Internationalising the Curriculum: Student Learning in the Global Experience Program

By

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# TABLE OF CONTENTS

## INTRODUCTION

- THE INTERNATIONAL TEACHING PRACTICUM IN THE CONTEXT OF INTERNATIONALISATION OF THE CURRICULUM ........................................... 1
- THE GLOBAL EXPERIENCE PROGRAM (GEP) AS AN EXAMPLE OF AN INTERNATIONAL TEACHING PRACTICUM ................................................. 5
- GAINING FROM INTERNATIONAL LEARNING EXPERIENCES: A PERSONAL PERSPECTIVE ............................................................................................ 6
- RESEARCH PROBLEM AND QUESTIONS: STUDENT TEACHER LEARNING FROM THE INTERNATIONAL TEACHING .................................................... 8
- MIXED-METHOD DESIGN WITHIN ETHNOGRAPHIC RESEARCH .............. 11
- THESIS STRUCTURE ............................................................................... 12

## LITERATURE REVIEW

- GLOBALISATION, CULTURAL DIVERSITY AT SCHOOL AND TEACHER EDUCATION ........................................................................................... 17
- REASONS FOR ADDRESSING CULTURAL DIVERSITY WITH THE INTERNATIONALISATION OF THE CURRICULUM IN HIGHER EDUCATION 20
- UNIVERSITY STUDENTS’ LEARNING FROM THE INTERNATIONAL EXPERIENCE........................................................................................... 23
  - Internationalisation of the curriculum in higher education .............. 23
  - Various learning from an international experience ............................ 28
  - Cultural learning from an international experience ......................... 30
- STUDENT TEACHER LEARNING FROM INTERNATIONAL TEACHING PRACTICUMS .............................................................................. 33
  - The practice of the international teaching practicum ....................... 34
  - The gap in the research method of studies of international teaching practicums .......................................................... 37
  - The gap in cultural learning from the perspective of internationalisation .......................... 40
2.4.4 The gap in professional learning from the perspective of internationalisation ........................................ 45

2.5 SUMMARY ........................................................................................................................................ 48

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK ........................................................................................................ 50

3.0 INTRODUCTION .......................................................................................................................... 50

3.1 FRAMING ‘LEARNING’ FROM EXPERIENCE IN THE GEP .................................................... 50

  3.1.1 Transformative Learning Theory and Learning in the International Teaching Practicum .......... 52

3.2 CULTURAL EXPERIENCE IN INTERNATIONAL TEACHING PRACTICUMS .................................. 54

  3.2.1 Culture learning ....................................................................................................................... 58

  3.2.2 Intercultural sensitivity............................................................................................................ 59

  3.2.3 Intercultural competence........................................................................................................ 62

3.3 PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE IN INTERNATIONAL TEACHING PRACTICUMS ......................................................... 66

  3.3.1 Professional knowledge ......................................................................................................... 68

  3.3.2 Reflective thinking ................................................................................................................ 69

3.4 CONTEXT FOR LEARNING IN THE GEP ................................................................................... 70

3.5 SUMMARY ...................................................................................................................................... 73

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODS ...................................................................................... 74

4.0 INTRODUCTION .......................................................................................................................... 74

4.1 RESEARCH QUESTIONS, THE GEP AND ETHNOGRAPHIC RESEARCH ................................ 74

4.2 MIXED-METHOD DESIGN IN ETHNOGRAPHIC RESEARCH .................................................. 78

4.3 THE SURVEY OF STUDENT TEACHERS’ PERCEPTIONS ......................................................... 83

  4.3.1 Designing the questionnaire .................................................................................................. 83

  4.3.2 Validity of the questionnaire ................................................................................................. 84

  4.3.3 Administering the questionnaire .......................................................................................... 85

  4.3.4 Reliability of the questionnaire ........................................................................................... 85

  4.3.5 Data analysis procedures .................................................................................................... 86

4.4 THE BACKGROUND TO THE CASE STUDY OF THE 2010 VANUATU GEP. 87

  4.4.1 The case and participant selections ...................................................................................... 87

  4.4.2 Getting to know the participants and their consent ................................................................. 88
4.4.3 The role of the researcher ............................................................. 88
4.4.4 Data collection: methods and themes ........................................... 89
4.4.5 Data analysis ................................................................................ 95
4.4.6 Ethics and reflexivity .................................................................... 96
4.4.7 Trustworthiness and credibility .................................................... 97
4.5 SUMMARY ............................................................................................. 98

THE ETHNOGRAPHY OF THE GEP ........................................................ 99

5.0 INTRODUCTION ...................................................................................... 99
5.1 STUDENT TEACHERS’ PERCEPTIONS OF LEARNING IN THE GEP .......... 99
  5.1.1 Profile of the survey participants ................................................. 99
  5.1.2 Perceptions of culture learning .................................................. 100
  5.1.3 Student teachers’ insights of professional learning ....................... 105
5.2 THE 2010 VANUATU GEP CASE STUDY ............................................... 110
  5.2.1 The case study participants ........................................................ 110
  5.2.2 The roles of the on-site coordinator ........................................... 111
  5.2.3 Preparation before departure in 2010 ........................................ 113
  5.2.4 The student teachers before departure ....................................... 115
  5.2.5 Arrival in Vanuatu ...................................................................... 121
  5.2.6 ‘Living’ in Vanuatu .................................................................... 123
5.3 SUMMARY ............................................................................................ 140

CULTURE LEARNING IN THE 2010 VANUATU GEP ...................... 142

6.0 INTRODUCTION ..................................................................................... 142
6.1 LEARNING ABOUT THE SELF AS A CULTURAL BEING – CL1 ........ 142
6.2 CULTURE-SPECIFIC LEARNING – CL2/CL3 .................................. 145
6.3 CULTURE-GENERAL LEARNING – CL4 .......................................... 153
6.4 LEARNING ABOUT LEARNING – CL5 ............................................. 157
6.5 SUMMARY ........................................................................................... 160

INTERPRETING THE DEVELOPMENT OF INTERCULTURAL SENSITIVITY AND COMPETENCE IN THE 2010 VANUATU GEP 161

7.0 INTRODUCTION .................................................................................... 161
7.1 ANALYSIS OF INTERCULTURAL SENSITIVITY DEVELOPMENT .......... 161
  7.1.1 Denial ......................................................................................... 162
  7.1.2 Defence ....................................................................................... 166
Abstract

This thesis supports an existing argument that cultural diversity in classrooms, brought about by globalisation, can be addressed by preparing student teachers through the provision of an international teaching experience. However, this thesis presents a new perspective related to how student teachers understand and experience cultural and professional learning from teaching abroad. As teaching is conducted overseas, student teachers gain international experience; thus, this thesis investigates their learning within the context of internationalisation.

This thesis aims to investigate student teachers’ learning from participating in an international teaching practicum such as the Deakin University Global Experience Program (GEP). As this program has been conducted for eight years and in several countries, this thesis examines learning in terms of both perception and experience. Viewing this program from an internationalisation perspective directs this thesis to examine some aspects of cultural learning, including intercultural sensitivity and competence, which resonate in the broader context of the internationalisation of the curriculum. This thesis explores some aspects of professional learning, such as the development of reflective thinking, to extend the investigation of the influence of a different culture in student teachers’ learning about teaching.

As an interpretive study, this thesis applied mixed-methods to collect and analyse data within the general framework of ethnographic research. A survey was administered to 40 student teachers who had completed GEPs in a range of countries in 2008, 2009 and 2010, to collect their perceptions of learning from the GEP. A case study was conducted to collect rich data based on the lived experiences of 13 student teachers who participated in the 2010 Vanuatu GEP.

This thesis drew on multiple theoretical perspectives to interpret data. The application of Paige’s (2006b) Five Culture Learning Dimensions enabled this thesis to reveal what the student teachers perceived and learnt about culture. The Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity (Bennett, 1993) was applied to interpret the student teacher responses to cultural differences.
Whatever competencies the student teachers developed in the GEP were examined through the application of the Intercultural Competence model Deardorff (2008), and the skills of discovery and interactions Byram (1997).

Although there are limitations in generalising and developing theory, this research suggests some implications. With regard to the field of the internationalisation of the curriculum, this research shows the student teachers not only believed they gained cultural and professional learning, but also actually gained cultural and professional knowledge, and developed positive attitudes and skills towards interacting with Vanuatuan students through the GEP.
Introduction

Internationalisation has been an important topic in higher education around the world, including in Australia. It was recently estimated that international education contributed $15.5 billion in 2008 to the Australian economy and, as such, is the largest service export (Australia, 2009). Unsurprisingly, much of the research has been focused on international students in Australia. Although Australian students conducting part of their study overseas is a part of the internationalisation of the curriculum, there seems to be a lack of studies examining their professional experience abroad (Daly, 2007; Hoff, 2008; Quesada, 2004; Rizvi, 2007a). Hence, this thesis aims to contribute to the knowledge in this field through the investigation of the student teacher learning experience from participating in the Global Experience Program (GEP).

International teaching practicum, such as the GEP, have been conducted for decades in teacher education; however, by locating this program in the context of internationalisation, this research gives a new perspective in terms of the student teacher learning dimensions from participating in a short internationalisation program.

In this case, this research examines the emergence of some aspects of cultural learning, including the development of intercultural sensitivity and competence, which have resonance in the broader context of internationalisation programs, such as study abroad programs. In addition, as the GEP provides an international teaching experience, this research also investigates some aspects of professional learning, such as the development of reflective thinking to challenge the common perception of viewing this type of program as a ‘tourist program’.

Furthermore, this research is also unique, as it investigates not only the perceptions of learning in the GEP of a large number of participants, but also student teacher learning through their lived experiences during a teaching practicum, which might reflect the occurrence of learning. Thus, this research applied mixed-methods to collect and analyse data within the general interpretive framework of ethnographic research. In Part One, a survey was
administered to 40 student teachers who had completed their GEP in various countries in 2008, 2009, 2010 in order to gather their perceptions of learning through the GEP. Part Two involved a case study the aims of which were to collect rich data based on the lived experiences of 13 student teachers during the GEP in Vanuatu in 2010.

Investigation through an internationalisation perspective suggests the application of three models of theoretical approach – Five Culture Learning Dimensions (Paige, 2006a); Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity – DMIS (Bennett, 1993); and Intercultural Competence (Deardorff, 2008) to understand intercultural learning from an international experience (Paige & Goode, 2009).

Paige’s model of culture learning comprises a ‘conceptual map of Five Culture Learning Dimensions’ (Paige & Goode, 2009, p. 336). Among the Five Dimensions of Culture Learning, gaining an awareness of one’s own culture as the first dimension was believed to be the hardest thing to achieve. Although it was not significant, there were more student teachers who believed it was more important to gain an awareness of own patterns of behaviour, values and ways of thinking, than of one’s own culture. A few documented instances of this learning included an awareness of one’s own personal character, attitude to the use of time, and of Vanuatuan students’ non-verbal language.

With the knowledge of what the student teachers have learnt about culture, the application of the M. Bennett’s (1993) Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity (DMIS) enables the examination of the case study participants’ worldviews as they are immersed in Vanuatuan culture. This model considers intercultural sensitivity development as a developmental phenomenon which is defined as “the way people construe cultural differences …and the development refers to the increased ability to accommodate cultural difference” (Paige & Goode, 2009, p. 338).

The application of the DMIS finds several cultural differences referred to by the case study participants including relaxed or laidback-culture, silent/shy behaviour, unruly behaviour, friendliness, and talk-and-chalk pedagogy. The interpretation of student teachers’ reactions or responses to these cultural
differences, using the DMIS framework, reflects a range of intercultural sensitivity comprising three stages of ethnocentrism – Denial, Denigration, and Minimization; and three of ethno-relativism – Acceptance, Adaptation and Integration.

Further investigation of cultural learning aimed to examine learning in terms of the development of competence, rather than merely a change or shift of perspective through the application of Deardorff’s (2008) Model of Intercultural Competence. This model comprises five categories – attitudes, knowledge, skills, internal outcome, and external outcome – among the student teachers. It constitutes a “dynamic model of intercultural competence that identifies three key sets of elements: knowledge and comprehension, skills, and attitudes” (Paige & Goode, 2009, p. 337).

The Vanuatu case study illustrated the emerging abilities towards gaining the three ‘attitudes’ required for developing intercultural competence. These are: 1) ability to withhold judgment from making negative responses toward laidback behaviour - attitude of openness; 2) ability to value friendly and laidback behaviour - attitude of respect; and 3) ability to tolerate ambiguity about the unruly behaviour - attitude of curiosity.

The case study also revealed evidence among the student teachers of the ability to acquire certain ‘knowledge’ needed to develop intercultural competence. These include: 1) the ability to gain ‘cultural self-awareness’ in terms of an awareness of one’s own character and cultural gap; 2) the ability to attain culture-specific learning in terms of the shy behaviour and non-verbal language among Vanuatuan students; and 3) the ability to obtain socio-linguistic competence in terms of the use of English as a second language by Vanuatuan students. A range of other skills also emerged in students teaching practices. These illustrate a growing intercultural competence amongst the student teachers.

With regard to professional learning, this research investigated the student teachers’ perceptions and experiences of five adapted teaching knowledge bases from their participation in the GEP. More student teachers perceived they gained knowledge rather than developed teaching skills. The survey
reported that all student teachers believed that they learnt about knowledge bases of cultural norms of Vanuatuan schools and Vanuatuan student learning style and the case study findings provided some indications of professional learning.

The survey also reported that fewer student teachers thought that they were not able to adapt their teaching, although they recognised the different teaching styles of host teachers. It was found that the student teachers reflected on various aspects of teaching such as what appeared to them as limited strategies of classroom management practised by supervising teachers, absence of supervising teachers from the classroom, large class sizes, lack of non-verbal instruction, copying to and from the board, use of constructivist teaching and lack of teaching resources.

In general, this research shows that there is room for the GEP to enhance student teacher learning through active student-teacher participation. The provision of teaching knowledge bases in the field might help the student teachers to overcome their emerging teaching problems. In particular, there should be opportunities available which challenge the student teachers’ beliefs related to their professional and cultural practices in the field in order for them to learn more from their experiences. Preparing student teachers with a theoretical perspective about culture/interculture, including strategies to learn a culture before departure might help student teachers in navigating in the new culture.

Overall, this research has challenged the common assumption that there has been little research that shows the student learning through a short internationalisation program such as the GEP.
CHAPTER ONE

Overview of the Study

1.0 Introduction

Section One locates the international teaching practicum within the context of the internationalisation of the curriculum. Section Two describes the GEP as the context of this research. Section Three presents, as the empirical force for this study, my own experience as a former international student. It emphasises the importance of investigating student learning from international experience. In order to understand the direction of this research, Section Four discusses student learning from participating in an internationalisation program that provides international experience, including an international teaching practicum. This, then, is followed in the subsequent section – Section Five – by the research questions. The research design and methods used to address the research questions are explained in Section Six and the last section gives the overall structure of the thesis with the aim of enhancing understanding of the overall study.

