhile, international tourism is the country's fastest growing and largest export industry. For example, foreign exchange earnings rose 17 per cent to AU$10.7 billion (12 per cent of Australia's total export earnings) in the year ending 30 June 1994. In the same period, the number of international visitor arrivals increased by 14 per cent to an all-time high of 3.2 million. The overall number of visitors from overseas is predicted to nearly double to 6.3 million by the year 2000 (Tourism Forecasting Council, 1994). Mylne (1996) predicted that:

> about 8.8 million visitors are expected by 2005, up from 3.7 million in 1995 and representing growth of about 9 percent per year ... international tourism to Australia would account for AU$21 billion by 2000 and AU$37

> billion by 2005 representing 20 percent of Australia's export dollars and out-performing the rural sector.
>
> (p.8)

Another study by the Tourism Forecasting Council (1997), suggested that by the year 2000,

> Australia will host 7.5 million visitors staying an average 19 nights and spending AU$1,550. Local spending by overseas visitors is expected to grow 8.5 per cent per year, and total AU$12 billion by 2003, or 12 per cent exports. Meanwhile the Olympic games are estimated to add at least AU$3.5 billion to net export earnings between 1994 and 2004. Obviously it is a huge marketing opportunity to sell Australia not just Sydney – as an international destination.
>
> (p.1)

Other characteristics of the industry are that it is labour-intensive, with employment opportunities at all skill levels; and it consists of a predominance of small businesses, despite growing investment by large companies (Beresford, 1995).

According to the Australian Bureau of Statistics (1997), in terms of the composition of employees within the Australian hospitality and tourism service industries, employment provided by the accommodation sector, cafes and restaurants in the industry totalled 402,700, of which 186,300 were male employees and 216,400 were female employees. The average weekly earnings were AU$338.60. A total of 1,058,700 visitors arrived during the September quarter of 1997. This was an increase of 6 per cent from September 1996 when there were 995,900 visitors. Visitors stayed a total of 29,354,900 days in Australia. The average length of stay was twenty-eight days per person. The main countries of embarkation of overseas visitors were New Zealand – 23 per cent, Japan – 21 per cent and Singapore – 12 per cent in 1996 (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 1997). A total of 5,057,000 international tourists visited Australia during the June quarter of 2005 (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2006).

The many reasons why international visitors come to Australia include convention/conference business, visiting friends/relatives and holiday.

In summary, the Australian hospitality and tourism service industries are dynamic, fast-growing, of vital importance to the Australian economy and to Australian society. In addition, the hospitality industry represents a high degree of cultural diversity which in turn poses major challenges for its managers.

4.2 Challenges of cultural diversity within the Australian hospitality and tourism service industries

Tourism and migration to Australia have presented considerable opportunities and challenges for the Australian hospitality and tourism industries. In terms of opportunities, for example, Australia's culturally diverse population, according to Beresford (1995):

> represents a largely untapped resource to give enterprise a marketing edge at home and overseas. Overseas-born Australians have linguistic and cultural skills that can facilitate access to export markets and, as consumers, they offer new domestic niche markets, as well as opportunities to test products and services for export purposes.
>
> (p.19)

With that in mind, hospitality and tourism managers today face unique challenges: (1) There is a growing cultural and ethnic diversity of hospitality consumers in Australia. The Tourism Forecasting Council of Australia (1994) indicated that international visitors whose first language is not English could number 3.9 million (or 62 per cent of the forecast total) by the year 2000. This will be about 2.12 million more than in calendar year 1994 – or more than double; (2) An increasing number of Australians of culturally diverse backgrounds travel, eat out and engage in other leisure activities serviced by the hospitality industry. According to Beresford (1995):

> the scale of the cultural diversity of Australia's population is large: 42 per cent of the population were either born overseas or have at least one parent born overseas; approximately 23 per cent were either born in a non-English speaking country or have at least one parent from such a country; about 17 per cent speak a language other than English at home; in the last ten years more than 50,000 business migrants have settled in Australia; and about 21 per cent of Australia's 800,000 small businesses are owned or operated by people of non-English speaking backgrounds. Australians of non-English speaking backgrounds make up 15 per cent of Australia's labourforce.
>
> (p.19)

Statistics released by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (1998) present main countries of birth of the population who may be participating as consumers and employees in the Australian hospitality and tourism service industries, as shown in Table 4.1.

The cultural diversity of the Australian population means that a number of languages other than English are spoken in society and hence in the industries under discussion.

Table 4.2 lists the number of people who speak languages other than English in New South Wales, compared to the national total (Census of Population and Housing: State Comparison Series, 1991).

Employment in the tourism industry is increasing in Australia. In 1996, Australia's tourism industry directly employed approximately half a million of Australia's workforce (Bureau of Tourism Research, 1997). Using the Australian Tourism Commission's 2000 international visitor targets (6.5 million overseas visitors), the Department of Tourism projected that by year 2000, employment in the tourism industry could increase to 571,000 persons or 6.3 per cent of the total workforce. As migrants were estimated to contribute annually around

Table 4.1 Main countries of birth of Australian population (expressed in 1,000)

Country	*1981*	*1991*	*1996*
United Kingdom and Ireland	1,175.7	1,244.3	1,207.6
New Zealand	175.7	286.4	297.5
Italy	285.3	272.0	258.8
Former Yugoslav Republic	156.1	168.0	186.1
Vietnam	43.4	124.8	149.9
Greece	153.2	147.4	144.6
Germany	115.2	120.4	118.9
China	26.8	84.6	103.4
Hong Kong	16.3	62.4	98.0
Netherlands	100.5	100.9	97.3
Philippines	15.8	79.1	94.7
Total overseas	3,11.0	3,965.2	4,209.0
Australia	11,812.3	13,318.8	14,080.2
Total population	14,923.3	17,284.0	18,289.1

Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, *Yearbook* (1998).

Table 4.2 The number of people who are speakers of languages other than English at home

Language	*NSW*	*Australia*
Italian	114,264	420,442
Cantonese	83,600	165,283
Spanish	48,487	91,117
German	35,256	117,450
Mandarin	23,372	55,454
Chinese (other)	19,428	44,762
French	17,694	47,378
Korean	16,433	20,113
Indonesian/Malay	12,673	30,612
Japanese	11,372	28,195
Thai	4,292	9,805

Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, *Yearbook* (1991).

46,000 persons of total new labourforce between 1991–2001 (James Cook University, 1992), it can be assumed that the workforce of the hospitality/tourism industry will become increasingly multicultural, as will the total Australian workforce.

Present indications also suggest that the hospitality industry is, at the same time, becoming increasingly globalised, with companies exporting and establishing their products and services beyond national and cultural boundaries. There is also a high degree of globalisation of hotel ownership taking place throughout the world (Noriander, 1990). The hotel sector already features many examples

of international businesses – Hilton, Hyatt, Regent, Sheraton, South Pacific Hotel Corporations, Nikko, Meridien, Shangri-La and Radisson, to name a few. All of these international hotel chains are represented in Australia.

Globalisation trends and expansion in world travel point to a future that will witness an increased interaction of persons from diverse cultures. An understanding of and sensitivity to the cultural differences and needs of others will therefore become more important for present and future hospitality management operations. Further, as the hospitality industry enters the 21st century, there will be strong competition in a marketplace driven by evolution, dynamic change and new demands on resources (Wolvin, 1994). The increasingly global nature of hospitality has already intensified existing competitive pressures and quickened the pace of business (Dimanche, 1995). Operating in a constantly changing marketplace and business environment, organisations are becoming even more dependent on effective communication for their success.

While communication technology continues to make it easier and quicker to reach much wider audiences, "the success of the communication still depends on the skill of the communicators" (Brownell, 1994, pp.112–113). More particularly, in view of growing cultural diversity within Australian hospitality workplaces, issues of effective management have become more complex for managers. According to Elashmawi and Harris (1993), "The multicultural workplace is complicated. Imagine a spider web of people, managers, supervisors and staff members from different cultural backgrounds (who) need to work together, interacting in various ways to fulfill the organisation's requirements" (p.2). Disagreement and conflict are bound to occur; between staff members, between staff and management, and between clients and members of the organisation resulting in more negative or disruptive feelings, organisational problems, destructive conflict and employee inefficiency (Hughes, 1992). Further research (Brownell, 1992) on hospitality managers' communication practices showed that

> there were only 6 per cent of middle managers who felt that they had "little difficulty" communicating down to employees. And, there were 25 per cent of the general managers (who) rated the difficulty of the middle managers to employee communication relationship as relatively very low.
>
> (p.118)

Fatehi (1996) argued that in order for organisations to compete in today's culturally diverse workplaces coupled with culturally diverse global markets, "organisations must manage cultural diversity properly in order to avoid conflict and communication breakdowns" (1996, p.156). Australian hospitality organisations are no exception. Literature reviews revealed a lack of research into the management of cultural diversity within the Australian hospitality industries. The study in this research study was designed to explore these issues. The next section looks at the centrality of communication to effective management performance, including management of cultural diversity within the hospitality industry.

4.3 The link between managerial communication and effective management performance within the Australian hospitality and tourism service industries

Effective communication management in culturally diverse workplaces is becoming increasingly important for the successful performance of major managerial functions including planning, organising, coordinating, leading, motivating staff and dealing with industrial relations within organisations generally and the Australian hospitality and tourism service industries, in particular. Dixon (1997) argued that "communicating is synonymous with managing: you cannot manage effectively without communicating" (p.81). Managers spend their days communicating with other people: with subordinates, peers, superiors, customers, suppliers and so on, by telephone, face-to-face meetings, electronic mail, written memos and reports, etc. One study by Stewart (cited in Dixon, 1997) of 160 managers over a four-week period found that on average they spent two-thirds of their working time with other people: attending meetings, giving and receiving information and instructions, discussing matters with colleagues. Most of their remaining time tended to be spent preparing and reading reports (Stewart, 1971). There are, according to Dixon (1997), a number of good reasons why high-level communication skills are vital for management. These include the following:

- Decision-making. Management is concerned with decision making, and the quality of those decisions depends to a large extent on the quality of the information communicated to the decision makers.
- Organising. Communication is vital in the organisational processes concerned with acquiring resources, developing them, and transferring finished goods and services to the customers. These involve work teams and reporting relationships and, unless decisions are conveyed to and from the appropriate people, none of the organising tasks can be accomplished.
- Influencing. Communicating is about persuading, informing and educating in organisational settings. Therefore, one of its effects can be to mould opinions.
- Activating. Another purpose of communicating is to initiate action. Communication, in effect, acts as the regulating mechanism for beginning, continuing and halting the company's business.

(p.83)

In their 1986 review of the literature on hospitality management, Hales and Nightingale (1986) identified nine recurring managerial tasks. Of these, "seven are predominantly communication activities: leading, serving as a liaison, disseminating information, allocating resources, maintaining workflow, negotiating, controlling, and directing subordinates" (p.95). Parallel to this research, a growing number of studies (Ferguson and Berger, 1984; Mullins and Davies, 1991) explore the characteristics of hospitality managers. These studies con-

firmed the importance of effective communication and interpersonal skills for successful management practices. This is primarily due to the service-oriented nature of the hospitality industry and the wide range of demands placed on workers and managers in offering their services to diverse clientele.

Like many service industries, the hospitality industry has apparently begun to reflect a recognition of the value of improved communication as a key to quality, productivity and competitiveness. In their look at the hospitality industry in the 21st century, Powers and Riegel (1993) concluded that:

> because the hospitality industry is very much a "people business" in which staff make all the difference in the customer experience . . . the increasingly diverse workforce, the shortage of workers which can be expected from time to time in many markets, and the increasing significance of customer service in a competitive market all combine to heighten the importance of managing human resources. And the management of human resources certainly hinges on effective communication.
>
> (p.305)

The role of communication in the hospitality industry cannot be overemphasised and effective communication skills are required for recruitment. As Lattin (1995) remarked, "Because the hospitality industry requires frequent interactions with people, job candidates must demonstrate solid communication skills" (p.25). Effective communication skills are essential for all levels of staff, not only to handle difficult customers, but also to develop efficiency and good employer–employee relationships (Brownell, 1992; Dixon, 1997; Lattin, 1995). Effective communication can prevent costly mistakes that may result in lower productivity. Information that is incorrect, or that arrives too late, or that is lost entirely as it passes through the organisation's hierarchy, can adversely affect the bottom line. What may be less obvious are the consequences ineffective communication can have for human resources management and interpersonal relationships within an organisation.

One of the major issues encountered within the hospitality industry is that services are intangible. There is no actual product to pick up or examine, making it very hard for the customer to evaluate and buy. The reason why effective communication is extremely important in hospitality is because this industry relies heavily on the people skills of service providers to deliver the intangible and inseparable aspects of the service product. The communication skills of hospitality employees are a major concern because effective communication is integral to meeting the needs of the customer. According to Sparks and Callan (1992), "the service encounter requires interpersonal communication between the service provider and the customer, therefore, effective communication should be practiced [sic] throughout all levels of the organisation in order to establish a closer relationship with customers" (p.218).

In her research on the communication effectiveness of hotel reservation staff in the United States, Sparks (1994) discovered that "Customers evaluate the

quality of service, at least in part, on the manner in which information is communicated" (p.48). Michaelides (1991), in a study encouraging restaurant managers to restructure their organisations to communicate, described "the communicating organization as one in which everyone . . . knows what's going on . . . [through] lines of communication that are clear, not garbled; candid, not dishonest or evasive; open, not shut; clean, not polluted" (p.22).

The importance of effective communication within hospitality as a service industry is thus very clear. George (1993) stressed that "effective interaction with employees is crucial to management success, so an important goal in hospitality education is developing managers' communication skills and empathy in the workplace" (p.60). It is apparent that hospitality organisations must communicate with employees at all levels. A study by Brownell (1991) of hospitality middle management in the USA concluded that:

> although no two properties are alike, middle managers from across the country share common concerns and face similar problems as they perform their daily tasks. Most of these tasks involve communication, and the quality and nature of their interactions directly affect productivity and service.
>
> (p.59)

Brownell's research also showed that "Those (middle managers) who communicate effectively encourage information sharing and provide clear and sufficient messages to their subordinates. They promote a climate of teamwork and trust through open-mindedness and supportive communication practices" (p.59). In addition, effective communication has also come to be regarded as one of the benchmarks in hospitality leadership. Studies of leadership in the lodging and food service sectors found that effective leadership was able to "(a) develop a compelling vision; (b) earn and return trust; (c) listen and communicate effectively; and (d) persevere when others give up" (Cichy *et al.*, 1992, p.50).

Given increasing cultural diversity within the Australian hospitality and tourism service industries, it is imperative for managers to learn to value and manage any differences among employees and clientele. Increasingly, top management of organisations is recognising that there is a strong relationship between a commitment to racial equality and organisational effectiveness (Ouseley, 1997). As we have seen in previous sections in this research study, every aspect of hospitality organisations relates to communication. Effective management of any hospitality organisation must include awareness of the cultural impact on communication in order to manage cultural diversity successfully both at an interpersonal and organisational level. An understanding of cultural differences within hospitality workplaces and how cultural factors such as values, beliefs, experiences and backgrounds affect management communication can improve staff relations, encourage creativity in problem solving and reduce both interpersonal and structural barriers to equality, access and participation (Dimanche, 1995; Tanke, 1990; Van der Wagen, 1997). As Hughes (1992) stated,

> Diversity in the workplace can be a source of strength for an organisation, provided the organisation manages that diversity effectively. . . . Employees of ethnic backgrounds would have more satisfaction and commitment on their jobs in the organisation where diversity was supported by the management.
>
> (p.78)

In addition, Gee (1994) advocated that:

> diverse work groups are more effective when diversity is valued and well managed by the organisation, the different experiences of co-workers and their different ways of seeing things and talking about things combine to make the group more effective and work a more rewarding experience. They produce a better product, service their clients with greater sensitivity, and enjoy the benefits of a more motivated and responsible workforce.
>
> (p.347)

However, cultural diversity also poses communication challenges because so many unknown variables are involved. As the cultural variables and differences increase, the number of communication misunderstandings can grow (Harris and Moran, 1991; Saee, 1997). Potentially, some of the key problems that affect intercultural communication competence result from: incorrect cultural assumptions; stereotyping; ethnocentrism; insensitivity to each other's cultures; prejudice and discrimination; fear of the unknown; fear of threatened identity; fear of rejection; fear of contradiction to one's belief system; misunderstanding of gender roles and values and behaviour; as well as nonverbal behaviour within the cross-cultural setting (Saee, 1998). Hughes (1992) has conducted qualitative research of management communication including cultural variables. Using an open-ended interview format, Hughes (1992) studied the culturally diverse hospitality industry in Canada, focusing on six hotels in Toronto. This study has important lessons for the training of Australian hospitality and tourism managers. Challenges arising from management of cultural diversity within the Canadian hospitality industry are similar to challenges experienced in Australia and therefore the findings are discussed here.

In the Canadian study, respondents were human resource directors. Hughes' (1992) study confirmed the following advantageous effects of the culturally diverse workplace:

- the new immigrant groups provided a large source of potential labour;
- the work environment was enriched by multiple cultures;
- the hotels were able to meet the needs of a diverse group of customers; and
- new market segments were attracted to culturally diverse hotels.

In contrast to these positive effects, having a diverse group of employees also created problems arising from departmental concentration of ethnic groups, language and cultural differences.

In particular, respondents in the study identified the following problems for management:

1 Communication. When individuals from a given ethnic group are concentrated, as in Hughes' study, they tend to use their native tongue for communication rather than English. As a result, communication with other departments and hotel management can suffer.
2 Coordination. Barriers can arise between departments and individuals, impinging on interdepartmental coordination and cooperation. Moreover, if individuals are restricted from working in various departments, cross-training can be difficult to accomplish.
3 Comfort. Supervisors, other employees, and guests who do not speak a particular employee group's language may feel uncomfortable.
4 Motivation. With the comfort of speaking in a native language, employees have less incentive to learn English, impeding both the employees' and the department's effectiveness.
5 Image. Guests and other outsiders may think poorly of a hotel that has obvious employee enclaves.

Human resource directors also noted that language differences can have a strong impact on hotel operations (Hughes, 1992). In particular, the participants in Hughes' study were concerned with the effects that language differences were having on communication between management and employees on one hand, and between guests and employees on the other. Many critical management functions (e.g. interviewing, induction, training, performance feedback, information dissemination and achievement of standards) were made more difficult, more time-consuming, or less accurate as a result of language differences.

Human resource directors also noted, that when people have trouble communicating, they quickly give up trying (Hughes, 1992). When that occurred, employees suffered from decreased communication and were not as effective in their jobs as their counterparts who could speak English.

The study also found that communication problems were further exacerbated when memos and posted notices were the predominant mode of communication, as seemed to be the case in some of the hotels. This practice not only affected the employees who did not speak and read English, but also native speakers with literacy problems. One human resource director expressed frustration with her head office's lack of sensitivity by commenting that "Everything is in print – company newspapers, new programs, flyers, mission statements. It is questionable how much of this information is getting through to a large number of employees" (Hughes, 1992, p.82). Thus cultural diversity posed a variety of challenges for management. For example, some ethnic employee groups were more likely to challenge authority or launch more union grievances than others.

Some human resource directors in Hughes' study commented that cultural differences and spoken communication are sometimes intertwined. One particu-

lar human resource director cited an example in which she believed that cultural difference had led to different interpretations of the same conversation:

> A European executive came over and experienced culture shock. He really has had to modify his style from "I am the boss and you'll do it because I told you so." In one instance, an inspector had examined a room and overlooked a piece of paper on the floor. When the executive asked her about the paper, she replied, "I can't think of everything." He responded: "Any woman off the street could see that this is garbage." Her interpretation of that remark was that he had called her a prostitute.
>
> (Hughes, 1992, p.84)

Hughes found that most of the human resource directors' strategies for dealing with challenges arising from cultural diversity were centred around language issues. Strategies for dealing with language issues ranged from removing the need for employees to learn English (i.e. through departmental ethnic concentration or by providing translation to help employees learn to speak English) to teaching English to employees (Hughes, 1992). Specific strategies included:

(a) Employee translators. These translators were often used to assist in conducting interviews, orienting and training new employees, and conducting performance reviews.
(b) Written translations. Some hotels provided written translations of such written material as job descriptions, employee handbooks, orientation materials, and training manuals.
(c) Language matching. Some hotels ensured that English-speaking guests had ready access to English-speaking employees.
(d) Teaching basic expressions. Some hotels taught their employees basic English expressions useful for customer service.
(e) Teaching English as a second language. Most of the hotels had at one time implemented ESL (English as a second language) training.

Other management problems arising from cultural diversity were in the areas of legal knowledge, and in particular, human resource directors were concerned about the supervisors' level of legal awareness regarding discriminatory practices (Hughes, 1992).

It was found that human resource directors recognised the importance of a dynamic corporate culture. In particular, respondents said that management must be willing to adopt a new company culture that values cultural diversity, increases awareness of different cultures, and promotes patience and flexibility when dealing with employees (Hughes, 1992). While this Canadian study of managerial communication/managerial practices furnishes important training lessons for Australian hospitality and tourism managers, no such study of managerial communication/management practices within the Australian hospitality's culturally diverse workplaces has ever been undertaken. Therefore the study

here was designed to explore whether these Canadian findings applied in Australia.

In a separate study (Jafari and Way, 1994) of thirty-eight lodging chains serving international visitors in the United States, it was found that the industry's approach to serving international travellers did not include an awareness of cultural diversity. While the managers in these hotels strongly agreed that the international market was an important one, the issue of training guest-contact employees for cultural sensitivity received a less than enthusiastic response (Jafari and Way, 1994). Literature reviews revealed a dearth of research on opportunities for training of Australian hospitality employees to increase their awareness of and sensitivity to culturally diverse guests. The study presented here was designed to explore training-related issues within Australian hospitality.

Because the hospitality industry is labour-intensive and service-centred, it is a people enterprise. Both the industry's power and potential are vested in the extent to which multicultural human resources are effectively managed to maximise productivity.

> To realize this potential, management needs to understand how ethnicity and culture affect human behaviour in general, and intercultural communication in particular. Examples of situations where culture can influence both management and multicultural employees in the workplace are: communication problems in Recruitment Policies and Procedures such as Interviewing; Disciplinary Actions; Rules of Conduct; Dress Codes; Perception of Time; Service Procedures; Motivation for Professional Development; Employee Counselling; Work Schemes and the Role of Women in the hospitality industry.
>
> (Tanke, 1990, pp.46–47)

Brownell (1992) suggested that, in view of increasing cultural diversity of both staff and international guests, managers should develop skills to deal effectively with those whose backgrounds and assumptions are unlike their own. Within an organisation, managers serve as links, communicating the perceptions of their work groups to others whose interests, roles, needs and attitudes may or may not be similar.

As with many sectors, in the hospitality industry the success of the organisation depends on the coordinated efforts of each department. According to Lewis *et al.* (1995),

> Hospitality organisations are typically composed of functional areas, such as accounting, marketing and sales, food and beverage, housekeeping, front office, the engineering. The flow of communication provides the coordination and information necessary for this type of organisation to function properly. If this flow is interrupted or inefficient, the organisation will suffer.
>
> (p.83)

Ineffective intercultural communication by managers and staff within an organisational context can lead to undesirable lack of liaison within and between departments and consequent loss of productivity. Australian hospitality organisations are no exception. In fact, research by the Office of Multicultural Affairs (1994) reported that the communication process within Australian organisations is often complicated by the existence of a variety of competence in English and in languages other than English. Research by the Office of Multicultural Affairs (1994) also showed that

> there is the existence of an inflexible/rigid communication system within Australian organisations irrespective of whether it achieves communication objectives or not. Similarly, there is also a high degree of filtering by management of what information is needed at each level, resulting in lower levels having insufficient information.
>
> (p.14)

It is argued that most Australian managers lack an understanding of culture and hence intercultural communication competence, which is reflected in their inability to perform management functions and roles including planning, organising, controlling, leading, decision making, communication and human resource management within a culturally diverse workforce in an effective manner (Karpin, 1995).

So to what extent does cultural diversity pose a challenge for Australian hospitality and tourism managers? No specific study of these managers' intercultural communication competence and managerial functions has ever been undertaken in Australia in order to address this question. Two Australian studies have broadly looked at human resource management practices within Australian hospitality management (James Cook University, 1992; Peat Marwick Management Consultants, 1992) and a third study has been conducted to explore the impact of cultural diversity within Australian tourism with particular reference to linguistic skills (Beresford, 1995). These three studies identified broad management problems inherent within the sector, including poor management skills relating to communication, motivation and feedback as well as deficits in education and training in foreign languages. The main findings of these three studies are discussed briefly in the next section.

4.4 Current weaknesses in management practices in the Australian hospitality and tourism service industries

Key problems facing the Australian hospitality industries, identified by James Cook University (1992) in *Tourism 2000: Key Directions for Human Resource Development* included:

1 Management issues. There is a wide perception within the tourism workforce that individuals in managerial, and to a lesser extent supervisory

positions, often have poor management skills relating to communication, motivation and feedback. Hospitality employees surveyed in the study generally felt that management concentrated on criticising them for faults raised by customers but did not comment when an individual's efforts had been praised by the customer. Employees also felt that management did not communicate the reasons for their management decisions/directives. Equally, the industry suffers from a number of other related management skill deficits, such as poor people management skills (including management of cultural diversity), poor organisational skills and poor operational skills. The study also found that in many tourism-related industries, autocratic management was practised and managers seemed to have no knowledge of how to manage people. Generally, staff felt that there was a low level of recognition of efforts from supervisors and management, which detracted from the level of job satisfaction.

2 Promotion issues. Another related difficulty with management related to a perception by staff that promotion was often given on the basis of length of service, rather than on merit.

3 Staffing issues. These relate to an apparent lack of commitment by employers, concerning tenure of employment and the use of casual staff. In addition, there was concern that individuals in apprenticeships and traineeships were being employed as cheap labour at the expense of more experienced employees.

4 Working issues. Shift work is widely applicable within the industry and has adversely affected social and family life. Of equal concern has been the requirement to work split shifts and back-to-back shifts, coupled with ad hoc rostering. This was seen to be very stressful for staff and changes in work rosters at short notice generally precluded forward planning of social and other activities by staff.

5 Job security. Traditionally, career paths were absent within the tourism/hospitality industry, which has predominantly employed casual staff to fill various vacancies. Generally, employees felt that some employers took advantage of the supply of temporary workers, who may be prepared to work for less than the award wages, by designating permanent staff at a lower rate than was reflected by the work being undertaken. The perception that any complaints about this were likely to result in dismissal appeared to result in employees continuing to work in what they viewed as highly unsatisfactory conditions. Similarly, casualisation of employment conditions has not provided employees with the degree of job security needed to increase motivation. There was also concern that it was easy to find a job without having sufficient experience and qualifications, particularly at managerial and supervisory level.

6 Lack of professionalism. There was a wide perception that the industry was generally made up of part-time and casual employment opportunities and was not regarded as a profession. In contrast to European counterparts, there was a lack of professionalism within the Australian tourism industry.

7 Discrimination. Discrimination was perceived in the fact that the industry preferred younger staff particularly in front-line positions. This problem was further exacerbated by employers' differing expectations relating to the duties of male and female employees. Some employees felt that they experienced racial discrimination. It was reported that some employers were reluctant to employ Asian staff, while others were reported to be actively seeking Asian employees in the belief that they worked harder and would accept lower wages. Some female employees perceived that there was discrimination against women in management positions in the industry.
8 Lack of training issues. It was argued that there was a lack of training particularly in areas other than the department which staff were employed.
9 Stress. Anti-social working hours, poor pay, the need to deal with the public on a continuous basis and poor management practices have contributed to high levels of stress in the industry. Finally, but more importantly, the industry has traditionally suffered from a poor image.

Other research by Peat Marwick Management Consultants (1992) confirmed the foregoing findings but also found that sections of the hospitality and tourism industries suffered from other problems, such as poaching of staff by hospitality and tourism organisations who did not train their staff. Poaching is a major issue, forcing up wage and salary levels in the industry and reducing incentive to conduct staff training. While sectors within the industry over the past two years have made considerable advances in the provision of training, however, the low level of training in general continues to remain a major problem in the current shortage of skilled hospitality staff. These shortages have occurred largely because of low levels of training.

Award structures in the tourism industry have also contributed to high staff turnover as they fall short of standard awards which are applicable to all other industries in Australia. In view of shortages of skilled staff in the industry, training colleges and tertiary institutions, in particular TAFE colleges, have responded positively by developing industry training programmes. However, the tremendous growth experienced in the industry has resulted in an undersupply of TAFE course places (Graig-Smith and French, 1991). Further, the relevance of course content at TAFE colleges and universities has to some extent been questioned by the industry (Rein, 1992). The standards, accreditation and articulation of many courses offered have also come in for criticism (Rein, 1992).

Beresford (1995) identified a range of problems which inhibited interest in the tourism and hospitality sector as an employer in Australia:

- lack of knowledge of what the tourism industry can offer;
- lack of continuing information about employment and career opportunities in the sector;
- lack of information on qualifications and training required for a satisfactory career in the industry;
- and lack of a coordinated, up-to-date database on: the industry; employment

> opportunities; training/educational needs and opportunities; other qualifications required; and lines of communication for accessing the database.
>
> (pp.52–53)

In summary, the current weaknesses in management practices in the Australian hospitality and tourism industry relate to inappropriate management styles, career paths, work organisation, training, job security, assimilation and levels of stress. The next section analyses the profile of the hospitality sector's culturally diverse clientele and its implications for staff/management training.

4.5 Profile of a culturally diverse clientele: implications for training in the Australian hospitality and tourism service industries

The Australian hospitality and tourism service industries, in particular the hotel industry, will experience increasing cultural diversity in terms of ownership, workforce and international visitors. Currently, the industry relies heavily on domestic tourism for expenditure and visitor nights. Present indications strongly suggest that the scenario is rapidly changing, with international tourism fast becoming the focal point for projected growth. Between 1990 and 2000, growth was expected to come substantially from international markets, which are expected to contribute over 60 per cent of total growth measured in visitor numbers. By the year 2000, the international market was projected to account for 35 per cent of total visitor nights, up from 21 per cent in 1990 (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 1998). According to one forecast, "in 1994, the percentage of visitors from non-English speaking backgrounds (NESB) was about 53 percent – nearly 1.8 million out of a total 3.35 million. By the year 2000, the percentage of NESB visitors is forecast to be 62 percent of the total – 3.9 million of the total of 6.3 million" (Beresford, 1995, p.26).

Detailed forecasts of estimates for visitors from fourteen main language groups expected to visit Australia between 1994 and 2000 are provided in Table 4.3. These forecasts highlight the rapidly growing importance of visitors from non-English-speaking backgrounds. In particular, Japanese speakers will continue to be the most important language group and the number of visitors with a Chinese language and cultural background is forecast to be similar to the Japanese group. The market share of Japanese speakers is forecast to decline from more than 21 per cent to less than 19 per cent and the share of Chinese speakers to grow from about 12 per cent to just under 17 per cent (Beresford, 1995).

As previously mentioned, the high degree of globalisation of hotel ownership throughout the world will present the greatest challenges to the industry worldwide. Every hotel company must develop new marketing techniques for multinational and multicultural travellers. "With increasing globalisation, the hotels that will emerge as leaders are those that are sensitive to cultural needs" (Noriander, 1990, p.18). Such diversity calls for changes in the hotel industry, including changes in the education and training of future managers and

Table 4.3 Forecasts of number of international visitors to Australia between 1994 and 2000 whose first language is other than English (expressed in 1,000)

Total number of international visitors		*1994*	*1995*	*1996*	*1997*	*1998*	*1999*	*2000*
		3,354	*3,71*	*4,220*	*4,676*	*5,179*	*5,699*	*6,299*
Japanese	No. of visitors	710	734	783	856	948	1,058	1,180
	% of total	21.2	19.5	18.6	18.3	18.3	18.6	18.7
	Rank order	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Chinese/Mandarin	No. of visitors	192	254	303	351	410	461	524
	% of total	5.7	6.7	7.2	7.5	7.9	8.1	8.3
	Rank order	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Cantonese	No. of visitors	104	125	147	162	188	212	235
	% of total	3.1	3.3	3.5	3.5	3.6	3.7	3.7
	Rank order	7	7	8	8	8	8	8
Hokkien	No. of visitors	87	110	132	155	178	198	220
	% of total	2.6	2.9	3.1	3.3	3.4	3.5	3.5
	Rank order	8	9	9	9	9	9	9
Chiu Chao	No. of visitors	27	35	44	53	63	72	82
	% of total	0.8	0.9	1	1.1	1.2	1.3	1.3
	Rank order	15	15	14	13	13	13	13
Total Chinese	No. of visitors	410	524	626	721	839	943	1.061
	% of total	12.2	13.9	14.8	15.4	16.2	16.5	16.8
	Rank order	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
Indonesian	No. of visitors	84	112	150	185	219	260	296
	% of total	2.5	3	3.6	4	4.2	4.6	4.7
	Rank order	9	8	7	7	7	7	6
Malay	No. of visitors	79	88	105	132	152	173	193
	% of total	2..4	2.3	2.5	2.8	2.9	3	3.1
	Rank order	10	10	10	10	10	10	10
Total	No. of visitors	163	200	255	317	371	433	489
Indonesian/Malay	% of total	4.9	5.3	6	6.8	7.2	7.6	7.8
	Rank order	4	4	4	4	4	4	4
Korean	No. of visitors	105	174	229	270	312	349	386
	% of total	3.1	4.6	504	5.8	6	6.1	6.1
	Rank order	6	6	5	5	5	5	5
German	No. of visitors	163	181	198	218	240	266	294
	% of total	4.9	4.8	4.7	4.7	4.6	4.7	4.7
	Rank order	4	5	6	6	6	6	7
French	No. of visitors	74	81	89	97	105	113	125
	% of total	2.2	2.1	2	2.1	2	2	2
	Rank order	11	11	12	12	12	12	12
Thai	No. of visitors	56	74	96	117	137	162	188
	% of total	1.7	2	2.3	2.5	2.6	2.8	3
	Rank order	12	12	11	11	11	11	11
Italian	No. of visitors	39	42	46	50	54	59	66
	% of total	1.2	1.1	1.1	1.1	1	1	1
	Rank order	13	13	13	14	14	14	14
Scandinavian	No. of visitors	37	40	44	47	52	57	63
	% of total	1.1	1.1	1	1	1	1	1
	Rank order	14	14	14	15	15	15	15
Spanish	No. of visitors	24	26	29	33	38	45	54
	% of total	0.7	0.7	0.7	0.7	0.7	0.8	0.9
	Rank order	16	16	16	16	16	16	16
Total (no.) speaking 14 languages listed		1,781	2,102	2,405	2,726	3,096	3,485	3,906
Percentage of total number of visitors forecast		53	56	57	58	60	61	62

Sources: Tourism Forecasting Council (1994); Australian Tourism Commission (1994); Australian Bureau of Statistics (1994).

employees. In particular, there is a strong need for developing cross-cultural training programs including intercultural communication competence for Australian hospitality and tourism managers. Arguably, management and employees who are effective cross-cultural communicators will, in addition to creating a more enlightened working environment, provide a world-class standard of service to international visitors. Unfortunately, at present "very little is known about the significance of how language and cultural differences affect visitors' experience in Australia, as well as their implications for training in the Australian Hospitality And Tourism Service Industries" (Beresford, 1995, p.33).

As Beresford (1995) pointed out, managers need a range of data on which to base their training policy. He suggested that the International Visitors Survey (IVS) was an appropriate source of data, arguing that:

> analysis of the IVS on the basis of language (i.e., if provided) could proffer much useful information on travel patterns of non-English speaking visitors, e.g.; visitor satisfaction; purpose of visit; port of entry and departure; length of stay; regions visited; attractions visited; activities; type of accommodation and transport used; expenditure: how much; on what; country of residence. This information would give the Australian tourism and hospitality industry a clearer understanding of what non-English speaking visitors do, what they like and dislike and what their value is [sic]. It also would help the industry and training providers to identify where foreign language speaking customers contact staff are most needed.
>
> (pp.34–35)

In spite of these advantages, data collected via the International Visitors Survey might be problematic as a basis for decisions about training, since the IVS is usually arranged as data according to geographic markets. This data is useful when the geographic markets are culturally homogeneous. However, Asian markets, for example, are not. Each Asian market contains a variety of ethnic and language groups.

4.6 Future demands for fluency in languages other than English (LOTE) for staff within the Australian hospitality and tourism service industries

There is likely to be a high demand in the Australian hospitality and tourism sectors for staff who are fluent in more than one language. For example, Beresford (1995) found that, at 31 July 1994, "within the inbound tourism organisations (i.e., the international tour operators), their total staff numbers were 15,000. Of those 2,334 (more than 15 per cent) were fluent in at least one of the main non-English language[s]" (p.43). The number of staff in the sector fluent in a language other than English is shown in Table 4.4 (Beresford, 1995).

Most organisations surveyed by Beresford (1995) still nominate Japanese as their highest priority future market. Forecasts indicated that, by the year 2000,

Table 4.4 Number of staff in the Australian hospitality and tourism service industries fluent in a language other than English

Japanese	950
Mandarin	225
Cantonese	236
Korean	44
Thai	44
Indonesian/Malay	70
German	191
French	226
Italian	178
Spanish	190

Source: Beresford (1995).

the Japanese-speaking market could represent less than 19 per cent of the total inbound visitor market to Australia; Chinese-speaking markets could account for nearly 17 per cent; Indonesia/Malay 8 per cent; Korean 6 per cent; and Thai 3 per cent, while the total Asian-language markets other than Japanese could be about 34 per cent (Beresford, 1995). Accordingly, Beresford estimated that the need for LOTE staff to cater for non-English-speaking visitors by the year 2000 would be 5,267 (up from a survey of 2,334 in 1994 – an increase of 126 per cent).

Estimated increases of language-fluent staff by language groups of those who responded in Beresford's survey are outlined in Table 4.5.

Beresford also estimated the number of language-fluent staff required in 2000 for the Australian hospitality sector by job category and language group; see Table 4.6.

Table 4.5 Estimated increases of language-fluent staff in the Australian hospitality and tourism service industries by language group

Language group	*Reported number for 1994*	*Estimate for year 2000*	*Number increase over 1994*	*Percentage increase over 1994*
Japanese	950	1,544	614	66
Mandarin	225	650	425	189
Cantonese	236	608	372	158
Korean	44	315	271	616
Thai	44	210	166	377
Indonesian/Malay	70	320	250	357
German	191	410	219	115
French	226	577	351	155
Italian	178	356	178	100
Spanish	190	277	87	46

Source: Beresford (1995).

Table 4.6 Estimates of number of language-fluent staff required in 2000 for the Australian hospitality and tourism service industries by job category and language group

Language group	*Tour guides*	*Tour co-ordinators*	*Other customers*	*Other staff*	*Marketing/ sales*	*Management/ supervision*
Japanese	580	106	312	330	101	115
Mandarin	46	13	204	339	19	29
Cantonese	29	34	188	316	15	26
Korean	99	45	87	38	31	15
Thai	8	4	52	136	3	7
Indonesian/ Malay	32	18	93	150	15	12
German	46	18	98	224	8	18
French	40	17	137	348	8	27
Italian	34	19	151	129	8	
Spanish	36	18	125	69	8	21

Source: Beresford (1995).

It should be noted, that Beresford's findings arose from a survey of a small number of inbound tourism organisations, totalling seventy-eight respondents. Thus his conclusions cannot be considered as representative of specific sectors of the industries and should be treated with caution, considered as indicative only. Nevertheless, his findings seem to predict a substantial demand for staff with language and intercultural skills.

Of key concern to the Australian hospitality/tourism industry is the present and predicted demand for management and staff with high-level language and cultural skills, a demand which remains unmet (Beresford, 1995).

Australian federal and state governments have already acknowledged that learning of other languages is an essential resource for Australia's future development and funds have been made available by various planning and policy agencies. The advantages to the individual and the society of language education and fluency are numerous and include cultural, intellectual, economic, social and educational benefits (Lo Bianco, 1987).

More specifically, it can be argued that Australian hospitality and tourism managers would require training in areas such as intercultural communication competence and managerial functions and other-language fluency in order to manage human resources more effectively as well as to provide a much more professional service to their international clientele. The next section examines the status of the industries' training and education, including those of intercultural communication and major tourism languages.

4.7 Profile of the hospitality/tourism training in Australia

Traditionally, Australian educational institutions have been slow to recognise the significance of the hospitality industry and there has been in the past an

insufficient number of hospitality and travel courses. From 1975, Training and Further Education (TAFE) colleges have instituted tourism/hospitality courses to meet the industry's training requirements. Over the years, the colleges have also developed and implemented a common core curriculum that now has national portability. This has helped to reduce the provincial barriers to transferability of qualifications across states and across state-based industry associations (Graig-Smith and French, 1991).

It should be noted that the courses in tourism/hospitality provided by TAFE colleges mainly centred around technical rather than managerial skills. In 1975, Gutten College in Queensland began the first undergraduate programme in hospitality, followed by Footscray Institute of Technology a year later. In 1980, the University of Victoria in Melbourne was the first Australian educational institution to offer a Graduate Diploma in Tourism (Graig-Smith and French, 1991). In 1985, an additional ten institutions commenced undergraduate programmes with six of these institutions providing postgraduate programmes (Harris and Ravinder, 1990).

Increasingly, the tourism/hospitality industry has been recognised as a major employer with enormous economic benefits to Australia nationally. Consequently, tourism/hospitality education has grown considerably. Bondar (1990) identified that education is being offered at the following levels:

Professional level
Higher Degree Courses: Ph.D.; Master of Arts; Master of Commerce; Master of Business in Tourism;
Post-graduate diplomas
Graduate Diploma in Tourism; Graduate Diploma in Hotel Management;
Undergraduate degree courses
Bachelor Degrees in Tourism/Hospitality Management;
Undergraduate diploma courses
Diploma in Hospitality; Diploma in Travel and Tourism;
Para-professional
Associate Diploma in Travel and Tourism; Travel and Tourism;
Tourism and Hospitality; Skilled Trade Certificate in Commercial Cooking (Chef); Skilled Waiter; Butchery Certificates;
courses available at TAFE colleges in most states.
Other skills certificates
Hospitality Management; Catering Supervisor; Food and Beverage; Secretarial Studies; Typing and Office Procedures; Travel Operations;
Courses available at private colleges
Traineeships in various hospitality areas including travel; bar attendance; table service are available at TAFE colleges in most states.

Of relevance to note is that curricula on cross-cultural management communication as well as management of cultural diversity subjects appear to be lacking as core subjects within these programmes. Cultural issues and communication issues

are, to some extent, addressed as generic issues within the management and communication subjects offered within the hospitality programmes.

4.7.1 Training and Further Education (TAFE) Colleges – hospitality courses

In 1995, "75,600 students were enrolled in courses in Food, Hospitality and Tourism in Australia – 6800 more than in 1994 or growth of just under 10 per cent over 1994–1995. This was slightly higher than growth in vocational activity in TAFE/Adult Community Education sector (close to 8 per cent)" (Tourism Training Australia, 1998, p.36). These trends are represented in Table 4.7.

4.7.2 Composition of growth in hospitality/tourism training in Australia 1994–1995

In terms of qualification-levels courses in hospitality and tourism, student growth was concentrated in two broad categories which accounted for 58 per cent of all growth, as shown in Table 4.8.

4.7.3 Male/female participation in hospitality/tourism training in Australia

Overall, females comprised a substantial majority of the student population (57 per cent) in TAFE tourism programmes in 1995; and the rate of growth in

Table 4.7 Total clients (persons) enrolled in TAFE courses in food, tourism and hospitality, by qualification level of course, Australia: 1994 and 1995

Qualification level	*Clients*		*Change 1994–1995*	
	1994	*1995*	*Number*	*%*
Diploma and Associate Diploma	7,627	9,141	1,514	20
Advanced Certificate – Post Trade	763	877	114	15
Advanced Certificate – Other	9,647	9,669	22	0
Certificate – Trade	9,269	9,443	174	2
Certificate – Other	26,371	28,781	2,410	9
Endorsements to Certificates	118	110	−8	−7
Statement of Attainment	9,774	9,524	−250	−3
Certificate of Competency	221	430	209	94
Certificate of Proficiency		1,029	n/a	n/a
AQF – Certificate I		68	n/a	n/a
AQF – Certificate II		2,281	n/a	n/a
AQF – Certificate III		903	n/a	n/a
Other	1,694	3,921	2,227	131
Non-award	7,212	3,707	−3,506	−49
Total	68,840	75,603	6,763	10

Source: Tourism Training Australia (1998).

Table 4.8 Number of enrolments for hospitality and tourism courses

Certificate – Other	2,410	36%
Diploma and Associate Diploma	1,514	22%
Subtotal	3,920	58%
All others	2,840	42%
Total	6,760	100%

Source: Tourism Training Australia (1998).

female student participation was almost double that of male students between 1994–1995. Except for trade certificates where males made up the overwhelming majority (72 per cent), female student representation was generally much higher than males, including in the higher-end qualifications, as shown below:

- Females made up 70 per cent of Diploma and Associate Diploma clients and more than 60 per cent of Advanced Certificate programmes, including post-trade programmes (Tourism Training Australia, 1998).
- Between 1994–1995, female student enrolments overall grew nearly twice as fast as male students enrolments (12 per cent compared to 7 per cent); and in the higher courses, even greater female growth was recorded (Tourism Training Australia, 1998).
- In Diploma and Associate Diploma courses, there was a 25 per cent increase in female student population enrolled – nearly three times the growth rate of male enrolments (9 per cent) (Tourism Training Australia, 1998).

4.7.4 In-house hospitality/tourism training in Australia

Most large hospitality establishments have begun to provide formal training for management, supervisors, front-office and front-line staff, through in-house training programmes (Tourism Training Australia, 1998).

4.7.5 Private training providers for hospitality/tourism training in Australia

Private training providers offer short and intensive courses in areas such as waiting and bar work. Issues such as course standards, accreditation and articulation have been addressed by the Australian Hospitality Review Panel.

4.7.6 Industry-based training for hospitality/tourism training in Australia

Industry-based training programmes encompass the apprenticeship and traineeship systems, structured in-house training and on-the-job training.

Apprenticeship/traineeship schemes mainly apply to young people and, given the rapid growth of industry, the need for training is rapidly increasing. There is now a need for group training arrangements, which will to some extent overcome the limited training capacity of small employers.

On-the-job training is another vehicle for equipping hospitality staff with appropriate skills needed to run hospitality operations effectively. Fully accredited training is available through the Australian National Training Authority with accreditation by the Australian Hospitality Review Panel.

4.7.7 Tourism training Australia

Tourism Training Australia was established in 1980, in response to the changing nature of the industry combined with the range and depth of skills in the hospitality workforce. Tourism Training Australia's overall aim is to develop a training system which is flexible enough to meet both the short- and long-term needs of the industry. Objectives include the following:

- to assess current and future workforce requirements and training needs;
- to provide advice to federal and state governments and educational institutions;
- to co-ordinate the development and implementation of initiatives involving industry, government and the education system;
- to develop training resources and provide advice to companies to improve industry-based training.

(Tourism Training Australia, 1992)

The Australian Hospitality Review Panel and the Australian Tourism Training Review Panel, which exist within the Tourism Training Australia structure, are also authorised to give formal recognition to all forms of training. The Australian Hospitality Review Panel covers programmes provided by high schools, TAFE colleges, universities, private providers and in-house by companies nationally (Rein, 1992).

4.7.8 Career path and skills recognition

It has long been recognised that the Australian hospitality sector suffers from a high degree of staff turnover, mainly due to the absence of career paths. In addition, staff skills learnt on-the-job have traditionally not been recognised. A very high proportion of the hospitality workforce lack formal training (for example two-thirds of cooks), although, in many cases, these staff have acquired significant skill levels. Nevertheless, there have been few opportunities for these people to have their skills legitimately acknowledged. There is now some opportunity for formally unqualified hospitality staff to have their acquired skills recognised by Tourism Training Australia. The skills assessment recognition programme developed for the hospitality industry is called "ACCESS". ACCESS covers skills in areas such as food and beverage, front

office, kitchen, bar operations, bottle shop operations, cellar operation and restaurant service.

Tourism Training Australia also aims to:

- increase the industry's commitment to training;
- develop an adequate labourforce database for forward planning and use by the industry;
- establish a tiered training system corresponding to stages in recognised industry career paths i.e. a system with a variety of entry and exit points and a range of courses which match the requirements of major career points from front-line staff to senior management level;
- establish agreed national training standards with associated portability of qualifications;
- move towards an Australian training system which is widely recognised overseas and which realises the needs of the international market;
- encourage the development of courses and facilities;
- reduce Australia's dependence on immigration as a source of trained staff in the long term.

(Tourism Training Australia, 1992)

4.7.9 Accreditation criteria for a training and education programme in the Australian hospitality industry

While the Australian Hospitality Review Panel and the Australian Tourism Training Review Panel oversee the operation of the system, an Accreditation Committee has been established to examine all training programmes submitted for review. The Accreditation Committee is made up of industry experts who examine the training courses in their area of speciality. Members are chosen for their expertise, experience and standing in the industry. All contact between training providers and the Accreditation Committee is made through the secretary at the office of Tourism Training Australia.

The underlying concept of the accreditation process is that participants will be able to achieve a particular level of competence. That is, participants, upon completion of the training programme, will have the skills, knowledge and understanding to be able to perform their duties to the standard expected in the workplace.

When reviewing training programmes the Accreditation Committee considers, among other matters, the following:

- the programme's overall aims and objectives;
- the programme content;
- training facilities and resources;
- trainer qualifications and experience;
- training practices and strategies;
- methods of assessment.

These matters are considered along with the stated aims and objectives of the training programme.

Each training course is carefully examined by industry specialists, who assess whether upon completion of a course the student will be able to perform successfully to the standard set by the National Competency Standards – endorsed by the National Training Board. On graduating from an Australian Hospitality Review Panel-approved course, graduates are issued with an official record of the modules they have attained. This will assist prospective employers in deciding whether the applicant has all the necessary skills for the job (Australian Hospitality Review Panel, 1993).

4.7.10 Specific levels of accreditation by the Australian Hospitality Review Panel

The Australian Hospitality Review Panel offers accreditation at the following levels:

Introductory. Participants gain an overview of at least one area of the hospitality industry, and may benefit from practical training.

Basic skills. This level helps participants to achieve competence in performing all basic tasks relevant to one or more areas of the hospitality sector.

Advanced skills. This level provides participants with the competence to perform a broader range of skills relevant to one or more areas of hospitality, including the more complex and demanding skills. (Some programmes are only available to those already employed in the industry.)

Supervisory skills. Participants gain skills and understanding allied to their industry experience. This should enable participants to become competent supervisors in specific operational areas.

Management. This level offers training in areas such as organisation, planning and control of establishments and involves training in at least one of the hospitality skills areas. In addition, cross-cultural skills and cross-cultural communication competencies are also available in two stand-alone elective subjects for students enrolled in Level 4 to Level 6 of these accredited courses.

(Australian Hospitality Review Panel, 1993)

4.7.11 Applying for accreditation for a hospitality training and education programme

When accrediting a training programme, the Australian Hospitality Review Panel (AHRP) is only accrediting the content of the programme. To operate an AHRP-approved hospitality programme, submission is made to the AHRP, including a completed questionnaire, module grid, resumes of trainers, details of sites and physical resources, statement of agreement and, where appropriate, sample lesson plans. Providers must comply by the rules and conditions placed

on the programme by the Accreditation Committee (Australian Hospitality Review Panel, 1993). In other words, the process of accreditation includes satisfying a range of guidelines on implementation of the programme.

4.7.12 The modules of the Australian Hospitality Review Panel

A programme's content is assessed against minimum training requirements determined by industry. These minimum requirements are organised in modular format. Although providers are not required to present their programme material in modular format, the content of the module must be identified within the programme before accreditation is given for that module. Recently, new minimum training requirements have been introduced for areas such as cooking and management. Some programmes have been aligned with previously developed modules. Programmes seeking re-accreditation will now have to align with the new modules (Australian Hospitality Review Panel, 1993).

It should be noted that competence in cross-cultural skills and cross-cultural communication within the hospitality industry are becoming increasingly recognised as learning outcomes that are now generically included in all fully accredited hospitality curricula.

At the tertiary education level, there are a very few formal courses that include studies in intercultural communication courses in Australia, despite the growing importance of this area of communication competence for managers and employees.

4.7.13 Speakers of languages other than English (LOTE) in tourism courses

The number of people taking tourism courses offered at different levels who speak the major tourism languages is important for the Australian hospitality/tourism industry. There appears to be a strong industry preference for native speakers in recruiting staff for positions needing high-level language skills, compared to second-language learners. Table 4.2 shows that in 1995, there were 7,700 people enrolled in tourism programmes at all levels who spoke a language other than English (LOTE) at home. This represented just over 10 per cent of the total student population enrolled in tourism courses in 1995. This is an increase of 11 per cent from 6,900 enrolled between 1994–1995 (Tourism Training Australia, 1998).

Of these LOTE students,

> There were 3,900 students who were able to speak a main tourism language. This is an 18% increase from 1994. This is almost twice the growth for all languages and all TAFE tourism students overall (11%). Overall, this represents 5.2% of all students enrolled in tourism courses in 1995.
>
> (Tourism Training Australia, 1998, p.40)

Table 4.9 Total clients (persons) enrolled in TAFE courses in food, tourism and hospitality, and speaking a language other than English (LOTE), by major tourism languages spoken in Australia: 1994 and 1995

Language	*Clients*		*Change 1994–1995*	
	1994	*1995*	*Number*	*%*
Cantonese	601	645	44	7
Chinese	80	218	138	173
Chinese Mandarin	116	170	54	47
Hokkien	53	76	23	43
Sub-total, Chinese	850	1,109	259	31
French	172	204	32	19
German	197	202	5	3
Indonesian/Malay	190	267	77	41
Italian	681	710	29	4
Japanese	102	201	99	97
Korean	166	195	29	18
Spanish	586	624	38	7
Thai	136	146	10	7
Vietnamese	241	254	13	5
Sub-total, "Tourism" LOTE	3,321	3,912	591	18
Other	3,579	3,777	198	6
Total LOTE	6,900	7,689	789	11

Source: Tourism Training Australia (1998).

The number of LOTE speakers enrolled in TAFE tourism and hospitality courses is given in Table 4.9.

4.8 Conclusion

In this chapter, a profile of the Australian hospitality and tourism service industries has shown the significance of international tourism to the Australian economy in terms of foreign exchange earnings and employment opportunities for Australians. Growth in international tourism and the increasing cultural diversity of Australian workplaces in the hospitality industry are creating new challenges and opportunities for managers. These trends highlight the need for effective intercultural communication by Australian managers in their culturally diverse workplaces. Competent managerial communication is especially necessary in the Australian hospitality and tourism service industries, which predominantly provide a service to national and international multicultural clients.

In the absence of Australian research, studies in the United States and Canada demonstrated both strengths and challenges of cultural diversity within the hospitality industry. There are implications of these studies for the Australian hospitality sector, especially in terms of the conduct of management practices and determination of training needs.

In Australia, data has been collected on human resource practices in the local hospitality industry and major weaknesses have become apparent, including poor management skills relating to communication, motivation/feedback, discriminatory practices and lack of professionalism within the industry. Education and training for Australian hospitality was shown to be diverse in level and location across the secondary to tertiary educational sectors. Accreditation of courses is conducted by an industry body and there are policies for recognition of key competencies acquired outside formal methods of qualification. More females than males participate in education and training for the Australian hospitality industry and greater numbers of speakers of languages other than English are enrolling in hospitality and tourism courses. Nevertheless, there are not many opportunities to study intercultural communication in association with managerial functions in available courses. Also, there is a lack of research on the connection between intercultural communication and managerial functions within the Australian hospitality and tourism service industries in spite of significant increases in multiculturalism in Australian society and expansion in hospitality in terms of numbers of international visitors.

In summary, studies investigating trends in Australian hospitality and tourism have focused on managerial practices, the importance of inbound tourism to the Australian economy and projected growth as well as provision of training and educational courses designed specifically for the industry with some reference to intercultural communication and major tourism languages. There has been no specific study of Australian hospitality and tourism managers' intercultural communication competence and managerial functions within their culturally diverse workplaces. In view of the crucial importance of effective managerial communication as a foundation for all managerial functions, the study in this research study is designed to explore these issues arising from the trends which affect managerial practices. In the next chapter, the research methodology for this study is described and discussed.

5 Research methodology

This chapter outlines the research aims, objectives and research questions for this study, explaining the choice of research strategy and methodology. In addition, the structure of the research design, including data collection procedure and methods of data collection, is described.

5.1 Research aims

The aim of the research was to explore the nature of intercultural communication competence and its application to the managerial functions of Australian hospitality and tourism managers. From interpersonal communication theory, theories of world cultures, uncertainty reduction theory and psychological adaptation theory, eight research objectives and eight research questions were identified and explored in this study.

5.2 Research objectives

The specific objectives of the research were:

1 To ascertain potential problems, barriers and obstacles to effective intercultural communication competence, as experienced by the Australian hospitality and tourism managers.
2 To investigate the managers' understanding of intercultural communication in relation to their dealing with staff and clients.
3 To determine in what ways Australian hospitality organisations reflect cultural diversity within their corporate culture and hence their managerial functions.
4 To determine in what ways cultural diversity has affected Australian hospitality management practice in functions such as planning, workplace communication, recruitment/promotion, induction, training, supervision, industrial relations, management of change, customer service, financial management and marketing.
5 To determine in what ways intercultural communication competence is reflected in hospitality and tourism managers' interpersonal relationships with their culturally diverse workforce.

6 To determine in what ways managers experience uncertainty in their daily intercultural encounters in the workplace.
7 To determine whether managers have an awareness of psychological adaptation processes, as experienced by international customers visiting Australia.
8 To make more general recommendations from this specific study for future research in the area of intercultural communication competence and cross-cultural management.

5.3 Research questions

The following specific research questions were investigated:

1 How do Australian hospitality and tourism managers define and apply intercultural communication competence?
2 In what ways do Australian hospitality and tourism managers experience uncertainty in their daily intercultural encounters in the workplace?
3 How is the intercultural communication competence of Australian hospitality and tourism managers affected by the ability to establish interpersonal relationships?
4 How are psychological adaptation processes, likely to be experienced by international customers during their visits to Australia, understood by Australian hospitality and tourism managers?
5 In what ways do Australian hospitality and tourism managers consider a culturally diverse workforce a "challenge"?
6 How is cultural diversity reflected within Australian hospitality organisational culture?
7 In what ways has cultural diversity affected Australian hospitality and tourism management practices?

    7.1 In what ways is intercultural communication competence used by Australian hospitality and tourism managers in planning?
    7.2 In what ways is intercultural communication competence used by Australian hospitality and tourism managers in workplace communication?
    7.3 In what ways is intercultural communication competence used by Australian hospitality and tourism managers in recruitment/promotion?
    7.4 In what ways is intercultural communication competence used by Australian hospitality and tourism managers in induction?
    7.5 In what ways is intercultural communication competence used by Australian hospitality and tourism managers in training?
    7.6 In what ways is intercultural communication competence used by Australian hospitality and tourism managers in supervision?
    7.7 In what ways is intercultural communication competence used by Australian hospitality and tourism managers in industrial relations?
    7.8 In what ways is intercultural communication competence used by Australian hospitality and tourism managers in change management?

7.9 In what ways is intercultural communication competence used by Australian hospitality and tourism managers in customer service?
7.10 In what ways is intercultural communication competence used by Australian hospitality managers in financial management?
7.11 In what ways is intercultural communication competence used by Australian hospitality managers in marketing?

8 What training strategies are available for Australian hospitality and tourism managers to advance their intercultural communication competence and enhance their management of cultural diversity?

5.4 Research methodology and rationale

In this chapter, the intention is to describe and explain the qualitative methodology used for this study. The field of management is largely positioned within the domain of the social sciences as it deals primarily with the macro and micro behaviour and activities of human beings (Gill and Johnson, 1993). Social scientists endeavour to explain the nature of social action, relationships and structure in theoretically adequate terms (Bulmer, 1984; Ferman and Leven, 1975; May, 1993). Research methodologies appropriate for the social sciences have been traditionally conceived in terms of an antithesis between two schools of philosophy: the positivist and the phenomenological (Gummesson, 1991). The approach selected for this study incorporates phenomenological rather than positivist or empirical principles. These will now be discussed briefly along with the selected approach for the study. Easterby-Smith *et al.* (1991) have delineated the key differing features between the positivistic and phenomenological schools of philosophy (see Table 5.1).

Essentially, positivist philosophy is primarily concerned with ways in which data has been created and its validity (Easterby-Smith *et al.*, 1991). According to positivism, the social world exists externally and its properties should be measured through objective methods. Causality and fundamental laws are used to explain regularities in human social behaviour using large samples from a segment of a population and implementing a hypothetico-deductive approach. Resultant knowledge is typically generalised from a sample to the wider population. Furthermore, when statistics are aggregated from such large samples, findings may be of relevance to policy decisions at the macro-level. However, this approach can result in a number of weaknesses, based on the view that a positivist orientation is not so effective in understanding processes or the significance that people attach to actions (Easterby-Smith *et al.*, 1991).

In contrast, the phenomenological approach is based upon the belief that the world is socially constructed rather than objectively determined. The researcher is considered to be part of what is researched/observed and develops ideas through interpreting information. Thus phenomenological approaches reject the positivist assumption that descriptive concepts are simply a first step towards the testing of explanatory hypotheses (Bryman, 1992; Silverman, 1985).

Table 5.1 Positivistic and phenomenological schools of philosophy

	Positivistic	*Phenomenological*
Basic belief	The world is external and objective. Science is value-free.	The world is socially constructed and subjective. Science is driven by human interests.
Researcher should	Focus on facts. Look for causality and fundamental laws. Reduce phenomena to simplest elements. Formulate hypotheses and test them.	Focus on meanings. Try to understand what is happening. Look at the totality of each situation. Develop ideas through induction from data.
Preferred methods	Operationalising concepts so that they can be measured. Taking large samples.	Using multimethods to establish different views of phenomena. Investigating a small sample in depth or over time.

Source: Easterby-Smith *et al.* (1991, p.41).

Phenomenology began with the work of European philosophers during the 1800s, who, dissatisfied with the positivist assumptions of the traditional paradigm, began to search for a science that recognised the importance of context and the individual construction of perception and meaning in the context. These philosophers asserted that human meaning and actions could only be understood holistically within situational contexts. Early pioneers of this philosophical school of thought were Heidegger (1962), Husserl (1962), Ponty (1962) and Sartre (1969). Many variations are associated with phenomenology including interpretive sociology (Habermas, 1970), naturalistic inquiry (Lincoln and Guba, 1986), social constructionism (Berger and Luckman, 1966), qualitative methodology (Taylor and Bodgan, 1984), hermeneutic phenomenology (Heidegger, 1962) and new paradigm inquiry (Reason and Rowan, 1981).

Phenomenologically based research is concerned with eliciting the viewpoint of the individuals being studied, elucidating details of context and investigating the sensitivities of process at a micro analytical level (Rosen, 1991). These emphases particularly suit the research study presented here. The use of surveys which represent the positivist school of thought is not deemed appropriate for this study, because surveys might provide a limited understanding of the contextual basis of the phenomenon under study. As Yin (1994) stated,

> Surveys can try to deal with phenomenon and context, but their ability to investigate the context is extremely limited. The survey designer, for instance, constantly struggles to limit the number of variables to be analysed (and hence the number of questions that can be asked) to fall safely within the number of respondents than can be surveyed.
>
> (p.13)

The approach selected for this research study is qualitative rather than quantitative in order to focus on developing an understanding of the phenomenon and context of intercultural communication competence and the managerial functions of Australian hospitality and tourism managers. Given the absence of any research dealing with these managers' intercultural communication competence, coupled with limited research and theoretical development internationally on intercultural communication competence (adaptation processes) of the members of the host culture, the research strategy in this study is qualitative. No special study has been conducted to date in Australia to determine the nature and appreciation of the intercultural communication competence of Australian hospitality and tourism managers. Further, little is known about the impact of cultural diversity on them as members of the host culture. A qualitative study of their intercultural competence is most appropriate to capture the idiosyncrasies and complexities of cultural diversity and to determine implications for intercultural communication competence generally and for managerial functions in the Australian hospitality sector in particular.

This type of qualitative research paradigm was supported by Marshall and Rossman (1995) in their theoretical guidelines on designing qualitative research. They argued that qualitative research is appropriate "when there are many compelling reasons including the following: (a) since the research delves into complexities and processes; and (b) little is known about the phenomenon" (p.43). This rationale is relevant to this present study of Australian hospitality managers' intercultural communication competence. In addition, Marshall and Rossman (1995) argue that such a qualitative approach for this type of research is highly appropriate because it is exploratory or descriptive; it assumes the value of context and setting; and it searches for a deeper understanding of the participants' lived experiences of the phenomenon.

Essentially, qualitative research subsumes richness and holism with strong potential for revealing complexity (Miles and Huberman, 1994). Qualitative methods of data collection, according to Miles and Huberman, can provide thick descriptions that are vivid and nested in real context. In addition, they argued that "Qualitative research [studies] with their emphasis on people's 'lived experiences' are fundamentally well suited for locating the meanings people place on the events, processes and structures of their lives: their perceptions, assumptions, prejudgments, presuppositions and for connecting these meanings to the social world around them" (p.10).

The present study complies with most, if not all, of these requirements. In this research study, multiple case studies based on traditional qualitative methods such as in-depth interviews are used in addition to ethnomethodological techniques such as personal narratives (Perry and Zuber-Skerritt, 1992; Tesch, 1990).

5.5 Methodology overview

The qualitative research methodology used in this study involved multiple case studies made up of triangulation of data collection by in-depth, semi-structured

interviews (incorporating open-ended questions); personal narratives; historical analysis; and analysis of organisational documentation. Twelve Australian hospitality and tourism managers representing six organisations were interviewed. The study in this research also incorporated grounded theory. The purpose of grounded theory is to build theory that is faithful to and which illuminates the area under investigation. The intention is to arrive at prescriptions and policy recommendations with the theory which are "likely to be intelligible to, and usable by, those in the situation being studied, and is often open to comment and correction by them" (Turner, 1988).

5.5.1 Pilot study

A pilot study was initially conducted with two hospitality and tourism managers, involving in-depth interviews to test the feasibility of obtaining answers to open-ended questions posed, as well as ensuring the adequacy of these open-ended questions with the view to eliciting appropriate responses from managers. Any problems arising from the open-ended questions were addressed at this stage. As this was a trial run, the data is not included in the analysis, since the intention in this exercise was only to address any possible ambiguities and shortcomings surrounding the open-ended questions conducted during the in-depth interviews. A discussion is now given of number of interviewees, selection of the interviewees, profiles of the representative organisations, protocol conduct of the interviews and researcher bias.

5.5.2 Number of interviewees

Guidelines vary on the appropriate number of interviewees to be included in qualitative studies but there is some agreement on underlying principles. Patton (1990, cited in Perry and Coote, 1994) set no specific figure for an adequate number of participants for interpretive qualitative research, advocating that the number of participants involved should depend on the purposes of the research, the reason behind the enquiry, the use of the findings and the resources available. Patton (1990) emphasised that the validity, meaningfulness and insights obtained from qualitative research were more important than determining a definite sample size.

More specifically, Hedges (1985, cited in Perry and Coote, 1994) suggested that "between four and six in-depth interviews constituted a 'a reasonable minimum for a serious project' " (pp.76–77). In this research study, twelve in-depth interviews were conducted with different levels of management in six different hospitality and tourism organisations representing significant aspects of the Australian hospitality industry.

5.5.3 Selection of interviewees

As part of the multiple case studies in this research, six organisations were selected to reflect a broad range of managerial opinions within representative sections of the hospitality sector. Twelve managers of both gender i.e. six male

and six female at different levels of hierarchy across these six Australian organisations were interviewed. Particular care was exercised to select Australian managers who represented the members of the host culture. For this study an Australian manager or member of the host culture was defined as a person whose first language, or mother tongue, is English and who is an Australian citizen. In addition, selected Australian managers at different levels of organisational hierarchy were chosen because of their widely recognised management expertise or length of industry experience.

5.6 Profiles of representative organisations in brief

The organisations featured in this research study included two peak organisations representing hospitality and tourism and inbound tour operators at a national level; a peak training organisation which provides training for the industry; and three five-star hotels with global operations in terms of ownership and clientele as well as culturally diverse workforces.

The researcher has, through his previous teaching in hospitality management education and his publications, managed to establish some key contacts within the Australian hospitality industry and approached these contacts with the view to gaining a list of recommended respondents willing to participate in the study. His contacts were willing to personally recommend him to some twelve senior managers in six representative organisations who have widely recognised expertise and/or extensive experience within the industry.