1.1 The International Teaching Practicum in the Context of Internationalisation of the Curriculum

Globalisation, which means “the widening, deepening and speeding up worldwide interconnectedness” (Held et al, 1999, cited in Marginson & Wende, 2007, p. 5) is reflected in the linkage among higher education institutions around the world with regards to all aspects of university functioning, such as research and international education (Marginson, 2007). The connection takes place because universities are the medium for relationships and global movements of people, information, knowledge, technologies, products and financial capital in the global knowledge economy (Marginson & Wende, 2007). Thus, the linkages can be “technological, cultural, political and economic, as well as educational” and involve “flows of ideas, images, and people or … flows of money, goods and services” (Harman, 2005, p. 121).
The dynamic relationship between globalisation and internationalisation is shown in “the economic, political and societal forces pushing university toward greater international involvement” (Altbach & Knight, 2007, p. 291). This reflects internationalisation of higher education, which is defined as ”a process of integrating international or intercultural dimensions into the teaching, research and service functions of higher education institutions” (De Wit & Knight, 1999, p. 15).

Internationalisation in higher education is shaped by various motives, such as commercial advantage, knowledge and language acquisition, and the enhancement of the curriculum with international content (Altbach & Knight, 2007). Hence, internationalisation of higher education involves a range of activities including:

- The international movement of students between countries;
- The international movement of academic staff and researchers;
- Internationalisation of higher education curricula in order to achieve better understandings about other people and cultures, and competence in foreign languages;
- International links between nation states through open learning programs and new technologies;
- Bilateral links between governments and higher education institutions in different countries for collaboration in research, curriculum development, student and staff exchange and other international activities;
- Multi-national collaboration such as via international organisations or through consortia such as Universitas Global; and
- Export education where education services are offered on a commercial basis in other countries, with students studying either in their home country or in the country of the provider (Harman, 2005, pp. 120-121)

In the case of internationalisation of the curriculum, it has a complex and multifaceted meaning. Similarly, the meaning of ‘curriculum’ itself appears to be very broad. Fraser and Bosanquest (2006, p. 272) identify that, as a broad concept, curriculum covers both product and process orientations, including:

- Structure and content of a unit/subject, structure and content of a programme of study, students’ experience of learning, and the dynamic and interactive process of teaching and learning.

This perspective is similar to the meaning of curriculum, which refers to:

all the experiences which inform a student’s cognitive, attitudinal and affective development encompassing course content, teaching methodologies, learning strategies,
assessment mechanisms, curriculum activities such as student exchanges and volunteering, and symbols and messages, reflecting university’s commitment to global perspectives and diversity

(Jones & Killick, 2007, pp. 109-110)

This present research follows the above perspective of the curriculum, which is in line with the following definition of international curricula defined by the OECD (Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development) in 1994. International curricula are defined as:

curricula with international orientation in content, aimed at preparing students for performing (professionally/ socially) in an international and multicultural context, and designed for domestic students as well as foreign students

(Henry, Lingard, Rizvi, & Taylor, 1998, p. 148)

The OECD also proposes a set of characteristics of international curricula in 1996:

- curricula with international content, such as international relations;
- curricula that add comparative dimension to traditional content;
- career-oriented curricula;
- curricula that address cross-cultural skills;
- interdisciplinary programs, such as region and area studies covering more than one country;
- curricula leading to internationally recognised professions;
- curricula leading to joint or double degrees;
- curricula whose parts are offered at off-shore institutions by local faculty;
- curricula designed exclusively for foreign students

(Henry, et al., 1998, p. 148)

Using these definitions, a recent study finds that current initiatives of internationalisation of the curriculum around the world still reflect practices similar to those defined by the OECD in 1996 (Rizvi, 2007a). Apart from the practice of supporting international students internationalisation of the curriculum involves, in detail, the following interrelated forms:

- facilitating study abroad and educational exchange to broaden and enrich students’ cultural experiences;
- learning about other languages and cultures as a way of developing ... skills of intercultural communication; and
- preparing (students) to work in the global knowledge economy

(Rizvi, 2007a, p. 392)

In this case, Rizvi (2007a) states that study abroad programs, with their variations, such as international exchange, international industry or clinical
placement, internship and international study tour, are popular, since they are “a pragmatic, quick and achievable way of internationalising the curriculum” (Rizvi, 2007a, p. 392).

This worldwide phenomenon is illuminated in the Australian context. A recent study concludes that the internationalisation of the curriculum in Australia has involved mainly study abroad/ student exchange programs, rather than changes within the subjects and courses (Bell, 2004, p. 51). This can be the case, as internationalising the content of the curriculum is considered to be “the most prickly, trying and time-consuming internationalisation strategy” (Burn, 2002, p. 253).

Focusing on the programs that provide an international experience for students in an Australian context, Davis, Milne & Olsen (1999) establish a typology for programs with an international study component, as follows:

- Outgoing international exchanges;
- Outgoing international study abroad;
- International period of study as part of Australian award;
- Industry, business, clinical work placements, practicum, internships;
- International study tours or study programs;
- Joint degree or diploma programs;
- Research overseas as part of Australian post-graduate program.


Thus, using the OECD’s international curricula typology and the above typology, internationalisation of the curriculum involves many programs such as international study programs at the undergraduate level (Brill, 1998) and in-country language-teacher education programs (Harbon, 2003; Rizvi, 2007a). In this context, international teaching practicum programs such as the GEP, which is shorter than study abroad programs, could be considered as part of programs aimed at the internationalisation of the curriculum; in particular, it could be posited within the context of study abroad programs. As a study abroad program, the GEP allows student teachers to get credit for their international teaching experiences abroad and is provided for students as an option within the existing program (Rizvi, 2007a).

This discussion posits the GEP as part of study abroad programs in the context of the internationalisation of the curriculum.
1.2 The Global Experience Program (GEP) as an Example of an International Teaching Practicum

As shown previously, the international teaching practicum is located within the context of the internationalisation of the curriculum; this section presents an overview of the GEP to illustrate a framework for an international teaching practicum that provides student teachers with international teaching experience.

The Global Experience Program (GEP) is a program within the Faculty of Arts and Education, Deakin University, Australia, which provides an international professional experience for student teachers. The GEP provides an opportunity for student teachers to conduct 2 – 4 weeks teaching practicums at schools in selected foreign countries. Each three-week program operates at different times during the academic year in order to fit in with the university calendar and classroom availability at the GEP sites. In 2010, the sites were offered in a range of countries, including China, Malaysia, Thailand, Vanuatu, Switzerland, and India, as well as in traditional indigenous communities in Australia’s Northern Territory. These sites have been selected as cultural contexts that are different from those of the mainstream teaching-round experience in Melbourne, Australia.

This practicum requires student teachers to complete at least fifteen days of teaching practice as a replacement for one of the teaching rounds that are normally undertaken in the second, third or fourth year of studies. The other program requirement is that student teachers have successfully completed their first local teaching practicum in one of the following courses:

- Bachelor of Education (Primary);
- Bachelor of Teaching (Primary and Secondary);
- Bachelor of Teaching (Secondary)/Bachelor of Arts;
- Bachelor of Teaching (Science)/Bachelor of Science;
- Bachelor of Physical Education; and
- Graduate Diploma of Education (Applied Learning).

The objective of the GEP is to provide opportunities for student teachers to have experience of both living and teaching in a different culture. It is expected that student teachers will develop the knowledge, cultural sensitivity and skills
needed to address cultural diversity in any environment in their future. This includes acquiring a wide repertoire of skills, understandings, dispositions and values leading to new practices. There is also an opportunity for student teachers to develop the ability to manage the interaction of children from differing cultural backgrounds, in the classroom, playground and school. Therefore, at the completion of the program, it is expected that the GEP will provide the opportunity for student teachers to enhance their capacity to enter educational practice with the competencies expected of graduate teachers by the education profession. These competencies include:

- An understanding of curriculum content and processes within a more global context;
- An appreciation of the cultural imperatives expressed through schools and teaching practices;
- An appreciation of being inclusive in teaching practice;
- A desire to work for social justice for all those for whom one is professionally responsible; and
- An understanding of the flexibility and adaptability of subject matter, skills and values within a range of cultural settings

(Deakin, 2009)

The following section attempts to emphasize the importance and focus of this research drawn from my own personal perspective of student learning through international experience.

### 1.3 Gaining from International Learning Experiences: a Personal Perspective

My interest in this study arises from my personal and professional background. In addition to living in Melbourne for the past ten years, I have been an international student on two occasions. Recently, one year prior to the present study, I received several short assignments involving the evaluation of a language immersion program for visiting Thai students, and the reviewing of literatures on global teacher and professional experience at the School of Education, Deakin University. These two snapshots of my life were the initial trigger for my curiosity about learning from international experience.

Earlier, I had started to wonder about the outcomes that I had achieved from studying in a system that is known internationally as a world-class provider of
international education. What did I get? The certificate? The knowledge? Then, when evaluating the immersion program, the thought continued. What did those international students from Thailand gain from completing that brief immersion program? Did they get other benefits from the program apart from a ‘perception of satisfaction’? Similar thoughts continued when I reviewed the literature on the global teacher and international professional experience for my evaluation work. What does it mean to be ‘a global teacher’? Does it mean ‘a teacher who is able to teach children from any cultural background’ or does the definition include ‘a teacher who can teach in any part of the world’?

The need for answers to these questions intensified as I was exposed to the Global Experience Program (GEP), which I subsequently came to see as an initiative of the internationalisation of the curriculum. This program had been running for almost eight years, but there did not appear to be much documentation of the kinds of changes that might be occurring in the belief systems, values and behaviour of the student teachers involved (Prior, 2006). Furthermore, the scant research seemed to demonstrate that student teachers appeared to confine their attention largely to the teaching aspect of the program, and to pay less attention to the broader context of cultural immersion (Prior, 2006). A personal discussion with the GEP manager suggested that there was also interest in knowing the reasons that student teachers choose to participate in the GEP, what actually attracts them to enter such a program, and what the perceived values of the GEP are among the participants. All these snapshots – myself as an international student, the Thai students as participants of an international language program, Deakin student teachers as participants of the GEP, and the issue of the ‘global teacher’ encountered while conducting the literature review assignment – seemed to me to reveal the same issue: what is the student’s learning experience gained from participating in an internationalisation program? The importance of this study having been affirmed, the next section discusses the research problem in order to understand the direction of this present research and how this research could contribute to the existing body of knowledge.
1.4 Research Problem and Questions: Student Teacher Learning from the International Teaching

The internationalisation of the curriculum has been emerging to achieve the goal of internationalisation beyond the mere recruitment of international students (Clifford, 2011; Leask, 2001; Liddicoat, Eisenchlas, & Trevaskes, 2003; Rizvi, 2007a; Rizvi & Walsh, 1998a).

The common approach to internationalising the curriculum has involved the provision of international experience for students through programs such as study abroad, although its proposition of potential student outcomes, such as becoming culturally sensitive, remains unclear (Rizvi, 2007a). In particular, there are some concerns over ‘a lack of any systematic curriculum thinking in: design and evaluation; ‘preparation before departure’; and ‘method to include intercultural insight into the curriculum’, as most studies are involved with ‘administrative arrangements and its implementations’ (Rizvi, 2007a, pp. 393-394). A similar argument in support of a closer analysis of student learning occurring through a study abroad program is that “international and intercultural competencies are hardly measured in terms of actual learning outcomes” (Stronkhorst, 2005, p. 297).

Nevertheless, many studies report various impacts or positive values gained by students through international experience, in particular from participating in programs with a duration of between three months and a year, such as study abroad programs (Bell, 2008; Daly, 2007; Dunkley, 2009; Papatsiba, 2006; Pearson-Evans, 2006; Williams, 2005), international service learning programs (Davis, et al., 1999), and language teacher programs (Bell, 2008; Daly, 2007; Davis, et al., 1999; Harbon, 2003). However, studies of student teacher learning from participating in a shorter program, such as the GEP, appear to be limited. There are some studies of student experience abroad in short term programs, but they involve foreign language students (Jackson, 2006) and business students (Tarp, 2006).

Student learning through programs that provide international experience has been referred to as ‘intercultural competence’, ‘intercultural effectiveness’ or ‘intercultural engagement’ (Brill, 1998; Deardorff, 2004, 2006b; Leask, 2001;
Stier, 2006). In more detail, a review of the literature on study abroad programs reports on student learning in terms of the development of intercultural sensitivity, intercultural communicative competence, global perspective and global mindedness, and increased intercultural and cross cultural awareness (Cushner, 2009); and cognitive, affective and behavioural domains (Mahon & Cushner, 2007). Moreover, another study reports on students’ culture learning in term of discovering the ability to learn about a different culture (Brubaker, 2006).

Focusing on programs for student teacher learning from international experience, several studies of student-teacher learning through study abroad programs report on student teachers’ development of intercultural sensitivity. In this case, some student teachers are considered to be in the last phase of the ethnocentric stage of the DMIS (Mahon & Cushner, 2002, 2007), while other student teachers change throughout the program to embrace an ethnorelative worldview (Emert, 2008; Marx, 2008). The discussion shows that most of the study of students’ cultural learning, including intercultural competence development, draws on study abroad programs which are much longer than the GEP. Hence, an inquiry into a student teacher’s learning in terms of intercultural learning, such as intercultural competence and sensitivity from participating in a shorter program such as the three-week GEP, is necessary.

A further review of student learning through study abroad programs displays a lack of research related to the impact of study abroad programs on discipline-specific learning outcomes (Hoff, 2008; Rizvi, 2007a), suggesting the need to investigate the professional development of student teachers in terms of their teaching practice.

Indeed, many studies in the field of teacher education have established that international teaching programs such as the GEP offer positive effects on student teachers. However, the student teachers’ learnings are referred to as forms of growth in the areas of personal and professional development, such as global-mindedness and an improved ability to teach in diverse cultural settings (Bryan & Sprague, 1997; Cushner & Mahon, 2002; Faulconer, 2003; Pence & Macgillivray, 2008; Stachowsk, Richardson, & Henderson, 2003; Willard-Holt, 2001). None of the studies in this type of program – non-foreign language
teaching practicum – investigates student teachers’ cultural learning in terms of intercultural sensitivity and competence using the perspectives of M. Bennet (1993), Paige (2006a), Deardorff (2008), and Byram (1997).

The above discussion illustrates the research problem for this study. It illustrates that the objective of this research is to investigate the student teachers’ cultural and professional learning experiences through participation in the Deakin (GEP) – a non-foreign language program which is shorter in general than a study abroad program. The GEP has been chosen because this program provides international teaching experience for student teachers.

Because the GEP has been conducted over a number of years and in many countries, the investigation of student teachers’ learning experience is targeted to cover experiences of the participants of the program across the dimensions of time and place. Given such a context, learning experience is investigated from two lenses – lived experiences and perceptions – in order to gain depth and breadth in the data. In addition, this concurs with the literature review, revealing that most studies of this topic were conducted based on pre-and post surveys and that a limited number were involved with the combination of direct observation of lived experience and perspective from a wider student teacher population who had completed the GEP.

Hence, this study investigates student teachers’ actual lived learning experiences in a GEP as well as perceptions of learning experience upon returning from the GEP. Four central research questions, with their sub-questions evolving out of the current themes of student teachers’ learning experience, are:

1. What perceptions did the student teachers have regarding their learning in the GEP?
2. What was the lived experience of the student teachers participating in the 2010 Vanuatu GEP?
   a. How were the student teachers prepared before departure?
   b. What was the student teachers’ preconception related to living and teaching in Vanuatu?
   c. What were their lived experiences of living and teaching in Vanuatu?
3. How is culture learning interpreted through the findings in the case study; and how are intercultural sensitivity and competence interpreted through the findings in the case study?