Ethical considerations to maintain privacy have been adopted in this research study and the names of specific organisations and of individual managers have not been divulged. However, this section provides a brief description of these representative organisations and of the twelve respondents' managerial functions. These profiles demonstrate that different levels of management representing various sections of the Australian hospitality and tourism service industries are included in this study. All organisations and respondents participating in the study were coded to protect privacy. In addition, some specific information has been deliberately omitted in the following profiles of organisations and managerial functions in order to ensure confidentiality.

5.6.1 Organisation 1

Organisation 1 is a major organisation which represents the interests of various sections of the hospitality and tourism service industries. Major organisational objectives are:

- to lobby government to gain better deals for its members;
- to serve members' interests at all levels;
- to attempt to influence the environment in which its members do business by developing and promoting policies on issues like investment, infrastructure, taxes, the environment and training.

Organisation 1 has wide-ranging membership including airlines, retailers, tour operators, travel agents, investors, hoteliers/accommodation establishments, investors, banks and educational providers. Organisation 1 operates through a board and is served by numerous committees. The actual management staff number fewer than ten people.

5.6.1.1 Respondent's role

The participating respondent was a senior manager who, in addition to being involved in dealing with people of culturally diverse backgrounds on a daily basis, is well recognised by peers to possess expertise across a broad spectrum of the hospitality industry.

The main roles of this senior manager are: to represent the organisation at various forums including government bodies, conferences, conventions, etc.; to manage the organisation at the highest level; to manage the organisation's culturally diverse workforce; to interact with culturally diverse members; to initiate policies and strategies for the organisation including inbound tourism.

5.6.2 Organisation 2

Organisation 2 is concerned with the promotion of hospitality and tourism in Australia and represents the interests of its members. Major organisational objectives are to:

- promote the development of hospitality/tourism;
- provide forums to seek an exchange of ideas on international visitor growth and satisfaction levels;
- liaise with and influence government and industry organisations on visitor-related issues;
- assist in the development and implementation of education programmes;
- develop and maintain contact with associated organisations outside Australia to ensure the exchange of ideas and networking;
- stimulate the flow of relevant information on visitors through educational programmes, seminars and government liaison.

Organisation 2 is served by a board of directors and management staff. It has a wide-ranging membership including: tour operations, restaurants, entertainment complexes, theme parks, consultancies, souvenir shops, hotels, motels and function/convention venues.

5.6.2.1 Respondent's role

The participating respondent was a general manager whose responsibilities extend beyond day-to-day management, including representation of the organisation.

The main roles of this senior manager are: to develop and implement policy and strategy affecting both members and visitors; to manage a culturally diverse workplace; to liaise with culturally diverse clientele nationally and internationally.

5.6.3 Organisation 3

Organisation 3 is a major training services organisation within the tourism/hospitality industry in Australia. It provides training in business and management skills for managers and owner operators. Training courses offered by Organisation 3 include: customer service training; hospitality and tourism training; hospitality specific language and cross-cultural skills development; cookery/food training and alcohol training for employees of the hospitality industry. Organisation 3 conducts research on various aspects of the hospitality industry. Served by a variety of committees and four management staff, Organisation 3 has a culturally diverse membership and clientele throughout Australia.

5.6.3.1 Respondent's role

The respondent taking part in this study was the general manager, whose responsibilities extend beyond the day-to-day management of the organisation. The main roles of this senior manager are: to represent the organisation at various levels; to develop and implement policy and strategy affecting both members and visitors; to manage a culturally diverse workplace; to liaise with culturally diverse clientele nationally and internationally.

5.6.4 Organisation 4

Organisation 4 is a five-star hotel with operations in many parts of the world. It represents one of the most culturally diverse accommodation establishments in Australia in terms of workforce, clientele and ownership. For example, a profile of employees shows that staff at this hotel in Australia were born in forty-nine different countries and speak forty-six different languages, as shown in Table 5.2.

Over 55 per cent of the total workforce of Organisation 4 are not from an English-speaking background and clientele are predominantly international visitors from a wide range of countries. The hotel is owned by a multinational parent company.

5.6.4.1 Respondents' roles

Three key managers at different levels within Organisation 4 were chosen because of their recognised expertise or length of management experience in a culturally diverse workplace. One respondent was the human resource director, who has an overall responsibility for management practices relating to dealing

Table 5.2 Countries of birth of employees and languages spoken by employees of Organisation 4

Countries of birth of employees	*Languages spoken by employees*
Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Bangladesh, Bosnia, Brazil, Cambodia, Canada, Chile, China, Colombia, Cook Islands, Croatia, Czech Republic, Egypt, El Salvadore, England, France, Germany, Hong Kong, India, Indonesia, Iraq, Ireland, Japan, Jordan, Korea, Lebanon, Malaysia, Mauritius, Nepal, New Caledonia, New Zealand, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Samoa, Serbia, Singapore, Slovakia, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Tonga, Turkey, Uruguay, USA, Vietnam.	Arabic, Assyrian, Batanginino, Bengali, Cantonese, Chiu Chao, Croatian, Czech, English, French, German, Greek, Hindi, Hokkien, Ilango, Ilocano, Indonesian, Italian, Japanese, Khmer, Korean, Macedonian, Malayan, Malaysian, Mandarin, Maori, Nepali, Polish, Portuguese, Punjabi, Rarotongan, Samoan, Singhales, Slovak, Spanish, Tamil, Thai, Togalog, Tongan, Turkish, Urdu, Vietnamese, Visayan.

with staff in a cultural diverse workplace. Another respondent was the director of food and beverage, who has a large contingent of culturally diverse staff, and who also interacts regularly with international visitors staying at this hotel. The third respondent was the front office manager who manages a highly culturally diverse workforce and who interacts on a regular basis with the international visitors staying at this hotel.

5.6.5 Organisation 5

Organisation 5 is a five-star hotel with operations in many parts of the world. It represents one of the most culturally diverse accommodation establishments in Australia in terms of workforce, clientele and ownership. The hotel is owned by a multinational company, which also owns and operates over 171 luxury hotels and resorts in over thirty-three countries. The organisation has a highly culturally diverse workforce and clientele.

5.6.5.1 Respondents' roles

Four key managers at different levels within Organisation 5 were chosen due to their recognised expertise or length of management experience in a culturally diverse workplace. One was the national human resource director, who has an overall responsibility for management practices relating to dealing with staff in culturally diverse workplaces in branches of the hotel across Australia. The second participant was the regional human resource director, who has the overall responsibility for management practices relating to dealing with staff in the culturally diverse workplace of this hotel. The third respondent was the director of food and beverage, who has a large contingent of culturally diverse staff, and who interacts with international visitors staying at this hotel. Another respondent

who took part in this research was the front office manager, who manages a highly culturally diverse workforce and who also interacts on a regular basis with international visitors staying at this hotel.

5.6.6 Organisation 6

Organisation 6 is a five-star hotel, owned by an Australian multinational company which manages over 3,000 hotels, resorts and apartment rooms around Australia. The organisation has a highly culturally diverse workforce, clientele and ownership. Of 364 staff employed at this hotel, more than 75 per cent of the workforce represents culturally diverse backgrounds. The hotel caters for a wide range of market segments including international guests from many countries.

5.6.6.1 Respondents' roles

Two key managers at different levels within this organisation were chosen because of their recognised expertise or length of management experience in a culturally diverse workplace. One respondent who participated was the human resource director, who has overall responsibility for management practices relating to dealing with staff in a culturally diverse workplace. A second participant was the front office manager who manages a highly culturally diverse workforce and who also interacts on a daily basis with international visitors staying at the hotel.

5.7 Means of gaining relevant phenomenological information

5.7.1 Multiple sources of evidence used in this study

This multiple case study was conducted using multiple sources of evidence. Yin (1989) pointed out that "the use of multiple sources of evidence is a major strength of qualitative research, as it allows the development of converging lines of enquiry, and a process of triangulation" (p.97). This feature of the methodology addressed problems of construct validity in this multiple case study

> because the multiple sources of evidence essentially provide multiple measures of the same phenomenon. Not surprisingly, one analysis of qualitative study methods found that those studies using multiple sources of evidence were rated [more] highly, in terms of their overall quality, than those that relied on a single source of information.
>
> (Yin, 1994, p.92)

The sources of evidence used in this multiple case study research were in-depth interviews, narratives, historical analysis and organisational documentation.

5.7.2 In-depth interviews

Personal (i.e. in-depth) interviews were used as the first method of data collection. The in-depth interview is one of the most powerful methods of data collection in qualitative research. A face-to-face interview provides an excellent vehicle to develop a dialogue and delve into the mental world of individual interviewees to see and experience their world as they do themselves (Brenner *et al.*, 1985). The importance of in-depth interviews is summarised by Burgess (1982): "The interview is . . . the opportunity for the researchers to probe deeply uncover new clues, open up new dimensions of a problem and secure vivid, accurate inclusive accounts that are based on personal experience" (p.107).

In the context of this research study, the purpose of the interview was to gauge, in some detail, the reactions, behaviour patterns, beliefs, opinions and attitudes of Australian hospitality and tourism managers towards their culturally diverse workforces and clientele. As no previous study has been conducted in Australia in relation to management of cultural diversity in the hospitality industry, interviews were conducted with selected managers to elicit and elucidate these significant intercultural communication issues. The interviews are considered to be intensive in the sense that they were specifically structured to explore managerial functions as they related to dealing with cultural diversity and, more importantly, to investigate the intercultural communication competence of Australian hospitality and tourism managers.

According to Brenner (1985):

> it is one of the characteristics of intensive interviewing that the interviewer should follow rules in his/her relationship with the informant. For example, he/she must try to obtain accounts on all the topics listed in the interview guide; his/her questioning must always be nondirective; that is, must never suggest a "right" answer or direction of answering; he/she must take care that the accounts obtained are adequate (as complete as possible, linguistically comprehensible, free of internal inconsistencies, for example); he/she must also enact a facilitator role by being non-judgemental and supportive, among other things.
>
> (pp.158–159)

The researcher strictly observed these rules in the conduct of the interviews. In-depth interviews took place at different levels of managerial hierarchy within these six organisations so that phenomenological information could be gathered from a range of managers.

5.7.3 Interview protocol

As recommended by Malhotra (1996), the interview protocol began with an introduction which reiterated the nature and purpose of the research so that the respondent could understand and clarify the issues to be discussed. Ethical

issues were explained to assure the respondent of confidentiality and anonymity. The respondent was informed that he or she could end the interview, without explanation, at any stage and that he or she had the right to withdraw from the study at any time. The role of associate researcher was also explained to the participant. This was followed by rapport-building questions which aimed to gain the confidence and co-operation of the respondent and introduced the respondent to the topic of the research.

The interview protocol is the "master file of general instructions and probe questions for the interview" (Perry and Coote, 1994, p.16) and is designed to provide direction to the interviewer during data collection (Yin, 1989). The interview protocol for the study in this research consisted of a number of open-ended questions dealing with identified relevant issues. Probing techniques were used to gain in-depth views and opinions, to clarify areas of uncertainty and uncover hidden issues (Malhotra, 1996). In particular, the interview questions were open-ended and were directed to three areas of the study: (a) questions relating to cultural diversity and organisational culture; (b) questions relating managers' understanding of intercultural communication; (c) questions relating to managers' understanding of how intercultural communication is used by managers in key managerial functions.

Respondents' answers to these questions were noted on the interview schedule by the principal researcher and the associate researcher, and tape recorded. Interviews lasted between one hour and twenty minutes and three hours with model and median averages being an hour and a half and two hours and fifteen minutes. The interviews were conducted by the principal researcher, with an associate researcher present at every interview to act as a researcher and non-participant observer. The associate researcher also managed the tape recording of each interview. Confidentiality was assured to every interviewee. An interview schedule was used to address main issues of the study in this research. Both principal researcher and associate researcher made written notes of respondents' replies to each interview question on the interview schedule. Upon completion of the interview, respondents were thanked for their time and co-operation.

5.7.4 Potential sources of cultural bias

Although the principal researcher was raised in Australia, his cultural heritage stemmed from a non-English-speaking background. To minimise respondents' perceptions of ethnic bias in the interview, and to reduce the possibility of ethnic bias of the principal researcher in the conduct and interpretation of the interview, the principal researcher tried to facilitate the interview process as dispassionately as possible. In addition, an associate researcher was employed temporarily to act as a second observer to record interview responses. The associate researcher was raised in Australia and was of an English-speaking background. His presence, coupled with his recording of responses at interviews, was designed to further reduce respondents' perceptions of ethnic bias on the part of the principal researcher.

In addition, the role of the associate researcher provided a check on any ethnic bias of the principal researcher in the conduct of the interview and collection of data from the interview. To help address issues of reliability and validity in intensive interviews, the researcher orally reported back to interviewees during the interview his understanding of what they expressed in order to check comprehension, address ambiguities and provide assurance that they were indeed being listened to very carefully.

In order to reduce potential bias of the principal researcher in selective perception and interpreting phenomenological information, all interviews were tape recorded with the approval of the interviewees so that an accurate record of each interview could be obtained (Strauss, 1987). The tape recordings were used as a backup to resolve any inconsistency between the two recorders. Brenner (1985) has pointed out that "tape recording also removes a source of potential distraction, and frees the interviewer to guide the interview, check that answers are complete and consistent, and plan future questions" (p.154). Similarly, Patton (1980) strongly argued in favour of tape recording of interviews:

> a tape recorder is part of the indispensable equipment of evaluators using qualitative methods. Tape recorders do not 'tune out' conversations, change what has been said because of interpretation (either conscious or unconscious), or record words more slowly than they are spoken. In addition to increasing the accuracy of data collection, the use of a tape recorder permits the interviewer to be more attentive to the interviewee.
>
> (p.247)

The associate researcher managed the tape recording of the interviews, and took independent notes during the interview. Immediately after the interview, the principal researcher conferred with the associate researcher about his understanding of the data collected during the interview. If any ambiguities were discovered, the tape recording of the interview was used to resolve discrepancies.

The principal researcher coded, numbered and dated each audio tape. A transcript was done of each audio tape and all audio tapes were stored in a locked filing cabinet. For confidentiality, a coded record was kept of the interviewee's name, organisational position, and of the date, length of interview and recording duration of the audio tapes. Each transcript was correspondingly coded. A similar system for organisation of tapes and transcripts was described by Stenhouse (1981, cited in Yin, 1989) who regarded such record-keeping as an important element of maintaining a "chain of evidence", as did Guba (1981, p.87). Both researchers' written data recorded on the interview schedule for each participant was correspondingly coded. All coded data was stored in a locked filing cabinet and is not publicly available.

The findings of each interview, once written, were presented to the individual participant to verify that they formed a true representation of the interview. Guba (1981) referred to this method as the process of number checks which is the single most important action an inquirer can take, as it goes to the heart of

the credibility criterion. This method was also recommended by Yin (1989, 1994) as a means of increasing construct validity. Further interviews were held with the hospitality and tourism managers, in an attempt to gain a complete insight into their understandings of the issues involved in this research study.

To increase validity, data was gathered by a number of methods: interviews, participating at staff meetings, documentary evidence and ethnomethodical enquiry.

5.7.5 Documentary evidence

Documentation collected for this multiple case study included organisational annual reports; printed material related to organisational structures and managerial functions; human resources – induction programmes; employee relations circulars; equal employment opportunity policy; training manuals; occupational, health and safety policy available from the public relations and/ or human resource management section and collected with the permission of the relevant managers of the organisation.

Two additional sources of data collection were also incorporated in the design of this study to ensure further validity and reliability. These involved an ethnomethodical approach consisting of narrative enquiry and historical analysis based on their written organisational documents and the oral testimony of managers.

5.7.6 Ethnomethodological approach

An ethnomethodological approach to research involves exploring and interpreting a phenomenon of interest. In this research study, an ethnomethodological approach of narrative enquiry was used to collect and canvass managers' individual stories of dealing with cultural diversity in the workplace.

According to Feldman (1995):

> The fundamental assumption of ethnomethodology is that people within a culture have procedures for making sense. These procedures are "ethnomethods," or culturally based methods. Many of these procedures are verbal. These include telling stories and giving explanations. Other procedures such as the forming of lines (e.g., at the bus stop or a ticket counter) are non-verbal.
>
> (p.8)

Narrative enquiry assumes that people live "storied lives" and seeks to collect data "to describe those lives. . . . The researcher explores a story told by a participant and records that story through the construction of narrative. Narrative analysis can be applied to any spoken or written account; for example, an in-depth interview" (Marshall and Rossman, 1995, p.86).

Narrative approaches can provide "thick descriptions" of social and cultural

activities and events. They detail the context and meanings of events and scenes (Emerson, 1983; Geertz, 1983). Key processes involved in a narrative approach to research have been identified by Polkinghorne (1995) and are given in Table 5.3.

During each in-depth interview, the principal researcher encouraged respondents to illustrate their answers by asking "Can you give an example" or "Has there been an incident in the past on this issue which you would care to comment on?" Narratives related by managers during the interviews were transcribed from the tape recordings. Transcripts of narratives were made and were correspondingly coded.

5.7.7 Historical analysis

Historical analysis was also used to collect phenomenological information in this study. Historical analysis is a method of discovering what happened in the past from records and accounts (Marshall and Rossman, 1995). Sources of historical data included the oral testimony of managers, staff meetings, and organisational documentation e.g. annual reports; policies and procedures. This research method was appropriate because, according to Marshall and Rossman, "historical analysis enhances the trustworthiness and credibility of a study" (p.90).

5.8 Phenomenological information collection procedure

The research process commenced with a literature review, which drew on the interdisciplinary sources of communication, management, psychology, anthropology and sociology. From this material, a set of sixteen research objectives and related research questions was developed to investigate intercultural communication competence and managerial functions for dealing with cultural diversity within the Australian hospitality and tourism service industries. This was followed by phenomenological information collection including in-depth interviews and organisational documentation.

5.8.1 Analysis of phenomenological information

Written phenomenological information collected by the two recorders of each interview, verified as a true representation by the interviewee via follow-up interviews, was collated by the principal researcher, into electronic files, protected by passwords and locks, related to each of eight research objectives and eight main research questions. Transcripts of narratives were configured and analysed according to the previously mentioned research objectives and research questions. Qualitative findings from interviews including narratives were combined to give results for analysis of discussion of each research question as appropriate. Findings from organisational documentation relating to historical and current organisational practices in the specific managerial functions studied

Table 5.3 Processes involved in a narrative approach to research

Data	A descriptive record of actions, events and happenings within a "bounded" system of study is made. These records may be described as "field texts" (Clandinin and Connelly, 1994).
Purpose/outcome of analysis	An emplotted narrative is given to provide a coherent account of development (e.g. a historical account, a case study, a life story or a storied episode of a person's life).
Application	Data is collected over time and connections are sought in the data as a means by which meaning can be expressed.
Forms of research data (i.e. field texts)	Unstructured interviews (i.e. conversations); journal records; observational data; documents such as photographs and letters; other data sources such as personal philosophies and metaphors.
Aspects of temporality	Data is largely diachronic (i.e. data has a historical and developmental dimension), rather than synchronic, where data is concerned with the here and now and found in categorical answers to questions. This is where narrative inquiry differs from other qualitative approaches. Diachronic descriptions of events and happenings are effectively organised in a story.
Researcher role	The researcher collects descriptions of events and happenings and synthesises or configures them by means of a plot into a narrative account that unites and gives meaning to the data.
Processes of synthesis	Incidents are synthesised or configured and happenings within the data are drawn together and integrated (through emplotment) into a temporally organised whole (Polkinghorne, 1995, p.5).
Analytical tools	Emplotment is used where events and happenings are organised in such a way as to produce explanatory stories. The plot displays the linkage among the data elements; and is the glue which enables the story to unfold towards some kind of resolution or denouement.
Function of analytical tools	Events are composed or configured into a story by setting a time frame within which the story takes place (i.e. has a beginning and an end), setting the parameters for the selection of events which will form part of the story (i.e. narrative smoothing occurs), sequencing events either temporally or developmentally, clarifying or making explicit the meaning of the events as the story unfolds.
Outcome	A "final story" (as an emplotted narrative) is produced which draws data together into a systemic whole. Order and meaningfulness are brought to the data while at the same time the fittingness between the story and the data from which it is derived (i.e. data produces knowledge of particular situation) is addressed.

Source: Polkinghorne (1995).

in this research were collated and analysed according to the previously mentioned research objectives and questions. Statistical analysis of findings was not appropriate. Results from interviews, narratives and organisational documentation were presented in a variety of written and graphical forms including vignettes.

5.9 Ethical issues

Ethical issues arising from this research relate to not identifying individuals by name, managerial position or level, or organisation; protecting personal privacy during the interview session; storing all data securely; and ensuring that the data cannot be accessed by any person other than the researcher. All these issues have been addressed. Researchers were aware that the use of an interviewee's time should be productive and not wasteful and the interviewee was informed that he or she could terminate the interview at any time. Participants were recruited in an informed manner. Appointments for all interviews were made at a time/date and for a duration chosen by the interviewee. Respondents' consent to participate in the study was sought and participants could withdraw at any stage. Through follow-up interviews, each participant was shown a written copy of the phenomenological information collected during the initial interview to check it was a true representation of the interviewee's views.

5.10 Further quality and bias checks

Reason and Rowan (1981) and Tesch (1990) have proposed useful guidelines for assessing issues of validity in qualitative research including:

- valid research cannot be conducted alone. This research deliberately involved as many people as were prepared to discuss it (including the respondents over several meetings and interviews, colleagues and friends, international conferences and seminar participants);
- valid research involves a subtle interplay between different forms of knowledge and approaches. The study in this research attempted to integrate different forms of knowledge and approaches through in-depth interviews, narratives and organisational documentation and peer discussion;
- convergent and contextual validity can be used to enhance the validity of any particular piece of phenomenological information. The multiple sources of evidence and multi-respondents were a significant part of the multiple case study in this research;
- the research can be replicated in some form. The process of the study in this research can be replicated by following the methods outlined;
- the analysis process is systematic but not rigid. The analysis was systematically structured into vignettes and common themes in order to identify insights. Ambiguities were checked with respondents if necessary;
- attending to phenomenological information included a reflective activity

that results in a set of analytical notes that guide the process. The researcher kept a diary during the study. These personal notes were used in conjunction with narrative accounts and other reflections on managerial practice by respondents to construct the interpretation of the data and guide the process of analysis of information collected during the interviews and staff meetings respectively over an extended period;

- phenomenological information to be segmented meaningfully and categorised according to a system that is predominantly derived from the information collected. Within the general confines of the research questions, the phenomenological information was able to be categorised according to theories and insights revealed by the information collected;
- the main intellectual tools are comparison and higher-level synthesis. The researcher, while using grounded theory based on multiple sources of evidence and multi-respondents, compared and contrasted phenomenological information to discriminate and identify patterns and to synthethise a provisional model of intercultural communication competence and best practice on cross-cultural/global management for future research.

There could be other ways to enhance the validity and reliability of the study, such as the use of multiple researchers, convergent interviewing and more iterations over a longer period of time. Nevertheless, the study in this research represented an adequate use and choice of resources and time to create an acceptable and worthwhile research methodology to produce meaningful results. The results are discussed in the next chapter.

6 Results and analysis

Chapter 5 gave an outline of research aims, objectives and questions for this study, explaining the choice of research strategy and methodology. In addition, the chapter described the selected research methods employed to collect and analyse the phenomenological information pertaining to the eight research questions identified from literature reviews. Chapter 6 reports and discusses the findings from phenomenological information collected from multiple sources of evidence, namely in-depth interviews, an ethnomethodological approach, historical analysis and documentary evidence relating to these eight research questions.

Findings from multiple sources of evidence have been combined to give results for discussion of each research question and, where appropriate, results are also presented in the form of vignettes, narratives and tables. A summary of the key issues including any emergent common themes that are of relevance to the study in this research is provided for each research question. In addition, two new models of intercultural communication competence and of competent managerial practice respectively for the management of cultural diversity based on grounded theory are advanced in this research study.

6.1 Use of tables

For each of the tables used to present the results from interviews of twelve Australian hospitality and tourism managers, the following conventions are used. The results from each manager are given in columns, coded for each individual according to position, type of organisational sector of the hospitality industry and number of the organisation consulted (1 to 6).

Thus results from each manager are represented as shown in Table 6.1 below.

Table 6.1 Presentation of results

GM H/T 1	GM H/T 2	GM T 3	HR HL 4	FB HL 4	FO HL 4	NR HL 5	HR HL 5	FB HL 5	FO HL 5	HR HL 6	FO HL 6

Where:

GM	H/T 1	signifies	General Manager	Organisation 1	Hospitality/ tourism
GM	H/T 2	signifies	General Manager	Organisation 2	Hospitality/
GM	T 3	signifies	General Manager	Organisation 3	Training services
HR	HL 4	signifies	Human Resources Director	Organisation 4	Five-star multinational hotel
FB	HL 4	signifies	Food and Beverage Director	Organisation 4	Five-star multinational hotel
FO	HL 4	signifies	Front Office Manager	Organisation 4	Five-star multinational hotel
NR	HL 5	signifies	National Human Resources Director	Organisation 5	Five-star multinational hotel
HR	HL 5	signifies	Human Resources Director	Organisation 5	Five-star multinational hotel
FB	HL 5	signifies	Food and Beverage Director	Organisation 5	Five-star multinational hotel
FO	HL 5	signifies	Front Office Manager	Organisation 5	Five-star multinational hotel
HR	HL 6	signifies	Human Resources Director	Organisation 6	Five-star hotel
FO	HL 6	signifies	Front Office Manager	Organisation 6	Five-star hotel

6.2 Research question no. 1

How do Australian hospitality and tourism managers define intercultural communication competence?

Twelve managers representative of different sectors of the Australian hospitality and tourism service industries participating in the study were asked to describe their understanding of intercultural communication competence. Their views and perceptions gathered on this issue during the interviews indicated a wide range of perspectives.

Managers' definitions of intercultural communication competence, in terms of order of frequency, included the ability to establish interpersonal relationships, references to the nature of communication in interpersonal relationships such as intimacy and disclosure, cross-cultural awareness/sensitivity, adaptabil-

ity, trust, empathy, mindfulness/openness, respect for the individual and cultural differences, listening skills, awareness of nonverbal communication associated with cultural diversity, equity, tolerance for ambiguity, assimilation, adjusting one's speed of delivery of communication, education and personality traits. A summary of findings on indicators of intercultural communication is provided in Table 6.2 below, reflecting the perspectives expressed.

Table 6.2 Managers' perspectives on intercultural communication competence

	Managers N = 12												
Hospitality managers' descriptions of indicators of intercultural communication competence. Responses are indicated by x.	*GM H/T 1*	*GM H/T 2*	*GM T 3*	*HR HL 4*	*FB HL 4*	*FO HL 4*	*NR HL 5*	*HR HL 5*	*FB HL 5*	*FO HL 5*	*HR HL 6*	*FO HL 6*	*Total responses 12 (%)*
The ability to establish interpersonal relationships	x	x	x	x	x		x	x	x		x		9 (75)
Adaptability	x	x	x	x			x	x			x		7 (58)
Cross-cultural awareness and sensitivity	x	x	x	x			x	x			x		7 (58)
Mindfulness/ openness to new ideas		x	x	x			x		x		x		6 (50)
Empathy	x	x		x			x	x			x		6 (50)
Trust	x	x		x	x					x	x		6 (50)
Respect for the individual and cultural difference	x	x		x			x				x		5 (42)
Awareness of aspects of nonverbal communication associated with cultural diversity	x	x	x	x									4 (33)
Listening skills	x		x					x			x		4 (33)
Tolerance for ambiguity		x	x								x		3 (25)
Equity/equal treatment of all individuals irrespective of their cultural backgrounds		x					x				x		3 (25)

continued

Table 6.2 continued

	Managers N = 12												
Hospitality managers' descriptions of indicators of intercultural communication competence. Responses are indicated by x.	*GM H/T 1*	*GM H/T 2*	*GM T 3*	*HR HL 4*	*FB HL 4*	*FO HL 4*	*NR HL 5*	*HR HL 5*	*FB HL 5*	*FO HL 5*	*HR HL 6*	*FO HL 6*	*Total responses 12 (%)*
Multicultural staff should adopt Australian cultural values and be able to speak English (assimilationist approach)						x	x					x	3 (25)
Adjusting one's speed of delivery of communication			x			x							2 (16)
Personality trait (friendly)											x		1 (8)
Education	x												1 (8)
Total N = 15 (%)	9 (60)	10 (67)	8 (53)	8 (53)	2 (13)	2 (13)	8 (53)	5 (33)	2 (13)	1 (7)	11 (73)	1 (7)	

On examining hospitality and tourism managers' descriptions of indicators of intercultural communication competence, as shown in Table 6.2, it appears that there is a majority view which tends to support the notion that the ability to form interpersonal relationships coupled with adaptability and sensitivity to other cultures are key indicators of intercultural communication competence. This view is also consistent with descriptions given by the literature (Adler, 1997; Duran, 1992; Fatehi, 1996; Gudykunst, 1986, 1987; Irwin, 1994, 1996; Jackson, 1993; Lustig and Koester, 1993; Mahoney *et al.*, 1998; Spitzberg and Cupach, 1984; Spitzberg and Duran, 1995; Wiemann and Bradac, 1989; Wiseman and Koester, 1993).

Each perceived indicator of intercultural communication competence is now discussed in more detail according to frequency of responses given by managers.

6.2.1 The ability to establish interpersonal relationships

An overwhelming majority of managers interviewed identified the ability to establish interpersonal relationships with individuals of culturally diverse backgrounds as the key variable in intercultural communication competence. For example, the human resources director (five-star hotel, Organisation 6) saw

intercultural communication competence primarily in terms of one's ability to establish interpersonal relationships with culturally diverse employees and clientele. As he put it, "you cannot really understand someone, unless you have already established some form of interpersonal relationship with that person, and this of course includes multicultural people".

Of the substantial majority of the managers interviewed, who highlighted the ability to form interpersonal relationships as defining intercultural communication competence, a large number of these managers (seven) also included other indicators such as adaptability, cultural awareness and sensitivity; five also included respect for the individual and cultural differences, mindfulness/openness to new ideas; and only four also identified listening skills as determinants of intercultural communication competence. For example, the general manager (hospitality and tourism, Organisation 2) commented that intercultural communication competence means that:

> one has to be sensitive and one should develop interpersonal relationships with culturally diverse clientele and employees. To do this effectively, one has to have an awareness of cultural differences, because culture influences the way a person is communicating.

In summary, the general emphasis on the interpersonal relationship dimension of intercultural communication competence was captured by the human resources director (five-star multinational hotel, Organisation 4), who is responsible for providing human resources management services to a large culturally diverse workforce (i.e. accounting for more than 50 per cent of the total workforce):

> intercultural communication competence is not just about language, it is about a relationship. It also means that we don't want people to feel that we are making special efforts, just because they can't speak English as good as I can, but we are recognising them as individuals, and we all have to work with everyone differently. And that there needs to be a respect for the differences between all of us. It doesn't mean that you excuse someone completely from your expectations because they are different, but you need to consider that to get the best out of people you have to respect a relationship.

It should be noted that the majority of the managers who viewed the ability to establish interpersonal relationships as characteristic of intercultural communication competence (i.e. corroborated in terms of their most frequent response) hold senior management roles (i.e. general managers, human resources directors) in their respective organisations. These senior managers thus support a key feature of the definition of intercultural communication competence discussed previously in this research, namely, the ability to establish an interpersonal relationship is at the core of intercultural communication competence (Gudykunst *et al.*, 1977).

What is, however, lacking in their descriptions of intercultural communication competence is a number of behavioural dimensions namely, interaction posture; being non-judgemental; interaction management; ability to perform role behaviours; tolerance for ambiguity (Ruben, 1976; Ruben and Kealy, 1979); as well as an appreciation that individuals' knowledge, motivation and skills in intercultural communication (Gudykunst and Kim, 1997; Spitzberg and Cupach, 1984) are necessary for the development of intercultural communication competence.

6.2.2 Cross-cultural awareness/sensitivity

Seven of the twelve managers [58 per cent] interviewed identified cross-cultural awareness including sensitivity to cultural differences as key factors in intercultural communication competence. For example, the general manager (hospitality and tourism, Organisation 2) viewed one's ability to establish interpersonal relationships and cross-cultural awareness/sensitivity as the main two aspects of intercultural communication competence. This manager also maintained that "once you understand their culture, it helps you to understand the reasons why they do certain things and why they react in the way they do". This manager had also mentioned empathy as a key indicator of intercultural communication competence.

In summary, a majority of managers supported another key aspect of defining intercultural communication competence mentioned previously in this research, namely, having an awareness of cultural differences/showing sensitivity to other cultures (Adler, 1997; Fatehi, 1996; Jackson, 1993; Mahoney *et al.*, 1998).

6.2.3 Adaptability

A majority of managers interviewed identified adaptability as a key determinant of intercultural communication competence. Similarly, they also included cross-cultural awareness as another key indicator of such competence. Again, it should be noted that a majority of these interviewees held senior management roles in their respective organisations.

It is instructive to note that one particular manager seemed to contradict her comment that adaptability was a key variable in intercultural communication competence. This manager claimed that "although I am a keen listener and perceptive of others, however I always have a viewpoint on any issue(s) and I try to persuade others to accept my viewpoint". She went on to state that "my family call me the mind bender because once I have decided on something, I would persist in bringing other people to my point of view". Consequently, it may be argued that, although adaptability has been identified by a majority of managers interviewed as one of the key attributes of competence in intercultural communication, there may be some doubt as to whether Australian hospitality and tourism managers are able to apply adaptability to their managerial functions. This issue will be discussed later in this chapter.

In summary, a majority of managers interviewed identified adaptability as a key indicator of intercultural communication competence. Adaptability has been previously mentioned in this research study as another key feature of such competence (Duran, 1992; Irwin, 1994, 1996; Lustig and Koester, 1993; Spitzberg and Cupach, 1984; Spitzberg and Duran, 1995; Wiemann and Bradac, 1989; Wiseman and Koester, 1993).

6.2.4 Mindfulness/openness to new ideas

Mindfulness and being open to new ideas and other cultures was also identified by a majority of managers as a key determinant of intercultural communication competence. For example, the food and beverage director (five-star multinational hotel, Organisation 5) commented that "unless we are open to other values/cultures and ideas, we will never be able to truly understand and/or communicate effectively with multicultural people". This finding shows that half of the managers interviewed were aware of the significance of one aspect of the theoretical construct of mindfulness – openness to new categories (Langer, 1989) previously discussed in this research as a significant feature of intercultural communication competence.

6.2.5 Empathy

Several managers interviewed identified empathy as a key variable in intercultural communication competence. For example, the national human resources director (five-star multinational hotel, Organisation 5) argued that "to be effective in intercultural communication, one has to put oneself in the other person's shoes and ensure that the message one is trying to deliver is actually what that person receives and understands". Again, a majority of managers who emphasised empathy as an indicator of intercultural communication competence held senior management positions in their respective organisations. A similar view was echoed by the general manager (hospitality and tourism, Organisation 2) who maintained that "Without actually showing empathic understanding towards others, we end up blocking our own understanding of what they are really on about. Thus the onus is on us to be able to tap into people's hearts and minds to get a feel for their understandings."

In summary, several managers interviewed supported Ruben (1976) that empathy should be included as a feature of intercultural communication competence.

6.2.6 Trust

Building trust in a relationship was identified by a number of managers as a key variable in intercultural communication competence. For example, the front office manager (five-star multinational hotel, Organisation 5) attributed her perceived ability to communicate effectively with her multicultural staff to her

trusting nature. She strongly believed that the reason why her staff respect her and are performing at an optimal level in her department is because they know that she trusts them. She explained that the staff value her trust in them and did not want to let her down because they did not want to lose this trust. As well, the human resources director (five-star multinational hotel, Organisation 4) asserted that "Having an attitude of trust towards others is a must for any relationship including interpersonal relationships with NESB persons, and the reason is that we cannot be effective in our interactions unless we trust them."

In summary, half of the managers interviewed supported Ruben (1976) that trust features in a definition of intercultural communication competence.

6.2.7 Respect for the individual and cultural differences

A minority of managers interviewed identified respect for the individual and cultural differences as a key variable in intercultural communication competence. For example, the human resources director (five-star multinational hotel, Organisation 4) strongly expressed the importance of respect for the individual in intercultural encounters. The general manager (hospitality, Organisation 2) commented that understanding cultural differences was a crucial determinant of intercultural communication competence. Although a majority of managers failed to reflect an appreciation of respect for the individual and/or cultural differences as a significant indicator of intercultural communication competence, those managers who did refer to it seemed to regard respect as a necessary part of a definition of intercultural communication competence.

These managers thus supported Ruben's (1976) inclusion of respect in a definition of interpersonal communication competence.

6.2.8 Awareness of aspects of nonverbal communication associated with cultural diversity

Four or one-third of managers interviewed identified an awareness of aspects of nonverbal communication associated with cultural diversity as a key indicator in intercultural communication competence. For example, the general manager (hospitality and tourism, Organisation 2) commented that

> A lot of the time, our communication is non-verbal, often expressed through how distance is maintained between individuals; facial expressions; and body postures, and of course aspects of non-verbal communication vary from culture to culture. To communicate effectively with multicultural staff therefore requires an understanding of these nonverbal communication issues.

Also, the general manager (training services, Organisation 3) asserted that

> when we engage in communication with others including NESB [people], we have to realise that there are a lot of non-verbal aspects of communica-

> tion occurring simultaneously that we need to consider in order to become effective in our interactions with others including NESB persons.

In summary, a minority of managers interviewed supported scholars (Hall, 1976; Mahoney *et al.*, 1998; Saee, 1993, 1998; Samovar and Porter, 1995) who have included appropriate use of nonverbal communication as an important indicator of interpersonal communication competence.

6.2.9 Listening skills

Listening skills were identified by some managers as a key variable in intercultural communication competence. For example, the general manager (training services, Organisation 3) commented that listening skills are vital in intercultural communication and a similar sentiment was echoed by the human resources director (five-star multinational hotel, Organisation 4) who maintained that "if there is one thing that is highly significant in communication including intercultural communication, it has to be listening skills". As he put it, "without good listening skills, one is at a loss to understand the message being conveyed by the speaker".

In summary, a minority of the managers interviewed viewed listening skills as an important dimension of interpersonal communication competence thus reflecting Littlejohn's (1992) emphasis discussed previously in this research study.

6.2.10 Tolerance for ambiguity

Some managers interviewed identified tolerance for ambiguity/patience as a key variable in intercultural communication. For example, the general manager (hospitality and tourism, Organisation 2) maintained that

> because of cultural differences present in Australia, we have to be tolerant of many aspects of cultural diversity we don't know much about. We can be successful in our communication with multicultural staff/clientele through patiently persevering to understand issues of cultural diversity that are not entirely clear to us.

A similar sentiment was expressed by the human resources director (five-star hotel, Organisation 6) when he argued that patience and tolerance for ambiguity arising from cultural diversity are critical for intercultural communication competence.

In summary, one-third of managers interviewed supported the notion of tolerance for ambiguity expressed by Ruben and Kealey (1979) as an important indicator of intercultural communication competence.

6.2.11 Equity

Equity was identified by a few managers as a key indicator in intercultural communication. For example, the national human resources director (five-star multinational hotel, Organisation 5) commented that "a manager's ability to gain respect and thereby communicate with multicultural staff effectively would depend on how he/she treats his/her staff and, in my view, one is competent in dealing with culturally diverse staff when he/she treats everyone equally". This link between respect and equity as an indicator of intercultural communication competence will be considered further later in this chapter. Overall, only a minority of managers supported the notion of equity as an indicator of intercultural communication competence.

6.2.12 Multicultural staff should adopt "Australian cultural values"

A minority of managers interviewed subscribed to an assimilationist view of intercultural communication competence, namely that multicultural staff should adopt Australian cultural values. These managers also did not believe that they themselves should develop competence in intercultural communication. Rather, they regarded developing this competence as largely the responsibility of the immigrant workers/international visitors. These managers recommended that immigrant workers could further their knowledge of English by communicating in English all the time. For some, the exclusive speaking of English was a workplace requirement. For example, the front office manager (five-star hotel, Organisation 6) strongly advocated an assimilationist view by arguing that:

> Given our culturally diverse staff, we do instill into the staff that they are living, working in Australia and we tend to use those Australian values as benchmarks with the staff. So, we feel it is very important that they understand that what might be one level of importance in one country may be very different in another. . . . Basically we outline how we operate in this hotel and we expect all staff to adhere to those values. We have made a general rule that all staff in the hotel get along with each other and they should be able to interact together at a reasonable working level without causing any problems. So we ensure that they are fully aware of that in their induction namely what is expected of them. Any kind of racial discrepancies that they may have outside of work are certainly not welcome in the hotel.

The national human resources director (five-star multinational hotel, Organisation 5) maintained that "it is mandatory in this hotel that staff speak in English during office hours". This view seemed to contradict his other comments on adaptability and empathy as key indicators of intercultural communication competence. In this research study, it is argued that the assimilationist view does not help managers to develop any degree of intercultural communication compe-

tence, because it fails to recognise and value the contribution of other cultures and people to intercultural encounters in interpersonal relationships.

6.2.13 Adjusting one's speed of delivery of communication

A few managers interviewed identified adjusting one's speed of delivery of communication as a key variable in intercultural communication competence. For example, the front office manager (five-star multinational hotel, Organisation 4) stated that interpersonal communication competence is: "in the first place, speaking slowly and clearly and when you speak with the multicultural staff and making sure that they understand you . . . you have to make sure that the slower ones are still understanding your message". Overall, this manager's understanding of defining intercultural communication competence was expressed as "understanding English, clear precise directions, and adjusting one's speed of delivery of communication". This is a more limited view of interpersonal communication competence emphasising language acquisition and use. It is significant to note that such a narrow view was expressed only by a minority of those interviewed (two or 17 per cent).

6.2.14 Personality traits

Personality traits such as friendliness and approachability were identified by a very few managers as key indicators of intercultural communication competence. Specifically, the human resources director (five-star hotel, Organisation 6) believed that "most of the time we find that people with whom we have been successful in establishing good interpersonal relationships in our intercultural encounters are the ones who have displayed personality traits such as being friendly and approachable". In other words, there has been a degree of attraction because of a person's warm and friendly personality which was then ascribed to be an indicator of interpersonal communication competence. Although this was an extremely minority view by these managers (one or 8 per cent), nonetheless it indicated that implicit personality theory is used to judge intercultural communication competence, thus reflecting Hartley's (1993) emphasis discussed previously in this research study.

6.2.15 Education

Only one senior manager identified education as a key indicator of intercultural communication competence. In particular, the general manager (hospitality and tourism, Organisation 1) argued that "given the complexities and dimensions of cultural differences, one would never know enough to feel absolutely competent in intercultural encounters". This manager believed that it was important for everyone involved in intercultural communication to be educated in the nuances and subtleties inherent in cultural diversity. Thus, it was a minority view (one or 8 per cent) that education was necessary to achieve intercultural communication competence.

6.2.16 Summary and discussion of results of research question no. 1

A variety of perspectives on the nature of intercultural communication competence was expressed by managers employed within the different sectors of the Australian hospitality and tourism service industries. In their responses, the managers reflected differing degrees of perceived knowledge of intercultural communication competence. Fifteen indicators, as presented in Table 6.2, of intercultural communication competence were suggested and the greatest frequency or overlap of responses occurred for indicators that were related to the forming of interpersonal relationships: adaptability, mindfulness, empathy and trust.

A clear majority view from the twelve hospitality and tourism managers was that intercultural communication competence must be conceptualised in terms of the ability to establish interpersonal relationships, coupled with adaptability and sensitivity to other cultures. This finding supports aspects of definitions from the relevant literature previously discussed in this research study.

In spite of the breadth of the fifteen indicators mentioned, on the whole, a limited understanding of intercultural communication competence was shown by these hospitality managers. For example, two or 17 per cent of managers interviewed mentioned eleven and ten of the fifteen indicators, six or half of those interviewed referred to five or less and two managers or 17 per cent referred to only one indicator. There was also some discrepancy between perceptual understandings of such competence at different levels of management. The more senior managers in the organisational hierarchy seemed to be the more knowledgeable in their understanding of intercultural communication competence. The three general managers each mentioned ten, nine or eight indicators. In contrast, the less senior managers (i.e. middle managers) appeared to be less equipped to express specific knowledge of intercultural communication competence and mentioned fewer indicators. Finally, managers' levels of understanding of intercultural communication competence and its application to their managerial functions may be linked to a lack of training and education on cultural dimensions of the workplace (Hofstede, 1980, 1991). Although only one manager mentioned that education could improve understanding. There also seemed to be some indication that managers might be using implicit personality theory (Hartley, 1993) to judge intercultural communication competence. The issue of how intercultural communication competence may be acquired and developed by managers will be discussed further later in this research study.

In general, the managers spoke in broad terms about the complexity of intercultural communication competence; they were not narrowly focused on language acquisition and use as the main indicator.

6.3 Research question no. 2

In what ways do Australian hospitality and tourism managers experience uncertainty in their daily intercultural encounters in the workplace?

A majority of managers interviewed expressed some form of uncertainty in engaging in initial intercultural encounters in the workplace. In Table 6.3, these responses are represented as feelings of "uncertainty" and "anxiety". Three managers interviewed (25 per cent) claimed that they were entirely comfortable in these intercultural encounters. Their responses are recorded in Table 6.3 as "Comfortableness".

6.3.1 Feelings of uncertainty

A vast majority of the managers interviewed reported that they experienced a degree of uncertainty in their initial intercultural encounters in the workplace. For example, the general manager (hospitality and tourism, Organisation 1) commented that "there is always a degree of uncertainty when I am dealing with someone of a different cultural background". She further remarked that:

> I also find the entire experience enormously enriching and challenging both at the same time. It is enriching because it is always unexpected; new things to learn from; and it is challenging because the new culture of the multicultural person often poses a challenge to my value system which I have

Table 6.3 Managers' perspectives on experiencing uncertainty in multicultural interactions

	Managers N = 12												
Hospitality managers' descriptions of their feelings about their intercultural encounters. Responses are indicated by x.	*GM T/H 1*	*GM H/T 2*	*GM T 3*	*HR HL 4*	*FB HL 4*	*FO HT 4*	*NR HL 5*	*HR HL 5*	*FB HL 5*	*FO HL 5*	*HR HL 6*	*FO HL 6*	*Total responses 12 (%)*
Feeling of uncertainty	x	x	x	x	x	x		x	x			x	9 (75)
Feeling of anxiety			x		x	x		x				x	5 (42)
Feeling of comfortableness							x			x	x		3 (25)
Total N = 3 (%)	1 (33)	1 (33)	2 (66)	1 (33)	2 (66)	2 (66)	1 (33)	2 (66)	1 (33)	1 (33)	1 (33)	2 (66)	

> internalised since childhood. Obviously, I will not accept certain aspects of their values which may contradict my non-negotiable values (like what is right or wrong) which are fundamental to my beliefs and are naturally important to me. Therefore it is always uncomfortable for me to communicate with someone of a totally different cultural background than to someone of my own cultural background.

It can be argued from this statement that she experiences uncertainty because she feels that other cultures present challenges to her value system. She also feels uncertain about her familiarity with other cultures and this would render her unable to predict communicative responses from a person from another culture.

The human resources director (five-star multinational hotel, Organisation 5) agreed that there is always going to be an element of uncertainty when dealing with a culturally diverse individual. As she put it:

> I suppose I would feel (you know) more uncertain with the culture that is different to mine. In terms of someone, say, who was from Sydney, I would probably feel more confident dealing with a Sydney person because I would have more of a snapshot of Sydney life and culture, so to speak, and what he/she is therefore expected to behave [like] in a social or a work environment than someone say, from Fiji whose culture is totally alien to me.

6.3.2 Feelings of anxiety and stress

A minority of managers reported experiencing a level of uncertainty that they described as anxiety or stress when initially interacting with culturally diverse people. For example, the food and beverage director (five-star multinational hotel, Organisation 4) recounted her experience in the following manner:

> I find that meeting someone from an entirely different culture for the first time is a very stressful experience, and this is because I don't know anything about them or their cultures. I always feel that I am experiencing a high degree of anxiety and stress; as if there is a psychological wall between us. For example, if it involves a new employee in our hotel, it takes me quite a while before I feel comfortable talking to that person.

These managers also reported that anxiety is gradually alleviated once they were able to establish sound interpersonal relationships with NESB persons over a period of time.

6.3.3 Feeling of comfortableness/ease

Some managers reported not experiencing any uncertainty and/or anxiety dealing with multicultural people. On the contrary, they felt comfortable dealing

with culturally diverse people. For example, the human resources director (five-star hotel, Organisation 6) commented that he does not feel uncomfortable/uncertain when interacting with multicultural people:

> I will be perfectly honest with you, I can say that I feel quite comfortable in dealing with any nationality; any person of any cultural background. Having been around different cultures/nationalities and thereby having associated with different cultures in my career for 15 years or so, in the same sort of environment, in the same sort of situation, I can honestly say without sort of blowing my own horn, I guess I feel very comfortable communicating with multicultural persons even, many with strong accents who are trying to get their point of views across. It is not usually very difficult for me to understand what it is that they are trying to say or the point that they are trying to bring across and vice versa. I don't know whether that's a personal skill that I have that I have developed over the years because of my life experiences with different cultures.

At another five-star hotel, a similar view was expressed by the national human resources director (five-star multinational hotel, Organisation 5) who stated that he could not recall ever experiencing uncertainty when dealing with persons of different cultural backgrounds. He remarked:

> I am probably a person that is unusual in my response, although I am an Anglo-Saxon Australian, but, I spent most of my life living in 13 countries, so I am very culturally aware. I've experienced what it is like to be living in another culture so I am probably more open minded than those who have never ever travelled outside of Australia.

A front office manager (five-star multinational hotel, Organisation 5) expressed a similar view, saying that she felt very comfortable interacting with multicultural people. She explained this as "due to my upbringing with multicultural people". She said that her family has had lots of multicultural friends living in different parts of the world including Australia who often visit. She also has Aboriginal friends with whom she has maintained close contact over the years. In addition, she commented:

> if one wants to be successful in establishing a solid friendship with multicultural persons, one has to avoid stereotyping them. For example, I suppose it is the same way as Aussies who go to England and the English think that we are in certain areas beer swelling yobbos, we know that that is not true of every Aussie, so why should we maintain misguided stereotypical views of others i.e. multicultural people.

6.3.4 Ways that managers' experience uncertainty in their intercultural encounters

Responses are summarised in Table 6.4 below.

6.3.5 Uncertainty as to whether employees understand content and meaning of communication by management

Half of the managers interviewed reported that they were concerned that, given some NESB employees' limited competence in written and spoken English, management communications might not be really understood by NESB employees. For example, the human resources director (five-star multinational hotel, Organisation 5) maintained that she was not entirely certain whether the content of messages on different work-related issues that she tried to convey to culturally diverse employees was really understood by NESB employees, as she

Table 6.4 Ways that managers experience uncertainty in their intercultural encounters

	Managers N = 12												
Hospitality managers' descriptions of different ways of experiencing uncertainty about their intercultural encounters. Responses are indicated by x.	*GM H/T 1*	*GM H/T 2*	*GM T 3*	*HR HL 4*	*FB HL 4*	*FO HL 4*	*NR HL 5*	*HR HL 5*	*FB HL 5*	*FO HL 5*	*HR HL 6*	*FO HL 6*	*Total responses 12 (%)*
Unable to be sure that employees understand content and meaning of communication	x	x	x	x				x				x	6 (50)
Unable to know how NESB employees would react to management communication	x	x	x		x	x		x	x			x	8 (66)
Unable to predict employees' behavioural responses to management communication	x	x	x	x	x	x		x	x				8 (66)
Total N = 3 (%)	3 (100)	3 (100)	3 (100)	2 (66)	2 (66)	2 (66)	(0)	3 (100)	2 (66)	(0)	(0)	2 (66)	

originally intended. She also commented that "we really do not have formal mechanisms in place within our organisation for feedback from our employees to ensure that they really understand the meaning and content of our messages".

6.3.6 Inability to know how NESB employees would react to management communication

A majority of the hospitality managers interviewed reported that it is hard to predict what types of behavioural responses one is likely to get from NESB employees to one's communication. For example, the general manager (hospitality and tourism, Organisation 1) commented that "in dealing with NESB persons, it makes it hard sometimes to know how they would feel about certain issues being communicated to them". She went on to say that this is particularly the case with the NESB persons of Asian cultural heritage "where they are quite often reluctant to tell you how they feel about issues being communicated to them".

6.3.7 Inability to predict NESB employees' behavioural responses

A degree of uncertainty was expressed by a majority of the hospitality managers in terms of their not being able to predict accurately what types of behavioural responses they are likely to get from NESB employees to their management communications. For example, the food and beverages director (five-star multinational hotel, Organisation 5) commented that

> it is nearly impossible to predict certain cultural groups' behaviour in an intercultural encounter, as there are great cultural divides between us and them to be able to accurately predict their behavioural responses and feelings about certain issues being communicated to them, and that is why it makes it so hard to predict their behavioural responses to our communications.

6.3.8 Managers' perspectives on their coping strategies in managing uncertainty in multicultural interactions

Responses are summarised in Table 6.5 below.

6.3.9 The ability to establish interpersonal relationships/friendships

A majority of the hospitality managers interviewed reported that the way to cope with uncertainty in an intercultural context is to get to know the NESB person you are dealing with better. For example, the general manager (hospitality and tourism, Organisation 1) stressed:

> It is vitally important for effective communication to establish some form of rapport with NESB persons, one is dealing with. Once a solid rapport is

Table 6.5 Managers' perspectives on their coping strategies in managing uncertainty in multicultural interactions

	Managers N = 12												
Hospitality managers' descriptions of their coping strategies to reduce uncertainty and anxiety. Responses are indicated by x.	*GM H/T 1*	*GM H/T 2*	*GM T 3*	*HR HL 4*	*FB HL 4*	*FO HL 4*	*NR HL 5*	*HR HL 5*	*FB HL 5*	*FO HL 5*	*HR HL 6*	*FO HL 6*	*Total responses 12 (%)*
The ability to establish interpersonal relationships/ friendships.	x	x	x	x	x	x		x	x			x	9 (75)
Cultural awareness	x	x		x	x	x		x	x			x	8 (66)
A willingness to learn from a new culture	x	x	x	x	x	x		x				x	8 (66)
Open-mindedness (i.e. not having any preconceived/ stereotypical views of multicultural persons)	x	x		x	x	x		x	x			x	8 (66)
Patience		x		x		x		x				x	5 (42)
An attitude of trust	x	x			x	x		x					5 (42)
The ability to see alternative viewpoints		x	x	x		x		x					5 (42)
Self-monitoring or mindfulness	x				x	x		x	x				5 (42)
Competency in English language				x		x						x	4 (33)
Total N = 9 (%)	6 (66)	7 (77)	3 (33)	7 (77)	6 (66)	9 (100)	(0)	8 (80)	4 (44)	(0)	(0)	6 (66)	

being established, it becomes easier to relate to that person of NESB. As well, the degree of uncertainty one experiences initially will gradually disappear over time.

6.3.10 Cultural awareness

A majority of managers indicated that the way to deal with uncertainty in an intercultural context is by familiarising oneself as much as possible with the cultural heritage of the NESB employees present in the workplace. For example, the general manager (hospitality and tourism, Organisation 2) commented that "Understanding of different cultures is critical in an intercultural communication

context, and this would also lead to the reduction to one's initial uncertainty one feels in such an intercultural encounters."

6.3.11 A willingness to learn from a new culture

Several managers reported that a willingness to learn from a new culture could reduce the uncertainty initially experienced in an intercultural context. For example, the human resources director (five-star multinational hotel, Organisation 5) commented that:

> It is my strategy not to panic or be overwhelmed by the cultural difference. Thus I make my business to [be] finding out more about his/her culture, and to be prepared to learn, you know, from them as far as their culture is concerned. This strategy has always helped to get to know the person better in terms of where they are coming from. As well, it has been a great help in terms of helping me to reduce my initial uncertainty I had in such an intercultural encounter. Having said that it is always going to be easier to deal with someone of the same cultural background than person(s) of dissimilar backgrounds. This is because it is quite appropriate to say one thing here in Australia, but when the same thing is said to a multicultural person it has the potential to be misconstrued or even to be offensive in their cultures. So it is a lot easier to deal with a person of my cultural background than a person of different culture.

6.3.12 Open-mindedness

A majority of managers believed that the best way to deal with psychological uncertainty arising from an intercultural encounter is by having an open mind to all things that are culturally dissimilar. For example, the front office manager (five-star multinational hotel, Organisation 4) commented that "having an open mind to new ideas and NESB people are always going to be the best strategies in dealing with uncertainty, and we really should not prejudge other people just because they are different to us".

6.3.13 Patience

A minority of managers believed that the best way to deal with the psychological uncertainty arising from an intercultural encounter is by displaying patience to people of dissimilar cultures. For example, the general manager (hospitality and tourism, Organisation 2) commented that "Patience is truly a virtue in all situations and particularly so in an intercultural context. Only through patience, we would be able to get to know the NESB persons . . . how they feel about certain issues over time and with patience."

6.3.14 An attitude of trust

Displaying an attitude of trust towards NESB employees/clientele was seen by some managers to be the best way to deal with any psychological uncertainty arising from an intercultural encounter in the workplace. For example, the front office manager (five-star multinational hotel, Organisation 4) commented that "my trusting attitude to NESB people has helped to overcome any uncertainty I experienced initially in such an intercultural encounter".

6.3.15 Mindfulness

A minority of interviewees considered that the best way to deal with the psychological uncertainty arising from an intercultural encounter is to be mindful to NESB people. For example, the general manager (tourism and hospitality, Organisation 1) commented that her coping strategies were to remain open-minded to a multicultural person,

> and if my encounter involves regular contact with the same multicultural person, my strategy is then [to] try to establish [a] good interpersonal relationship with that person. More importantly, one has be mindful of cultural differences in the way one communicates with different cultures so as to not cause any offense and/or embarrassment.

6.3.16 Competence in the English language

Some managers interviewed reported that one way to reduce uncertainty over time is for NESB persons to gain competence in English. For example, the general manager (training services, Organisation 3) commented that "it makes it a whole lot easier when an NESB person is able to speak good English. NESB person's language facility could also assist us in overcoming uncertainty/ambiguity one may experience in intercultural encounters over time". Meanwhile, the food and beverage director (five-star multinational hotel, Organisation 4) believed that "it makes it easier, if a multicultural person could communicate well in English".

6.3.17 Summary of results and discussion of research question no. 2

Results show that a majority of Australian hospitality and tourism managers experienced uncertainty in their intercultural encounters in the workplace. This finding supports the proposition, as discussed previously in this research study, namely, that uncertainty and anxiety feature in many human interactions including intercultural encounters and that people seek to reduce or manage this uncertainty through ongoing communication (Lazarus, 1991; May, 1977). What is significant in this study is that the members of the host culture experience a noticeable degree of uncertainty and even anxiety especially when initially

dealing with individuals of different cultural backgrounds. The uncertainty and anxiety arising from intercultural encounters were experienced by the Australian managers in a number of ways which included: not knowing how multicultural people would understand the content of the communication; not knowing how multicultural people would react to the communication; and not being able to predict their communicative responses. Thus linguistic and cultural difference can pose serious impediments to effective intercultural interactions in a hospitality workplace.

In response to the uncertainty or anxiety arising from their intercultural encounters, Australian hospitality and tourism managers developed a number of strategies to help reduce their uncertainty in such encounters in the workplace. Strategies such as open-mindedness (i.e. resisting any preconceived/stereotypical views of a multicultural person and showing a willingness to learn from a new culture); an attitude of trust; the ability to establish an interpersonal relationship/friendship; self-monitoring/mindfulness; and cultural awareness had been mentioned as indicators of intercultural communication competence and were reiterated as means for coping with uncertainty and anxiety in intercultural encounters. Patience and competence in language to achieve mutual communication i.e. in English, were additional strategies. No managers suggested that they should learn another language to reduce their uncertainty in such encounters, however.

In summary, there emerged a clear majority view of the types of coping strategies favoured in these situations. These included (a) the ability to establish interpersonal relationships; (b) the willingness to learn a new culture; and (c) being open to other views and values without prejudging them. These coping strategies were emphasised as being critical in reducing uncertainty in intercultural encounters. Finally, a minority of managers (three or 25 per cent), who did not report any degree of uncertainty/anxiety in their intercultural encounters, commented that the reasons why they felt at ease with people of culturally different backgrounds from themselves were because of their lifelong experience of cultural diversity through living overseas and working with culturally diverse people and, in some cases, through establishing close friendships with multicultural people. They particularly stressed that they gained real insights into different cultures from living and working in those cultures over a period of time.

6.4 Research question no. 3

How is the intercultural communication competence of Australian hospitality and tourism managers affected by the ability to establish interpersonal relationships?

The twelve managers interviewed were asked about their perceptions of whether their intercultural communication competence was, in any way, affected by the ability to establish interpersonal relationships. Nine or 75 per cent responded positively and more specific links were established between intercultural

communication competence and the ability to form interpersonal relationships than had been expressed in research question no. 1.

The general manager (hospitality and tourism, Organisation 1) considered that the ability to establish interpersonal relationships is a necessary part of intercultural communication competence and that friendship and humour are involved. She conceded that "humour is culturally based, i.e. some cultures find certain things very funny whilst others don't. But if you do have friendships with multicultural people and enjoy humour with them, then all differences arising from cultural backgrounds seem to become less important." She mentioned her own personal family life story as an example where a close friendship transcended cultural differences leading to a successful personal relationship.

These links are illustrated in the following vignettes.

> Although I was born of an Anglo-Australian family and also raised in Australia, however, my partner was raised overseas and is from a non-English speaking background with vastly dissimilar cultural beliefs and value system to mine. What brought us together is our close friendship with each other that we established over a period of time, and our close friendship also allowed us to have a lot of fun in our life which in turn helped us to transcend our cultural differences. As a result, we are able to communicate with each other much more freely and openly.

The front office manager (five-star multinational hotel, Organisation 5) referred to several of her personal experiences, emphasising the importance of friendship as well as trust and openness as links between intercultural communication competence and forming interpersonal relationships. In the following vignette she relates her experiences as both a cultural stranger and a host.

> Some years ago, I worked in one of our subsidiary hotels in China where I met a Malaysian colleague who worked in that hotel. Unlike myself, he was able to speak Chinese. Despite my initial uncertainty/apprehension brought on by our cultural differences, we managed to spend a lot of time together, and were able to develop a friendship with each other. As a result, we were able to feel comfortable with each other and were able to communicate effectively with each other, as there were a lot of trust, openness and friendship between us. Similarly in this hotel here, I enjoy friendships with some of our multicultural chefs and a number of multicultural room attendants with whom I am able to communicate very openly and they in turn are being very nice and helpful to me. As a result, it is a great environment to work here.

The national human resources director (five-star multinational hotel, Organisation 4) strongly endorsed the view that interpersonal relationships are, as he put it, "the foundation of all communication including intercultural communication competence". His personal story is not an example of a friendship. Rather, the vignette described the successful interpersonal relationship he developed with his Chinese secretary based on increased mutual trust and openness, which resulted in both people being more relaxed.

> My secretary who is a relatively recent arrival from China, has been employed with us for over two and half years. When she was appointed as my secretary, she had, despite good English skills, a lot of difficulty in adjusting to our Australian work environment. She had, in the beginning, displayed strong Chinese work ethics and behaviour. She never questioned anything I gave her to do, because I was her boss, and therefore she was very respectful of authority. I initially felt a little uncomfortable and tense working with her, because of her Chinese ways of doing things and moreover, there was hardly any interpersonal relationship between us to speak of. Over time, we managed to form a solid interpersonal relationship, she now knows me better and she now says to me "I don't understand this or that" or "I don't think that is the way we should do this job, or have you thought about it another way?" and she also displays humour in her interpersonal relationship with me. You know, she is more open. . . . I certainly think the fact that we have built a trusting relationship, it has helped to overcome our cultural differences, because she trusts me and I trust her. Therefore I would talk openly to her or behave in a manner around her that I wouldn't possibly behave around other Chinese people that I didn't know, for fear of offending them.

A food and beverage director at another five-star hotel linked the ability to establish interpersonal relationships to his intercultural communication competence by emphasising rapport: "we can only become very effective communicators if we develop a rapport and interpersonal relationship with multicultural people". He also stated that, in dealing with people of culturally diverse backgrounds, he found that the time frame to establish an interpersonal relationship varied from culture to culture. He particularly cited Asians as being very reserved people. According to him, it took a lot of time to develop friendships with Asians. He also recounted a personal story of two of his Asian friends (Japanese and Taiwanese) who work at this hotel. He mentioned that it took some considerable period of time before he became good friends with them. In the beginning, he recalled that "it was a lot harder for me to relate to them, and contact with them was maintained at a minimum level". Now that he knew each of them and they know him, he found that they are very approachable and helpful to him, and they can talk about almost anything, and feel relaxed and comfortable with each other.

However, a few managers held somewhat divergent views from this notion. For example, the front office manager (five-star multinational hotel, Organisation 4) commented that interpersonal relationships, i.e. developing interpersonal relations/friendships at work, is not much encouraged:

> This is because there are a lot of young people of non-English speaking backgrounds who work within the hospitality industry, in particular in my department as porters and receptionists and so forth. They all tend to be quite young and if they get too friendly and too interpersonal, they start to lose their professionalism which can start to show in the overall perception of the guests of the hotel. In my management practice, I don't practise and/or encourage much interpersonal relations and familiarity because anything that is too familiar starts to affect the work in a negative manner.

The front office manager (five-star multinational hotel, Organisation 4) disapproved of forming interpersonal relationships at work. At the same time, however, the same manager did not identify any specific attributes of intercultural communication competence, except to say that she regarded herself to be a competent communicator in intercultural encounters, and this is, as she put it, "due to my innate natural ability, and my appreciation of different cultures". Another human resource director (five-star hotel, Organisation 6) linked having consideration and respect for culturally diverse individuals to successful relationships and intercultural communication competence. He argued that

> all relationships boil down to respect for each other. As long as there is mutual respect, people tend to feel confident in communicating effectively with each other irrespective of their cultural differences. This has certainly been my lifelong experience with multicultural people. I hasten to add that I regard myself competent in communicating with multicultural people.

At another hotel, the front office manager (five-star multinational hotel, Organisation 4) linked the importance of cultural awareness to tolerance of multicultural people for successful relationships and intercultural communication competence. She explained that "once you know the culture of the person involved in the communication process, you are then able to have an understanding of where they are essentially coming from, and because of cultural differences, one also has to have a degree of tolerance to different values to be successful in intercultural encounters".

6.4.1 Summary and discussion of results of the research question no. 3

A vast majority of managers interviewed agreed that the ability to establish interpersonal relationships is the key indicator of intercultural communication competence (see Dimbleby and Burton, 1992; Gudykunst, 1986; Irwin, 1996; Jackson, 1993, previously discussed in this study). A minority cited friendship

and trust. Few cited respect/consideration and toleration of multicultural people as critical elements of intercultural communication competence, and only one hospitality manager interviewed was not in accord with the views put forward by the other interviewees. However, this manager did not identify any specific trait of intercultural communication competence except to say that she is a naturally gifted competent intercultural communicator.

6.5 Research question no. 4

How are psychological adaptation processes, likely to be experienced by international customers during their visits to Australia, understood by Australian hospitality and tourism managers?

Twelve Australian hospitality and tourism managers were asked whether they had an awareness of psychological adaptation processes likely to be experienced by international customers during their visits to Australia.

As shown in Table 6.6 under "No elaboration", five managers interviewed or 42 per cent lacked any demonstrable appreciation of psychological adaptation likely to be experienced by international visitors. A typical reply was: "No, I am sorry, I am not aware of international visitors' psychological adaptation." Six or

Table 6.6 Managers' perspectives on psychological adaptation by international visitors during their stay in Australia

	Managers N = 12												
Managers' definitions of psychological adaptation. Responses are indicated by x.	*GM H/T 1*	*GM H/T 2*	*GM T 3*	*HR HL 4*	*FB HL 4*	*FO HL 4*	*NR HL 5*	*HR HL 5*	*FB HL 5*	*FO HL 5*	*HR HL 6*	*FO HL 6*	*Total responses 12 (%)*
No elaboration			x		x	x		x		x			5 (41)
Psychological disorientation/ elation	x	x					x		x				4 (33)
Anxiety because of vulnerability to crime	x								x				2 (17)
Culture shock		x							x				2 (17)
Distress because of language and cultural barriers											x	x	2 (17)
It depends on one's prior experience				x									1 (8)
Total N = 5 (%)	2 (40)	2 (40)	1 (20)	1 (20)	1 (20)	1 (20)	1 (20)	1 (20)	3 (60)	1 (20)	1 (20)	1 (20)	

50 per cent of interviewees reflected a wide range of perspectives on the meaning and experience of international visitors' psychological adaptation including psychological disorientation/elation (four responses); anxiety because of vulnerability to crime (two responses); culture shock (two responses); distress because of language and cultural differences (two responses). Another manager remarked that an answer to this question depended on one's prior experience and no further elaboration was provided.