4. How did the student teachers construct their professional learning and reflective thinking development in the GEP?

These central and overarching research questions have been addressed using mixed-methods within a qualitative approach, as discussed in the following section.

1.5 Mixed-Method Design within Ethnographic Research

The nature of the main research question—what is the student teacher’s learning experience from participating in the GEP?—requires a qualitative methodology; this research applies an ethnographic approach. The ethnographic approach chosen for this research focuses on the ‘student teacher participating in the GEP’. This approach is suitable for investigating a group of students in a program in a higher education setting (Cousin, 2009). In particular, although the GEP has been conducted in various places, it is still relevant, as an ethnographic approach can be multi-sited, or focus only on a single site; the consistent aim is to attain rich data to provide the understanding of both specific and general features of the research setting (Cousin, 2009). Moreover, the purpose of investigating the student teachers’ learning is enabled through the application of ethnographic research, since it allows the use of a ‘cultural lens’ to interpret the attitudes, experiences, language and shared pattern of behaviour of the group while living on location (Creswell, 2008).

In addition to the framework suggested by the research questions, the context of the GEP, that has been conducted for several years in several places, suggests the use of mixed-methods comprising survey and case study to both collect and analyse the data. A survey of student teachers who completed a GEP in 2008, 2009 and 2010 was conducted between May to December 2010 in order to address the first research question - What perceptions did student
teachers have regarding the learning in the GEP? A case study method has been used to investigate the second research question – What was the lived experience of the student teachers participating in the 2010 Vanuatu GEP?

As a method, case study allows an in-depth exploration of the learning of the student teachers who conducted their teaching practicum in Vanuatu in August 2010 (Creswell, 1998). The GEP case study, involving 13 student teachers in Vanuatu in August 2010, is considered as the object of research (Stake, 2003). The case study has been conducted in Vanuatu, because the Vanuatu GEP is considered as being able to offer sufficient insights of the GEP, compared to the other GEPs. In this case, the Vanuatu GEP has been conducted for eight years which constitutes the longest GEP.

The following section explains how this thesis is structured into nine chapters.

**1.6 Thesis Structure**

This chapter commences with an overview of the background information for this research, and explains the structure of the thesis as follows:

The literature review in Chapter Two provides the background to this research in terms of internationalisation. This research is grounded in an attempt to investigate how to equip student teachers with competencies needed to address cultural diversity brought by globalisation in the classroom. This is followed by a discussion of the internationalisation of the curriculum, in particular the initiatives that provide international experience for undergraduate students. The current debate about student learning experience, both in the internationalisation of the curriculum and international teaching practicum programs, is also presented. The discussion of student teacher learning from an international teaching practicum leads to the identification of three gaps for this research:

- Few investigations of learning from student teachers’ experiences and perceptions using mixed-methods to both collect and analyse the data.
• Few investigations of student teachers’ cultural learning in terms of *Culture Learning, Intercultural Sensitivity* and *Intercultural Competence* from participating in a program shorter than study abroad programs.

• Few investigations of student teachers’ professional learning, including the development of reflective thinking.

Having established the direction of the study in Chapter Two, Chapter Three explains the theoretical foundation used to analyse the data. In particular, this chapter informs the readers about various theoretical perspectives used to interpret cultural and professional learning. Firstly, Paige’s model – *Five Dimensions of Culture Learning* – is applied to understand the kind of cultural learning involved. Secondly, student teachers’ cultural learning, in terms of intercultural sensitivity, is analysed using the DMIS (Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity (Bennett, 1993), while intercultural competence is interpreted using the following paradigms: Deardorff’s (2006b) *Intercultural Competence*; and Byram’s (1997) *Skills of Discovery and Interaction*. Furthermore, student teachers’ professional learning, in the context of teaching practicum, is interpreted in terms of the Five Aspects of Teacher Professional Knowledge (Shulman (2004), while the emerging reflective thinking is examined using Loughran’s (2002) and Clarke’s (1995) perspectives.

Chapter Four specifies the theoretical foundation behind the rationale offered for using survey and case study as the mixed-methods within an ethnographic approach. This methodology enables the investigation of both the perceptions of student teacher learning and lived experience from participating in the GEP; it also allows for the insights gained through this researcher living in with the participants in Vanuatu in 2010 in order to develop a specific and general picture of the Vanuatu GEP (Cousin, 2009). Thus, this research follows *ethnography as fieldwork*, which allows for the studying a group of people where the researcher lives in the field (Bryman, 2004).

With regard to mixed-methods, it allows for building on the strengths of both the qualitative and quantitative data to provide a complete picture of the phenomena or issues under investigation (Creswell, 2002; Punch, 1998). The survey is appropriate to collect the perceptions of a large number of student
teachers (Creswell, 2002), while the case study is suitable for investigating the in-depth meaning of the learning experience, including its context, and conducting further analysis on the learning which is represented in the 2010 Vanuatu GEP (Yin, 2009). Furthermore, this chapter describes how the survey and case study were conducted in 2010, including a detailed description of the method used for data analysis.

Chapter Five presents the ethnographic study of the GEP. This chapter answers the first and second research questions relating to student teachers’ perceptions and the lived experience of learning in the GEP. Thus, it contains the findings of the survey of student teachers’ perspectives of learning in the GEP and the 2010 Vanuatu GEP case study. The first section of this chapter encompasses a profile of the 40 survey participants, and a discussion of the student teachers’ perceptions of their learning experiences in the GEP. The second section presents a detailed description of the case study of the Vanuatu GEP conducted in 2010. The lived experience of student teachers participating in the Vanuatu GEP illustrates the close accounts of engagements with Vanuatuan students, teachers and student teacher peers in Vanuatu, and the lived experiences during the preparation sessions before departure. The ethnographic case study method, which facilitates the production of a ‘rich and thick’ description of the GEP, aims to contextualise the data analyses in the subsequent chapters.

The contribution of this research to the field of internationalisation is presented through the findings in Chapters Six and Seven. Chapter Six presents the analysis of culture learning using the Five Dimensions of Culture Learning (Paige, 2006a). Chapter Seven answers the second part of the third research question on interpreting the emergence of the student teachers’ intercultural sensitivity and competence.

Chapter Eight addresses the fourth research question, which aims to contribute to the area of teaching practicum, on student teachers’ professional learning. Apart from the analysis of professional learning from the findings in the case study in the first section, the second section presents the interpretation of reflective thinking development among the student teachers.
Chapter Nine provides the conclusions, limitations and implications of the study. The survey of perceptions reveals that all student teachers believe that they were able to appreciate and understand their host country students’ values and able to develop attitudes and skills to interact with the culture of the host country. With regard to the student teachers’ cultural learning, the case study reveals the student teachers’ recognition of the value orientation of Vanuatuan people towards polychronic time, which is manifested in their laidback behaviour and, to a lesser extent, the silent behaviour and unruliness among the Vanuatuan students. This case study also reveals that, although all the student teachers faced the same cultural differences in Vanuatu, they displayed different levels of intercultural sensitivity. They also developed different elements of intercultural competence for dissimilar cultural differences.

In terms of professional learning, all survey participants believed that they understood the cultural norms of the host school – but a few student teachers who thought they understood these ‘norms’ were not able to adjust their teaching to their host school’s cultural norms, students’ learning style, teaching practice and classroom management. The case study shows that the student teachers’ observations led to their construction of what they considered to be the cultural norms of a Vanuatuan school; they saw these as manifested, in part, in the shy behaviour and rote learning style of Vanuatuan students. This chapter also shows that the student teachers were able to reflect on their experiences and a few even adjusted their teaching according to their reflection.

In spite of the limitations, this thesis presents, in general, what student teachers’ experience about learning from participating in the GEP. This thesis suggests that the learning experiences can be further substantiated through the inclusion of preparing participants with theoretical perspectives and the provision of academic/teaching and cultural support in the field in order to enhance their learning from the experience.
CHAPTER TWO:

Literature Review

2.0 Introduction

This chapter provides a review of the literature to justify the importance of this research and to identify gaps so as to ensure the contribution of new and unique knowledge to the existing body of knowledge about internationalisation. This is achieved by reviewing the literature on the internationalisation of the curriculum and on teaching practicums.

The first section discusses the impact of globalisation on the current educational landscape - in this case, the increasing cultural diversity in schools. The second section discusses the rationale for addressing cultural diversity through the internationalisation of the curriculum. The third section discusses student learning experiences gained from international experiences. As the GEP is positioned in the context of the internationalisation of the curriculum, it reveals a gap in the existing research: the need to investigate student teacher learning in an international teaching practicum from the perspective of internationalisation.

The fourth section covers the discussion of student learning through the international teaching practicum. The discussion points to the three gaps in which this research attempts to insert itself: 1) to investigate student learning in international teaching practicum using mixed-methods; 2) to investigate cultural learning from an international teaching experience in terms of the dimensions of culture learning, intercultural sensitivity, and intercultural competence; and 3) to investigate professional learning via the international teaching practicum, including the development of reflective thinking.

Overall, this chapter serves to justify this research in an attempt to reveal the necessity of investigating student teacher learning experiences through the international teaching practicum within the context of internationalisation.
2.1 Globalisation, Cultural Diversity at school and Teacher Education

Globalisation is defined as:

The flow of technology, economy, knowledge, people, values, ideas across borders that further affects each country in a different way due to a nation’s individual history, tradition, cultures and priorities.

(De Wit, H. & Knight, J. cited in Knight, 1999, p. 14)

This definition illuminates the phenomenon of globalisation, which includes the flow of people across countries, resulting in the cultural diversity of students in the school context. In this view, globalisation is understood as the catalyst for change, as it is also seen as:

Fundamentally an economic process of integration that transcends national borders and ultimately affects the flow of knowledge, people, values and ideas.

(Yang, R., 2000, cited in Yang, 2002, p. 82)

In the Australian context, Luke (2004c, p. 354) asserts that globalisation creates a ‘new Australia’, which consists of a “culturally and linguistically diverse population…” Further, he explains:

the empirical conditions and contexts of schooling, identity and knowledge formation are changed and changing. Schools, teachers and students face the accelerated power and contradiction of forces of late and globalised capitalism

(Luke, 2004b, p. 73)

In the case of the impact of globalisation in America, Banks (2004) mentions that global immigration creates an increase of racial, ethnic, cultural, and language diversity. In particular, Cushner & Mahon (2002, p. 45) argue that, in the 21st century, student populations will be more diverse and will grow, whilst the teaching force around the world will still be represented by the majority culture. Recently, the argument about the changing demographic seems to be similar. Cushner (2008) argues that there is an increasing cultural and ethnic diversity of students in most U.S schools, while teaching is considered as an homogenous profession, with less than 12 percent being teachers of colour.

Clearly globalisation results in a global movement of people that brings consequences, such as an increase in multicultural class rooms. This phenomenon is commonly found in the cities around the world, which indeed
can be associated with the emerging problems in classrooms. Luke (2004b, p. 74) argues that:

> schools across national and regional jurisdictions in North and West, South and East are still struggling to contend with cultural and linguistic diversity.

In particular, Hollins and Guzman (2005) argue that the changing demographic results in problems of inequality in many aspects of the educational system. In this case, there is the assumption that teacher quality is the single most influential factor in school success rates and student achievement, surpassing other factors such as class size, socioeconomic and school context; thus, Hollins and Guzman (2005) argue that it becomes paramount for the teacher to be prepared to address the problems caused by the diversity of students’ cultural backgrounds.

Given the context, there have been various strategies to address diversity. Some studies support the provision of multicultural education to address problems rooted in cultural diversity among students (Ross & Chan, 2008). However, other studies argue that intercultural education, which is different from multicultural education, is more relevant to prepare culturally responsive teachers (Goldstein, 2007; Leeman & Ledoux, 2003).

Goldstein (2007) argues that in preparing ‘world teachers’ for ‘cosmopolitan classrooms and schools’, developing intercultural capital is not the same as the multicultural education that has been dominating Western teacher education throughout the 1970s, 80s, and 90s. Goldstein (2007, p. 131) defines ‘intercultural capital’ as “knowledge and dispositions that will help them [teachers] in intercultural exchanges of teaching and learning, which might involve issues of power, identity and intercultural conflict”.

Therefore, world teachers should be able to understand and engage with issues of power, identity and conflict between and within the cultures and community they work with (Goldstein, 2007).

Similarly, intercultural education has been incorporated in Dutch teacher education curriculum for decades (Leeman & Ledoux, 2003, p. 285). Nevertheless, recent research on teachers who work in multicultural classroom in the Netherlands still remarks on the necessity of intercultural education in
facing growing ethnic diversity due to immigration in Europe (Leeman, 2006). Moreover, Dooly & Villanueva (2006) argue that the presence of diversity across Europe forces teacher education to encourage ‘intercultural awareness’ of candidate teachers through the provision of international experience and intercultural communicative theory.

Indeed, in an Australian context, Luke (2004a, pp. 75-78) asserts that there is a need to prepare ‘a world teacher’ or ‘teacher as a world citizen’, who “could and would work, communicate and exchange – physically, virtually, online and face to face – across national and regional boundaries, across and between cultures”. This kind of teacher needs to have ‘intercultural capital’, which is defined as “the kinds of new skills, competences and knowledge required for teachers and their students to engage in flows across culture, geographies and sites” (Luke, 2004b, p. 79).

The above arguments present a strong case that the increasing of culturally diverse classrooms requires preparation of student teachers to become culturally responsive or competent teachers (Banks et al., 2005; Cushner & Brennan, 2007). Recent studies support this argument by suggesting the importance of intercultural sensitivity and intercultural competence among teachers to teach in multicultural class rooms (DeJaeghere & Cao, 2009; Mahon, 2006).

The provision of an international teaching practicum has been considered as a strategy to develop student teachers’ understanding of diversity, aimed at enhancing their capacity to solve problems in multicultural classrooms (Mahan & Stachowski, 1995). Supporting this argument, Baker and Giacchino-Baker (2000) conclude that the international teaching practicum plays an important role in preparing student teachers to teach in multicultural settings.

Similarly, Cushner (2009) argues that a study abroad experience can support student teachers to become more interculturally effective. In particular, an international teaching practicum is considered as vital to prepare student teachers with the intercultural experience required to teach in a culturally diverse context (Cushner, 2009; Cushner & Brennan, 2007; Mahon & Cushner, 2002, 2007).
Clearly, equipping student teachers with intercultural sensitivity and competence through the provision of a teaching practicum abroad in order to be able to address issues related to cultural diversity could be considered as in line with what Luke (2004b) argues is an attempt to cultivate a ‘world teacher’: “I’d like to see every student teacher who can, do a practicum in another cultural site, if not internationally” (2004a, p. 17).

This discussion shows that globalisation, which renders a significant increase in the cultural diversity of students in the classroom, requires that teachers have a cultural dimension in their teaching. The following section attempts to discuss the rationale of addressing this issue through the internationalisation of the curriculum in higher education/teacher education; this context provides the opportunity to internationalise the experiences of undergraduate students, including student teachers.

2.2 Reasons for Addressing Cultural Diversity with the Internationalisation of the Curriculum in Higher Education

The issue of cultural diversity in schools, as an impact of globalisation, is shared by other educational environments, such as higher education, and workplaces in general. The following section discusses several reasons why the internationalisation of the curriculum in higher education is considered as a suitable strategy to address the issue of cultural diversity.

The main rationale for addressing cultural diversity via the internationalisation of the curriculum stems from the current common definition of internationalisation:

the process of integrating an international, intercultural or global dimension into the purpose, functions or delivery of post secondary education

(Knight, 2003, p. 2)

It implies the need to develop an international perspective or intercultural dimension in teaching and learning as part of internationalisation (Crichton & Scarino, 2007). Since internationalisation is considered as a strategy to respond to the impact of globalisation (Knight, 1999; Yang, 2002), the integration of an intercultural dimension could be aimed at addressing cultural
diversity. Thus, this definition of internationalisation reflects the concern to incorporate an intercultural perspective in teaching and learning, which could be perceived as a way to address cultural diversity in educational settings.

The relevance of addressing cultural diversity via internationalising education is depicted in the goal of internationalisation, particularly the one which “centres on the development of interculturality and pluralism through education as a whole” (Liddicoat, 2003, p. 14). In this context, internationalisation of the curriculum includes ‘internationalised teaching’, which promotes intercultural engagement rather than merely developing awareness and values of different culture. Thus, in the Australian context, Eisenchlas, Trevaskes, & Liddicoat (2003, p. 146) state that internationalisation provides ”an irreplaceable opportunity to better Australian society with the skills, competences, (and) intercultural knowledge to engage effectively in the global market place”.

The relevance of addressing cultural diversity with the internationalisation of the curriculum also lies within the rationale for internationalisation of the curriculum itself. In this case, the rationale could be pragmatically based, values-based, or a combination of both (Jones & Killick, 2007). In detail, Jones and Killick (2007) explain that a pragmatic rationale aims to prepare students to enter the globalising workforce, with an emphasis on the ability of the graduate to perform, while values-based rationales are involved with notions such as global citizenship, ethics and justice, and global issues.

The combination of both rationales means that the purpose of internationalisation is to cultivate, not only knowledge and abilities, but also attitudes that inform the application of knowledge and abilities. Thus, internationalising the curriculum is perceived as the preparation of graduates to enter the globalised workforce (Brill, 1998; Deardorff, 2006b; Leask, 2001; Whalley, 1997). In this case, globalisation demands that graduates need to have, not only knowledge and skills in their professions, but also the competencies to work in the global economy (Brill, 1998) and diversified citizenry (Whalley, 1997).
Moreover, the internationalisation of the curriculum can be regarded as a suitable move to address cultural diversity, as its objectives are reflected in the objectives of a university; the goal of a university includes developing, as part of the graduate’s expected qualities, an international perspective and an understanding of many cultures. In this case, the Statement of Purpose of Australian Higher Education (Davis, et al., 1999) states that “universities must enable their graduates to operate anywhere and in any sphere … in order to be able to engage in an increasingly globalised economy” (National Board of Employment, Education and Training, 1992 cited in Davis, Milne & Olsen, 1999, p.22-23).

In particular, a reason to address cultural diversity with the internationalisation of the curriculum is also demonstrated in the description of graduate qualities, which includes global knowledge, engagement and intercultural knowledge and competence (Bennett, 2008). In this instance:

the association of American Colleges and Universities Greater Expectation Project on Accreditation and Assessment reported that global knowledge and engagement, along with intercultural knowledge and competence, have been identified as essential learning outcomes for all fields of concentration and for all majors.


The objective of developing student outcomes, such as intercultural competence among graduates, is also mentioned in higher education in Canada. According to Stone (2006, p. 337), the Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada (AUCC, cited in Knight, 1999) have an agreement on the objective or rationale for internationalisation in higher education, which is “to prepare graduates who are internationally knowledgeable and interculturally competent”.

The relevance of addressing cultural diversity through internationalisation of the curriculum becomes apparent with the increasing number of international students in higher education. The more diverse student body directs the internationalisation of the curriculum to emphasise:

a wide range of teaching and learning strategies designed to develop graduates who demonstrate international perspectives as professionals and citizens through broadening the scope of the subject to include international content and/or contact, and approaches to teaching and learning that assist in the development of cross cultural communication skills

(Leask, 2001, p. 106)
In this context, as internationalisation of the curriculum targets all students, international students are involved through strategies such as the infusion of perspectives of international education, multiculturalism and intercultural communication in teaching and learning, and assessment (Leask, 2001).

Student outcomes of internationalisation through international experience are depicted in the students’ responses regarding their expectations of study abroad. In this case, students who participated in the European Action Scheme for the Mobility of University Students (ERASMUS) 1998-1999, reported their expectations of participating in study abroad, including: "self development (87%), overseas academic learning (82%), (and) improved understanding of the host country (82%)“ (Teichler, 2004, p. 397).

Leggott and Stapleford (cited in Brown & Jones, 2007, pp. 126-127) find that students’ involvement in study abroad programs is aimed at increasing their employability through the development of attributes such as ‘confidence’, ‘independence’, ‘organisation’, ‘meta-cognitive skills’, ‘responsibility’ and ‘cross-cultural awareness’. In this regard, Van de Berg (2007, cited in Bennett, 2008) reports that a recent survey of over 300 employers, conducted by the Council on International Educational Exchange, reveals the employers’ valuing of study abroad and overseas internship programs.

Brill (1998, p. 85) considers international competency as ‘skills for a world community’. These include:

the development of interpersonal skills, education for participation in active citizenship, understanding and acceptance of other cultures and active engagement in analytical, creative thinking, a sharpening ability to recognise concepts, problems, issues, and the ability to identify information needs, to analyse alternative solutions, to calculate cost and benefits including externalities and make reasonable choices.


Discussion in this section shows the relevance of addressing cultural diversity through the internationalisation of the curriculum. Its relevance is outlined in: the definition and objectives of internationalisation; the objective and rationale for internationalisation of the curriculum; and the delineation of graduates’ qualities and employers’ expectations. Therefore, it is necessary to discuss student learning in this process.
2.3 University Students’ Learning from the International Experience

The following section aims to discuss student learning in programs to internationalise student experience. As shown in the previous chapter, this kind of program is part of the broad practice of the internationalisation of the curriculum. This section thus starts with a discussion of perspectives on practices designed to internationalise the curriculum, in order to further contextualize student teacher learning from the perspective of internationalisation.

2.3.1 Internationalisation of the curriculum in higher education

The practices of internationalisation of the curriculum involve various strategies influenced by various factors, including the perception of what constitutes ‘curriculum’. This present research adopts the perspective of international curricula developed by OECD, in which it encompasses a broad range of activities such as study abroad and study of languages; such a definition is listed in the typology of international curricula (Rizvi, 2007a), where curriculum is perceived as a broad concept. As mentioned previously, curriculum can be interpreted as involving aspects of content and process (Fraser & Bosanquest, 2006) and “all the experiences which inform a student’s cognitive, attitudinal and affective development” (Jones & Killick, 2007, p. 110).

Assuming that curriculum refers to content or teaching material, the internationalisation of the curriculum merely involves changes in the content of curriculum (Cogan, 1998) with the objective of broadening students’ views and perspectives in their study areas (Fung, 1998). In this case, the connection between students and academics and the real world is conducted through the infusion of new material, focusing on international issues, into courses, including reading material, illustration, and assignments. In general education, this perspective of internationalising the curriculum through changing the content of teaching material is considered as impractical; thus undergraduate
curricula is internationalised through the inclusion of international studies (Burn, 2002).

Perceiving curriculum as encompassing all aspects of teaching and learning leads to more comprehensive strategies in internationalising the curriculum. In this case, internationalisation aims, not only to expand the current repertoire of university practices, but also to include an interculturally inclusive approach in teaching and learning in order to provide intercultural experiences for all students (Liddicoat, 2003). Thus, incorporating curriculum with international studies with the aim of developing an international perspective only is not sufficient to achieve the goal of internationalisation, which includes developing an intercultural perspective. Hence, as internationalisation of the curriculum targets both international and local students to move toward a more culturally pluralistic perspective, it involves the development of international perspectives and intercultural understanding (Eisenchlas, et al., 2003). In practice, internationalising teaching practice involves developing “an intercultural dimension of teaching” in order to develop students’ ability to “solve problems and apply learning with cultural and environmental sensitivity” (Liddicoat 2003, p. 19).

This broad perspective of internationalisation of the curriculum includes not only internationalising the content of curricula, but also the process of teaching and learning, as the objective of internationalisation is to cultivate some degree of intercultural competence among both local and international students (Trevaskes & Eisenchlas, 2003). Thus internationalisation of the curriculum aims to affect the whole individual cognitively, affectively and behaviourally to perform in an internationalised environment. In this light, some practical ways to internationalise the curriculum involve the inclusion of intercultural communication into curricula, such as providing spaces for students’ discussion and reflection on intercultural issues in the university environment, and opportunities for interaction between international and local students to develop intercultural knowledge, awareness and skills.

Moreover, this broad perspective of the internationalisation of the curriculum suggests internationalising the pedagogy involving communication, organisation and work practices, such as teaching, management and evaluation
(Curro & McTaggart, 2003). In this case, internationalisation of the curriculum aims to develop skills, understanding and values required to work in a different environment.

As internationalisation aims to develop an international perspective for both local and international students, internationalisation of the curriculum is conducted through initiatives to “broaden the scope of the subject to include international content and/or contact and sets up teaching and learning to assist in the development of cross-cultural communication skills” (Leask, 2001, p.100). From this perspective, the internationalisation of the curriculum focuses on “process as well as content”; “improving the quality of teaching and learning for all students from all educational and cultural backgrounds”; and “value and include the contributions of international students, validate the points of view of others, and promote cross-cultural and international understanding” (Leask, 2001, pp. 108-114).

Internationalising the curriculum through transnational programs increases as it provides the opportunities for transformational intercultural engagement with other cultures (Leask, 2005). However, intercultural contact does not guarantee intercultural learning. The internationalisation of the curriculum encompasses a framework for the development of teaching and learning in order to develop international perspectives. In this case,

the primary themes for academic staff development are teacher as intercultural learner, teaching as an intercultural conversation, and teacher as manager of the intercultural learning environment; and the primary themes for the delivery of services to students are student as intercultural learners, learning as an intercultural conversation and students as managers of their own intercultural learning

(Leask, 2005, p. 6)

Furthermore, the education export from Australian universities is also considered as a form of the internationalisation of the curriculum (Scapper & Mayson, 2003). In this context, curricula are produced massively to address the economic rationale behind the program. However, in this type of program, the strong influence of telecommunications technology shapes the program. Internationalisation issues become less important than the economic imperative, which is to deliver the program efficiently and effectively. In practice, this requires standardisation of the course, which results in the
difficulty of achieving the goals of internationalisation, such as catering for the varied needs of students.

As mentioned in a previous chapter, the popular construction of the internationalisation of the curriculum falls within three interrelated initiatives of the OECD’s typology of international curricula: ‘study abroad and educational exchange programs’; ‘foreign language and cultural programs’; and ‘work preparation related programs’ (Rizvi, 2007a, p. 392). Rizvi (2007) argues that universities have been internationalising the curriculum according to the OECD’s suggestion that:

Internationalisation of the curriculum is necessary partly because of the requirements of the global market and the social and cultural developments that are heading towards a multicultural and globally minded society.

(Rizvi, 2007a, p. 391)

In these current practices, study abroad and educational exchange programs are the most popular programs aiming to internationalise the curriculum, apart from international student recruitment, as universities hold the position that this type of program encourages an international outlook in its students, which turns them into culturally sensitive graduates. With respect to the second raft of well-received programs, – foreign language and cultural programs – there has been the general perception that this type of program promotes intercultural exchange and understanding. Furthermore, the assumption for the third common program lies in the universities’ interpretations of the global economy, which is mostly considered as being about knowledge-based and service-oriented programs. This results in the emerging notion of global competence, which is perceived as facilitating graduates to work in multicultural settings. This assumption leads to the trend towards an international, standards-based qualification, suggesting “curricular frameworks that are globally networked and fully utilise the possibilities of new information and communication technologies” (Rizvi, 2007a, p. 393).

This sub-section discusses various perspectives in internationalising the curriculum in higher education, including changing the content of the curriculum to develop an international perspective. As the internationalisation of the curriculum is considered to also develop an intercultural perspective, perceiving that curriculum is more than content leads to more comprehensive
approaches. In this case, some initiatives include the provision of intercultural engagements between local and international students, while others provide this international experience or study abroad programs for students.

Having acknowledged these varied perspectives of the internationalisation of the curriculum, the next inquiry concerns what students actually gain. Assuming that the internationalisation of the curriculum aims to develop an international and/or intercultural dimension in order to prepare both international and local students to work in a globalised world, the following section aims to discuss various perspectives of student learning.

As mentioned previously, the GEP is located in the context of the internationalisation of the curriculum within the category of programs that provide international experience for students; the following section focuses the discussion solely on student learning gained through international experience abroad.

2.3.2 Various learning from an international experience

As discussed above, there are various programs of internationalisation of the curriculum that provide international experience for students, including the GEP. This subsection discusses benefits gained from an international experience.

There have been extensive studies on student learning from international experience in study abroad programs. Cushner and Karim (2004) and Mahon and Cushner (2007) conducted reviews of studies on study abroad programs. Although there are some inconsistent findings, some studies report on the impact of studying abroad on participants’ cognitive learning, including an increase in cultural and political knowledge of the host countries, changes in attitude toward home and the host countries, and foreign language proficiency. Moreover, various studies remark on the effects of the programs on affective aspects, such as greater independence, self-reliance, tolerance and appreciation. Many studies also include reports on participants’ lasting friendships with people from host countries. With regard to behavioural changes, some studies
report that students who participated in study abroad programs embraced an international outlook and even worked in global workplaces.

Similarly, Immelman and Schneider (1998) found that student learning during study abroad programs mostly falls within affective and social, rather than behavioural and cognitive domains. The affective domain includes self-confidence, broadening worldview or appreciating differences, questioning or re-evaluating personal values, responsibility and patience, whilst the social domain consists of independence, autonomy, self-sufficiency or self-reliance, communication or socialization skills, friendship, relationships or social identity, self-identity, questioning and re-evaluating goals, and spontaneity.

Indeed, many studies report student learning without identifying its learning dimensions. Many terms are used to refer to student’ gains as the impacts of participating in the program, including: global perspective (Dunkley, 2009; Wilson, 1993); international perspective/ global understanding (Kauffmann, Martin, Weaver, & Weaver, 1992); global interdependence (Sutton & Rubin, 2004); global mindedness (Golay, 2007; Kehl & Morris, 2007-2008); international orientation (Daly, 2007); international concern (Parsons, 2010).

Many studies also report on students’ gains in terms of personal growth or personal development (Ingraham & Peterson, 2004; Jackson, 2006; Kauffmann, et al., 1992; Murphy-Lejeune, 2002; Wilson, 1993). Indeed, some studies refer to aspects related to global mindedness or cultural learning as personal growth or development, whilst this present research refers it as social skills, including autonomy, self-confidence, self-esteem, self-reliance, or self-concept and maturity.