6.5.1 Psychological disorientation and elation

As can be seen in Table 6.6, some managers reported that international visitors might experience psychological disorientation and elation during their stay in Australia. For example, the general manager (hospitality and tourism, Organisation 2) commented that "for anyone who is travelling overseas for the first time, it is almost expected that they undergo a varying degree of psychological disorientation and stress levels. At the same time, however, travelling abroad can be uplifting for the travellers, as he/she comes across new and exotic cultures." He narrated the following personal story dealing with his own psychological disorientation/ elation during his visit to Hong Kong.

> Of late, my journeys have been mainly to North America, so you know you're dealing with mainly an English speaking environment similar to Australia, and therefore you rarely come across any exotic culture to cause any psychological disorientation. Having said that I have been a few times to Hong Kong. On my first visit, I did experience a kind of psychological disorientation. Yes I do think that everyone does go through psychological disorientation to varying degrees. I had such a wonderful time in Hong Kong and that every time I've since been to Hong Kong, you know, it has never really dampened my attitude to the place at all. Ah, the first time I went there I stayed at the Mandarin, they were constructing buildings after buildings, and so another new building was never far away from my sight, and it used to amaze me to see these workers with heavy bricks on their backs, carrying all these bricks up the top. They were like little spiders climbing up a wall and their energy just staggered me. I couldn't get over it, but oh, I think they'd better come to Australia to teach some of our builders and labourers a trick or two.

6.5.2 Anxiety because of vulnerability to crime

As can be seen in Table 6.6, only a few hospitality managers commented that adaptation of international visitors might take the form of anxiety because of perceived vulnerability to crime when travelling abroad. For example, the general manager (tourism and hospitality, Organisation 1) linked psychological disorientation to vulnerability to crime:

> [psychological disorientation] obviously exists. One only needs to go out to the airport to witness this. International visitors appear to be disoriented and stressed. In majority cases, they are vulnerable to crime, because they are disoriented, and the last thing, they probably have in mind is to safeguard their personal possessions.

When asked "In what ways would your organisation be attempting to help international visitors to come to terms with their psychological adaptation processes during their stay in Australia?", her comments were:

> Whilst it is not our organisation's job to deal with these issues, it is more of our members' responsibility to provide assistance to our international visitors in this regard. Having said that we do, however, provide some assistance to international visitors such as courtesy services like greetings and orientation directions.

Further probing of this issue with the general manager (tourism and hospitality, Organisation 1), coupled with a study of printed materials produced by this organisation, revealed that it has not yet made any real attempt to address this issue in any systematic manner involving training and education of its management team and/or its membership.

6.5.3 Culture shock

As can be seen in Table 6.6, few hospitality managers considered that culture shock might be experienced by international visitors. For example, the food and beverage director (five-star multinational hotel, Organisation 5) commented that international visitors of non-English-speaking backgrounds, particularly those with a vastly dissimilar culture/value system, may experience culture shock when visiting Australia for the first time:

> I learned through observation that some of the Japanese guests who have visited Australia for the first time and have stayed at our hotel experienced a degree of culture shock in Australia because of the way things are done in Australia. For example, they are not used to our laid back way of life or our informal manner of greetings, and/or because of our past failure to recognize the importance of social hierarchy, as observed for example, in seating arrangements in the restaurant or making room reservations. For example, Japanese guests who are high up the social hierarchy are expecting Australian hotel staff to make reservations for them in prestigious ensuite rooms or rooms at least a floor up from their Japanese juniors while staying at the same hotel.

He was then asked "whether the hotel had any specific intervening strategies in place to help international guests to deal effectively with their psychological

adaptation whilst visiting Australia". His response was that "no formal mechanism exists at our hotel to monitor systematically guests' psychological adaptation to Australia, except for our customer service area, where we mainly focus on our customer daily needs whilst staying at our hotel".

6.5.4 Distress because of language and cultural differences

As can be seen in Table 6.6, two managers expected that language and cultural differences might cause distress requiring psychological adaptation. For example, the human resources director (five-star hotel, Organisation 6) commented that international visitors' experience of difficulty in psychological adaptation in Australia has to do with their inability to speak English. Additionally, their difficulty is further exacerbated by their lack of awareness and understanding of Australian culture. This view was also supported in a separate interview by his colleague, the front office manager (five-star hotel, Organisation 6).

6.5.5 Strategies assisting international visitors

Australian hospitality and tourism managers were asked to comment whether there were any specific strategies to help international guests to deal effectively with their psychological adaptation during their stay. The vast majority was unable to specify strategies, except for Organisations 4 and 6. For example, the human resources director (five-star multinational hotel, Organisation 4) commented that:

> we have a range of customer service designed to assist our international guests including their psychological adaptation in Australia. We have procedures and policies in place like portering and guest relations to answer any questions our international guests may have to satisfy their needs. We also provide different amenities targeted at meeting their specific needs such as international foods and menus, mini bars in their rooms and so on.

Whereas the human resources director (five-star hotel, Organisation 6) stated that they had specific strategies in place to assist international visitors to deal with their psychological adaptation in Australia. In the following extract from the transcript of the interview he referred to specific strategies.

> To assist our international guests with all their enquiries especially dealing with adjustment in Australia, I have initiated and implemented a new management strategy. This involves identification of our multicultural staff with facility for speaking a second language. I have then issued our multicultural staff with little lapel flags appropriate to their particular cultural and linguistic origins. For example, we have Japanese staff who

> speak Japanese [and they] have a little Japanese flag so that the staff member is easily recognizable to our international visitors: so that they see that they have their country of origin's flag; and so they obviously assume that the staff member can speak their language, so they direct any questions to the staff member speaking their languages who is also familiar with their cultural protocols as well as the Australian way of life. In many instances, it has been observed that once an international guest is able to make use of this facility our staff are able to provide [that], our international guests not only felt comfortable in staying at our hotel, but also, they were able to form friendships with our staff during their stay with us. Whenever there was any problem, international guests were [noticed to be] trying to seek out that particular staff member knowing that that staff member speaks their language, as well as being a friend to them and being more willing to help them with any assistance they required.

When asked whether this management strategy was a response to any study conducted by the hotel of international guests with particular reference to their psychological adaptation, this director said "No". He went on to narrate how he advanced this idea.

> I will be honest with you, it is something that came to mind a couple of years ago when I was on one of my many overseas trips and I believe it was [on a] Qantas flight where I noticed that flight attendants had little flags indented into their little name badges. And it is something that came to my mind which I thought that would be useful to initiate at our hotel, since knowing that our staff represent so many different cultures and nationalities. I thought, well, [for] all our front office staff who do speak a second language that I would issue them with a little flag so that it makes them easily recognizable and accessible. They are, after all, the ones who have the first dealing with our guests who come in through the front door. So when the guests see that there is someone that they can refer to [in their own language] they immediately feel more at ease, and any potential problem arising from their adaptation can be addressed by that staff member [who is] very keen to help them. This new management strategy has proven very successful.

When asked whether multicultural staff members were formally trained to understand international guests' likely psychological adaptation processes, this director responded "No".

In summary, according to the managers' responses to research question no. 4, there are no formal processes in place to monitor international guests' psychological adaptation processes in any of these hospitality organisations.

6.5.6 It depends on one's prior experience

A somewhat different response to research question no. 4 was given by the human resources director (five-star multinational hotel, Organisation 4), who maintained that any appreciation of the likely psychological adaptation process of international guests "depends on one's life experiences in overseas countries". He remarked that "If one has lived and worked in a number of overseas countries for some time like myself, the process of adaptation becomes lot easier."

6.5.7 Summary and discussion of results of research question no. 4

In summary, managers' responses to research question no. 4 demonstrated only a peripheral understanding of international guests' likely psychological adaptation processes during their stay in Australia. Models of psychological adaptation across cultures originally advanced by Bochner (1981, 1982), Brislin (1981, 1993), Harris and Moran (1979), Lysgaard (1955), Oberg (1960), Searle and Ward (1990) and Ward and Kennedy (1996) discussed previously in this research study were unknown to these twelve managers. Moreover, there were no formal processes in these hospitality organisations (now or in the past) to monitor international guests' adjustment to Australian culture and society during their stay in the country. No surveys have ever been conducted by these hospitality establishments to ascertain international guests' degree of psychological adaptation to Australia and hence to suggest specific and relevant management practices to meet identified perceived needs arising from a likely experience of such processes: initial contact, initial culture shock, superficial adjustment, depression/isolation, reintegration/compensation and autonomy/independence stages as developed by scholars such as Bochner (1981, 1982), Brislin (1981, 1993), Harris and Moran (1979), Lysgaard (1955), Oberg (1960), Searle and Ward (1990) and Ward and Kennedy (1996) and what this process of psychological adaptation might mean for a particular international guest.

6.6 Research question no. 5

In what ways do Australian hospitality and tourism managers consider a culturally diverse workforce a "challenge"?

Cultural diversity in the workforce can be a source of strength for an organisation, provided the organisation manages that diversity effectively. One major study (Kirchmeyer and McLellan, 1990) found that cultural diversity contributed to organisational flexibility, innovation, creativity, problem solving and decision making. These features have been identified as the characteristics that will be required of successful organisations according to leading management scholars (Drucker, 1989; Hughes, 1992; Kanter, 1983; Morgan, 1988).

Twelve Australian hospitality and tourism managers were asked to articulate the challenges arising from cultural diversity in their workforces. Managers' responses specified a range of seven challenges and four resulting benefits for their organisations.

These specific perceptions of challenges and benefits are presented in Table 6.7 under two headings: Challenges, Benefits.

Managers voiced the challenges of cultural diversity in the workforce as including cultural differences; communication difficulties as a result of low levels of English competency by culturally diverse workers; gender role conflicts; religious differences; expectations that particular cultures would be stereotyped as being more challenging; divisiveness because of departmental concentration of ethnic groups; divisiveness and challenges related to multicultural staff not being acculturated to Australian social conventions.

Managers experienced perceived benefits of cultural diversity in the workforce for the organisation as enrichment of quality of life at work, multilingual skills, better understanding of customers and higher quality of customer service, more innovation and new ideas, flexibility, a wider range of expertise and increased marketing successes.

6.6.1 Challenges of cultural diversity in the workforce

There was a clear consensus by the Australian hospitality and tourism managers interviewed (eleven or 92 per cent) suggesting that cultural differences in the workforce present substantial challenges for management. For example, the human resources director (five-star multinational hotel, Organisation 4) commented that the many unknown factors associated with a culturally diverse workforce mean that managers find it very hard to get to know their multicultural employees to discover what they really think on certain issues in the workplace. He illustrated his point of view by claiming that:

> our staff of Asian cultural backgrounds such as Indian, Sri Lankan, Chinese who mostly work in our Housekeeping Department rarely speak out their minds on any management issues. No matter how many times I sit down with them and would try to tell them that I value their opinions on this or that issue and could they please provide me with some feedback. Rest assured that they would never say negatively about anything to do with management issues and/or offer feedback on any contentious issue. I think it has to do with their cultures, because I assume that in their cultures, being hierarchically structured societies, they conscientiously respect authority and they are terribly worried that they may lose face before their bosses, if they speak out their minds. In fact, I experienced this type of problem myself when I spent three months in Malaysia opening a new Hotel a couple of years ago. I found out that in Malaysia they had different expectations of me as the manager than what would be here in Australia. They were always respectful and formal in their dealings with me. They always sought directions from me about their delegated tasks.

A similar sentiment was also voiced by the food and beverages director (five-star multinational hotel, Organisation 4) in which she commented that "there are distinct differences and hence styles of communication amongst different cul-

Table 6.7 Managers' perspectives on challenges and benefits of cultural diversity of a multicultural workforce

	Managers N = 12												
Hospitality managers' descriptions of challenges and benefits derived from cultural diversity in the workforce. Responses are indicated by x.	*GM H/T 1*	*GM H/T 2*	*GM T 3*	*HR HL 4*	*FB HL 4*	*FO HL 4*	*NR HL 5*	*HR HL 5*	*FB HL 5*	*FO HL 5*	*HR HL 6*	*F O HL 6*	*Total responses 12 (%)*
Challenges:													
Cultural differences		x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	11 (92)
Some cultures expected to be more problematic than others (cultural stereotyping)		x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	11 (92)
Religious differences	x		x		x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	10 (83)
Communication difficulties				x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	9 (75)
Gender role conflicts			x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x		9 (75)
Departmental segregation around ethnic groups/divisiveness				x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	9 (75)
Lack of acculturation to Australian society		x	x				x			x	x		5 (42)
Benefits:													
Marketing successes and better customer service	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	12 (100)
Enrichment of quality of life	x	x		x		x	x	x	x		x	x	9 (75)
Generation of new ideas, flexibility and innovation		x		x	x	x	x	x		x	x	x	9 (75)
Multilingual skills and wider range of expertise		x		x	x		x		x	x	x	x	9 (75)
Challenges N = 7 (%)	1 (14)	3 (43)	5 (71)	5 (71)	6 (86)	6 (86)	7 (100)	6 (86)	6 (86)	7 (100)	7 (100)	5 (71)	
Benefits N = 4 (%)	2 (50)	4 (100)	1 (25)	4 (100)	3 (75)	3 (75)	4 (100)	3 (75)	3 (75)	3 (75)	4 (100)	4 (100)	

tural groupings employed at this hotel making it very hard for managers to come to terms with these differences". For example, in her view, German and Swiss employees were much more assertive, even aggressive, than Chinese employees. She remarked that Chinese employees may tell you one thing and would be thinking something totally different at the same time. In her opinion that discrepancy made it very difficult for a manager to really understand multicultural employees. For this manager, behavioural differences were attributed to cultural differences which then became challenges for managers.

6.6.1.1 Stereotyping of some cultures by hospitality management as being more challenging (cultural stereotyping)

There was a clear consensus amongst the Australian hospitality and tourism managers interviewed (eleven or 92 per cent) that some ethnic groups (i.e. of both employees and clientele) are more challenging for managers than others. These views seemed to be based on managers' perceived stereotypes of these "problematic" ethnic groups. For example, the national human resources director (five-star multinational hotel, Organisation 5) stereotyped Filipino and South American workers as being "very hung up about their rights at the workplace, and they are too demanding". At another hotel, the food and beverages director (five-star multinational hotel, Organisation 4) reported that she found exployees of Middle Eastern backgrounds as confrontational about their rights and, in some cases, as sometimes being slack workers. She said that she attributes these qualities to their "fighting countries/cultures". As an example, she described her experience with an employee.

> We had one chap from Afghanistan who came to work and but he didn't do any work. He would move a few things around from one area to the other but he wouldn't actually do anything for the 8 hours that he was there, and so we had a lot of problems with him. During his employment, he had probably received seven written warnings. He seemed to be so thick skinned to anything you actually said and when you asked him, "Do you understand this or that," he said, "Yes". He seemed to understand perfectly well but he just didn't seem to care about his work. One day, he basically turned around and said, "Well you know I just want to wait until you fire me because I can get more money on the dole, and if you fire me I can get it straight away". In the end, we had no choice but to terminate his employment with us.

This manager made other remarks which appeared to contradict her original stereotypical view of Afghanis as being "slack and confrontational". For example, she claimed that "I have worked with another Afghani, previously

employed at this hotel, as our chief steward, but he was fantastic and [a] very hard working individual."

Although managers interviewed from Organisations 1, 2 and 3 did not have a significant number of culturally diverse employees, they had a large percentage of culturally diverse members/clientele. These managers also commented that certain ethnic groups were more problematic than others. For example, the general manager (hospitality/tourism training services, Organisation 3) portrayed Australian indigenous members as being very problematic (i.e. hard to relate to because of entrenched cultural barriers, despite best intentions). Phenomenological information showed that the organisation in question has not yet conducted any research into the benefits and challenges of cultural diversity linked to indigenous culture to justify its senior manager's anecdotal assertion that indigenous members are problematic for the organisation.

In a stereotypical fashion, the general manager (hospitality and tourism, Organisation 2) talked about "Koreans and Germans who make up part of the organisational membership as being domineering and aggressive cultures. Therefore it makes it very hard to break down these cultural barriers." In another instance, the general manager (hospitality and tourism, Organisation 1) alleged that some Korean tour operators were unethical in the way that they had previously marketed Australian destinations as products to their Korean clients. He recounted the following story.

> Well, the most recent examples which they have all been wiped out now, have been with the Korean market. We had enormous problems last year with Korean tour operators, and this is what was happening. The operators were selling the product at below cost in Korea. People were being shown things in brochures that were then not delivered to them upon their arrival in Australia. When Korean people arrived in all good faith, they expected to be receiving what they thought they had contracted for those prices. They found that because the package was sold to them at less than cost, there was a gap to be made up by commission of the product so that they were taken from one shop to another. [The product was] very heavily sold by them, because those tour guides were working on commission and had to earn a certain amount of commission to pay to their tour operators. I mean it was just really bad news, really bad for our industry. Dissatisfied clients who then got stroppy. Of course they do. You would and I would, and so would anybody if you thought that you had contracted to a certain package and it was not presented to them. So it's that type of tourism, rather than that sort of person from that country. The fact that it was happening mostly from Korea, was associated with the fact that, um, you know there was lots of people who wanted to come out from Korea to Australia and there were a lot of unscrupulous operators, who were unlicensed and it's up to the laws of this country to try and regulate that as much as possible, and to maintain the quality of the product. This has now happened.

This kind of stereotyping of certain cultures by some Australian hospitality and tourism managers seemed to hinder effective intercultural communication. Such cultural stereotyping seemed to be symptomatic of a lack of management training on complexities and sophisticated dimensions of cross-cultural understandings in these organisations evident in the managers' responses at interviews and by the lack of references to cross-cultural training in printed literature from the selected organisations.

6.6.1.2 Religious differences

A vast majority of the Australian hospitality and tourism managers interviewed commented that different religions in the workforce can cause problems for the operations of hotel organisations. For example, the front office manager (five-star multinational hotel, Organisation 4) commented that

> one of our staff who is a practising Seventh Day Adventist (Christianity) cannot work on Saturday and when you are working on a 24 hour roster such as in our hotel, that person wanting to have Saturday off would not only complicate our roster system, but it would also arouse complaints by other staff who would say, "Why can't we also have Saturday off, since you have approved this person's leave of absence on Saturdays?"

At another hotel, the human resources director (five-star hotel, Organisation 6) gave a different example of religious differences creating a challenge for management. He remarked:

> quite often you will find a person of a particular religion working alongside another person of another religion. We normally state that it doesn't make a difference and it shouldn't make a difference but sometimes you find that religions between fellow employees cause a little bit of animosity amongst them. It certainly doesn't get to any sort of stage where it is uncontrollable or whatever, but we will find out that there may be a minor little grumbling and we will then try to address the situation with the people concerned.

At another hotel, the food and beverages manager (five-star multinational hotel, Organisation 4) related a personal story about one of her staff members. This challenge for her as a manager concerned a delicate problem which appeared to originate from religious differences.

> Well, we've had a staff member from a cultural background where they don't use things like deodorant and that became an issue, because of other staff members' complaints about this matter. Actually, her supervisor

> came to me and said, "Look we have a lot of staff who are complaining about this". Later on, we sat down with her and discussed it with her and she was quite upset, and embarrassed, I suppose. She said that her background is that they don't use deodorant, it's a religious thing. As far as I recall, her cultural background was South American.

6.6.1.3 Communication difficulties associated with cultural diversity in the workforce

A majority of the Australian hospitality and tourism managers interviewed cited communication problems arising from cultural diversity in the workforce as a challenge. Many communication difficulties experienced were related to the low levels of competency in verbal and written English language of multicultural staff. For example, the human resources director (five-star multinational hotel, Organisation 5) lamented that:

> cultural diversity poses communication problems at work, and this is exacerbated by the limited timeframes we have to prepare our communication – messages targeted to our multicultural staff. This is because our industry is a 24 hour industry, and we are always on the go, not being able to find sufficient time to prepare management messages in many different ways so that it may be understood by all our multicultural staff working for us at this hotel.

At another organisation, the human resources director (five-star multinational hotel, Organisation 4) related a story about one of his multicultural employees' poor grasp of English which caused embarrassment for this employee.

> I can remember our housekeeper telling me that they were going through the different items in the mini bar and they asked one of the room attendants to explain what was missing from one of the fridges and she said, "Watermelon" and the housekeeper said, "Watermelon, we don't have watermelon in the mini bar", and she said, "No, the watermelon is missing". It was later found that it was actually bitter lemon that was missing.

Despite a perceived common problem of poor English of multicultural employees at these hotels, the establishments in question have not introduced any training programmes for their multicultural employees to improve their English-language skills. One manager made a frank admission that:

> we have a general weakness in our organisation caused by our own inability as managers to provide comprehensive training courses in English language

for our multicultural employees, and yet, we have produced much of our organisational literature in English which may be incomprehensible for multicultural employees with limited understanding in written English language.

6.6.1.4 Gender role conflicts

A majority of the Australian hospitality and tourism managers reported that gender role conflicts arising from cultural differences in the workforce can present challenges for management practice. For example, the front office manager (five-star multinational hotel, Organisation 4) related a gender-based conflict with one of her female staff. As she explained:

> We had an accounts lady who was from Hong Kong and her boyfriend was of the same level and we wanted to promote her to a higher level because she performed at a superior level in her existing job and was therefore qualified for promotion. However, she didn't want promotion, because, according to her, she is not allowed to be on a higher status than her boyfriend, even though he worked in a different hotel.

At another hotel establishment, the human resources director (five-star multinational hotel, Organisation 5) narrated a story about one of his staff who was strongly reluctant to report to her female superior and was thus causing a problem for management:

> I had a staff member who was a male Filipino in my department and the composition of my department was made up of predominantly female staff. As a result, there was actually he and I who were the only male staff members in the department and he did not directly like his reporting line to be my Assistant Human Resources Director who happened to be a female and who in turn reported to me.
>
> Some serious difficulties were experienced, as a result of this male Filipino staff not wanting to report to a female superior. She would actually give him a task and he would complete the task and put it in my tray and that sort of thing. It was very difficult and very frustrating for her but we had to look at it critically. We really believed that it was a cultural thing that he felt that I was certainly the head of the department and I was male even when we would try to tell him she was his immediate supervisor. He would just look at me the whole time and direct all of his answers towards me so this was quite a challenge and I suppose I wanted to show respect

for him but also made it very clear to him that his reporting line was not me but my assistant.

I wouldn't say that we just resolved it like that, but it took us some time. I do believe that in the end he did realise that it was the Assistant Human Resources Director that he needed to report to his female superior rather than me.

Problems arising from gender role conflicts in organisations are symptomatic of cultural values which recognise and legitimise social division around gender and are not necessarily restricted to Australia but are found even more in many nations of the world. It is clear that management has a role to play in educating the workforce about values of equality and mutual respect among genders and creeds, as well as ideally instituting management practices to prevent discrimination in the workplace based on grounds of gender, race and so on. The managers' responses in this study revealed little evidence to suggest that education about these ideals had ever been undertaken by management in these organisations.

6.6.1.5 Departmental segregation around concentration of ethnic groups: divisiveness

A substantial majority of the Australian hospitality and tourism managers interviewed, who were all employed in three five-star hotels, reported high proportions of ethnic concentration in particular departments. For example, the human resources directors in all these hotels commented candidly about the composition of their workforce in specific departments such as: "Our laundry department is Asian e.g., Chinese"; "Our housekeeping departments are predominantly from the Philippines, South America". Catering areas had substantial percentages of Asian, Middle Eastern, Swiss, German and Italian staff. The study found that the vast majority of manual, semi-skilled/skilled jobs in these hotel organisations were held by people of Non-English-speaking backgrounds. However, in Organisation 6, there were some senior management positions occupied by Europeans of Non-English-speaking backgrounds. This was also corroborated by the human resources documents published by these hotel organisations.

Managers maintained that departmental ethnic concentration has created problems for communication within the wider organisational context. For example, the national human resources director (five-star multinational hotel, Organisation 5) commented that ethnic concentration by itself can create barriers to social interactions and the development of team spirit within the workforce. He cited an example of departmental ethnic concentration which has presented challenges for management:

During the lunch breaks, you will find that all the Filipinos sit together in a particular area of the canteen and all the Lebanese sit together in another

> area of the canteen whilst all the Chinese sit together somewhere else in the canteen. This naturally makes it very hard for the management to break down these culturally induced barriers, and of course it is not healthy for the development of a unified corporate culture and/or team spirit in this organisation.

In the same hotel, the food and beverages manager lamented about Filipino workers' unwillingness/reluctance to participate fully in providing feedback to management on issues which may lead to further improvement of the *modus operandi* of this organisation. He claimed that this is a cultural attribute of Filipino workers. He saw their loyalty as being primarily to their cultural group including a keen interest in protecting each other. He described them as reluctant to impart the same level of loyalty outside their own group and suspicious of outsiders to some extent. Similar views on Asian, particularly Chinese staff, were expressed by the human resources director (five-star hotel, Organisation 6). He claimed that Chinese workers segregated themselves from the rest of the hotel employees and were reluctant to contribute to any discussion in staff meetings. He described them as culturally conditioned to hide their true feelings about issues in public. He speculated that this was to do with their cultural upbringing. These managers' views seem to support Hofstede's theories (1980, 1991) in which collectivist cultures such as Filipino and Chinese are depicted as primarily concerned with providing loyalty and protection for their own groups. Outsiders are looked at with a degree of suspicion and interactions with people outside their own groups are minimal.

It was the opinion of these managers that ethnic concentration in departments can potentially create divisions among hotel employees. For example, the human resources director (five-star multinational hotel, Organisation 5) claimed that in his previous employment at another hotel in a similar management role, there was evidence of divisiveness and clans within the housekeeping department primarily staffed by Asians.

6.6.1.6 Lack of acculturation to Australian society

A minority of the Australian hospitality and tourism managers interviewed reported that some migrant workers recently arrived in Australia are not adequately acculturated to Anglo Australian culture, thus presenting a challenge to hospitality management. For example, the food and beverage director (five-star multinational hotel, Organisation 5) commented that

> since some of our staff who recently arrived to Australia, are still not acculturated to an Australian way of life and work practices, they are not sure what is expected of them by way of customer service here in Australia. It takes it a bit longer for these recent arrival migrant staff to get used to Australian culture and Australian customer service.

6.6.2 Benefits of cultural diversity in the workforce

6.6.2.1 Marketing successes and better customer service

There was a unanimous view among the twelve managers interviewed that a culturally diverse workforce is highly beneficial, especially for marketing and better customer service to culturally diverse clientele. More specifically, the managers employed by the three hotels reported a number of marketing success stories attributed to their culturally diverse workforce where the ratio of international guests staying at their respective hotels has increased. The link between intercultural communication competence and marketing is discussed further later in this chapter.

6.6.2.2 Enrichment of quality of life through a culturally diverse workforce

A vast majority of the managers interviewed reported that cultural diversity is inherently beneficial especially in terms of quality of life to Australian hospitality organisations. For example, the general manager (hospitality and tourism, Organisation 1) maintained that cultural diversity in the workforce has greatly contributed to the enrichment of quality of life in the workplace, "as culturally diverse employees can bring in different perspectives to hospitality organisations thereby enriching the quality of life".

6.6.2.3 New ideas, flexibility and innovation through multicultural staff

According to several of the managers, "a culturally diverse workforce can generate a greater range of new ideas compared to a monocultural workforce". Also, human resources directors in hotels, Organisations 4, 5 and 6 reported that cultural diversity in the workforce could lead to flexibility in managing human resources especially with reference to rostering and customer service.

In relation to innovation, the human resources director (five-star hotel, Organisation 6) cited a specific innovation in customer service in his organisation suggested by his multicultural staff.

> All staff were invited to suggest ways of improving our customer service including the development of a new customer service slogan. A competition was held and suggestions were received from staff, and one suggestion which stood out from the rest was an idea that all staff including management staff be uniformly trained in the art of customer service and thereafter all staff wear a lapel with the written customer slogan like "Here to Help". That idea is now widely adopted throughout our different properties located in different parts of the world. This innovative idea stemmed from one of our multicultural staff of Korean cultural background. Of course that particular staff member was rewarded with a prize.

6.6.2.4 Multilingual skills and wide range of expertise through a culturally diverse workforce

A vast majority of the hospitality managers reported that a culturally diverse workforce can provide multilingual skills and a wider range of expertise not present in a monocultural workforce. For example, the general manager (hospitality and tourism, Organisation 2) commented that:

> cultural diversity has been of great benefit, particularly, given the industry that we're involved with: tourism. As you know, in the inbound section of the industry we're dealing with every culture and every language. So it has been of benefit to us to have these multicultural staff, because we are never sure who is going to walk through the door and who's going to be asking questions, and we run into a problem. So to have people you know with multilingual skills on your staff is a plus for us.

At another organisation, the food and beverages director (five-star multinational hotel, Organisation 5) recounted a story about a multicultural staff member whose expertise proved financially beneficial to that organisation.

> In a recent month, we had the privilege of having as our clients, the Japanese National Soccer Team, who came to Australia for a visit. Of course they are in the World Cup so they are honoured quite highly in Japan and they came to stay with us. They had very particular dietary requirements that we were not used to catering, and they stayed with us because at that stage we had a Japanese chef who had a good understanding of the Japanese athletes' dietary requirements. And as the food was very important to these athletes, we could satisfy their needs and that is why they stayed with us during their visits to Australia.

The wide range of expertise of culturally diverse workforce capable of meeting customer demands was specifically mentioned by the human resources director at the same hotel:

> There are clearly benefits associated with cultural diversity, for example, we are able to meet the service demands of our guests because we are a hotel that is largely involved in inbound tourism. If we didn't have that cultural diversity in our workforce we wouldn't be able to provide the services to our the guests. So it is very much a benefit. And also, in general, I suppose [this is a benefit], in creating awareness of cultural diversity in the actual workplace as well as having these culturally diverse staff with different skills and a range of expertise gained from their other countries of origins. [These aspects] are obviously beneficial to our hospitality industry.

6.6.3 Summary and discussion of results of research question no. 5

In summary, the twelve managers interviewed expressed a broad consensus that cultural diversity in the workforce can be both challenging to management and beneficial to the organisation. Managers identified seven specific challenges and four clusters of benefits, presented in Table 6.7.

Managers' responses and printed literature from the selected organisations revealed only a peripheral understanding and awareness by managers of the complexity of cross-cultural issues in a hospitality workplace. Consequently, the managers interviewed were found to be ill equipped to deal with challenges of cultural diversity in a systematic manner. The failure to initiate in-house cross-cultural training programmes to address these challenges seemed to be a contributing factor. Finally, it was found that the managers have not instituted formal processes for monitoring staff and management feedback/responses to any challenges arising from cultural diversity at their respective workplaces. This oversight could be argued to be a significant contributing factor to the managers' lack of ability to respond systematically and strategically to the challenges of a culturally diverse workforce that they recounted.

6.7 Research question no. 6

How is cultural diversity reflected within Australian hospitality and tourism organisational culture?

Analysts of organisational behaviour such as McLean and Marshall (1993, cited in Mullins, 1996) have argued that a strong corporate culture is a unifying force which is important for promoting organisational performance. In support of their thesis, McLean and Marshall (1993, cited in Mullins, 1996) referred to studies of sixty-two firms in the United States and twenty-three firms in the United Kingdom where organisational culture was clearly identified as a crucial element in the ability to maintain consistently the characteristics of high-performing organisations. Earlier, Deal and Kennedy's *Corporate cultures* (1982) and Peters and Waterman's *In search of excellence* (1984), for example, reflected the recommendation that "A strong culture has almost always been the driving force behind continuing success" (Deal and Kennedy, 1982, p.5). A strong corporate culture creates and nurtures a shared system of values and assumptions for everyone in the organisation. It attempts to involve everyone including culturally diverse employees in setting organisational goals and objectives (Schein, 1989). In the final analysis, it creates a sense of belongingness and togetherness for a common purpose and a common future for everyone within an organisation.

Given that cultural diversity is a feature of Australian hospitality organisations, how is cultural diversity reflected in written published mission statements and managers' perceptions of corporate culture? The twelve managers were interviewed in order to explore this issue.

To explore such trends in Australian organisations, the managers were asked to comment on the nature of their organisation's corporate culture. In addition, they were invited to identify and explain any specific management strategies used to acculturate their culturally diverse employees to a corporate culture.

The Australian hospitality managers' descriptions of the corporate cultures of six organisations reflected a wide variety of perspectives. Corporate cultural attributes included providing quality service to the membership; achieving a profit; upholding principles of access and equity; valuing staff and customer service; and providing customer service. A number of strategies used by Australian hospitality and tourism managers to communicate these corporate cultures to employees included memos, reports/literature, business plans, meetings, forums, committees, training, questionnaires, informal information sessions with staff and guests and personnel briefings.

Of the six hospitality organisations who participated in this study research, three organisations (i.e. representative of different sectors of the hospitality industry other than the hotel/accommodation sector) had very few culturally diverse employees. However, these three organisations had a significant percentage of culturally diverse contacts through the composition of their membership. The other three organisations operating in the accommodation sector of the hospitality industry, have very high percentages of culturally diverse employees. The corporate culture of each of the six hospitality organisations, derived from multiple sources of oral and written evidence including interviews and company documents, is reported in the next section.

6.7.1 Hospitality and tourism, Organisation 1

The general manager (Organisation 1) described the essence of the organisational culture in terms of "providing services to our members and our industry. Since our membership and our industry represent a high degree of cultural diversity, we therefore focus on an understanding of cultural diversity amongst our membership."

According to this manager, the core values of the corporate culture were communicated to the employees as following:

> We don't have a formal structure in place like monthly meetings and so on. We do have managers' meetings every now and then. The nature of our jobs in this industry is that we're all over the place. So I would say that our values and activities are communicated by our literature that we put out to our members, where we say what we believe in and what we do. We also issue memorandums/circulars to our membership reinforcing our core values.

Analysis of the literature from this organisation including printed materials from human resources, annual reports and newsletters showed that documents revealed little organisational focus, if any, on cultural diversity. The main

organisational focus, as has been claimed by its general manager, was in the area of promotion of tourism combined with enhancing membership representation at different levels of government. Valuing cultural diversity within the workforce did not seem to be a major priority for this organisation as reflected in its published literature. Notably, this organisation also had a written recruitment policy to employ only people who were highly competent in written and verbal English.

In summary, this organisation did not demonstrate that cultural diversity was a key part of its corporate culture or the composition of its workforce. Nor had this organisation established clear formal processes to communicate or train its workforce or membership in the values of cultural diversity for the organisation.