Culture-related gains in terms of cognitive, as well as, attitudinal and behavioural changes are mentioned in many studies (Brubaker, 2006; Dunkley, 2009; Engle & Engle, 2003; Ingraham & Peterson, 2004; Jackson, 2006; Kauffmann, et al., 1992; Marx, 2008; Papatsiba, 2006; Parsons, 2010; Pearson-Evans, 2006; Sutton & Rubin, 2004; Wilson, 1993).

Intellectual growth or academic growth or study-based knowledge is mentioned in some studies as an impact of international learning (Ingraham &
Peterson, 2004; Kauffmann, et al., 1992; Murphy-Lejeune, 2002; Parsons, 2010; Sutton & Rubin, 2004). These terms refer to the development of a student’s knowledge base, related to particular subject matter that subsequently leads to increased academic performance. Other studies include growth of factual knowledge and cultural knowledge as parts of academic growth.

Language learning or language competency is also considered to be an impact that study abroad programs have on participants (Engle & Engle, 2003; Ingraham & Peterson, 2004; Jackson, 2006; Kauffmann, et al., 1992; Parsons, 2010). This includes the attainment of foreign language skills in oracy, writing and reading.

Few studies remark student gains from study abroad programs that are combined with service learning. In this context, Russell and Morris (2008) found that international experience affects students in terms of gaining leadership skills and an ethno-relative worldview. Similarly, Stachowski and Visconti (1998) reported that student teachers gain greater understanding of the community and make discoveries about the host community and themselves.

Focusing on in-country language programs, Harbon (2003; Harbon, 2005) suggests that students who learnt a foreign language developed their linguistic skills and cultural awareness from the language immersion program. Hill and Thomas (2002) discover that international travel increases Australian student teachers’ interest in study of Asia. Moreover, the student teachers who travelled in Asia have a tendency to consider the importance of teaching about Asia in primary school and to feel more confident to teach such material upon graduation.

This discussion points out the various benefits gained by the students through international experience in study abroad, exchange, service-learning and foreign language programs. The next section attempts to focus the discussion on dimensions or aspects of cultural gains of student participants from their immersion in a different country, and on how these aspects are understood.

### 2.3.3 Cultural learning from an international experience
Many studies mainly report on cultural learning deriving from the programs that provide international experience. In these studies, different frameworks or models are used to represent cultural learning gained from interaction with different cultures.

As cultural learning includes intercultural learning, cultural learning is perceived in terms of intercultural literacy (Heyward, 2002). A multidimensional model for the development of intercultural literacy as the end point of intercultural learning is constructed through modelling the cross-cultural experience from culture shock to intercultural learning (Heyward, 2002). In this model, intercultural learning refers to ‘learning of culture’, while intercultural literacy is defined as “the understandings, competencies, attitudes, language proficiencies, participation and identities necessary for successful cross-cultural engagement” (Heyward, 2002, p. 10). According to this view, intercultural competence is considered as a component of intercultural literacy that relates specifically to competencies of mindfulness, empathy, perspective-taking, tolerance and communication. Overall, intercultural literacy refers to the broad ability to understand and negotiate another culture, including symbols and meanings in daily life. The influential factors, such as curriculum (educational and training inventions) and learning contexts (social and cultural supports) are essential, as contact with other cultures, although necessary, is not enough to develop intercultural competence.

In the context of preparing, through internationalising student learning, "graduates who are internationally knowledgeable and interculturally competent”, cultural learning is viewed in term of ‘intercultural effectiveness’ (Stone, 2006, p. 337). It is defined as "the ability to interact with people from different cultures, so as to optimise the probability of mutually successful outcomes” (Stone, 2006, p. 338). This conceptual framework comprises several essential elements, including “emotional intelligence, knowledge, motivation, openness, resilience, reflectiveness, sensitivity and skills” (Stone, 2006, p. 344).

The concept of intercultural effectiveness is also perceived as the benefit of intercultural or international experience in broader contexts, such as high school students, university students and professionals (Vincenti, 2001).
sum, this concept includes the three qualities of “flexibility, sensitivity to others (and) non-ethnocentricity” (Vincenti, 2001, p. 55).

Another model views cultural learning in terms of intercultural competence, which is defined, simply, as ‘intercultural know-how’, and differentiated into content and ‘processual’ competencies (Stier, 2003, p. 84). The first one consists of knowledge, information about culture and its people, while the second comprises cognitive, emotional (emotional coping, avoiding judgments, avoiding automatic responses) and interpersonal competencies (interpersonal sensitivity, communicative competence, situational sensitivity). In this construct, the term ‘intercultural competence’ is used interchangeably with ‘intercultural and cultural competencies’.

Intercultural competence is argued as a representation of a student outcome of internationalisation in higher education, in particular to study abroad programs, although it is defined by intercultural scholars and understood by universities differently (Deardorff, 2004; Deardorff, 2006a; Deardorff, 2006b; Deardorff, 2008). Through a consensus, intercultural competence is defined as “the ability to communicate effectively and appropriately in intercultural situations based on one’s intercultural knowledge, skills and attitudes” (Deardorff, 2004, p. 194). Comprising 22 elements, this concept of intercultural competence is categorised into attitude, knowledge, skills, and internal and external outcomes, and can be viewed in the form of a pyramid, with attitude as the lowest degree of competency, and the external outcome as the highest level of competency.

In combination with foreign language learning, intercultural learning is referred to as ‘intercultural communicative competence’ (Byram, 1997). In this model, intercultural competence is considered as part of intercultural communicative competence, comprising “linguistic competence, sociolinguistic competence, discourse competence and intercultural competence” (Byram, 1997, p. 73). In particular, the components of intercultural competence are “knowledge, skills and attitudes, complemented by the values one holds because of one’s belonging to a number of social groups, values which are part of one’s belonging to a given society” (Byram, 1997, p. 5).
Cultural learning from cross-cultural interaction is also perceived in terms of intercultural sensitivity (Bennett, 1993). The Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity (DMIS) refers to a developmental model of personal growth in the context of cross-cultural interaction. This model describes “how cultural difference is comprehended and identifies the strategies that impede such comprehension” (Bennett, 1993, p. 22). Basically this model comprises two stages of ethnocentric and ethno-relative worldviews.

This subchapter discusses cultural learning through international experience within the broad context of study abroad programs; it has been perceived in terms of various concepts or models, such as intercultural literacy, intercultural effectiveness, intercultural sensitivity and intercultural competence.

Indeed, Paige and Goode (2009) consider four conceptual models as the relevant theoretical frameworks attaching to the development of intercultural competence in the field of international education. These include: the model of intensity factors in intercultural experiences (Paige, 1993a), the model of culture learning (Paige, 2006), the model of intercultural competence (Deardorff, 2008); and the Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity (Bennett, 1986 & 1993).

As this discussion encompasses student learning gained from study abroad programs, this discussion of the literature points out a gap for this research to fill; there is a need to investigate student-teacher learning from programs that provide international teaching experience for student teachers.

The following section aims to discuss student teachers’ learning gained from international teaching practicum programs.

### 2.4 Student Teacher Learning from International Teaching Practicums

In the field of teacher education, the international teaching practicum predated the emergence of initiatives aimed at the internationalisation of the curriculum in higher education. As international teaching practicums can be found in many forms, this section begins with a discussion of the practices of international
teaching practicums in order to contextualise the position of the GEP within this broad and vital area of teacher education.

2.4.1 The practice of the international teaching practicum

From the perspective of the internationalisation of the curriculum, this present research falls within the category of study abroad programs that provide international experience. A few literature reviews report that there have been a small number of students participating in study abroad programs who come from a teacher education background (Cushner, 2008; Karaman & Tochon, 2007; Quesada, 2004). In this context, Marx (2008) investigates student teacher’s intercultural development during a study abroad program in London, which runs for the course of an academic year. This program incorporates internship at local schools while attending courses at university in London. The students worked as support teachers with responsibility “to assist students who were identified as needing a range of support within mainstream classrooms” (Marx, 2008, p. 168). As part of the internship, some student teachers were given the opportunity to teach for several days a week.

Apart from study abroad programs, student teachers have the opportunity to conduct teaching practicums abroad through international teaching practicum programs, which are mostly shorter than study abroad programs. In the USA, this type of program has been conducted by over 100 universities since around 1972 (Quesada, 2004); two models for the provision of international education programs have been identified – by individual schools of education, or by a consortium of schools of education from various universities that are partnered with universities in other countries.

In practice, these programs appear to be similar with respect to their short term duration, varying from one week (Willard-Holt, 2001), to fifteen weeks (Cushner & Mahon, 2002). In these programs, student teachers teach for the duration of the program. Additionally, these programs are similar with respect to the opportunity they provide to teach at local, national or international schools, with English as the language of instruction (or in bilingual settings), in countries such as Mexico and Italy, and in English-speaking countries, such as
England, Ireland, Scotland, Australia and New Zealand (Baker & Giacchino-Baker, 2000). Activity outside the classroom includes community service (Mahan & Stachowski, 1995; Stachowski, et al., 2003; Stachowski & Visconti, 1998), in addition to visiting local attractions.

According to Quezada (2004), to participate in teaching practicum programs abroad, student teachers need to attend a preparation program, such as meeting sessions, and to attend a pre-requisite course. Students may live in the same accommodation facility or with host families. As the main activity is to teach, student teachers are placed with their local supervising teacher. They are also able to communicate with their university supervisors through email.

The rationales for conducting teaching practicum overseas appear to be varied. Firstly, some arguments originally come from theoretical perspectives on teacher preparation/practicums. Pence & Macgillvray (2008) state that: 1) greater understanding comes from active involvement in the field based experiences, rather than from normal classroom (Villegas & Lucas, 2002); 2) engagement with different cultures makes sensitive teachers (Willard-Holt, 2001); and 3) reflection is important for professional development (Lee, 2005; Robertson & Webber, 2000). Moreover, Faulconer (2003) asserts the need to prepare student teachers to confront their own biases, since wrong perception of students might become the students’ self perception through self-fulfilling prophecies (Jones & Fuller, 2003). In addition, Cushner and Mahon (2002, p. 46) mention that the ‘situative theory’ of Putnam & Boko (2000) implies that the context in which learning takes place ‘is integral to one’s cognition and that all knowledge is situated’. A student teacher “needs (the) opportunity to examine the interaction between their own beliefs while in specific contexts” (McDiarmid & Price, 1993, cited in Cushner & Mahon, 2002).

Secondly, the rationale for an international teaching practicum comes from the empirical situation, whereby an increasing culturally diverse classroom requires student teachers to be culturally responsive teachers. According to Stachowski, et al. (2003), teachers need to consider the different cultural values of students to avoid misinterpretation on differences in modes of communication, participation and world view (Bennett, 1995). Willard-Holt (2001) stated that there was a mandate from the National Council for
Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) (1995) for the provision of global and international education. Moreover, according to Merryfield (1995) and Tucker & Cistone (1991) (as cited in Willard-Holt, 2001), several organisations such as the American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education; the American Association of State Colleges and Universities; and the National Governor’s Association impose the inclusion of a global perspective in teacher education. Clearly, in the American context, an international teaching practicum aims to prepare teachers for the increasingly diverse classroom due to the global movement of people.

In the Australian context, international experiences for student teachers are provided through programs such as offshore studies, Languages and Cultures Initial Teacher Education Program, in-country languages programs, and a combination of international studies within a range of courses, including teacher education and overseas teaching practicums (Hill & Thomas, 2002, p. 296).

In this case, the international teaching practicum, which has had a strong association with culture studies for student teachers, has been practiced over the past 20 years (Hill, Thomas & Cote, 1997, cited in Harbon, 2005). This program is known as an “immersion in-country professional development experience” and is defined as “the practice of language teachers professionally developing and updating their language and culture knowledge through formal classroom immersion language experiences in the target country” (Harbon, 2005, p. 7).

Hill and Thomas (1995, as cited in Harbon 2005, p. 1; Hill & Thomas, 2002) state that there were fifteen Australian universities that had conducted thirty-two in-country teaching programs over the five-year period preceding their research. In particular, Charles Sturt University started to conduct this program in 1989 (Hill, 1993). Students in the Diploma of Teaching in General Primary and Early Childhood courses had the opportunity to teach in public schools and pre-schools. Hill (1993, p. 4) described that student teachers “taught in all curriculum areas with minimum direction from the schools concerned, supervised by the Charles Sturt academics”. They also taught English in an
English program of the host university (Yogyakarta) for three weeks as part of the program (Hill, 1993).

In the case of non-foreign language teaching abroad programs, two studies have been conducted on the Deakin GEP – the program under present investigation. Johnson (2009) investigated the development of the attributes of an intercultural teacher among student teachers who participated in the GEP. In this case, the student teachers conducted teaching practicums for three weeks in India. They taught in schools that have an English language based curriculum. Similarly, Prior (2006) investigated student teachers’ development of a sense of global citizenship through participation in an international teaching practicum. The student teacher participants conducted their GEP in Vanuatu for three weeks.

Other non-language teaching practicum programs abroad include the international teaching practicum conducted at the University of Wollongong. This program has been provided for more than twenty years in collaboration with the Fijian Education Department (Tome, Fitzsimmons, & McKenzie, 2004). In this program, student teachers teach for two weeks in Fiji. Fitsimmon and McKenzie (2006) also examined the personal and professional benefits of student teachers who participated in the program.

This sub-section discusses various programs that provide opportunities for student teachers to teach abroad. However, the next discussion is limited only on those programs which have similar characteristics to the Deakin University GEP, that is, the international teaching practicum which is of shorter duration than study abroad programs. Moreover, this research focuses on the program where the student teacher teaches in English; thus it excludes language immersion programs.

### 2.4.2 The gap in the research method of studies of international teaching practicums

This section discusses the research method of studies of programs that provide short-term and English-medium international teaching practicums.
Several studies have been conducted based on the reflective reports or questionnaires that were written upon completion of the program. Focusing on the influence of cultural values on classroom practice, one study required student teachers to write a reflective report on a weekly basis, without the program coordinator being on-site (Stachowski, et al., 2003).

Another study, which used a similar data-collection method, was conducted to investigate the nature of the international teaching experience and its impacts on the professional and personal developments of student teachers (Cushner & Mahon, 2002). In this study, apart from the reports, some students gave their personal journal entries for data analysis.

Another similar study aimed to examine student-learning outcomes from teaching in a different culture (Mahan & Stachowski, 1992). Data in the form of students’ reflective reports was collected upon completion of the program. It was found that new learning could be documented under five major headings: “classroom teaching strategy; curriculum; fact acquisition; human interrelationship, self-discovery and appreciation; and miscellanies” (Mahan & Stachowski, 1992, p. 157).

Furthermore, with the objective of examining the student teacher’s development in cultural understanding and critical teaching skills, data was collected in several ways. In addition to a written report completed during the program, in this study, data was collected through email, regular mail and several on-site visits, videotaped interviews and class visits (Baker & Giacchino-Baker, 2000).