6.7.2 Hospitality and tourism, Organisation 2

When interviewed, the general manager maintained that the organisational culture was about providing service to a primarily culturally diverse membership. This manager cited a few specific management strategies designed to embrace cultural diversity as part of the organisational corporate culture. In particular, the management team in this organisation had begun to form subcommittees of different ethnic groups. The missions of these multicultural subcommittees included increasing an understanding of cultural diversity and informing the organisation of any concerns and problems for action by management.

The general manager recounted the antecedents of these multicultural subcommittees:

> In the early days when the Japanese market segment for Australian was experiencing a massive growth for the Australian hospitality and tourism service industries, there were lots of problems associated with this market because many people in the industry didn't understand Japanese culture etc. That's why we developed the Japanese subcommittee so that they would have somewhere to take their problems to. They generally meet in our boardroom and these are Japanese tour operators so that they can convey to us, you know, what the problems are that are being experienced within that sector of the inbound industry.
>
> We also tried to establish a Korean subcommittee when there has been in recent years an exponential growth of the Korean tourism being experienced in our industry. We tried to establish that but we found it very difficult. The Koreans are slightly different to the Japanese, and we found it very hard to establish it. We had a series of meetings and committee meetings with the Korean membership, and we tried to get them to form the subcommittee but we could never achieve it. In the end we gave up.

The general manager said that the organisation communicated the core values of corporate culture to staff members

> through a monthly meeting with staff members. However for membership, we have an "info fax" which goes out to all of our members. It is also done on a monthly basis. As well, that's circulated to all of the staff to keep them aware of what the top level management are planning and what's happening.

All published organisational literature circulated to inform its culturally diverse members is written exclusively in English which may potentially alienate some culturally diverse members with limited competence in reading English.

6.7.3 Training services, Organisation 3

The general manager in this organisation described the corporate culture in terms of principles of equity and equal employment opportunity. He commented:

> the objectives of this organisation are well documented within our business plan and then recorded on our annual report. Specifically in terms of issues relating to cultural diversity, we have, in line with general objectives on access and equity principles, developed every activity within the organisation. Therefore we would certainly have that sort of equal employment opportunity focus within the organisation. As a result, all our activities that we undertake such as project, activity, publication of document has that sort of equity focus.

To communicate these corporate core values to staff and members, the general manager commented that the specific strategies used are mainly organisational literature such as memoranda and circulars.

In contrast to Organisations 1 and 2, where corporate culture was described in terms of service provision, Organisation 3 had a stated objective of promoting the principles of equity and equal employment opportunity in its culture. However, analysis of the phenomenological information from the interview and organisational literature showed that management is not incorporating cultural diversity in managerial functions including human resource development and decision-making processes.

According to the phenomenological information on human resources, this organisation had very few culturally diverse staff in its employ at present or in the past. There were no formal processes in place for involving and empowering culturally diverse staff to contribute to managerial functions. Management communication was purely of the message-driven type of communication and was restricted to bureaucratic memos/circulars. Although there is no evidence from this organisation that culturally diverse staff are valued and consulted on corporate decision making, paradoxically, this organisation engaged in a lot of outside consultations to develop its business plan and its training packages. In other words, consultation with valued parties is a feature of the corporate culture of the organisation.

6.7.4 Five-star multinational hotel, Organisation 4

In this organisation, the human resources director described the organisational culture in terms of valuing both their staff and customers: "Whilst the underlying objective of our organisation is to remain profitable, yet, we realise to be profitable, we need to have focus on our staff and our guests as our internal and external customers, and if we look after our staff, they will in turn look after our guests." In the same hotel, the front office manager described the corporate culture in similar terms of valuing staff and guests, and also commented that "we treat everyone equally and fairly". The food and beverages director of this hotel reinforced these sentiments and claimed that "our management philosophy is simple: we want to create a happy working environment, and if our staff are happy, then the guests will be happy too, because of quality services provided by our staff in a friendly manner".

Specific management strategies used by the management in this organisation to communicate corporate culture to employees included staff notices, staff induction/orientation programmes, staff training programmes and general presentations to staff in meetings. The hotel has articulated a corporate culture responsive to both staff and guests in organisational literature. This responsiveness was corroborated in interviews and the profile of employees indicated that the workforce is highly culturally diverse.

Nevertheless, no formal processes have been initiated by management to empower the culturally diverse workforce to participate in decision-making processes. There seemed to be little recognition that these employees have a role to play in setting both tactical and strategic plans for the organisation. Notably, most culturally diverse employees were employed in manual and semi-skilled/skilled areas of hotel operations, with very few staff of such backgrounds occupying supervisory/lower level of management positions. They were not represented in middle to upper levels of management in this hotel.

6.7.5 Five-star multinational hotel, Organisation 5

In this organisation, the national human resources director described the corporate culture primarily in terms of making a profit: "For us, our number one priority that we try to achieve here is to make a profit." He remarked: "we also see our culturally diverse human resources, as one of our strongest marketing tools because of our international guests staying at our hotel. As well, we are also big on training our staff especially in an area such as customer service." The human resources director commented that "Our core values in this organisation are all about customer service." In contrast, the front office manager conceptualised the corporate culture in terms of creating a culturally friendly environment. She maintained that

> Once we keep our staff happy, then they give great customer service. When staff give great customer service, then our guests would enjoy staying here

> and, as a result, our revenues will go up, so will our general profitability. In addition, by keeping our staff happy, we would be able to minimise staff turnover which, if staff turnover not addressed, is going to be costly for any organisation including ours.

An analysis of comments made by managers interviewed from this organisation showed that they have many interactions with their staff especially about improving customer service. On the whole, managers fostered open communication among all staff through regular meetings in different departments of the hotel.

Examination of transcripts of interviews and organisational literature including human resources information suggested that managers made relatively good use of the talents and expertise of culturally diverse staff in the area of marketing/customer services. According to the front office manager:

> We are also guilty of favouring particular cultures that bring something we deem as important in terms of marketing our products. For example, if I am interviewing somebody for a job who is Japanese [this person] would be more attractive to me than someone who speaks other languages with additional expertise, because the need for Japanese speaking staff is great in our hotel, because a significant percentage of our international guests are from Japan. This is a common practice within our hotel.

In other words, issues of cultural diversity are relevant to recruitment practice, if not policy.

In summary, for this organisation cultural diversity does not form part of the core values of mainstream corporate culture. As a result, no formal mechanisms are available for culturally diverse staff to participate in decision-making processes involving the operations of this hotel and/or setting future directions for the organisation. Notably, the vast majority of the culturally diverse staff hold unskilled to semi-skilled/skilled jobs with little or no prospects of attaining higher positions. Only a few culturally diverse staff currently hold supervisory roles, mainly in housekeeping, laundry and catering departments. None is represented in middle to senior levels of management in this organisation.

6.7.6 Five-star hotel, Organisation 6

In this organisation, the human resources director described the corporate culture "as a staff friendly culture which is of course supportive of all employees including culturally diverse employees". According to this director, the corporate culture is focused on fostering a climate of trust among employees, in which all employees are valued, irrespective of their organisational position.

Senior management in this hotel practised a management policy of caring for the workforce, recognising that all employees have unique abilities to benefit the organisation. According to the human resources director:

> Senior management, in particular, the General Manager being the head of this organisation, practises their motto of caring for employees by setting an example in his interactions with all employees. For instance, our General Manager actually makes it a point of finding out each and every staff member's name. He makes it a point of attending all staff morning briefings. He is absolutely phenomenal in that respect (i.e. his actions speak much louder than words) as far as his interactions with culturally diverse employees are concerned. In fact, our General Manager interacts on a daily basis with our staff in the housekeeping department made up of the greatest denomination of nationalities (i.e. as much as 70 percent of the total staff employed in this department). He recognises the importance of cultural diversity by spending most of his time with multicultural employees, and when we have various functions, our General Manager makes a point of attending them all and he continuously talks about the fact that we are a team and our purpose here is to serve our guests irrespective of our creed, colour, background and nationality.

The description of the corporate culture in this hotel as a staff-friendly culture was also corroborated by the front office manager. He commented that the senior manager set a good example by encouraging open communication. The hotel holds regular employee social functions where employees are encouraged to get to know each other better while fostering an organisational team spirit. The front office manager maintained that customer service is a top priority: "customer service is our bread and butter and whether we like it or not, without good customer relations, we don't have a customer which means, we won't have any money to maintain our operations and/or employ staff".

Examination of interview transcripts and organisational literature including human resources publications indicated that this organisation has fostered a corporate culture which values cultural diversity, respect, cooperation and teamwork, as exemplified by top management. Corporate culture in this hotel appears to be staff- and customer-focused. The human resources director seems to value cultural diversity and, according to him, he in fact thrives on cultural diversity as important stimuli for his intellectual and professional development. He commented that he is very much at home working with culturally diverse employees, finding it enormously rewarding. This level of enthusiasm for cultural diversity is also shared by members of the senior management team, who regularly interact with their culturally diverse workforce.

Human resources information showed that this organisation employs a very large percentage of culturally diverse staff in different parts of the hotel including a significant percentage of culturally diverse staff at the middle to senior management levels. The organisation is very committed to customer service. It has, in addition to embracing principles of equal employment opportunity, implemented specific management policies on cultural diversity. However, these are largely restricted to holding ethnic theme-days in the restaurants and staff cafeterias. There is no evidence of formal training programmes for management

and staff on cross-cultural issues within the organisation. This detracts from management's stated commitment to cultural diversity within the workforce and the inclusion of cultural diversity as an integral part of corporate culture.

6.7.7 Summary and discussion of results of research question no. 6

Australian hospitality and tourism managers employed in six representative organisations of the different sectors of the industry described their corporate cultures in different ways. A senior manager in Organisation 1 broadly defined the organisational corporate culture in terms of provision of services to its membership and the hospitality industry as a whole. However, a closer examination of the literature produced by this organisation, coupled with interview transcripts and entries in the researcher's personal diary, showed that cultural diversity was not a priority in this firm's corporate culture. In addition, the absence of cultural diversity at different levels of management served to indicate the inescapable conclusion that this organisation lacked any demonstrable appreciation of cultural diversity which could be harnessed in its overall organisational ethos and strategy.

Similarly, the senior hospitality manager in Organisation 2 described the essence of the corporate culture in terms of service to its culturally diverse membership. An analysis of the corporate culture as promulgated in its literature and the general manager's own assertions seemed to indicate that the issue of cultural diversity is to a certain extent being incorporated into its overall corporate culture and hence strategy. However, formal processes to support and benefit from cultural diversity are still lacking in this organisation.

In contrast, in Organisation 3, the senior hospitality manager conceptualised the corporate culture in terms of equity and equal employment opportunity. These espoused issues, further promulgated in this organisation's literature, are laudable. However, the literature showed scant evidence that appreciation and hence application of cultural diversity is a major priority for management in terms of managerial processes, despite it being a major hospitality/tourism training organisation.

In Organisation 4, hospitality managers broadly defined their corporate culture in terms of customer service and due care for their staff. While they definitely made good use of its culturally diverse workforce in terms of provision of customer service, they seemed to have failed to institute formal managerial processes to raise awareness of cultural diversity within its workforce and/or empowering its culturally diverse workforce to become involved in decision-making processes and/or planning processes.

Hospitality managers in Organisation 5 generally defined their corporate culture in terms of maintaining business profitability through good customer service and friendly staff. The cultural diversity of the workforce was utilised substantially to improve customer service and management took a great deal of care to maintain good interactions with the culturally diverse workforce on a regular basis. In the final analysis, what was ostensibly lacking in the corporate

culture here was a focus on the culturally diverse workforce in terms of not providing formal processes to raise awareness of cultural diversity and/or empowering these culturally diverse employees to become involved in decision-making and planning processes.

By comparison, management in Organisation 6 espoused their corporate culture as being entirely supportive of cultural diversity in the workplace. Critical analysis of organisational literature coupled with managers' descriptions of their corporate culture seemed to indicate that the corporate culture valued cultural diversity as it implemented a work ethos based on mutual respect, co-operation and teamwork. Management of this organisation had encouraged and fostered interactions with all employees through daily interactions and regular social functions. The corporate culture was found to be embracing cultural diversity in a substantial way and this was also reflected in the composition of its management team. However, detailed formal processes for raising awareness of cultural diversity, especially training programmes, were found to be wanting. This apparent deficiency will be discussed further in the next section.

6.8 Research question no. 7

In what ways has cultural diversity affected Australian hospitality and tourism management practices?

In research question no. 5 in this research study seven challenges of cultural diversity in the workplace were identified by managers, along with four benefits for the organisation. Nevertheless, this study has found little specific evidence that managers have clearly articulated appropriate strategies for dealing with these challenges and capitalising on potential benefits. In research question no. 7 a closer examination is made of how Australian hospitality and tourism managers incorporated issues relating to cultural diversity in the workforce to eleven management practices: planning; workplace communication; recruitment/promotion; induction; training; supervision; industrial relations; change management; customer service; financial management; and marketing. In other words, a study is made of how Australian hospitality managers use intercultural communication competence in each of these eleven managerial functions.

6.8.1 Research question no. 7.1

In what ways is intercultural communication competence used by Australian hospitality and tourism managers in planning?

As noted previously in this research study, planning was conceived in terms of setting goals, assigning tasks and co-ordinating activities (Dunford, 1992; Mullins, 1996; Phatak, 1997; Robbins, 1991) so that the organisation can seek to reach its full potential. This study argues that management needs to capitalise on all available resources. This includes effective management of cultural diversity

as a human resource. Specifically, managers need strategies for eliciting contributions from a culturally diverse workforce for the development and implementation of their organisational planning processes. In order to carry out planning functions satisfactorily managers need to have adequate levels of intercultural communication competence to implement appropriate strategies. Australian hospitality managers' perceptions of how they applied intercultural communication competence to the planning function were explored in this research question.

In Organisations 1, 2, 4 and 5 strategic business plans were conceptualised and developed exclusively by senior management without any consultations and/or participation by representatives from their culturally diverse workforces. These business plans were written only in English. The implementation of these business plans did not accommodate the specific language and cultural attributes of the culturally diverse workforces. Literature on planning in these organisations was written in sophisticated jargon likely to alienate many culturally diverse employees with lower levels of competence in English. Most managers expressed the view that setting directions for their organisations, i.e. organisational planning, is the domain of senior management and/or boards of directors. Management exercised a "top-down" management approach to their organisational planning processes characteristic of hierarchical organisations. Consequently, managers did not seem to be inclined to use their intercultural communication competence to avail themselves of the skills and talents of their culturally diverse workforces for planning. Neither did managers in these four organisations institute formal processes to gain feedback from their culturally diverse employees on the appropriateness and implementation of these organisational planning objectives.

Formal mechanisms that could assist managers in planning processes would ordinarily include a system for conducting an organisational audit of employees' language, cultural and overseas qualifications skills/competencies. A means of disseminating information on organisational planning to all levels of the business in English and all major languages spoken by multicultural employees could be developed. Methods for incorporating employees' feedback could also be part of the planning process. In other words, systems can be designed to encourage employees to participate in all aspects/stages of organisational planning processes (Karpin, 1995; OMA, 1994). Such systems in managerial planning were not evident in these four organisations. The national human resources director (five-star hotel, Organisation 4) specifically commented that:

> We haven't implemented formal mechanisms in this organisation to monitor our culturally diverse employees' feedback on the performance of our planning objectives and understanding of our management communications [i.e. planning objectives are all written in English in the forms of memos, circulars and newsletters, business reports and so on] for our multicultural employees in this regard.

According to the phenomenological information collected for this study of six Australian hospitality organisations, managers in only two of them have, to a limited degree, applied intercultural communication competence to their managerial planning processes. For example, the senior manager (training services, Organisation 3) consulted with a wide range of interested parties including multicultural people in the hospitality industry. He commented that consultation was needed because the planning processes related to training needs across the hospitality industry. His consultation process took the following form:

> Within the context of the business plan the way we go about [planning], is to first of all, assemble all the qualitative phenomenological information gained through a whole series of focus groups both internals and externals who develop recommendations and priorities from these quantitative data and then set it in the context of qualitative comment from those focus groups. And thereafter we go to a wider consultation mechanism which includes a number of regional areas and areas within the metropolitan area to further fine-tune recommendations and priorities from there. So it's a very broad consultation process. For example, in terms of cultural diversity, last year, we had some fairly clear examples of aspects of cultural diversity affecting the consultation process, particularly in terms of indigenous Australians, because we initially didn't take into account the seniority system inherent in indigenous Australian culture. We later modified our consultation processes to better meet the needs of that target audience which has been met with varying levels of success. I will give another example of our consultation processes which initially met with difficulties dealing with cultural diversity. We were planning to develop training packages for cooks, particularly Asian chefs, as some thirty to forty percent of restaurants and cafes within NSW are, based on anecdotal evidence, made up of Asian food businesses. However, communicating with that cultural group within the hospitality industry has been exceptionally difficult because they have had very low levels of English language competency. As a result, we have developed a particular communication strategy to be able to effectively interact with that sector of the industry, through first of all establishing interpersonal relationships with some key people with competency in English language in those cultural groups. They in turn acted for us as facilitators to gain feedback from the Asian cultural groupings about their training needs.

At the second organisation, the human resources director (five-star hotel, Organisation 6) commented that they have recently instituted a more elaborate form of planning processes. According to him, most managers in this organisation were successfully applying their intercultural communication competence to the organisational planning processes. He described a number of management strategies for communicating with and involving culturally diverse employees in these processes:

> As an organisation, we plan on a monthly and yearly basis. With the planning issues I guess, we have, first of all, management strategy meetings where we decide what we are going to do. We decide what we need to change to better position our services and management practices to the demands of our customer target groups, and then we will go from there. We will go down from our middle and lower levels of management to our culturally diverse staff. We will discuss with them what we plan to do and how we plan to go about it. We will ask them for suggestions on anything which we may have missed out within our management plan. Staff normally come up with some really useful information sometimes, and then from there we'll implement our organisational objectives taking into account suggestions from staff. We will monitor the implementation of our objectives on an ongoing basis and we'll fine tune it on the way i.e., change bits and pieces on the way designed to improve our chances of success of what we are trying to achieve. Intercultural communication with culturally diverse staff is certainly the biggest thing in this hotel. Not many memos go through the hotel which is a pleasant surprise. Also our management team strongly believe in establishing good interpersonal relationships with staff. Our work ethos emphasises mutual respect, cooperation and valuing cultural diversity within our workforce. Therefore we are not big fans of paper and hence writing memos/circulars to staff. We do actually meet with staff on a regular basis to discuss any aspects of our planning strategy. You could say that we are a communicating organisation where [the] management team are fully committed to fostering interpersonal relationship[s] with our staff and valuing their contributions to our planning processes. Aside from that, we have instituted an idea box for improvements on all aspects [of] our operations including planning processes where staff could make suggestions and receive financial rewards and staff recognition pending approval for implementation of such staff suggestion[s] being granted by management.

According to this manager's remarks, this organisation was the only one in this study which involved its culturally diverse employees in various phases of organisational planning processes while fostering a great deal of open communication among its employees and management team. As a result, its managers appeared to have applied adequately intercultural communication competence to their managerial function of planning.

6.8.1.1 Summary and discussion of results: planning

In summary, for four of the six Australian hospitality organisations studied, managers did not know how to apply their perceived intercultural communication competence specifically to their managerial function of planning. Consequently, managers in four of the six neither consulted nor actively encouraged the participation of their culturally diverse employees in the design, development and implementation of their business plans. Essentially, management

communication to culturally diverse workforces mainly consisted of bureaucratic, written types of communication expressed in English. Management teams did little to modify their planning processes to accommodate the variety of linguistic and cultural factors characteristic of their workforces. For the remaining two hospitality organisations studied, managers in Organisation 6 have, to varying degrees, applied their perceived intercultural communication competence to organisational planning processes in a number of ways including wider consultation, regular face-to-face interactions and other socialisation processes, albeit using a hierarchical system. Therefore it can be deduced from this finding that two managers in this study have adequately applied their perceived intercultural communication competence to the managerial function of planning processes. Meanwhile, managers in training services, Organisation 3 have, to a more limited degree, applied intercultural communication competence to their planning processes by consulting their external culturally diverse clientele. However, managers' applications of intercultural communication competence within their own culturally diverse workforce was virtually nonexistent.

6.8.2 Research question no. 7.2

In what ways is intercultural communication competence used by Australian hospitality and tourism managers in workplace communication?

As mentioned previously in this research study, communication needs to be understood as a human interaction where the central concern is sharing meaning. As Timm (1980) explained: "Communication occurs any time someone attaches meaning to what is going on. Intentional communication efforts are successful to the degree that common meaning develops" (p.21). Communication as the sharing of meanings can also be viewed in terms of the nature of the interpersonal relationship (Penman, 1985). All interpersonal relationships occur within a cultural context such as the corporate culture of a culturally diverse workforce and workplace. It has been suggested that effective communication for management of a culturally diverse workforce includes establishing and fostering trust and open communication between managers and employees. Managers are advised to relate to staff on a personal basis and to be sensitive and adaptable to the cultural needs of their multicultural employees when communicating with them (Irwin, 1996; Jackson, 1993; Mahoney *et al.*, 1998). There is no reason why these suggestions for workplace communication should not apply to Australian hospitality and tourism managers.

In this study, all the managers interviewed were unanimous that communication was central for the proper conduct of all managerial functions and hence for effective organisational performance. Nevertheless this study has found an apparent gap between most of the managers' perceived intercultural communication competence and their application of such competence to workplace communication in their organisations.

On the whole, Australian hospitality managers, with the exception of managers representing Organisation 6, seem to have failed to utilise their perceived intercultural communication competence in workplace communication. There was no convincing evidence in the information collected to suggest that hospitality managers in five out of the six organisations represented have creatively applied their intercultural communication competence in ways that can produce effective management communication outcomes for a culturally diverse workplace. Strategies nominated by the managers in this study for communicating with their culturally diverse workforces mainly consisted of bureaucratic written means of communication such as memos, circulars, notices, newsletters and reports. These communication forms were written only in English thereby potentially alienating many multicultural employees with very limited competence in English. The study also found that there was no formal mechanism in these organisations for monitoring and assessing the effectiveness of management communication. One national human resources manager in a five-star hotel commented that "we really don't have formal processes in place to ascertain whether our management communications have been successful in being understood by our multicultural employees or not". The front office manager (five-star multinational hotel, Organisation 5) candidly admitted some doubts about current communication practices for a culturally diverse workforce:

> All our management communications are in written forms, such as memos, newsletters, new programs, flyers, mission statements and are written only in English. It is debatable how much of this information is really understood by our culturally diverse employees.

All hotel organisations in this study had various ethnic concentrations in departments. In these ethnic concentrations, individuals tended to use their native language rather than English for communication among themselves. Managers regarded these tendencies as problematic for effective management communication. For example, the food and beverages director (five-star multinational hotel, Organisation 4) believed that:

> In certain departments such as housekeeping and laundry where ethnic concentration is greatest, you will find that ethnic people have created enclaves and a clan system where it is very hard for management to break down those peculiar cultural barriers with the view to effectively interacting with them on a daily basis.

The communication process in the workplace was further complicated for all hotels in the study by the variety of levels of competence in English of multicultural staff. As a result, managers reported many communication difficulties arising from linguistic and cultural factors. Only in Organisation 6 was there a reference to specific managerial communication strategies for dealing with the diverse language skills of employees.

In Organisation 6, the human resources director commented that management used face-to-face interpersonal communication with multicultural staff as much as possible. Meetings are normally informal and friendly. Managers held daily briefing sessions with their staff in each department to inform them of all activities and to delegate tasks for that day. Managers also organised regular social functions to build collegiality, trust and friendship between management and multicultural staff. The management team was very sensitive to cultural diversity in the workplace. According to the human resources director, the senior managers spent most of their time each day communicating with their culturally diverse workforce. For this hotel, effective communication in the workplace was based on building interpersonal relationships between managers and staff.

6.8.2.1 Summary and discussion of results: workplace communication

All Australian hospitality and tourism managers interviewed in this study were unanimous about the role of communication as central to the effective performance of all managerial functions in their culturally diverse organisations. However, there was little evidence to show that the managers involved in this study could effectively apply their perceived intercultural communication competence to appropriate communication strategies for a culturally diverse workplace. There were reports of many communication difficulties arising from language and cultural differences. Management tended to relate to employees mostly through bureaucratic types of communication such as memos/circulars and reports, all written exclusively in English. Only Organisation 6 modelled many types of interpersonal meetings between managers and staff. Factors such as ethnic concentration in some departments and different levels of competence in English among multicultural staff did not help effective intercultural encounters among staff and management teams. Only in Organisation 6 did management use a great deal of face-to-face interpersonal communication in order to build relationships with the culturally diverse workforce. This multinational hotel appears to have created a work environment and climate congenial for mutual respect and co-operation through its management practices and a corporate culture that values cultural diversity. It was the only organisation in this study where managers seemed to be justified in claiming that they had effectively applied their intercultural communication competence in the workplace.

6.8.3 Research question no. 7.3

In what ways is intercultural communication competence used by Australian hospitality and tourism managers in recruitment/promotion?

As mentioned previously, recruitment is defined as searching for, and obtaining, potential job candidates in sufficient numbers and quality for the organisation to select the most appropriate people to fill its jobs (Goss, 1994). Promotion is

defined as recognising and rewarding staff members for superior performance in their delegated tasks by higher positions with better pay and working conditions (Mullins, 1996). All management policies and practices need to be impartial/anti-discriminatory and transparent. Interview processes should be designed to assess an applicant's qualifications/merit against specific documented job criteria only.

In this study, Australian hospitality and tourism managers were invited to describe their recruitment/promotion policies. There was a clear consensus among all managers interviewed that these policies were based on equal employment opportunity. All twelve managers commented that they communicated these policies to their culturally diverse workforces effectively.

Examination of phenomenological information collected for this study, however, cast doubt on these claims. There was little evidence that managers in these organisations knew how to apply their perceived intercultural communication competence to recruitment and promotion processes in a manner that could result in effective management of cultural diversity at their workplaces. Most communication strategies used by management for recruitment and promotion were only expressed in English and were bureaucratic in nature. There was no evidence to show that recruitment and promotion processes were benefiting culturally diverse employees. In addition, the study found that factors such as fluency in English and "appropriate personality" were taken into account by some hospitality managers when recruiting or promoting an individual. For example, the general manager (hospitality and tourism, Organisation 1) commented that "we only employ staff with considerable fluency in both written and verbal English language. As such we don't have a management policy to necessarily employ someone because of their cultural skills." The food and beverages director (five-star multinational hotel, Organisation 4) also emphasised the importance of competency in English as part of recruitment/promotion policies. The human resources director (five-star hotel, Organisation 6) commented that the personality of an applicant is a major consideration in recruitment/promotion. He commented that

> the applicant's personality is really the number one thing that I look for because any other skills that they bring with them is a bonus, as far as I am concerned. If they don't have them, we can train them to do the job. But we certainly can't train them to develop a personality of their own.

This manager's view on linking personality to recruitment and promotion indicates that implicit personality theory (Hartley, 1993) is being used as an indicator of intercultural communication competence, employability and suitability for promotion.

Examination of human resources manuals collected for this study showed that in Organisations 1, 2 and 3 management did not have a specific recruitment policy of employing culturally diverse workers. Their written recruitment policy was generic, making no specific mention of hiring NESB employees. While

recruiting new employees, human resources directors in these organisations maintained that new employees had to have high levels of competence in written and oral English and this includes NESB employees. This requirement had the potential to exclude multicultural applicants with cross-cultural skills and overseas qualifications from gaining employment. Statistics on human resources on composition of their staffs in terms of ethnicity collected from these three organisations indicated that they had very few employees of non-English-speaking backgrounds (i.e. NESB employees) and that these mostly held clerical/office assistant roles. Promotion of NESB employees to supervisory levels and/or management level was practically nonexistent.

The recruitment/promotion policies for multicultural employees were found to be different for the three hotel organisations studied. In hotel Organisations 4 and 5, human resources data showed that managers recruited significant percentages of multicultural employees who were mainly employed in unskilled/semi-skilled areas. Only some NESB employees were employed in skilled areas of employment such as chefs, front office and marketing as well as at supervisory levels in housekeeping, laundry and stewarding departments. This tendency of management to recruit NEBS employees for menial roles (i.e. mainly in departments such as housekeeping and stewarding) seemed to indicate that there was little recognition of the talent and range of expertise that a culturally diverse employee may offer. It could be argued that managers demonstrated an inability to apply their intercultural communication competence to the recruitment and promotion of their culturally diverse workforce to advantage their organisations. This conclusion was supported by the following comments by managers. The national human resources director (five-star multinational hotel, Organisation 5) stated that "We have many overseas tertiary qualified NESB employees currently employed with us in stewarding and housekeeping departments." The human resources director (five-star multinational hotel, Organisation 4) confessed that "we have many highly qualified Asian employees. Unfortunately, they are very shy people making it very hard for us to promote them." Neither director was able to take advantage of the potential offered by these employees. This minority view also indicated that implicit personality theory (Hartley, 1993) was used to make decisions about employees' potential and organisational roles.

Overall, the recruitment/promotion management practices in these two hotels seemed to fall short of effective management of cultural diversity, resulting in the underutilisation of their culturally diverse staff. In contrast, in Organisation 6 there was some evidence to suggest that managers had adequately applied their intercultural communication competence to recruit and promote people of culturally diverse backgrounds for all levels of the organisation. The organisation has benefited by increased profits ratios of their businesses and greater international customer satisfaction and these outcomes could be linked to the implementation of recruitment and promotion policies that value cultural diversity. It appears that NESB employees who were valued through culturally favourable management practices were increasingly motivated to perform better and to

provide high quality service. The NESB employees' increased productivity, coupled with their provision of high-level customer service, seem to have been of considerable benefit to this five-star hotel.

6.8.3.1 Summary and discussion of results: recruitment/promotion

All managers in the organisations studied confirmed that equal employment opportunity was a guiding principle for their recruitment/promotion processes, and this was corroborated by written policy statements on equal employment policy in their human resources manuals. In spite of their equal employment opportunity policy, however, the study found that many managers applied other criteria to select applicants such as high levels of competence in English and personality factors, thereby potentially excluding many highly qualified NESB people from gaining employment. This finding supports previous studies of other industries in Australia (Karpin, 1995; OMA, 1994), which showed that many Australian organisations are utilising inappropriate language and literacy screening mechanisms, bearing no relationship to the specific job requirements, as part of their recruitment procedures. Instead, these managers tend to apply implicit personality theories (Hartley, 1993) in their recruitment programmes.

Other research in Australia (Caudron, 1990; Morrison, 1992) found that managers have little or no understanding of techniques suitable for interviewing applicants from culturally diverse backgrounds. Finally, the managers in this study (except for Organisation 6) have not demonstrably applied their perceived intercultural communication competence to recruitment/promotion processes in any way which could ultimately benefit both organisations and their NESB employees. Management communication for dealing with their culturally diverse workforces in these organisations appeared to be bureaucratic, i.e. routinely written and communicated exclusively in English through such communication media as memos/circulars, reports, notices and advertisements. Consequently, many challenges arising from cultural diversity at work including recruitment/promotion remained unresolved in these organisations. The scenario in Organisation 6 was reportedly different with multicultural employees being appointed at all levels of its hierarchy, and with many different types of intercultural interaction occurring between management and multicultural staff, apparently resulting in an increase in the ratio of international customers' satisfaction and a growth in profits.

6.8.4 Research question no. 7.4

In what ways is intercultural communication competence used by Australian hospitality and tourism managers in induction?

As mentioned previously, induction is the process by which a new employee is taken into the organisation and integrated as quickly and effectively as possible (Mullins, 1996). For induction programmes to be effective, they need to be

structured to explain to all new staff, including NESB employees, the acceptable standards of behaviour in the organisation and its corporate culture as well as workplace issues including EEO and occupational health and safety requirements. The role of management in induction is to develop and assess the effectiveness of communication processes for induction against specific information objectives and the cultural and linguistic needs of new culturally diverse employees (OMA, 1994). Ideally, management will develop a communication strategy which meets the needs of its culturally diverse employees during the induction. This requires that management demonstrate a knowledge and understanding of a broad range of communication issues in order to develop an appropriate induction for a culturally diverse workforce. Induction programmes should be conducted in plain English and there should be a policy on whatever induction information should be translated into major community languages.

The Australian hospitality managers interviewed reported different types of induction/orientation programmes at their organisations. Some were brief and informal; others lasted up to two days. The induction programme in one hotel, Organisation 6, was much more sophisticated than the others and included a two-stage orientation programme. However, it still failed to take into account major community languages/languages spoken by the majority of its NESB employees.

The study found that in Organisations 1, 2 and 3 induction programmes were generally brief and informal. For example, the general manager (hospitality and tourism, Organisation 2) described the induction process for new employees as follows:

> On their first day of their employment with us, they are taken around and introduced to key members of the staff. Then they have a meeting with those individual members of the staff so that they can explain to them what their roles are within the organisation and what they do and to give them some helpful little hints, probably on how to settle in a little more quickly. After that the door is left open to them to come into, if they feel like they have got a problem, or, there's something they don't understand, that they know whom to contact for that explanation.

Induction in these three organisations was conducted in English only, as the management policy on recruitment demanded that new employees should have high levels of competence in written and oral English. In Organisations 4 and 5, induction programmes were fairly formal and of longer duration. For example, the induction programme in Organisation 4 lasted two days and new employees were given a broad range of orientation on different aspects of the organisation. According to the human resources director, all induction programmes are written exclusively in English and all management communications with culturally diverse employees are apparently conducted in English. This has the potential to alienate and confuse many NESB employees with low levels of literacy in English.

Finally, management in Organisation 6 has implemented a more sophisticated

two-stage induction programme for new employees. For example, the human resources director in this hotel described their induction process as follows:

> We have two induction programs. We call them Induction A and Induction B. Induction A is the very first day of employment when all the new staff members are ushered into our training room and they are given all the things that they need to know relevant to human resource practices including employment law. During this session, new employees fill out the necessary forms including bank details for their pay information and new employees are introduced to all the general things that they need to know such as fire awareness procedures, evacuation procedures. Then we go into occupational health and safety. We go into hazardous substances. We go into manual handling. We go into all of the policies and procedures as I mentioned earlier on discrimination, harassment issues and drug and alcohol abuse and EEO principles. All of these issues are fully discussed. They are also issued with an employee handbook. We also go through the employee handbook by explaining to them what we expect of them. We explain to them what our employee policies and the hotel policies and procedures are so that they need to abide by them. At the end of this session we ask them to sign off relevant forms which means that they agreed that they have been shown on all operational and human resource practices at this organisation. Within a matter of one, two or three weeks each month we conduct Induction B and this consists much more of a general induction where we tell them all about our corporate culture and our other hotels in the group. We tell them about our own company. We tell them about our corporate office, our management office and the benefits that they can hope to achieve or to get by working in our chain. This is just to broaden their horizon. During that second induction program we also invite the general manager to come and give them an outline of our organisational goal setting, career planning, etc. Then we invite all of the executive committee to have morning tea with those people as well so that they get to meet who these people are that are running the hotel and then we take them to lunch in our own restaurants.

This director also mentioned the new employee feedback programme instituted to gather information on the effectiveness of these induction programmes. This also involves follow-up meetings with new employees so that they can discuss their understandings of the organisation. Employees are also expected to complete a questionnaire in which they confirm that they have understood what they have been shown in their department. This questionnaire also requires the new employees to verify that they have understood all induction processes.

Examination of this induction programme showed that all induction manuals are written exclusively in English which may potentially prove problematic for new employees of NESB backgrounds with limited competence in the English language. Nevertheless, in the two-stage induction process, management take

great care to acculturate their new employees in the corporate culture through a variety of socialisation processes including daily interactions and regular get-togethers. Managers at different levels seem to be engaged in interpersonal communication with their culturally diverse employees virtually on a daily basis. This process of building interpersonal relationships is particularly exemplified by their senior managers, including the general manager, who interacts with culturally diverse employees each day.

6.8.4.1 Summary and discussion of results: induction

All Australian hospitality organisations studied expressed their induction processes exclusively in English. In Organisations 1, 2 and 3 induction programmes were brief and informal with no feedback mechanisms for determining how new employees reacted to them. Organisations 4, 5 and 6 had fairly formal inductions of longer duration. However, most of the managers interviewed made no attempt to vary their management communication strategies at induction to better suit new NESB employees by, for instance, providing documents in major community languages or using bilingual staff to assist mutual comprehension.

No specific communication problems were mentioned by these hospitality managers concerning their induction processes. However, in view of the lack of feedback from new employees on induction processes in Organisations 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5, and given that their induction programmes are exclusively written and delivered in English, it seems to be appropriate to infer that new culturally diverse employees with limited competence in English may experience varying degrees of difficulty in understanding the induction processes offered. In addition, five organisations have not demonstrably applied intercultural communication competence to design induction programmes to suit their NEBS employees. Also, it can be argued that the absence of formal mechanisms to gather feedback on the effectiveness of the induction programmes, except in the case of Organisation 6, would make it difficult for suitable improvements to be made.

6.8.5 Research question no. 7.5

In what ways is intercultural communication competence used by Australian hospitality and tourism managers in training?

As previously discussed, training is used by management as a strategy to improve current and future employees' performance by increasing, through learning and education, employees' abilities to perform, usually by increasing their skills and knowledge (Schuler *et al.*, 1992). In a culturally diverse organisation, training programmes would incorporate cross-cultural and linguistic considerations. Formal processes would be developed to gain feedback from employees on training effectiveness. There would be strategies for adjusting training programmes to better suit culturally diverse employees in response to employees' feedback. There would be clearly stated pre-training requirements in

areas such as English-language literacy and numeracy. Training should also aim to develop mutual trust and build interpersonal relationships between its culturally diverse employees.

Australian hospitality and tourism managers interviewed in this study were asked to comment on their organisation's training programmes for dealing with their culturally diverse employees. Most described the training provided in terms of "generic" training programmes i.e. training is designed in a form that regards the audience as all the same. There was an assumption that the form of communication of information used in training was equally accessible to all workers. There was only one type of training programme for all employees regardless of their cultural and linguistic origins.

Most Australian hospitality organisations did not include cross-cultural awareness programmes as part of their training strategy. Only in Organisation 3 had management recently engaged external consultants to design a cross-cultural training programme for the hospitality industry. This modularised cross-cultural awareness programme is an elective part of the formal qualifications at certificate level for existing and potentially new employees in the industry.

Examination of training programmes at the six hospitality organisations showed that there was no evidence that their staff had undertaken any specific cross-cultural awareness training. Of the twelve managers interviewed, only three in Organisation 5 confirmed that they gained some knowledge of cross-cultural awareness as part of a two-day in-house leadership/management foundation workshop in which cross-cultural issues were peripheral. One manager stated that "It was by no means a comprehensive training programme on cultural diversity, but cultural diversity was treated as a management topic for discussion within the overall framework of the leadership/management foundation workshop."

In summary, training programmes in these hospitality organisations did not include cross-cultural awareness, as conceptualised by Hofstede (1980, 1991). Communication strategies for informing staff of available training were purely bureaucratic in nature (i.e. memos/circulars and notices). In other words, most managers failed to apply their perceived intercultural communication competence to the design, administration and implementation of training. Training programmes were exclusively written and delivered in English in all six hospitality organisations.

6.8.5.1 Summary and discussion of results: training

The bureaucratic style of management of the training function did not demonstrate intercultural communication competence in the organisations studied. There was no provision for training in cross-cultural awareness programmes in any of the organisations. It could be argued that many of the challenges arising from cultural diversity, identified previously in this chapter, are symptomatic of an absence of coherent cross-cultural training. In summary, there was no evidence in any of the organisations studied that Australian hospitality and tourism

managers were applying intercultural communication competence to the training function in a culturally diverse workplace.

6.8.6 Research question no. 7.6

In what ways is intercultural communication competence used by Australian hospitality and tourism managers in supervision?

As previously discussed, the role of supervisor/manager is undergoing rapid change in contemporary Australian organisations, owing to increasing globalisation, continuous technological innovation and cultural diversity in the workplace (Mullins, 1996). For managers to supervise effectively the work of their culturally diverse workforce, they need to have acquired the following knowledge: (a) a clear identification of key attributes of intercultural communication competence; (b) a good understanding of and sensitivity to cross-cultural issues and principles, for example as defined by Hofstede (1980, 1991); and (c) a good theoretical and practical knowledge of managerial functions. An integration of this knowledge is then applied to supervision of staff.

Most Australian hospitality and tourism managers could not cite any specific intercultural management strategies that they applied to enhance their supervision of culturally diverse employees. Many stated that "we treat all employees on an equal basis". Of the twelve managers interviewed, only two cited sensitivity and mutual trust as intercultural management strategies used when supervising their culturally diverse workforce. For example, the national human resources director (five-star multinational hotel, Organisation 5) maintained:

> Whilst I don't have any comprehensive management strategy which would greatly help my interaction with cultural diversity at workplace, one thing that I think that has worked well for me has been the notion of sensitivity to different cultures. But this is not a management technique. In my view, it is a characteristic of a person, and in my case, it is entrenched in my behaviour to display sensitive attitudes towards other people.

At another organisation, the human resources director (five-star hotel, Organisation 6) described his management strategy when supervising different cultures as fostering mutual respect. He claimed that "mutual respect I think is most certainly the foundation of our management practice, because from there, it can develop into quite an open relationship, so to speak, and finally to an understanding of cultural diversity, as well as improved intercultural communication". Senior managers in this organisation also practised a unique management strategy in that every senior manager was rostered to work at the front office, once a week, dealing with day-to-day issues including cultural diversity arising from international guests and NESB employees. This management strategy was particularly helpful for senior managers to update themselves on current issues including cultural diversity on a regular basis.

In summary, the managers studied did not demonstrate any depth of knowledge or integration of cross-cultural issues and principles, as conceptualised by Hofstede (1980, 1991), that they could specifically articulate and apply to supervision of staff. Consequently, they were unable to cite specific intercultural management strategies for supervision except for two references to sensitivity and mutual trust by two of the interviewees.

6.8.6.1 Summary and discussion of results: supervision

Except for two hospitality managers who attributed sensitivity and mutual trust as generic management strategies for supervising staff, most Australian hospitality and tourism managers were unable to cite any specific management strategies for supervision of a culturally diverse workforce. In summary, there was little evidence of competent practice in the management of cultural diversity when these managers supervise their culturally diverse staff.

6.8.7 Research question no. 7.7

In what ways is intercultural communication competence used by Australian hospitality and tourism managers in industrial relations?

As previously mentioned, industrial relations is an area in which individual employees are increasingly expected, even required, to negotiate industrial matters. Employees are expected, for example, to participate on joint consultative committees and to understand and vote on enterprise agreements (Mullins, 1996; OMA, 1994). In culturally diverse workplaces there is an increased need for effective communication about industrial issues affecting staff.

The managers interviewed reported that all industrial relations issues were communicated to their culturally diverse employees both formally and informally in English. Issues were explained at briefings on induction and at training programmes and in organisational literature. Managers reported that the main problems in industrial relations in the workplace arose from cultural and linguistic differences in their culturally diverse workforces. They considered that some problems in industrial relations were made worse because multicultural employees had limited levels of competence in written and spoken English.

6.8.7.1 Cultural and linguistic differences

The managers interviewed unanimously identified cultural and linguistic differences in the workplace as a common problem in industrial relations. Managers in Organisations 1, 2 and 3 reported that they did not have many culturally diverse employees and could not therefore comment on problems and issues of industrial matters arising from cultural diversity in their workplaces. Nevertheless, they pointed out that, as representative hospitality organisations, they had learnt that cultural diversity at their member organisations' workplaces had

presented many challenges arising from cultural and linguistic differences resulting in a poor grasp of industrial relations issues by the workforce. In addition, managers in these organisations generally experienced difficulty in communicating industrial issues to their culturally diverse workforces because of cultural differences. These Australian hospitality and tourism managers mainly used organisational literature such as memos/circulars written only in English to communicate industrial relations issues to employees. Meetings held to discuss industrial issues were all conducted in English. These ways of communicating could potentially create barriers to the effective understanding of industrial issues by multicultural employees with limited English competence, thereby causing industrial tensions.

An additional problem related to industrial relations reported was that multicultural workers are poorly represented in the ranks of unions. All interviewees commented that they have experienced a low participation rate by multicultural employees in negotiating working conditions and being involved in joint consultative committee structures within the organisation. According to the general manager (training services, Organisation 3), "uncertainty and disputes can often arise due to linguistic and cultural factors present within the hospitality workforce, and this has the potential to be exacerbated by a poor grasp of industrial relations issues by the culturally diverse employees with limited competence in written and verbal English".

Managers from the hotels (Organisations 4, 5 and 6) have similar experiences of cultural diversity presenting major challenges in industrial relations processes. For example, the national human resources director (five-star multinational hotel, Organisation 5) commented:

> Cultural diversity at the workplace presents a major challenge for industrial relations [because] there are many instances of multicultural employees who, because of their cultural and linguistic difference, have created many problems for management of industrial relations. In our experience, we have found, for example, Filipino workers, mainly working in our housekeeping department to be problematic. Normally, they are fairly docile workers, but the minute they perceive that they have been hard done by the management, they immediately become bombastic and too demanding. As well, the same type of problem has been experienced within some of our South American workers who would show hostility to management involving even minor industrial matters. They simply don't have much understanding of industrial relations processes in Australia, nor do they know how to calmly negotiate with management on workplace-related matters. There are avenues for them to seek clarification for resolving their differences with management on industrial matters within our organisation at any time. However, what we found is that during our training and induction sessions we explain everything to them and we think that they understood everything. Later on, when there may be an industrial problem, some of our multicultural employees never raise with us this as an issue to resolve. They then feel aggrieved and

hard done by because the particular problem which they perceived, was not addressed by the management. This boils down to cultural and linguistic difference.

The human resources director (five-star multinational hotel, Organisation 4) expressed a similar sentiment involving multicultural employees. He went on to claim that many Asian workers, for example, do not know how to negotiate with management on workplace agreements. He found them to be rather compliant employees who would never tell him how they felt about certain industrial relations issues because of respect for authority stemming from their cultural conditioning.

6.8.7.2 Summary and discussion of results: industrial relations

The managers studied unanimously suggested that cultural and linguistic differences arising from their culturally diverse workforces were the main impediments to the effective management of industrial relations processes. Multicultural employees' limited levels of competence in written and verbal communication in English compounded these problems. However, the managers' own ways and styles of communication seem to have contributed to these problems in industrial relations. The bureaucratic nature of organisational literature on industrial relations issues, exclusively written in sophisticated English, seem to have alienated many multicultural employees with limited competence in English. Hospitality managers have applied implicit personality theory (Hartley, 1993) by blaming NESB employees' alleged difficulty in understanding industrial relations issues on culturally stereotyped personal attributes. In addition, Australian hospitality managers lacked a sophisticated knowledge of cross-cultural issues and thereby could not articulate appropriate industrial relations strategies based on cross-cultural issues and principles (see Hofstede, 1980, 1991).

6.8.8 Research question no. 7.8

In what ways is intercultural communication competence used by Australian hospitality and tourism managers in change management?

As previously mentioned, a common observation among management analysts is that conditions both outside and inside organisations are changing rapidly and profoundly (Ivancevich *et al.*, 1997; Mullins, 1996; Robbins, 1991). Outside the organisation, environmental conditions are described as generally becoming less stable, even turbulent. Economic conditions, availability and cost of materials and money, technological and product innovation and government regulation can change, and have changed, rapidly. Inside the organisation, employees themselves are changing by bringing and acquiring higher educational levels to the workplace and by emphasising human values and questioning authority. The

composition of the workforce itself is changing in terms of gender and ethnicity. Management, in response to these challenges, introduces policies for change to better position the organisation for dealing with a multiplicity of associated issues. To gain the co-operation of their culturally diverse workforce to effect organisational change, management may be advised to consult widely with their culturally diverse workforce on all aspects of changes to be implemented so that employees feel a degree of involvement as well as ownership of the issues involved in management of change. Managers may also be required to initiate and institute formal processes for feedback on change in their organisations.

The Australian hospitality and tourism managers interviewed reported that issues concerning management of change are communicated to their culturally diverse employees in different ways. These included briefings at staff departmental meetings and staff forums as well as written management communications e.g. memos, notices, circulars, reports and other literature. All these documents were written only in English. The managers reported that the main problems of management of change in the workplace occurred as a result of cultural and linguistic differences arising from a culturally diverse workforce. Multicultural employees' limited levels of competence in English were also considered to add problems associated with introducing change. No specific strategies for change management to deal with the reactions and influences of a culturally diverse workforce to change were cited by the managers who participated in this research.

It seemed that Australian hospitality and tourism managers lacked an understanding of the complexities and subtleties of the cross-cultural dimensions of change (see Hofstede, 1980, 1991; Hofstede and Bond, 1984). This has resulted in problematic intercultural interactions between managers and staff during the process of management of change at these organisations.

6.8.8.1 Summary and discussion of results: change management

Australian hospitality and tourism managers reported that a variety of communication strategies were used to effect changes within their organisations such as oral briefings at staff/departmental meetings and staff forums as well as written management communications e.g. memos, notices, circulars, reports and literature, expressed in English. They identified the main impediment to the effective implementation of change processes in their organisations as a lack of understanding of the change by employees because of cultural and linguistic differences. Multicultural employees' limited written and spoken English was considered to be a particular difficulty in the smooth management of change. It seems that the managers' own failure to understand the cross-cultural dimensions of change, coupled with their inability to apply their perceived intercultural communication competence to developing strategies for management of change suitable for a culturally diverse workforce, have contributed to problems introducing change.

6.8.9 Research question no. 7.9

In what ways is intercultural communication competence used by Australian hospitality and tourism managers in customer service?

As previously discussed, customer service is widely considered to be one of the key areas in which organisations can have a positive and significant impact on customer satisfaction and retention. To do this effectively in a culturally diverse marketplace, organisations need to respond to a greatly increased range of client expectations and demands (Kotler, 1997; OMA, 1994). To apply their intercultural communication competence to their managerial function of customer service in a culturally diverse workplace, managers need to identify internal and external resources such as the language and cultural backgrounds of their staff e.g. an audit could be conducted of existing staff language and cultural skills available. Managers could commission market research to identify culturally diverse clientele in order to develop a formal policy on customer service that acknowledges and serves their culturally diverse clientele. Managers could institute customer service training requirements for their staff, especially on cross-cultural communication, to improve their service to their culturally diverse clientele.

The Australian hospitality managers reported considerable benefits from having a culturally diverse workforce in providing customer service to a culturally diverse clientele. More specifically, managers in Organisations 1, 2 and 3 based their views on reports from the member organisations. Managers from hotels, Organisations 4, 5 and 6, reported that their own culturally diverse workforces had been highly beneficial in effectively meeting the needs of their culturally diverse clientele.

There was a unanimous view among the interviewees that there are considerable benefits in having a culturally diverse workforce when it comes to meeting the demands and expectations of a culturally diverse clientele. For example, the national human resources director (five-star multinational hotel, Organisation 5) commented:

> Because we are very much a market driven organisation, we have found that having cultural diversity in the workplace helps our culturally diverse clientele tremendously. For example, many of our international guests staying in this hotel originate from Asia, and we have carefully packaged our customer service to meet our target clientele. Now, because we have Asian employees who are quite knowledgeable about Asian cultural protocols and Asian cuisines, they have proven to be a great asset to this organisation when it comes to effective servicing for our Asian guests. Our Asian employees have put forward suggestions which made marked improvements to servicing our Asian clientele particularly Asian cuisines now being served in all our restaurants.

The human resources director (five-star multinational hotel, Organisation 4) reported:

> Because we have a highly culturally diverse workforce, we have been able to use linguistic and cultural skills of our workforce to better service our culturally diverse clients. In particular, we have got a considerable number of Japanese guests who are staying in our hotel, and we have done a lot of work in this area to analyse our Japanese guests' demands and expectations. This is made possible through having Japanese employees who were able to provide much of the information we needed to incorporate into our Japanese customer service. The guest questionnaires which we regularly conduct have been complimentary to our customer service, largely thanks to our Japanese employees' input in this regard.

These positive views on the ability of a culturally diverse workforce to provide effective customer service to international guests were corroborated by other managers interviewed separately in the same organisation.

The human resources director (five-star hotel, Organisation 6) attributed much of its organisational customer service success stories to its culturally diverse employees. According to him:

> There has been an exponential growth in the number of our international guests and hence customer service satisfaction largely due to our multicultural employees. Our employees' cultural and linguistic skills have undoubtedly been our greatest assets to servicing our international guests in an effective manner. This is confirmed by our own customer service surveys conducted on a regular basis. For example, our Japanese sales manager, originally himself of Japanese cultural background, has been able to substantially increase the ratio of Japanese market segment largely due to his linguistic and cultural skills as well as his understanding of Japanese market segments.

In the same organisation, the food and beverages director attributed the increase in European guests and European customer service satisfaction levels largely to his employees of European backgrounds.

In summary, these Australian hospitality and tourism managers, particularly in the hotel sector, seem to have made good use of their culturally diverse workforce to better position themselves in terms of effective international customer service. As a result, many successes in both exponential growth in numbers of international guests and customer service satisfaction levels, as reported by these managers, were ascribed to their culturally diverse employees' involvement in customer service.

Phenomenological information collected indicated that, notwithstanding the demonstrated beneficial aspects of a culturally diverse workforce in terms of customer service, the hospitality managers in these organisations have not applied their perceived intercultural competence to improve customer service in a systematic manner. For example, their corporate communications including brochures are written exclusively in English, thereby potentially preventing

many members of their culturally diverse workforce and clients with limited competence in written and oral English from understanding the range of services. Further, they have failed to train their workforces on cross-cultural dimensions of customer service, particularly cross-cultural communication. Their printed training packages were exclusively written in English. There was little evidence to suggest that these Australian managers have themselves understood theories of cross-cultural dimensions of customer service (see Hofstede, 1980, 1991).

6.8.9.1 Summary and discussion of results: customer service

Australian hospitality and tourism managers reported a variety of communication strategies used to promote customer service within their organisations, including staff meetings as well as written management communications e.g. memos, notices, circulars, reports and organisational literature. However, all aspects of customer service are communicated to employees in English. It can thus be argued that some NESB employees will not understand the full range of services available to customers and, consequently, their customer service will be limited.

There was a unanimous view among the managers interviewed that their employees' cultural and linguistic skills have proven to be beneficial in terms of effective customer service for their international clientele. Nevertheless, these managers' own failure to institute training in the cross-cultural dimensions of customer service in their organisations to improve services seems to demonstrate that their application of intercultural communication in management of customer service in their culturally diverse contents was not as effective as it might be.

6.8.10 Research question no. 7.10

In what ways is intercultural communication competence used by Australian hospitality and tourism managers in financial management?

As previously discussed, financial management-related activities include financial methods, budgets, and audits; financial methods include financial statements, ratio analyses and break-even analysis. Commonly used types of financial statements are balance statements, income statements, cash flow, sources and funds statements. These statements are used by managers to control the organisation's activities and by individuals outside the organisation to evaluate its effectiveness (Stoner *et al.*, 1994). Financial management is of great importance for the evaluation of organisational effectiveness, and in some organisations, financial management is seen as a catalyst for innovation and entrepreneurial activities including diversification.

In general, the managers interviewed reported that there was little consultation with their culturally diverse workforce on the design and determination of financial plans in their organisations. They expressed a unanimous agreement

that decisions for the design and implementation of financial objectives and financial plans for their organisations were, by and large, made by their senior management team only. In other words, these managers believed that decisions for the determination of financial plans were the exclusive domain of senior management. Once these decisions were formulated by senior management, they were then circulated to relevant department heads for action. Communication strategies used by management to inform department heads of specific financial plans were bureaucratic in nature (memos/circulars, reports, and notices) and written in English. Department heads were then required to interpret and execute these plans within their areas or responsibility.

In summary, the usual method of financial management described by managers was to a large extent autocratic and lacked any consultation processes within the workforce including with heads of departments.

6.8.10.1 Summary and discussion of results: financial management

Some of the managers interviewed were not able to comment specifically on the managerial function of financial planning because this function was the prerogative of senior management only. In summary, they reported that only senior management teams were involved in the design and determination of financial plans/financial objectives with virtually no consultation with their culturally diverse employees. Communication strategies for these financial plans were formal, bureaucratic and written only in English. Managers were unaware of that any consideration was given to issues of cultural diversity in the financial decisions and plans made by senior management. Phenomenological information collected through multiple sources of evidence revealed no evidence that the financial planners consulted multicultural employees on the design and implementation of financial plans in the six organisations studied.

6.8.11 Research question no. 7.11

In what ways is intercultural communication competence used by Australian hospitality and tourism managers in marketing?

As previously discussed, marketing is a crucial managerial function within organisations designed to satisfy customer needs and wants through the development of appropriate products and services (Kotler, 1997). To do this effectively in a culturally diverse marketplace, organisations need to identify a great range of client expectations and demands through market research (OMA, 1994). Effective management of cultural diversity in relation to marketing would suggest that managers in applying their intercultural communication competence to the managerial function of marketing, would, as for the managerial function of customer service, identify internal and external resources, such as language and cultural background, to best meet customer requirements.

Managers could commission market research to identify their culturally

diverse clientele so that they could adapt their marketing strategies including delivery of marketing messages to better suit their culturally diverse marketing segments (Kotler, 1997). Managers could also use the linguistic and cultural skills of their culturally diverse workforce as part of their marketing strategies. Consequently, an audit of language and cultural skills of staff would assist the marketing function.

The managers reported that they have devised their marketing strategies around their market segments (i.e. customer groups with similar needs and wants), both domestic and international. In other words, they have different marketing strategies/marketing plans for different market segments. Their communication of marketing strategies to all clientele including advertising, product/service design are largely in English. They also reported that their culturally diverse workforces have been instrumental in the delivery of quality customer service, which has helped them to accomplish their marketing objectives. Many marketing success stories were attributed to the considerable language and cultural skills and insights into overseas market niches of culturally diverse staff. None of the managers knew of any plans in their organisations to market to culturally diverse clientele. Nor were there any educational or training initiatives to explore relationships between marketing and cultural diversity.

6.8.11.1 Summary and discussion of results: marketing

While the managers seem skilled in implementing a variety of marketing strategies for capturing different market segments, they were unable to elaborate on specific marketing issues related to culturally diverse clientele. Rather, they depended on their culturally diverse employees to identify and meet the demands of different market segments. They readily acknowledged that employees' cultural and linguistic abilities, coupled with their overseas' marketing knowledge, were a great asset to their organisations in determining the marketing policies for these international market segments. Nevertheless, there was little attempt to use languages other than English in marketing campaigns and brochures. There was no evidence that managers could refer to an organisational audit of employees' multicultural skills and no manager suggested that such an audit would be useful for the marketing function. Nor was there any existing market research on cultural issues relating to clients and no manager expressed an interest in commissioning such research. There was also no evidence that discussion, education or training on how to market to culturally diverse clientele were features of organisational culture.

In summary, managers' strategies for dealing with cultural diversity in marketing were ad hoc and unsystematic and not based on any form of cultural databases for either clientele or staff.

6.8.12 Summary and discussion of results of research question no. 7 (1–11)

While several challenges and benefits arising from cultural diversity in the workplace were identified by managers interviewed for this study, nevertheless, there was little specific evidence that these managers had clearly articulated appropriate strategies for dealing with these challenges and for capitalising on potential benefits. In research question no. 7 a closer examination was made of how Australian hospitality and tourism managers incorporated issues relating to cultural diversity in the workforce to eleven management practices: planning; workplace communication; recruitment/promotion; induction; training; supervision; industrial relations; change management; customer service; financial management; and marketing. In other words, the question probed how Australian hospitality and tourism managers might use intercultural communication competence in each of these eleven managerial functions.

There was a unanimous view by the hospitality managers interviewed that effective communication was central to the performance of their managerial functions and most of these managers also regarded themselves as effective in their managerial communications. However, many were unable to state how they applied their perceived intercultural communication competence specifically to a range of managerial functions. Phenomenological information collected from these managers revealed that much of their management communications targeted at staff, including NESB employees, were message-driven and spoken and written in sophisticated bureaucratic conventions exclusively in English, thereby potentially excluding many NESB employees with low levels of competence in oral and written English. Most managers' general lack of awareness of cross-cultural issues proved an added hindrance to an effective application of intercultural communication competence within specific managerial functions. Consequently, managers reported experiencing difficulties arising from departmental concentration of ethnic groups, language differences and cultural differences, where managers indicated some unhelpful stereotypical views of some minority groups. Most managers seemed to perform poorly in managerial functions where dealing with cultural diversity was required. Thus there was an underutilisation of multicultural human resources in these hospitality organisations. Only a few managers were able to capitalise on the cultural diversity of the workplace in various facets of their managerial functions.

NESB employees' contributions to quality customer service were recognised by these hospitality managers as providing substantial benefits for their organisations. Nevertheless, of the six organisations studied, only managers in Organisation 6 had involved culturally diverse employees in their managerial functions. In particular, Organisation 6 had actively sought to elicit contributions from NESB employees in day-to-day planning in the organisation. Management, including senior management, in Organisation 6 demonstrated an interest in valuing cultural diversity. Consequently, NESB employees in that hotel have been able to gain promotions to different levels of management. In Organisation

6, daily interactions and discussions took place between senior managers and NESB employees on various aspects of management-related issues including organisational and planning issues. Through these regular and respectful interactions, managers seemed to foster strong interpersonal relationships in the workplace and an attitude of trust with NESB employees.

Finally, there was an absence of formal processes in the organisations studied to ascertain in a systematic way whether management communications have been successful, in terms of being understood by their NESB employees, or not.

6.9 Research question no. 8

What training strategies are available for Australian hospitality and tourism managers to advance their intercultural communication competence and enhance their management of cultural diversity?

The managers interviewed were invited to comment on the availability of training programmes for improving their intercultural communication competence and hence their management of cultural diversity.

It was found that most of the organisations studied in this research did not feature cross-cultural awareness programmes in their management training strategies. Organisation 3 did have a cross-cultural training programme for the hospitality industry that was available to new and existing employees. Upon satisfactory completion of this course, participants received a certificate of attainment.

Examination of management training programmes in the six hospitality organisations showed that particular training in intercultural communication competence was nonexistent. Only three managers in Organisation 5 indicated that they had received some training on cross-cultural awareness during their participation at a two-day in-house leadership/management foundation workshop which touched on cross-cultural issues. "It was by no means a comprehensive training programme on cultural diversity, but cultural diversity was treated as a management topic for discussion within the overall framework of the leadership/management foundation workshop" (human resources director, five-star multinational hotel, Organisation 5).

There was no evidence of training for managers on understanding contemporary theories of psychological adaptation processes of sojourners (e.g. international guests at their hotels), as conceptualised by Bochner (1981, 1982), Brislin (1981, 1993), Harris and Moran (1979), Lysgaard (1955), Oberg (1960), Searle and Ward (1990) and Ward and Kennedy (1996). Neither were there any management training programmes on understanding the psychological theory of uncertainty reduction, as advanced by Gudykunst (1983, 1986). It could be argued that knowledge of theories of psychological adaptation processes of sojourners and uncertainty reduction theory is essential for developing intercultural communication competence.

Previously in this research, reference was made to several undergraduate and

postgraduate degree programmes in hospitality management in Australia developed in response to an increasing recognition of the importance of the industry. In these tertiary-level degree programmes there is little evidence of inclusion of curricula specifically in intercultural communication studies within the context of the Australian hospitality and tourism service industries. At an Australian university, a one-semester subject on cross-cultural management communication has been developed by this author as part of the degree of Bachelor of Business Administration (International Business). This subject is also available to students enrolled in the Bachelor of Hospitality Management and the Bachelor of Arts (Tourism). Since its inception in 1997, the subject has proven to be highly popular, particularly among hospitality students, as demonstrated by students' high ratios of enrolment and positive student evaluations.

Some opportunities exists for postgraduate studies in intercultural communication at many Australian universities depending on the availability of academic staff with expertise in the domain. None of the managers interviewed for this study had undertaken any tertiary training in intercultural communication.

6.9.1 Summary and discussion of results of research question no. 8

No management training programmes were available to Australian hospitality managers in the organisations studied where cross-cultural issues and principles as conceptualised by Hofstede (1980, 1991) were integral to the design of management training. Nor were there any management training programmes on understanding current theories of psychological adaptation processes of sojourners, as developed by Bochner (1981, 1982), Brislin (1981, 1993), Harris and Moran (1979), Lysgaard (1955), Oberg (1960), Searle and Ward (1990) and Ward and Kennedy (1996). There was no training available for these managers on uncertainty reduction theory, as advanced by Gudykunst (1983, 1986). Thus these managers had no opportunity to gain knowledge of a number of essential indicators of intercultural communication competence through in-house training programmes. They had not completed any of the small number of tertiary-level subjects in intercultural communication.

In summary, the managers studied had not been able to enhance their abilities to manage cultural diversity in their organisations by participation in specialised education or training on cross-cultural issues and principles of communication.

6.10 Conclusion

The Australian hospitality and tourism managers who participated in this study unanimously supported the view that competence in management communication, including intercultural communication, is central for the effective performance of all managerial functions e.g. planning, workplace communication, recruitment/promotion, induction, training, supervision, industrial relations, management of change, customer service, financial management and marketing

within their hospitality organisations. Their views showed unequivocal agreement with Thayer's (1990) perspective on management communication, namely, that "Without communication, nothing can be achieved in an organisation and that everything an organisation does and is, is dependent on communication" (pp.7–8).

Different perspectives on intercultural communication competence were expressed across the twelve managers interviewed and even by managers within the same organisation. Senior managers such as general managers and human resources directors appeared well able to provide descriptors of intercultural communication competence. Less senior managers such as food and beverage directors and front office managers, who have daily interactions with culturally diverse clientele and staff, seemed less able to elaborate on the meaning of competence in the workplace. Closer examination of the twelve managers' views on the meaning and application of intercultural communication competence revealed a wide range of perspectives with various degrees of similarity and dissimilarity across managers on fifteen indicators. There were significant discrepancies in managers' perceptions of their competence in intercultural communication and, more generally, of their management of cultural diversity, in relation to their expectations of how they carried out eleven managerial functions in the context of a culturally diverse workforce and clientele. Although cultural diversity was a significant feature of the workforce, the workplace and the environmental context at the hospitality organisations studied, no valuing of cultural diversity was reflected in the core values or mainstream ethos of most of their cultures.

On the whole, the managers in this study showed limited understanding of the cross-cultural relationships as conceptualised by Hofstede (1980, 1991), of current psychological theories of psychological adaptation processes of sojourners such as international visitors, and of uncertainty reduction theory. (See Chapter Three for discussions of these theories.) These managers were thus not familiar with such specific knowledge of key indicators of intercultural communication competence and how this knowledge might be applied to manage cultural diversity in the workplace. These apparent gaps in managers' knowledge of intercultural communication might account for the wide range of challenges that managers associated with managing cultural diversity in their organisations. Managers expressed specific challenges such as dealing with cultural differences, communication problems, gender role conflicts and religious differences. Some managers regarded employees from particular cultural backgrounds as being quite challenging for them to relate to as a manager. Other managers expressed cultural stereotyping in terms of perceived divisiveness among staff where ethnic concentration in departments presented problems for management.

When the findings of this study of management in the Australian hospitality and tourism service industries are compared to the literature on contemporary approaches to intercultural communication competence, and, more generally, on the management of cultural diversity (Adler, Rosenfeld and Towne, 1992; Bochner, 1981, 1982; Brislin, 1981, 1993; Dimbleby and Burton, 1992;

Gudykunst, 1983, 1986; Harris and Moran, 1991; Irwin, 1996; Irwin and More, 1994; Jackson, 1993; Karpin, 1995; Kim, 1988; Kincaid, 1980; Knapp and Miller, 1985; Littlejohn, 1989; Lysgaard, 1955; Oberg, 1960; OMA, 1994; Searle and Ward, 1990; Ward and Kennedy, 1996), the following new model of descriptors of intercultural communication competence are advanced, based on grounded theory. In this new model of intercultural communication competence in Table 6.8, the descriptors have been generated from the findings from the multiple case studies in this research of six Australian hospitality and tourism organisations, as represented by interviews with twelve Australian managers, and from an examination of selected organisational documents. In addition, each descriptor has been aligned to trends in the international literature. Consequently, the following list of descriptors has been developed to represent and highlight descriptors that are significant indicators of the intercultural communication competence particularly for managers in Australian hospitality and tourism organisations. Thus the list gives a combination of descriptors selected and identified by the researcher and the participants in the study in this research. The new descriptors of intercultural communication competence thus have specific applicability to the management of cultural diversity in the Australian hospitality and tourism service industries and may have general applicability to management in other industries worldwide.

It is important for those who manage cultural diversity in the workplace to understand these new descriptors of intercultural communication competence and to be able to apply them in their managerial functions. Consequently, based on grounded theory, a new model of competent managerial practice for the management of cultural diversity, incorporating the new descriptors of intercultural communication competence for eleven managerial functions, is provided in Table 6.9.