A study combining case study, mini-ethnography and action research involved the researcher staying on-site during the program (Tome, et al., 2004). In this research, data was collected through participant and non-participant observation, semi-structured interviews, in-class observation, informal conversations, reflective journals and a post-practicum follow-up. The aim of this study was to investigate if the international teaching practicum actually developed or hindered the professional and personal understanding of student teachers. Similarly, Fitzimmons & McKenzie (2006) investigated student teachers’ benefits gained from participating in a teaching practicum abroad.
They conducted in-situ classroom observations, semi-structured interviews and informal discussion to collect data while they lived at the research site with participants.

With the same objective – to investigate the impact of short-term international teaching practicums on student teachers – two studies used similar data collection methods. Willard-Holt (Willard-Holt, 2001) collected data through questionnaires in several steps: Questionnaire 1 (Q1) for pre-departure; Q2 for post-travel; Q3 for four months later; and an interview for ex-participants who got full-time teaching positions. In the second study, the researchers travelled with the student teachers, who were asked to write reflective reports, course evaluations and personal journals, to participate in focused group discussion with supervisors, and to complete questionnaires one year after graduation (Pence & Macgillivray, 2008).

Using participant observation, Faulconer (2003, p. 3) aimed to investigate: “what students learned; how they met the teaching and personal challenges; and how the experience impacted on their professional and personal lives upon returning from overseas”. Data was collected through various means, including: a pre-trip survey; interviews both on-site and upon returning; observational field notes, with a minimum of three days spent in each student’s classroom; informal conversations; photographs; documents; and student journals.

The discussion shows that, although the objectives of the studies focus on similar goals, – to investigate student learning in terms of professional and personal developments – the research method varied. Several studies reported that data was collected after the student teachers returned from overseas (Cushner & Mahon, 2002; Mahan & Stachowski, 1992; Stachowski, et al., 2003); while other studies involved the researcher collecting the data while staying on-site during the program or on-site visits (Baker & Giacchino-Baker, 2000; Faulconer, 2003; Fitzsimmons & McKenzie, 2006; Pence & Macgillivray, 2008; Tome, et al., 2004). The first method allows collecting data through questionnaires or reflective journals upon completing the program; thus, the data can be collected from various locations. This review shows that more studies were conducted through immersion in the research
site, allowing the researcher to collect richer data through direct observations and semi-structured interviews. However, this method only allows collecting data from a small number of participants from a particular site.

Therefore, it is possible to discern a gap in the way these research studies were conducted. It shows that none of the research collected data from both multi sites of programs and a single site. This present research aims to fill this gap as it combines an investigation of student lived experiences from a case study conducted at a particular site and time, along with the student perceptions of learning from various sites and times to ascertain the fuller meaning of student learning from participation in the GEP. Thus, the research questions to address the issues of the research method are:

- What perceptions did the student teachers have regarding their learning during the GEP?
- What was the lived experience of the student teachers participating in the 2010 Vanuatu GEP?

The first research question aims to investigate student learning in terms of perception; thus data are collected through a survey which has been delivered to some student teachers who participated in a GEP, whatever the location, in 2008, 2009 and 2010.

The second research question aims to examine the real lived experience of the students. Thus, close engagement with, and direct observation of participants and semi-structured interviews through an ethnographic case study, is necessary.

### 2.4.3 The gap in cultural learning from the perspective of internationalisation

The previous section shows that student learning from international experience in study abroad programs mainly refers to cultural learning. This section aims to explore student teacher learning of the host culture in an international teaching practicum program. In some research, cultural learning gains from teaching in different country are reported as professional, while in other studies it is considered as part of personal development.
Quezada’s review of international teaching practicum programs suggests that student teachers gain cultural understanding of the host country in addition to learning about instructional pedagogy and self (Quezada, 2004, p. 462). In particular, learning of new culture increased cultural awareness, global thinking, and cultural sensitivity.

Cushner (2009) reviewed literatures on student teachers teaching abroad. He reported that student teachers gained an increase in cultural knowledge as they developed empathy and learnt about their own culture. These included students’ development of interest in other cultures, and their ability to understand different cultures effectively and maintain good communication.

Clement and Outlaw (2002) reported that student teachers returning from seven weeks’ teaching in countries such as New Zealand, Mexico, the Bahamas and Ireland gained learning about culture. In this case, the students remarked on their experiences of the traditions of the host culture, such as eating traditional food and experiencing local carnivals, and learning about non-verbal communication; Clement and Outlaw (2002) argue that living abroad enabled the student teachers to learn about culture as an everyday experience.

Mahon and Cushner (2002) investigated the nature of the international teaching practicum and its impact on the professional and personal development of student teachers using the responses of fifty students, who went to countries such as Australia, Ireland and New Zealand, on an open-ended questionnaire. It is revealed that the greatest impact of the international teaching practicum was on “student teachers’ beliefs about self and others” (Mahon & Cushner, 2002, p. 49).

In detail, they reported some evidence of developing cultural sensitivity among student teachers. Some evidence of participants’ specific behaviours fell within three stages of the DMIS (Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity, Bennet 1993): Minimization, Acceptance and Adaptation. For example, many students wrote about developing empathy - “I learned the importance of trying to understand where the other people are coming from”; and “I learned that people can be much more helpful and kind than I had thought” (Mahon & Cushner, 2002, p. 50). This finding supports previous studies claiming that
overseas experience can: affect belief about self and others; question one’s stereotype of others; and develop empathy.

Other studies reported cross-cultural benefits as personal changes (Pence & Macgillivray, 2008; Willard-Holt, 2001). Cross-cultural benefits were considered as personal changes when student teachers mentioned several factors that could be considered as predictors of learning from cross cultural experiences (Pence & Macgillivray, 2008). The benefits of cross-cultural learning include: an increased confidence; a better appreciation and respect for differences of others and other cultures; tolerance; maturity; and reduced stereotyping and prejudice (Pence & Macgillivray, 2008).

Johnson (2009) investigated student teachers participating in the GEP in India in 2008. He aimed to seek attributes of an intercultural domain understood by the student teachers through the program. Data were collected through three interviews - before, during and upon returning. The findings suggest some qualities proposed by the student teachers, including: “passion for other people, ability to interact with other cultures, open-minded(ness), tolerance, respect for other cultures, the ability to be a realist and optimist at the same time, an understanding of others’ values, patience and flexibility” (Johnson, 2009, p. 5).

Prior (2006) reported that student teachers gained positive influence in their educational experience from participating in the GEP in Vanuatu. The finding suggests that students remarked on their deepened understanding of the country and were encouraged to think about their own cultural values and biases. However, the result did not mention that the student teachers gained interest in the local culture. In particular, the pre-departure questionnaires reported that they had an interest on the country even before departure. Prior (2006) concludes that the GEP did not support the common proposition that interaction with a different culture promoted interest in another culture.

Willard-Holt (2001) followed 22 student teachers who conducted an international teaching practicum in Mexico for a week. The objective of this study was to investigate students’ perceptions of the effects of the program. Data was collected through pre and post-questionnaires; and two interviews, one of which was conducted four months after returning, and the other, one
year after participation. Wilard-Holt (2001) reported a change in terms of sensitivity/empathy. One of the pieces of evidence was “I feel that I will be better prepared to work with students from a different culture in my classroom. I had some experience with this while in Mexico and should be able to relate to these students better” (Willard-Holt, 2001, p. 512). In addition, Willard-Holt (2001) reports on a broadened perspective, flexibility, patience, and self-confidence.

Mahan and Stachowski (1995) investigated the learning outcomes, gained from participation in an international teaching practicum, of sixty-three student teachers. This program provided eight-week assignments in national schools in England, Wales, Scotland, Ireland, India, Australia and New Zealand. This program combined cultural and community involvements as integral components which required the students to form friendships with local people and to become involved in their activities; plan and perform service learning; and write reflective reports on issues such as local attitudes and cultural values. With regard to cultural learning, they reported learning outcomes such as ‘a greater understanding and appreciation for the nature of other people’s lives’.

Stachowski, Richardson and Henderson (2003) reported that 60 student teachers learned about the host culture values, beliefs, and traditions. This study analysed the data based on the students’ written weekly report on the cultural values of the host country, including specific examples and the professional and personal follow-up relating to the described values (Stachowski, et al., 2003).

Faulconer (2003, p. 14) reported that student teachers found some differences with which “they were not culturally comfortable”, including different language, different conception of time, and the confrontation of poverty. The student responses revealed the development of new empathy and increased self-awareness (Faulconer, 2003).

The discussion presents reports on gains related to cultural learning in various terms, including: self awareness (Cushner, 2009; Faulconer, 2003; Mahon & Cushner, 2002; Prior, 2006; Quesada, 2004); cultural awareness / values, belief, tradition (Cushner, 2009; Quesada, 2004; Stachowski, et al., 2003);
cultural sensitivity/ empathy (Cushner, 2009; Cushner & Mahon, 2002; Faulconer, 2003; Quesada, 2004; Willard-Holt, 2001); and tolerance/ respect/appreciation of different culture (Johnson, 2009; Mahan & Stachowski, 1995; Pence & Macgillivray, 2008).

Obviously, except for the study of Mahon and Cushner (2002), none of these studies investigate student teachers’ learning using the theoretical frameworks perceived as relevant in international education, such as Paige’s Culture Learning model, Bennet’s Intercultural Sensitivity model, and Deardorff’s Intercultural Competence model (Paige & Goode, 2009). This review points to the emergent gap allowing for an investigation of student teacher cultural learning in an international teaching practicum from an internationalisation perspective.

Indeed, this gap is also revealed through other studies. In particular, the need appears for an investigation of student teachers’ intercultural development, as many studies suggest intercultural competence as the key student outcome to be expected from study abroad programs. In this context, since intercultural competence is regarded as a competence (Brill, 1998; Deardorff, 2006a; Leask, 2001; Stier, 2006; Stone, 2006) for graduates to enter the workforce in an increasingly globalised world, the international teaching practicum can be perceived as playing an important role in developing this competence among student teachers.

Moreover, there has been an argument on the need for teachers to be culturally competent in order to be able to address the cultural diversity of students (Cushner, 2008, 2009; Cushner & Brennan, 2007; Cushner & Karim, 2004; DeJaeghere & Cao, 2009; Diaz, 2001; Gay, 2001; Mahon, 2006; Westrick & Yuen, 2007). In this context, several studies reveal that intercultural competence is an importance aspect for teachers working in intercultural settings (Cushner, 2008; DeJaeghere & Cao, 2009; Mahon, 2006; Westrick & Yuen, 2007).

Furthermore, many studies suggest the need to investigate student teachers’ cultural learning in terms of intercultural sensitivity using the DMIS (Bennett, 1995; DeJaeghere & Cao, 2009; Marx, 2008; McAllister & Irvine, 2000), and
intercultural competence (Cushner & Mahon, 2009, p. 315) in assessing intercultural development.

Thus, this discussion suggests the paucity of research into the cultural learning of student teachers arising from their participation in an international teaching practicum abroad, using the theoretical perspectives underlying international education. In this context, the third research question aims to explore the potential of emerging aspects of student teachers’ cultural learning in terms of culture learning (Paige, 2006a), both from lived experience and perception, and intercultural sensitivity (Bennett, 1993) and intercultural competence (Deardorff, 2004) from lived experience during participation in the GEP.

2.4.4 The gap in professional learning from the perspective of internationalisation

Apart from intercultural learning, some studies remarked on the professional learning gained from an international teaching practicum.

Based on a literature review, Quezada (2004) reports student teachers’ gains of professional learning in terms of instructional pedagogy. The student teachers consider their learning in various terms, such as their being able to compare the different teaching practices in their home country and host country and pick out the better ones as part of their learning, and become more creative in curricular planning and delivery instruction.

Cushner’s (2009) literature review shows that student teachers gain professional impacts, including an understanding of other educational system, the ability to work with a different culture, and the ability to adapt teaching according to the needs of the student.

Prior (2006) report that student teachers participating in the GEP in Vanuatu mainly stated that the limited educational resources in Vanuatu affected them, as it influenced their thinking about the use of resources. However, it was not clear if it impacted on their teaching practice or merely their thinking system, as there was not enough evidence to support the tangible changes (Prior, 2006).
Clement and Outlaw (2002) report that student teachers gain learning of teaching from participation in an international teaching practicum. It includes some aspects of teaching, such as classroom management as the student teachers need to handle local students “who are out of their seat, don’t raise their hands before answering and are talking constantly” (Clement & Outlaw, 2002, p. 182).

Mahon and Cushner (2002; 2007, p. 76) reveal that student teachers have increased their “ability to be flexible and adapt their teaching to student differences”, and also their “cognitive sophistication and flexibility, which M. Bennett (1993) noted is crucial to increased cultural sensitivity”.

Fitzsimmons and McKenzie (2006) investigated the professional and personal benefit from a three-week international teaching practicum program for thirty-nine student teachers from the University of Wollongong. Data was collected through on-site classroom observations, interviews and informal discussion. The student teachers believed the requirement to teach empowered them with their teaching and that this eventually enhanced their confidence. In detail, the authors identify emergent themes indicating that the student teachers became reactive, retentive, reflective and resilient during their teaching practicum in the South Pacific.

Pence & Macgillvray (2008) reported their investigation of fifteen US student teachers who participated in a teaching practicum in Italy. The students reported some changes in terms of their increased awareness of the importance of feedback and reflection for professional and personal growth; and the development of appreciation and respect for differences of others and other cultures.

Other scholars such as Willard-Holt (2001) contributed evidence of changes related to students’ teaching, including the ability to incorporate a global perspective in their teaching. With regard to teaching different cultures, the majority of students reported professional changes, such as an increased sensitivity toward different cultures, flexibility or the ability to think on their feet, the development of patience, reflexivity, and professionalism.
Tome, Fitzsimmon & McKenzie (2004) reported professional growth among student participants. As the student teachers found difficulty in communicating with the local students and teachers, they needed to expand their teaching strategies, such as explaining and questioning techniques. Moreover, they gave evidence of their ability to adapt their teaching with regard, in particular, to the limited teaching resources condition. The student teachers were also able to understand the importance of student-teacher relationships.

The discussion shows some changes among student teachers with respect to their teaching practice, including: instructional pedagogy/delivery instruction (Cushner, 2009; Quesada, 2004; Tome, et al., 2004); creativity in lesson plans (Cushner, 2009; Quesada, 2004; Willard-Holt, 2001); classroom management (Clement & Outlaw, 2002); and becoming reflective (Fitzsimmons & McKenzie, 2006; Pence & Macgillivray, 2008; Willard-Holt, 2001).

As investigation in this present research is conducted from a perspective of internationalisation, previous chapter reveals that there has been limited investigation of student learning from international experience on discipline-specific learning outcomes (Hoff, 2008; Rizvi, 2007a). This suggests the need to investigate student teachers’ professional learning related to teaching aspects, as programs such as the GEP are programs that provide professional experience for student teachers.

Although discussion in this sub-section reports on various aspects of teaching, it seems to be limited to instructional pedagogy, lesson plan, classroom management and reflectivity, while other features relating to teacher knowledge bases (Shulman (2004) such as student learning style and school cultural norms, seem to be un-investigated. This discussion points to a gap wherein this present research could contribute. This present research aims to investigate the student teachers’ professional learning in terms of five adapted teacher knowledge bases (Shulman 2004), including host school cultural norms, classroom management, curriculum, teaching practice and student learning style. Furthermore, none of the reports of development in professional learning examine changes based on a particular theoretical perspective. As Brennan and Cleary (2007) suggest, reflection through journal writing is an important aspect for learning to occur during participation in international
teaching practicum. Thus, this present research identifies a gap to contribute; it aims to examine student teachers’ reflective thinking development, using the perspectives of Loughran (2002) and Clarke (1995).