Table 6.8 Excellence model of intercultural communication competence (ICC)

Descriptor	*Sources in literature*	*Research reference*
Understanding of cross-cultural dimensions: collectivism vs individualism; small vs large power distance; femininity vs masculinity; weak vs strong uncertainty avoidance; Confucian dynamism (also referred to as long-term orientation vs short-term orientation)	Hofstede (1980, 1991)	See pp.46–55
Understanding of cross-cultural nonverbal communication	Basso (1990); Czinkota *et al.* (1992); Hall (1976); Harris and Moran (1991); Morris (1994); Ricks (1993); Saee (1993, 1998); Samovar and Porter (1995)	See pp.35–39; pp.193–194

Table 6.8 continued

Descriptor	*Sources in literature*	*Research reference*
Understanding of psychological theories of adaptation processes	Bochner (1981, 1982); Brislin (1981, 1993); Harris and Moran (1979); Lysgaard (1955); Oberg (1960); Searle and Ward (1990); Ward and Kennedy (1996)	See pp.77–79
Understanding of psychological theory of uncertainty reduction theory: for strangers	Gudykunst (1983, 1986)	See pp.84–94
Understanding of psychological theory of uncertainty reduction theory: for members of the host culture	New descriptor as a result of the study in this research	See pp.200–202
Mindfulness	Bargh (1989); Langer (1989)	See pp.92–93; p.209
Adaptability	Duran (1992); Irwin (1996); Irwin and More (1994); Lustig and Koester (1993); Spitzberg and Cupach (1984); Spitzberg and Duran (1995); Wiemann and Bradac (1989); Wiseman and Koester (1993)	See pp.1–2; pp.190–191
The ability to establish meaningful interpersonal relationships with members of other cultures; the ability to enter into meaningful dialogue with other people; and the ability to deal with psychological stress within an intercultural context	Gudykunst *et al.* (1977)	See p.100; pp.189–190
Display of behavioural dimensions e.g. respect; empathy; openness; nonjudgementalness; tolerance of ambiguity; ability to perform role behaviours and interaction management	Kealey (1976); Ruben and Kealey (1979)	See pp.109–110
Trust		See p.227
Listening skills		See p.213
Equity/equal treatment of all		See p.211
individuals in intercultural context Education		See p.211
Patience		See p.227
Competence in a second language		See p.209
Open-mindedness		See p.208

Table 6.9 Model of competent practice in managerial functions incorporating intercultural communication competence to manage cultural diversity

Managerial functions	*Competent managerial practice of each managerial function incorporating intercultural communication competence to manage cultural diversity*
Planning is about setting goals, assigning tasks and coordinating activities.	• capitalise on the full range of available resources including cultural diversity in the workplace; • acknowledge the nature of cultural diversity as part of the organisation's mainstream processes; • actively elicit contributions from the culturally diverse workforce for developing, implementing and evaluating organisational planning processes; • adjust organisational planning processes to accommodate cultural and linguistic characteristics of the culturally diverse workforce by translating summaries of business plans into major language groups of the workforce.
Workplace communication is all the means for giving instructions, delegating, sharing information and so on involving oral, written, nonverbal and electronic forms.	• take care to establish and foster elements of trust and open communication with employees on a personal basis; • be sensitive and adaptable to the cultural and linguistic needs of multicultural employees when communicating with them.
Recruitment/promotion is searching for, and obtaining, potential job candidates in sufficient numbers and quality for the organisation to select the most appropriate people to fill its jobs. Promotion is defined in terms of recognising and rewarding staff members who show consistently superior performance in their delegated tasks by higher positions with better pay and working conditions.	• determine recruitment and promotion requirements for both the short- and long-term goals of the organisation, with specific regard to language and cultural skills; • ensure that all management policies and practices are impartial/anti-discriminatory and transparent; • ensure that all interview processes are designed strictly to assess the applicant's qualifications and merit against specific documented job criteria only; • form interview panels for recruitment/promotion to include representatives of the culturally diverse workforce.

Table 6.9 continued

Managerial functions	*Competent managerial practice of each managerial function incorporating intercultural communication competence to manage cultural diversity*
Induction is the process by which a new employee is taken into the organisation and integrated as quickly and effectively as possible.	• develop and deliver induction programmes in such a way as to explain fully to all new staff, including NESB employees, the acceptable standards of behaviour in the organisation and its corporate culture as well as workplace issues including equal employment opportunity principles and occupational health and safety requirements; • assess the effectiveness of existing communication processes for induction to suit the cultural and linguistic needs of the culturally diverse workforce; • conduct induction programmes in plain English, and translate induction information into major community languages; • use bilingual staff at group information sessions to relate to NESB employees with limited competency in English; • institute formal processes for feedback from their employees including NESB employees, to management.
Training involves policies to improve current and future employees' performance by increasing, through learning and education, employees' abilities to perform, usually by increasing their skills and knowledge.	• have a good understanding of and sensitivity to cross-cultural issues and principles and their likely impacts upon training processes; • incorporate flexibly these cross-cultural and linguistic considerations into overall training packages and strategies; • institute formal processes to gain feedback from employees on training effectiveness; • have a strategy and system in the formal processes of the organisation for adjusting training programmes to better suit culturally diverse employees in the light of employees' feedback; • determine pre-training requirements in spoken and written English and numeracy; • focus on the development of mutual trust and building interpersonal relationships with culturally diverse employees as part of the aim of the training programme.
Supervision entails coordinating, directing and guiding the efforts of members of the organisation to achieve organisational goals.	• have an understanding of and sensitivity to cross-cultural issues and principles; • demonstrate appropriate spoken and written English and numeracy skills required to perform supervisory skills; • have a good theoretical and practical knowledge of supervision functions; • create and foster a friendly working environment for staff, where every employee's contribution is valued and recognised.

continued

Table 6.9 continued

Managerial functions	*Competent managerial practice of each managerial function incorporating intercultural communication competence to manage cultural diversity*
Industrial relations involves managers and employees discussing conditions of employment in the workplace. This includes, for example, participating on joint consultative committees and voting on enterprise agreements.	• have an understanding of and sensitivity to cross-cultural issues and principles; • have a sound theoretical and practical knowledge of managerial functions as well as industrial issues e.g. EEO and OHS; • identify and implement training requirements to maximise participation in the industrial relations processes, inclusive of the linguistic and cultural backgrounds of the workforce; • provide information to the culturally diverse workforce about the main aspects of industrial relations including awards and conditions of employment by translating summaries into community languages; • consult the culturally diverse workforce by a variety of means of communication particularly through interpersonal relationships.
Change management is used to develop and implement policies to deal with changing conditions inside and outside the organisation.	• consult widely with the culturally diverse workforce on all aspects of the proposed change so that employees are able to participate and take ownership of the issues involved in introducing the change; • have a knowledge of cross-cultural dimensions and are also well equipped with both theoretical and practical knowledge of management of change; • institute formal processes for feedback from employees on effects of the change.
Customer service in a culturally diverse marketplace is the ability of organisations to respond to a greatly increased range of client expectations and demands.	• identify internal and external resources such as the language and cultural background of the clients and employees e.g. audit of existing staff language and cultural skills available within the organisation; • have a good knowledge of cross-cultural issues and principles so that managers can develop culturally sensitive customer services; • have a theoretical and practical knowledge of customer service; • commission market research to identify culturally diverse clientele; • develop formal policy for customer service based on data from market research; • institute customer service training for staff, especially in cross-cultural communication; • institute formal processes to evaluate customer service on a regular basis.

Table 6.9 continued

Managerial functions	*Competent managerial practice of each managerial function incorporating intercultural communication competence to manage cultural diversity*
Financial management-related activities include financial methods, budgets and audits. These statements are used by managers for controlling the organisation's activities and by individuals outside the organisation for evaluating its effectiveness.	• institute formal processes to seek an input from culturally diverse workforce on the determination of and monitoring of financial performance within the organisation so that employees are involved in making decisions for the organisational financial plan; • have a good knowledge of cross-cultural issues and principles relating to contributing to and reporting financial matters; • have both theoretical and practical knowledge of financial management.
Marketing is satisfying customer needs and wants through the development of appropriate products and services.	• identify internal and external resources such as the language and cultural background of clients and employees e.g. audit of existing staff language and cultural skills in the organisation; • have a good knowledge of cross-cultural issues and principles so that culturally responsive products and services can be developed to meet market demands; • have both theoretical and practical knowledge of marketing; • commission market research to identify culturally diverse clientele, and adapt marketing strategies including delivery of marketing messages to better suit the marketing segments; • use their culturally diverse workforce with linguistic and cultural skills in marketing strategies

In order for the introduction of these new models of intercultural communication competence and competent management practice to succeed within any organisation(s), managers, particularly senior management teams, need to foster a corporate culture not only to support cultural diversity, but more importantly, to celebrate and value cultural diversity. As McLean and Marshall (in Mullins, 1996) remarked, "corporate culture is critically an important feature of effective organisational performance" (p.650). Corporate culture has been conceived "as a system of shared meaning which constitutes a pervasive context for everything we do and think in an organisation" (Collins and McLaughlin, 1996, p.658). Once cultural diversity is incorporated as an essential part of the core ethos within an organisation, the onus is then on management to train the workforce on awareness of cross-cultural dimensions in a systematic manner. Management staff themselves would need to be trained in developing their own intercultural communication competence according to key attributes of this new model. Management policies and practices would need to be modified in order to integrate

all aspects of cross-cultural dimensions. In summary, competent management of cultural diversity is about creating and harnessing a corporate culture that values and empowers its culturally diverse workforce in all dimensions of its organisational *modus operandi*.

6.10.3 A new model of competent practice in managerial functions

Figure 6.1 illustrates a new model of competent practice in managerial functions to represent the inextricable interrelationships between processes involving managers' intercultural communication competence, a corporate culture sensitive to cultural diversity and specific managerial functions to produce outcomes of competent managerial practices for managing cultural diversity in any organisation.

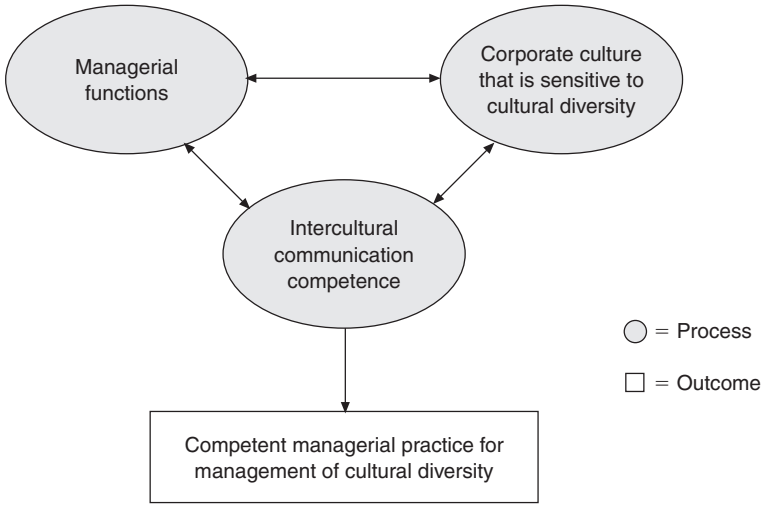

Figure 6.1 A new model of competent practice in managerial functions

7 Conclusion

7.1 Introduction

> "There is a tide in the affairs of men [or women] which, taken at the flood, leads on to fortune. . . . On such a sea we are afloat, And we must take the current when it serves or lose our venture".
>
> (Julius Caesar, William Shakespeare, cited in Gudykunst and Kim, 1997)

This research investigated the management of cultural diversity in the workplace by exploring the nature of intercultural communication competence and its application within the Australian hospitality and tourism service industries to managerial functions such as planning, workplace communication, recruitment/promotion, induction, training, supervision, industrial relations, management of change, customer service, financial management and marketing, as well as their perceptions of corporate culture.

7.2 Rationale for the study

The reality of contemporary Australian cultural diversity with special reference to the hospitality and tourism service industries, coupled with increasing globalisation of Australian businesses, indicated that Australian managers would have to be interculturally competent to capitalise on increasing opportunities and benefits afforded by cultural diversity both nationally and internationally. However, there was a dearth of research to date in Australia exploring the challenges and complexities of intercultural communication, especially relating to the hospitality industry. The absence of either quantitative or qualitative research in relation to the nature of intercultural communication competence within the Australian hospitality and tourism industries suggested that it would be useful to design a study to identify and isolate the key determining variables for effective intercultural communication by managers.

The prospect of such a study was even more significant because contemporary theories of intercultural communication focused on the sojourners'/migrants' responsibility to develop intercultural communication competence rather than on any equivalent requirement for members of the host culture. Thus the aim of this

research was to explore how Anglo Australian hospitality and tourism managers understood and used intercultural communication in their managerial roles in the context of culturally diverse workplaces.

In Chapter 1, the pervasive nature of cultural diversity within Australian society and its organisations especially in the Australian hospitality industry was noted to have considerable implications for managers' intercultural communication competence. The centrality of communication for managerial functions within the sector was inextricably linked to management of cultural diversity in these workplaces.

Contemporary intercultural communication theories, namely, the "English language alone is enough" thesis; Hall's (1976) theory of "low-context" and "high-context" culture and communication; Hofstede's (1980) cultural dimensions model; the psychological theory of culture shock; general systems theory; convergence theory; uncertainty reduction theory; and interpersonal theories were all reviewed to elucidate the scope and potential of intercultural communication competence that could be used by managers of multicultural workforces. Consequently, it was argued that any investigation of the intercultural communication competence of Australian hospitality and tourism managers would need to address a wide range of dimensions suggested by current theoretical perspectives. Provisions for English-language training are not sufficient to satisfy intercultural communication competence in the workplace. In accordance with contemporary theoretical perspectives, a construct of intercultural communication competence must include and value psychological, cultural and systems (or organisational) attributes. In addition, the intercultural communication competence of both the members of the host culture (Australian managers) and multicultural staff and clients must be examined. It was argued that it is unsatisfactory, and indeed inequitable, to study the intercultural communication competence of Australian managers within a framework where staff and clients are expected to assimilate to Australian cultural norms, both in the wider Australian society and in organisational contexts in hospitality institutions located in Australia. In this research, it was argued that there is a shared responsibility for intercultural communication competence between all participants whether host, migrant or sojourner.

In particular, the scope and potential of intercultural communication competence was further refined in Chapter 2 to emphasise the nexus between communication, management and culture and to draw attention to obstacles to intercultural communication in culturally diverse workplaces in the dominant Australian culture. To manage a culturally diverse workforce, Australian managers need to incorporate intercultural communication competence in the key managerial functions already identified as well as into their perceptions of Corporate Culture. In general, the limited amount of available research (Irwin and More, 1994; Karpin, 1995; OMA, 1994) has demonstrated that Australian managers appear to lack competence in their management of cultural diversity, and associated intercultural communication competence, and this has been reflected in their inability to perform these specific managerial functions within

culturally diverse workplaces. Specifically, it was established that there was a lack of research on intercultural communication competence and management of cultural diversity by Australian managers in the country's hospitality industry. Consequently, in this research the first special study of Australian hospitality and tourism managers has been carried out to investigate a previously identified general trend towards lack of competence by managers in dealing with cultural diversity in the workplace including deficiencies in intercultural communication competence.

Particular contemporary theories of intercultural communication were further examined in Chapter 3 to determine specific implications for the managerial practice of Australian hospitality and tourism managers. While particular implications were discovered, it was also found that some theories contained significant weaknesses or limitations for the scope of analysis of management in culturally diverse workplaces. The "English language alone is enough" thesis (Eyles *et al.*, 1989; Harris, 1996; Jupp, 1889; ROMMPAS, 1986) did not provide a coherent conceptual framework where both immigrant workers and the Australian managers could improve their intercultural communication competence. Encouraging one group to speak English at "adequate levels" does not deal with the complex nature of intercultural communication as defined elsewhere in the literature.

The psychological theory of culture shock (Bochner, 1981, 1982; Brislin, 1981, 1993; Gudykunst, 1983, 1986; Harris and Moran, 1979; Kim, 1988a and b; Lysgaard, 1955; Oberg, 1960; Searle and Ward, 1990; Ward and Kennedy, 1996) was shown to have particular implications for Australian hospitality managers. Awareness of issues arising from psychological adaptation to another culture could lead to intervening strategies to assist international guests. In the general systems theory of intercultural communication (Kim, 1988a and b, 1990; Kim and Ruben, 1988), there was a distinct failure to include the intercultural communication competence of members of the host culture in the systems analysis. Similarly, a convergence theory (Kincaid, 1987, 1988) failed to provide a satisfactory way of examining the intercultural communication competence of members of the host culture. Uncertainty reduction theory (Gudykunst, 1983, 1986) suggested that Australian hospitality managers might demonstrate intercultural communication competence by their ability to manage their experiences of uncertainty in a range of intercultural encounters in the workplace. Finally, interpersonal theories of the dynamics of intercultural communication (Adler *et al.*, 1992; Dimbleby and Burton, 1992; Gudykunst, 1983, 1986; Jackson, 1993; Irwin, 1996; Knapp and Miller, 1985a and b; Littlejohn, 1989) have suggested that any analysis of intercultural communication requires attention to the nature of interpersonal relationships. It was argued that these theories of construction of meaning and reciprocal creation and negotiation of meaning along with a person's ability to establish interpersonal relationships provided the most significant hallmarks of effective intercultural communication competence for managers (Jackson, 1993; Irwin, 1996).

The present challenges of cultural diversity facing the Australian hospitality

and tourism service industries that have implications for management were discussed in Chapter 4. Effective intercultural communication is central for the successful management of performance in such a culturally diverse industry. An analysis of current hospitality training in Australia, including education in intercultural communication and major tourism languages, revealed a lack of sufficiently qualified staff in language and cross-cultural skills. In addition, there was an apparent gap in management training and education specifically relating to understanding and developing intercultural communication competence. Analysis of current management practices within the sector demonstrated that there were major deficiencies in the managers' current performance in areas such as human resources management, operations management and general management.

In order to investigate the particular nature of intercultural communication competence and its application within the Australian hospitality industry to the specific identified managerial functions, a qualitative methodology was designed featuring multiple sources of evidence, namely in-depth interviews; ethnomethodology; historical analysis and organisational documentary evidence. This methodology allowed the researcher to collect detailed personal responses on the issues under investigation from twelve Australian hospitality and tourism managers representative of senior and middle management across industry bodies and hotels.

From interpersonal communication theory, theories of world cultures, uncertainty reduction theory and psychological adaptation theory, eight research objectives and eight research questions were identified to have implications for Australian hospitality and tourism managers' intercultural communication competence for managing culturally diverse workforces.

In summary, the issues investigated in this study include: definitions of intercultural communication competence; experiences of uncertainty in daily intercultural encounters in the workplace; perceptions of the importance of interpersonal relationships for intercultural communication competence; understandings of psychological adaptation processes likely to be experienced by international customers during their visits to Australia; perceptions of "challenge" arising from cultural diversity in the workplace; representations of cultural diversity within Australian hospitality organisational cultures; the potential impacts of cultural diversity upon management practices; the application of intercultural communication competence to managerial functions; and the availability of management training programmes in order to develop further their intercultural communication competence and enhance their management of cultural diversity.

The study found that Australian hospitality managers expressed a variety of perspectives on the nature of intercultural communication competence reflecting their differing degrees of perceived knowledge and intuitive understandings of the construct. Definitions covered the ability to establish interpersonal relationships; adaptability; mindfulness; trust; equity; respect for individual and cultural differences; good listening skills; education; personality traits; tolerance for

ambiguity; patience; empathy; cross-cultural awareness/sensitivity to other cultures/values; and an assimilationist attitude to intercultural communication competence.

Overall, a majority view emerged among these Australian hospitality and tourism managers, based on their intuitive understandings and perceptions rather than their formal training, that key traits of intercultural communication competence included the ability to establish interpersonal relationships and adaptability and sensitivity to other cultures. This view accords with the main features of the original definition of intercultural communication competence mentioned in Chapter 1. However, in terms of the scope of intercultural communication competence expressed in Chapters 1, 2 and 3, the managers showed, on the whole, only a limited and narrow understanding of intercultural communication competence. There was also a discrepancy in the range of indicators used to define intercultural communication competence at different levels of management. The more senior managers in the organisational hierarchy seemed to be more descriptive of their perceived knowledge of such competence. In comparison, the less senior managers (i.e. middle managers) appeared to be less equipped to suggest specific indicators.

A majority of the managers reported uncertainty in their daily intercultural encounters in the workplace. This finding supported the proposition, discussed in Chapter 3, that uncertainty and anxiety feature in many human interactions, including intercultural encounters, and that people seek to reduce or manage this uncertainty through ongoing communication (Lazarus, 1991; May, 1977). What is significant in this study is that the members of the host culture experienced a noticeable degree of uncertainty, and even anxiety, especially when initially dealing with individuals of different cultural backgrounds. The uncertainty and anxiety arising from intercultural encounters were experienced by these managers in a number of ways which included: not knowing how multicultural people would understand the content of the communication; not knowing how they would react to the communication; and not being able to predict the other person's communicative responses. Thus linguistic and cultural differences were revealed to pose serious impediments to effective intercultural interactions in a hospitality workplace.

In response to the uncertainty or anxiety arising from intercultural encounters in the workplace, these managers developed a number of strategies to help them to reduce these feelings. Strategies such as open-mindedness (i.e. not having any preconceived/stereotypical views of a multicultural person and being willing to learn from a new culture), an attitude of trust, the ability to establish an interpersonal relationship/friendship, self-monitoring/mindfulness and cultural awareness had been mentioned by these managers as indicators of intercultural communication competence and were reiterated as means for coping with uncertainty and anxiety. Patience and competency in language i.e. English, to achieve mutual communication, were additional strategies. No managers suggested that they should learn another language to reduce their uncertainty in intercultural encounters.

In an attempt to reduce uncertainty, different types of coping strategies were used. These included (a) the ability to establish interpersonal relationships; (b) the willingness to learn about a new culture; and (c) being open to other views and values without prejudging them. Finally, a minority of managers reported no degree of uncertainty/anxiety in their intercultural encounters in the workplace. These managers believed that they felt at ease with people of culturally different backgrounds from themselves because of their lifelong experiences of cultural diversity through living overseas and working with culturally diverse people and, in some cases, through establishing close friendships with multicultural people. They particularly emphasised that they gained real insights into different cultures from living and working in those cultures over a period of time.

A clear majority view accorded with the original proposition discussed in Chapter 1 that the ability to establish interpersonal relationships is the key indicator of intercultural communication competence. Few managers cited respect/consideration and toleration of multicultural people as critical elements of intercultural communication competence, and only one manager did not agree with any views put forward by the others interviewed. These perspectives were also captured in the form of narratives and vignettes, thereby adding broad support to the majority view that the ability to establish interpersonal relationships is a critical part of intercultural communication competence (Dimbleby and Burton, 1992; Gudykunst, 1986; Irwin, 1996; Jackson, 1993).

Australian hospitality and tourism managers expressed a wide range of individual views on the psychological adaptation processes (see Bochner, 1981, 1982; Brislin, 1981, 1993; Harris and Moran, 1979; Lysgaard, 1955; Oberg, 1960; Searle and Ward, 1990; Ward and Kennedy, 1996) likely to be experienced by international customers during their visits to Australia: psychological disorientation/elation; vulnerability to crime; culture shock; and language and cultural barriers. Some managers had no empathy for these visitors' psychological adaptation.

On the whole, the managers revealed only a peripheral understanding of international guests' psychological adaptation processes during their stay in Australia. None had undertaken formal study of these theories of psychological adaptation processes. In addition, there were no organisational processes for monitoring international guests' adjustment to Australian culture and society during their stay. Not a single survey has ever been conducted by these hospitality establishments to ascertain international guests' degree of psychological adaptation to Australia so that specific management practices could be developed to meet guests' perceived needs in this regard.

According to the hospitality managers interviewed, the challenges of cultural diversity in the workplace included dealing with cultural differences and communication difficulties as a result of low levels of English-language competence by culturally diverse workers. Managers perceived that gender roles and religious values and practices posed management challenges across a multicultural workforce where individual differences and preferences needed to be either standardised or accommodated in work routines. Managers stereotyped certain cul-

tures as being more challenging than others. They highlighted that the departmental concentration of ethnic groups could lead to divisiveness. Finally, managers commented that it was a challenge for them to work with staff who were not acculturated to Australian social protocols.

Nevertheless, the managers interviewed identified various benefits arising from cultural diversity in the workplace: enrichment of quality of life through a culturally diverse workforce; multilingual skills; understanding one's customers through multicultural staff; innovations/new ideas from multicultural staff; flexibility; wider range of expertise through a culturally diverse workforce; and marketing successes. Consequently, a broad consensus suggested that cultural diversity in the workplace is simultaneously both challenging and beneficial to management.

Both the hospitality and tourism managers' interviews and printed literature from their organisations revealed only a peripheral understanding and awareness of cross-cultural issues in the daily practice of management and in policies and accounts of organisational management and performance. Consequently, the managers studied were found to be ill equipped to deal with perceived challenges of cultural diversity in a systematic manner. There was, for example, a failure to initiate in-house cross-cultural training programmes to address these challenges. There was no indication that managers recognised that training in cross-cultural issues and communication might make a difference to their performance as managers. In addition, no hospitality managers had instituted formal organisational processes for monitoring feedback and reactions of management and staff to the challenges of cultural diversity at their respective workplaces.

Five of the six organisations in this study did not represent cultural diversity in their statements of mainstream corporate values. This apparent lack of demonstrable commitment to cultural diversity was further seen in the negligible participation in different levels of management by NESB staff at these five organisations. The qualifications of most NESB staff were underutilised in these five organisations across a wide range of roles except for jobs relating to customer service. There were no formal processes in these five organisations for raising awareness of cultural diversity within the workforce and/or for empowering the culturally diverse workforce to become involved in decision-making and/or planning processes for the organisation.

In contrast, the management of Organisation 6 espoused their corporate culture as being entirely supportive of cultural diversity in the workplace. A work ethos based on mutual respect, co-operation and teamwork was the hallmark of its corporate culture. Management had encouraged and fostered interactions with all employees through daily interactions and regular social functions. This embracing of cultural diversity was also reflected in the composition of the management team. However, visible formal processes for raising awareness of and valuing cultural diversity in the workplace, especially through training programmes were not being implemented.

Overall, the study found that an overwhelming majority of the Australian

hospitality and tourism managers interviewed did not know how to apply their perceived intercultural communication competence specifically to their managerial functions. Phenomenological information collected demonstrated that much of their spoken and written management communications directed to employees, including NESB employees were message-driven. Organisational documents and management directives were written in sophisticated bureaucratic styles and exclusively in English, thereby potentially excluding many NESB employees with low levels of competence in written English. Also, managers only spoke to employees in English. Most managers' general lack of awareness of cross-cultural issues was an added hindrance to an effective application of intercultural communication competence within specific managerial functions. Consequently, difficulties arose from departmental concentration of ethnic groups, from language differences and cultural differences in the workplace. Some managers expressed unhelpful stereotypical views of some minority groups of employees including attributes of these employees. Most managers did not show evidence of adequate performance of managerial functions where dealing with cultural diversity was required. Thus there seemed to be an underutilisation of multicultural human resources in the six organisations studied.

In summary, five of the Australian hospitality and tourism organisations studied did not have specific cross-cultural awareness programmes as integral parts of their management training strategies. In recent times, management in Organisation 3 has devised a cross-cultural training programme for the hospitality industry. This new modularised cross-cultural awareness programme is targeted to existing hospitality staff and potential employees in the hospitality industry wanting to gain some knowledge of cross-cultural issues. It also provides formal recognition of cross cultural training by issuing a certificate upon completion of the course. Close examination of management training programmes in the hospitality organisations studied showed that cross-cultural dimensions, in particular, were not included as course content.

A few managers had received some training on appreciating cross-cultural issues as part of a two-day in-house leadership/management foundation workshop. No management training was available to the managers in understanding psychological theories of the adaptation processes of sojourners, for example as conceptualised by Bochner (1981, 1982); Brislin (1981, 1993); Harris and Moran (1979); Lysgaard (1955); Oberg (1960); Searle and Ward (1990); and Ward and Kennedy (1996). Perhaps as a result of this lack of knowledge, there were no coherent management intervening strategies specifically designed to address any potential problems of psychological adaptation facing international guests at their hotels. In addition, there were no management training programmes on understanding the psychological theory of uncertainty reduction as advanced by Gudykunst (1983, 1986), which can be argued to be essential for developing intercultural communication competence.

At tertiary education levels, there are several undergraduate and postgraduate degree programmes on hospitality management Australia-wide. However, there has not yet been a concerted effort on the part of most Australian tertiary institu-

tions to develop curricula specifically designed to incorporate intercultural communication studies within the context of the Australian hospitality and tourism service industries. At the University of Western Sydney – Hawkesbury, the author has developed a subject on cross-cultural management communication, in the Bachelor of Business Administration (International Business), which is also available to students in the Bachelor of Hospitality Management and the Bachelor of Arts (Tourism). This subject has, since its inception in 1997, proven highly popular particularly with hospitality students, as demonstrated through students' high ratios of enrolment in the subject and regular student evaluations. There are therefore limited opportunities for hospitality students to study cross-cultural issues and communication at the undergraduate level in Australia.

Postgraduate studies in intercultural communication may be undertaken in many Australian universities depending on logistics and academic resources such as the appointment of academic staff with expertise in intercultural communication. The managers in this research had not been able to take advantage of these limited educational opportunities for developing intercultural communication competence and management of cultural diversity in the workplace.

7.3 Major contributions of this research study

In this investigation, there are four major contributions to the study of intercultural communication competence and its application within the Australian hospitality and tourism service industries for the management of culturally diverse workforces through managerial functions such as planning, workplace communication, recruitment/promotion, induction, training, supervision, industrial relations, management of change, customer service, financial management and marketing. First, the study explored the nature of psychological processes relating to the intercultural communication competence of members of the host culture, namely, Australian hospitality and tourism managers. Second, the perceived knowledge of these representative managers about the notion of intercultural communication competence and its application to their managerial functions was identified and examined. The managers were found to have shortcomings in their ability to apply intercultural communication competence to their managerial functions. These shortcomings can be largely attributed to a lack of management training in their organisations and indeed in the Australian tertiary educational sector. Third, there is now a greater understanding of how members of the host culture empathise with sojourners' psychological adaptation to the host culture. This research studied the Australian hospitality managers' understandings of and responses to international visitors' psychological adaptation processes. Fourth, based on grounded theory, two new models of intercultural communication competence and competent managerial practice respectively for the management of cultural diversity in the workplace have

been developed from both an analysis of published literature and the qualitative research findings that have global applications.

7.4 Limitations of the study in this research

The study has a number of limitations. The study focused only on the Australian hospitality and tourism service industries and did not include other industries in Australia. The focus of the study was only on the "multicultural" aspects of diversity in workforces within the sector. Other dimensions of diversity, such as age and gender, were not included. The research is within the phenomenological tradition and no quantitative research methods were used to determine the statistical significance of data. It is maintained that a positivist research methodology was not required for this study and that rich, qualitative data was gained by using multiple sources of evidence. However, these sources of evidence were limited to interviews and documentation and did not include sources such as managers' or staffs' journals or ethnographic observations of managers' performance in the workplace.

The study was limited to in-depth interviews with twelve Australian hospitality and tourism managers representative of six organisations in the industry. The investigation was not conducted as a longitudinal study. The study was also limited to six men and six women managers. More detailed studies of gender variables in managerial functions were not conducted. The influence of factors such as age and experience of managers was not studied specifically.

All researchers have potential biases conditioned by their backgrounds. Limitations resulting from cultural bias in the researcher and the research subjects was always a potential problem. The principal researcher cross-referenced all research findings with the associate researcher (who was born in Australia of English-speaking background) who independently took notes during the interviews. A summary of interview findings was also given to the participants to verify the accuracy of the phenomenological information. Nevertheless, the collection and analysis of the information collected may be limited by personal biases of researchers and/or participants.

The study was also limited in the fact that no investigation was made of hospitality managers outside Australia, for example in English-speaking countries in the region such as New Zealand or further afield such as in the United Kingdom or the United States. Participants in this study were not asked to comment on their perceptions of how their counterparts, say at another hotel in the group/chain in another country, might be managing cultural diversity in the workplace.

7.5 Implications of the present study for management training

The unanimous viewpoint of the Australian hospitality and tourism managers

studied in this research is that a manager's ability to communicate with a culturally diverse workforce is fundamental to the effective performance of managerial functions. This appears to support the proposition that managers need to improve their management of cultural diversity by undergoing training, particularly if such training involves the development of intercultural communication competence. According to the definitions uncovered in this study, management training programmes should not only incorporate cultural dimensions, as conceptualised by Hofstede (1980, 1991), but should also include psychological theories of adaptation processes by sojourners (see Bochner, 1981, 1982; Brislin, 1981, 1993; Harris and Moran, 1979; Lysgaard, 1955; Oberg, 1960; Searle and Ward, 1990; Ward and Kennedy, 1996) as well as uncertainty reduction theory and its management, as developed by Gudykunst (1983, 1986) all of which are considered to be critical indicators of intercultural communication competence.

In addition, management needs to create and foster a sensitive corporate culture that not only supports cultural diversity but, more importantly, celebrates it by incorporating cultural diversity in the organisation's mainstream core values. These perspectives can then be consistently applied to all organisational/managerial policies and practices.

7.6 Directions for further research

The findings of this study and the development of two new conceptual models on intercultural communication competence and competent managerial practice respectively for the management of cultural diversity in the workplace have several implications for future research. First, future researchers can field-test these new conceptual models to further refine specific aspects. Second, this research was based only on organisations in the hospitality and tourism industry. Future research can replicate this study in other industries. Third, the participants of this study were mainly senior managers employed by six organisations representative of different sectors of the Australian hospitality and tourism service industries. This study can be replicated using "culturally diverse employees" as particpants. This will facilitate a comparison of perceptions by both managers and their staff of the effectiveness of managers' intercultural communication competence and hence effective management of cultural diversity in Australia. Fourth, future research can assess the application of intercultural communication competence in other areas such as leadership, entrepreneurship and teamwork. Fifth, this study used multiple sources of evidence appropriate to a qualitative research methodology for collection of phenomenological information. Future researchers can adopt a combination of quantitative and other qualitative research methodologies to further enhance the relevance and reliability of the results of the study. Finally, this study of the management of cultural diversity in the workplace can be replicated in other countries to assess the extent of application of these two new conceptual models and associated self-diagnostic instruments for the management of cultural diversity internationally.

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