2.5 Summary

This chapter discussed two major themes illuminating the context of the research problem in order to justify the importance of this research. The first theme relates to the practice of the internationalisation of the curriculum in higher education, focusing on student learning from international experience. The second is concerned with investigating the international teaching practicum—particularly, student teacher learning with respect to cultural and professional learning.

Within the first theme, an argument is established that it is imperative to locate an international teaching practicum in the context of the internationalisation of the curriculum. Discussion of the second theme reflects the argument that contextualising the international teaching practicum in the field of internationalisation gives a different perspective on student-teacher learning experience.

In the general context of internationalisation of higher education, this chapter developed the argument that documentations of student-teacher learning from this present research will justify the possibility of student teachers gaining cultural and professional learning, thus addressing the cultural diversity that has been an increasingly common phenomenon around the world due to globalisation.

Therefore, the foregoing discussion provides the necessary direction for this research, enabling it to focus on four research questions:

- What perceptions did the student teachers have regarding their learning in the GEP?
What was the lived experience of the student teachers participating in the 2010 Deakin Vanuatu GEP?

How is culture learning interpreted through the findings from the case study; and how are intercultural sensitivity and competence interpreted through the findings from the case study?

How did the student teachers construct their professional learning and the development of their reflective thinking in the GEP?

The theoretical perspectives to approach the research questions will be discussed in the next chapter.
CHAPTER THREE: Theoretical framework

3.0 Introduction

This chapter aims to provide a theoretical framework by which to understand the phenomena under investigation, that is, the learning experiences of student teachers gained as a result of participating in the GEP. This is achieved by exploring all the possible meanings of learning that might take place in the GEP.

Thus, the first section provides a description of the objectives of the GEP and its wider context, which is the professional experience of the teaching practicum, including the meaning of transformative learning in the context of the international teaching practicum. The next two sections discuss two aspects of learning – cultural and professional – that are the foci of this study. In this regard, various theoretical perspectives are explained. In each of these sections, some explanations of other theoretical perspectives are included as an aid to understanding the necessary factors that influence the occurrence of cultural and professional learning in international teaching practicums.

3.1 Framing ‘Learning’ from Experience in the GEP

Initially, the literature review to establish the theoretical framework for this research was conducted in the light of the objectives of the Deakin Global Experience Program. According to the handbook of the GEP (Deakin, 2009, p. 3), the goal of the GEP is to “develop the knowledge, cultural sensitivity and skills needed to address diversity within the educational environment” among student teachers. Moreover, the handbook explains further various objectives of participation to reflect learning in the GEP, including:

- understanding of curriculum content and processes within the global context;
- understanding cultural imperatives in teaching practices and schools;
- understanding inclusivity in teaching;
- understanding social justice in teaching; and
- learning to be flexible regarding subject matter, skills and values within a range of cultural settings’
Since the GEP is a part of professional experience, the purposes of professional experience also give broadened insights about the learning that might take place in the GEP. These include the development of:

- an understanding of how students learn;
- the skills to interact with students;
- the ability to link knowledge gained from the course with teaching experience;
- knowledge and understanding of the school curriculum;
- effective teaching skills and strategies;
- a self-reflective approach to teaching;
- a capacity to work collaboratively with colleagues in planning, teaching and evaluation;
- greater understanding of the day-to-day operations within a school setting; and
- appropriate professional relationships with the school community

Moreover, the meanings of learning in the GEP are framed in the context of the research questions. Hence, in this study, the differentiation between experience and learning from experience, gained by student teachers during the GEP, is articulated. For this purpose, the following section presents a description of related terms used to understand learning outcomes (ERIC, 2010).

It appears that learning experience refers to any experience that results in learning. It is a part of broad interpretation of experience. Experience itself is defined as the process of observing, encountering or undergoing a set of circumstances or events from which knowledge, understanding, skills or attitudes are derived. Learning itself is defined as process of acquiring knowledge, attitudes or skills from experience. With regard to the nature of the international teaching practicum, the narrower term of learning relates to experiential learning. The scope in this learning refers to learning by doing, which includes knowledge and skills acquired outside of books through work/play/ and other life experience.

From these definitions, it can be assumed that some experiences have the potential to become learning. Furthermore, learning has elements of attitude, knowledge and skill. The Eric Web’s thesaurus defines attitude as the ‘predisposition to react to certain persons, objects, situation, idea etc in a particular manner’. In addition, attitude is not always consciously held. This
has the opposite meaning to belief, in which the predisposition is held consciously. Also, in attitude, the predispositions are not readily verbalised as in opinion. Lastly, attitudes are characterised as either affective or evaluative; quantified descriptions of an individual’s predispositions to react to certain people, objects, situation, ideas, etc are the terms used to recognise attitude. The other dimensions in learning – skills and knowledge – comprise the components of competency. One can thus conclude that learning experience is drawn from experiences and in the context of assessment; it is expressed in domains of learning.

This explanation provides insights in an attempt to differentiate the meaning of learning experience from lived experience with regard to the international teaching practicum. In this context, the lived experience is used in the research question of the ethnographic case study, in an attempt to describe the experience of student teachers in the GEP. It is also used in the third and fourth research questions, which aim to examine the learning experiences emerging from the experiences of the student teachers in the GEP. Next, the term, ‘learning experience’ is used in the survey’s research question, which aims to investigate student teachers’ perceptions of learning experience.

Furthermore, as was mentioned earlier, the theoretical framework needs to be established in the light of the objectives of the GEP; thus, this research emphasizes the learning experience of participating in the GEP, in terms of cultural and professional learning. The following section presents the theoretical perspectives in order to understand the learning experience occurring from participating in the GEP.

### 3.1.1 Transformative Learning Theory and Learning in the International Teaching Practicum

As the GEP has a similar context to study abroad programs, whereby both provide international experience for students, the perspective of transformative learning could be applicable in order to understand the occurrence of learning among the student teacher participants. Hunter (2008) supports the idea that transformation can be perceived as an objective of an education program such
as study abroad; thus, she adopted transformative learning theory to understand the student learning in a study abroad program.

Transformation is defined as “a deep and structural shift in the basic premises of our thoughts, feelings, and actions; it represents a permanent evolution in the way we filter, engage in, and interpret the world around us” (Mezirow, 1991, cited in Hunter, 2008, p. 94). Furthermore, Hunter (2008, pp. 95-96) elaborated this theory in the following figure:

Figure 3.1 The difference between normative developmental learning and transformative learning (adapted from Hunter, 2008, p.95-96)

Figure 3.1 demonstrates that, from the perspective of exposing the existing meaning to disorienting dilemma via an international experience, there are two possibilities for change to happen. The left-hand rectangle – of the three meaning schemes contains the additional disorienting dilemma, which is reorganised to fit into the existing meaning perspective. Thus, this learning does not result in a change in perspective, illustrated by its remaining in the same ‘square’ box. The contradictory change, called transformative learning, is illustrated by the round shape used to represent the transformation of the meaning scheme. In this case, the same disorienting dilemma transformed the existing perspective to a new perspective. Therefore, in the context of the GEP, the student teachers might gain learning in the form of developing meaning schemes, such as specific attitudes, beliefs, feelings and value judgments without transformation of perspective; or with further development of meaning
perspectives, namely: broader and more overarching philosophical worldviews (Merrian & Caffarella, 1999, cited in Hunter, 2008, p. 94). The later development represents the transformative learning, which may be gained from willingness to “reconsider the fundamental reasoning behind most basic notions of the way the world works” (Hunter, 2008, p. 94).

In this theory, a disorienting dilemma could be contained in the cultural difference experienced in the GEP, which, according to Taylor (1994, p. 161), appears to be ‘cultural shock’ or ‘imbalance’ or ‘an experience of dissonance’; such dissonance is considered to be the catalyst for change in the process of intercultural transformation.

3.2 Cultural experience in International Teaching Practicums

Having explained the difference between learning experience, and experience which is based in lived experience, this section aims to establish the meaning of cultural learning in the GEP, including cultural experience. Thus, to understand the cultural learning experience of student teachers gained from their international teaching practicum, this section discusses the broader context of cultural learning experience encompassing cultural experience in the GEP.

In this context, this research took on the definition of culture, which is “a learned set of shared interpretations about beliefs, values, norms, and social practices, which affect the behaviours large group of people”- (Lustig & Koester, 2003, p. 25); thus, it seems to reflect the intercultural context, in which the student teachers engaged with Vanuatuans students, teachers and people in general. Moreover, to understand this definition of culture, terms such as ‘nation’, ‘race’, ‘ethnic group’ and ‘subculture’ are important, as cultures are different due to history, ecology, technology, biology, institutional networks and interpersonal communication patterns (Lustig & Koester, 2003, p. 23).

Furthermore, Lustig and Koester’s (2003, p. 44) definition of intercultural communication, which is “a symbolic process in which people from different
cultures create shared meanings”, was used to understand the interaction between student teachers and Vanuatuan students, teachers, and people in general. Lustig and Koester (2003) explain that this definition emphasises the interaction between different cultures and is not about different languages, of which the latter is the context of the GEP. As mentioned before, the GEP is a program which provides an opportunity to conduct a teaching practicum overseas, but is not a foreign language teacher program.

In particular, the context of the Vanuatuan GEP allowed intercultural communication to take place; intercultural communication occurs only “when large and important cultural differences create dissimilar interpretations and expectations about how to communicate competently” (Lustig & Koester, 2003, p. 51) ‘ In this case, Lustig and Koester (2003, p. 52) highlight that ‘intercultural communication’ does not occur when the degree of cultural difference is low; they define this as ‘intracultural communication’.

Following the assumption that, in the context of the Vanuatu GEP, which reflects the intercultural environment, the student teachers might gain intercultural learning experience, it is necessary to recognise the factors that influence the acquisition of cultural learning from cultural experience. Paige (1993; 2009) identifies 10 factors that can influence the cultural learning process. He explains that these factors, which comprise situational and personal attributes, “can cause intense emotions and psychological stress” (Paige & Goode, 2009, pp. 335-336). Understanding these factors could give more insights about the intercultural learning experiences among student teachers during their international teaching practicum. The ten factors are presented as follows:

1. Cultural Differences. This phrase refers to the differences between a person’s own culture and the other culture. The psychological stress increases as the degree of cultural difference increases. In addition, the more negative the perception of cultural difference, the more stressful the experience. According to this theory, culture refers to value orientations, beliefs, attitudes, behaviours, patterns of thinking and communication styles.
2. *Ethnocentrism*. This factor has two meanings. People who are ethnocentric find intercultural experience stressful. They are described as being in the denial and defence stages of intercultural sensitivity (M. Bennet, 1993). The second meaning refers to ethnocentric culture. In this type of culture, people will have more stressful experiences.

3. *Language*. People who have less local language ability will experience greater stress. This is worse when knowledge of the local language is essential to functioning in the local culture. This experience can result in social isolation and frustration.

4. *Cultural Immersion*. People who are more immersed in the different culture will experience a greater amount of stress. Cultural immersion involves living and working with another culture, and speaking a different language.

5. *Cultural Isolation*. People who have less access to their own culture group will have more stressful experiences.

6. *Prior Intercultural Experience*. People with less amount of prior intercultural experience will have more stressful experiences. Prior intercultural experience gives culture learning experience, adaptation and intercultural communication skills.

7. *Expectations*. This factor involves two issues. People with positive but unrealistic expectations about the new culture will experience a psychological let-down after a time. The other issue is that people with a high expectation of the new culture will experience stress in facing ‘normal’ cultural adjustment problems, due to feeling of failure.

8. *Visibility and Invisibility*. People who are physically different from members of the host culture will experience more stress, such as unwanted attention. Similarly, having an invisible aspect of identity, which is not accepted in the local culture, can also create stress.

9. *Status*. People will be more stressed if they feel that they do not get the respect they deserve. Secondly, stress may happen due to being unable to recognise the status markers and their importance in a new culture.

10. *Power & Control*. People will experience more stress as they lose their personal efficacy due to living in a different culture.
These hypotheses on variables and attributes enhance our understanding of the *experience of culture* among student teachers during their participation in the GEP.

Moreover, as student teachers conducted a teaching practicum in Vanuatu, which was a different country, they might have experienced a crossing of cultures, with a significant amount of accompanying stress, involving both confrontation and adaptation to unfamiliar physical and psychological experiences and changes, which demand attitudinal and emotional adjustment (Cushner & Karim, 2004, p. 292). Hence the student teachers’ cultural experience in general may involve culture shock as part of the adjustment process. Juffer (1993, pp. 208-215) conducted a literature review around this topic and concluded that culture shock involves five dimensions of adjustment in a different culture. These are:

- Culture shock caused by confronting a new environment or situation.
- Culture shock caused by ineffectiveness of intercultural or interpersonal communication.
- Culture shock caused by a threat to the emotion of the sojourner.
- Culture shock caused by the need to modify to regain positive reinforcement from the new environment.
- Culture shock caused by growth of experience

(Juffer, 1993, pp. 208-215)

Overall, these theoretical perspectives laid the foundation for interpreting, in the present study, the cultural experience of student teachers during their participation in the GEP.

As mentioned earlier, learning might occur from experience; in the context of the cultural experience or intercultural experience in the GEP, learning experience could be viewed as an insight or competence emerging from an intercultural experience. In this regard, this research adopts three theoretical perspectives in order to interpret the possible cultural learning in the GEP: culture learning (Paige, 2006a); intercultural sensitivity; and intercultural competence (Deardorff, 2008). The latter also includes an aspect of an intercultural competence model of Byram (1997) – the skills of interaction to gain a complete understanding of intercultural competence.
3.2.1 Culture learning

The approach of Paige (2006a) on culture learning is adopted as the main theoretical perspective in order to understand the cultural learning that might take place among student teachers as they gain cultural experience from their participation in the GEP. Culture learning is defined as follows:

the process of acquiring the culture-specific and culture-general knowledge, skills and attitude required for effective communication and interaction with individual from other cultures. It is a dynamic, developmental, and ongoing process, which engages the learner cognitively, behaviourally, and affectively.

(Paige, Jorstad, Siaya, Klein, & Colby, 2003, p. 4)

This definition illuminates that cultural learning refers to learning experience involving three domains of learning: cognitive, affective and behavioural. Thus, to recognise what the cultural learning is that student teachers might experience, a definition of the five elements of culture learning (Paige, 2006a) is employed. The five elements of culture learning are explained as follows (Paige, 2006a; Paige & Goode, 2009; Paige, et al., 2003).

1. **Learning about the self as a cultural being.** This includes an awareness of one’s own culture, including preferred behaviours, communication, values and belief. Indeed this element of culture learning is fundamental to the whole process of culture learning. The ability to attain this understanding leads to the ability to recognise the different culture.

2. **Learning about the elements of culture.** To acquire this element of culture learning requires comprehensive theoretical understanding about culture. In this concept of culture learning, Paige et al (2003) employs M. Bennet’s (1998) definition of culture, which is differentiated into objective culture, such as the institution and products of a culture, and subjective culture, such as shared patterns of behaviour, values and beliefs. Next, Paige and Goode’s (2009, p.337) illustration of subjective culture, which is “those patterns of everyday life that identify a group of people and organise their communication and interaction”, was used.

3. **Culture-specific learning.** This element of culture learning includes the learning of a particular culture, comprising subjective and objective culture. In the present research, as the student teachers conducted their GEP in Vanuatu, it was hoped that the attainment of this learning would be
reflected in their understanding of Vanuatu's culture, in terms of both objective and subjective culture.

4. **Culture-general learning.** This type of culture learning refers to the learning of general culture-related issues experienced by foreigners through their interaction with local/native people. This learning includes intercultural development, adjustment, adaptation, culture shock, acculturation and assimilation. An understanding of these cultural phenomena is important in examining the student teachers’ general intercultural learning experience.

5. **Learning about learning.** This element of culture learning refers to the strategies used to learn a culture. Some examples may involve learning from media and from direct interaction with the other culture.

This perspective of culture learning facilitates an understanding of cultural learning involving the broad learning dimensions – cognitive, attitudinal and behavioural.

### 3.2.2 Intercultural sensitivity

Focusing on the cognitive aspect of learning, the development of a perspective on a different culture among the student teachers can be understood with the application of a different theoretical perspective. In this case, the DMIS (Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity) was adopted (Bennett, 1993). The DMIS aims to understand the developmental phenomena in the context of intercultural sensitivity.

M. Bennet (1993, p. 24) defined intercultural sensitivity as “the way people construe cultural difference and ... the varying kinds of experience that accompany these constructions”. In this case, intercultural sensitivity refers to “… the construction of reality as increasingly capable of accommodating cultural difference that constitutes development” (M. Bennett, 1993, cited in Paige & Goode, 2009, p. 338).

Thus, as the Vanuatu GEP provided an intercultural situation for student teachers, the DMIS can be used to explain the observed and reported experiences of student teachers in this intercultural situation (Bennet & Bennet,
In this context, the DMIS enabled an explanation, in some predictable ways, as to how people construe cultural difference; this involves six orientation stages in a continuum of acquisition of intercultural competence (Hammer, Bennett, & Wiseman, 2003).

According to M. Bennett (1993), the underlying assumption of this theoretical perspective is that the sensitivity of people increases as they experience more complex and sophisticated cultural difference. In detail, he explained the underlying assumptions for this model as follows:

- The experience is the subjective experience of the learner, which is phenomenological as it is ‘a function of the relationship a person forms with phenomena – a relationship, which is the product (or manifestation) of the attribution of meaning’.
- The focus of this model is on the ability of the individuals to construe and re-construe their ways of seeing the phenomena, not on the phenomena itself.
- In this model, the experiences of the phenomena are constructed on the continuum of development rather than merely the collections of experiences illuminating the increasing of cognitive complexity.

(M. Bennett, 1993, p. 24)

Moreover, each stage of development represents a specific worldview that can be identified by specific behaviours and attitudes.

The DMIS six stages of developmental continuum are divided into two phases, which are the ethnocentric and ethno-relative stages. The ethnocentric comprises denial, defence and minimisation at stage at which people perceive their own culture as the centre of reality. In the ethno-relative stage, people are able to view their own beliefs and behaviours as only one way to see the reality. In detail the DMIS can be explained as follows (adapted from McAllister & Irvine, 2000, p. 16):

1. **Denial.** People who lack a knowledge of difference display behaviour based on their worldview. They tend to avoid cultural difference. The inability to see culture difference is evident when individuals isolate or separate themselves in homogenous groups.

2. **Defence.** People start to recognise the difference of culture. People may respond in three different ways: denigrate another culture; become superior; or uplift the local majority culture. In the first, the recognition of
cultural difference is accompanied by negative stereotyping of the other culture. Some people may view theirs as superior and others as inferior. In the third possibility, the reversal phenomenon may happen when people perceive other cultures as threatening to their own culture. In this situation, people perceive the other cultures as superior to theirs and become critical of their own culture.

3. **Minimization.** People minimise the cultural difference and continue operating under their own cultural paradigm, assuming that other people share the same values. People develop the ability to reduce the impact of difference and focus on the commonality of all groups. They assume that the similarities of the cultures are more important than the differences. Awareness of one’s own culture is not identified yet.

4. **Acceptance.** People experience a major world-view shift from ethnocentrism to ethno-relativism. At this stage, they show a critical change, due to the recognition of other values and begin to respect and accept the different culture. They develop an ability to recognize and appreciate the value of cultural difference. They understand about culture, have a positive attitude towards cultural difference, and have curiosity about different cultures. Students wanting to go abroad could be an example of people at this stage.

5. **Adaptation.** People are able to adjust their behaviour and think from the perspective of the other, which is known as ‘empathy’. They develop the ability to see cultural categories as more flexible and become more competent in communicating across cultures. They shift their cultural frame of reference cognitively and adapt their behaviour, which they learn by themselves.

6. **Integration.** People are in the process of integration. They have the ability to have multiple frames of reference and can identify and move freely among multiple groups of cultures. They consider culture as both a social and individual construction.
3.2.3 Intercultural competence

The GEP is a program of internationalisation, and, in this, resembles the study abroad program; thus, it is necessary to examine the student teachers’ cultural learning in terms of competence gained from within the context of study abroad. For this reason, Deardorff’s (2008) model of intercultural competence, developed in the context of the study abroad program, was adopted.

Through the Delphi study, involving consensus among intercultural scholars, Deardorff (2004, p. 194) defines intercultural competence as “the ability to communicate effectively and appropriately in intercultural situations based on one’s intercultural knowledge, skills and attitudes”. It comprises ‘twenty-two elements’ which are categorised into five areas, including ‘attitude, knowledge, skills, internal outcome and external outcome’ (Deardorff, 2006b, p. 254). The following is summarised from Deardorff (2008, pp. 36-39) describing the five categories comprising intercultural competence:

**Attitude:** As the lowest level, this category is the basic one for the acquisition of knowledge and skills to develop intercultural competence. The main role of ‘attitude’ is that it can influence cross-cultural effectiveness. Its variation will be greater, due to differences in attitudes. Types of attitudes include respect, openness, curiosity and discovery.

**Knowledge:** In this model, knowledge refers to the awareness’s of one’s own cultural norms and sensitivity toward other cultures. One’s own awareness is the fundamental knowledge of cross cultural matters, which is required in order to be aware of how the world is viewed. To gain one’s own awareness means to move beyond one’s own culture, for example through study abroad or cultural immersion. Moreover, another sort of global knowledge necessary for intercultural competence comprises a deep understanding of other cultures associated with underlying cultural values and communication styles. Although it is not core knowledge, language plays an important role in understanding another culture’s worldview.

**Skills:** Skills required for developing intercultural competence refers to cognitive skills which emphasise analytical abilities and critical thinking. The
cognitive skills include comparative thinking and cognitive flexibility. Moreover, another necessary skill refers to communication skills including listening, observing, evaluating, analysing, interpreting, reflection, and relating.

**Internal outcome:** This term refers to knowledge gained as a result of the combination of attitudes and skills for developing intercultural competence, which ideally leads to an internal shift or frame of reference. With regard to adaptation, adjustment involves both cultural and communication styles. Moreover, flexibility is expressed in different behavioural styles. In these internal outcomes, empathy is essential.

**External outcome:** This is the observable behaviour as a result of having internal outcomes in the form of effective and appropriate communication and behaviour in intercultural situations. Using Spitzberg’s (1989) work, Deardorff (2006a, p. 39) explains ‘effective’ as ‘avoidance of violating valued rules’ while ‘appropriate’ is the ‘achievement of valued objectives’.

According to Deardorff (2006a), this model can be viewed in the form of a pyramid, whereby the degree of competency increases from requisite attitude up to desirable external outcome as the highest level of competency. This model suggests that an individual can enter the frame of cultural learning at any point, as it is a continuing process depicting the nature of life-long learning. Although attitude is considered as the starting point, knowledge and skills are required to develop an internal outcome. In this case, the intercultural nature of this model enables interaction with a different culture, so that the cultural learning will entail the desired external outcome, observable as an appropriate and effective communication.

This model emphasises cross-cultural knowledge, including a deep understanding of culture-specific knowledge, such as underlying cultural values and communication styles. In this regard, sociolinguistics could enhance culture learning. Furthermore, the model implies the importance of cognitive skills, including comparative thinking and cognitive flexibility. It also highlights the necessity of process in developing intercultural competence.
Indeed, Deardorff (2008, p. 36) also views her model in terms of ‘process model’, which is illustrated in the Figure 3.2.

![Figure 3.2 Intercultural Competence (Deardorff, 2008, p.36)](image)

Figure 3.2 Intercultural Competence (Deardorff, 2008, p.36)

In particular, Deardorff (2006a) emphasises the skills required to acquire and process knowledge about other cultures and one’s own, including skills to listen, observe and evaluate; and to analyse, interpret and relate, which are known as cognitive skills. However, the specific skills required to perform interaction with different a culture, which is the behavioural dimension of learning, is not covered. In fact, it appears that after developing attitudes, knowledge and comprehension, and skills, an individual may develop an internal or straightaway develop an external outcome that is observable as intercultural competence. In other words, this model does not specify the real skills to communicate with a different culture, although Deardorff includes the element of sociolinguistic awareness as part of knowledge, which refers to an awareness of how to communicate culturally.

This might contribute to the critique of the model given by Spitzberg and Changnon (2009) on the model. They argue that this model represents the compositional models, which merely present the elements of competence
without emphasising the relationships between the elements (Spitzberg & Changnon, 2009). They asserted that this model is very useful in identifying the scope of the competence, as it contains an analytic scheme or a typology of components of competence; however, it does not define the detailed criteria for the competence, and what qualities or attributes actually represent the competence.

Thus, knowledge in terms of cognitive skills alone is considered as not sufficient to achieve intercultural competence in communicating with different cultures. Therefore, the intercultural competence model of Bryam (1997), which recognises the importance of interaction skills, is applied complementarily in this research to examine the skills or behavioural dimension of cultural learning among the participants. As argued by Spitzberg and Changnon (2009), this model provides clearer concepts in term of skills. In this case, this model contains skills of interaction, a feature which was absent in the first model. The skills to interact include ‘discovery and/ or interaction’, which refers to “the ability to acquire new knowledge of a culture and cultural practices and the ability to operate knowledge, attitudes and skills under the constraint of real-time communication and interaction” (Byram, 1997, p. 52).

Furthermore, the adoption of Byram’s (1997) skills of discovery and interaction appear to be necessary, as Deardorff (2006b) argues that the researcher consider her model as a process model for lifelong learning. However, the shift from internal to external outcome, which connoted a visualisation of the interaction process, was not actually visible in Deardorff’s model. Therefore, the skills of discovery and interaction of Byram (1997) have been adopted to complement Deardorff’s model of intercultural competence.

The above discussion provided insights about the frameworks both to understand and examine cultural learning, in particular the development of intercultural competence among student teachers.
3.3 Professional Experience in International Teaching Practicums

As the first section established that learning experience might be generated from experience; this section aims to explain professional learning, including its broader context – professional experience in an international teaching practicum setting.

In this case, a general understanding of professional experience, which encompasses three interpretations, including immersion in community, process of learning, and integration (Sinclair, Trimingham-Jack, & Pollnitz, 2006) seems to shed light on the meaning of professional experience in the international teaching practicum. Moreover, professional learning, which refers to an opportunity for student teachers to integrate their academic learning with concrete knowledge within a professional setting and is valued by academic staff and student teachers as an integral part of the formation of teacher identity (Taffe & Sally, 2006), could be employed to explain the meaning of professional learning in the international teaching practicum.

Indeed, professional learning in the context of the international teaching practicum is very complex. In the broader context of becoming a teacher through teacher education, this research adopts the perspective that professional learning involves the development of professional knowledge through inquiry of prior knowledge in the light of new understandings, and the development of new knowledge through the process of reflection, dialogue and inquiry (Beattie, 2000).

Further perspective held on professional learning and its development has been established in Beattie’s study (2000). She demonstrated that the development process of professional knowledge in teaching is different for each student; she grounded her study in Dewey’s philosophy of education—that learning is based on experience and reflection on experience, and “educational process is one of continual reorganising, reconstructing, transforming experience” (Dewey, 1966 cited in Beattie, 2000, p. 2)
In more detail, this study adopts Beattie’s (2000) perspective of professional knowledge development. She suggests that the process of professional knowledge development is influenced by prior personal knowledge and student teachers’ perceptions of teaching (Calderhead, 1991, cited in Beattie, 2000). Moreover, the development involves the reconstruction of perception from new perspectives. Overall, her study was based on Schon’s (1983) work on professional knowledge. Supporting others, she challenged the opposite perception that teacher education is a kind of training whereby professional knowledge creation is externally produced through educational literature and public policy documents, rather than personal experience (Beattie, 2000).

Therefore, this research follows Beattie’s perspective that professional learning refers to education and the development of the whole person in becoming a teacher. This includes a “relational and interactive process where teacher, student and subject matter are interconnected” (Schwab, 1971, cited in Beattie, 2000, p.3), thus, personal and situational contexts such as cultures, genders, ethnicities and communities become relevant to professional learning. Moreover, the context of relations with others is central to the process of professional learning. In this case, dialogue and conversations with others enable student teachers to learn about self to construct professional identity. Supporting other scholars, Beattie (2000) explained that learning from others allows student teachers to co-construct new meanings. Collegial relationship provides student teachers with opportunities to learn about themselves, about others and about teaching and learning, as they re-focus their attention from themselves and their teaching onto students and their learning”.

Overall, in the context of the international teaching practicum, which is part of a broad context of the teaching practicum, professional learning could include three major themes, including: “creating a professional identity (connecting the personal and professional); creating relationships and making new relations (learning from and with others); and creating new narratives (connecting self, school and society)” (Beattie, 2000, p. 5).

Furthermore, as the context of this research is on the international teaching practicum, this research is focused only on certain aspects of professional
CHAPTER 3: THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

learning in the teaching practicum, based on the lived experience of student teachers during the teaching practicum in Vanuatu.

The early part of the chapter explained that professional learning might be drawn from professional experience, and that, in the broad context of teacher education, professional learning could involve the development of professional knowledge and skills among student teachers. As this perspective sheds light on this research, in order to understand professional learning in the GEP, several theoretical perspectives have been adopted, including that of a teaching knowledge base (Shulman, 2004) and reflective thinking (Clarke, 1995; Loughran, 2002).

3.3.1 Professional knowledge

As the GEP provides professional experience of doing a teaching practicum, professional knowledge in this research refers to ‘teaching knowledge bases’ (Shulman, 2004, p. 92). He proposes seven interrelated teaching knowledge bases, including:

1. Content knowledge
2. General pedagogical knowledge, with special reference to those broad principles and strategies of classroom management and organization that appear to transcend subject matter;
3. Curriculum knowledge, with particular grasp of the materials and programs that serve as “tools of the trade” for teachers;
4. Pedagogical content knowledge, that special amalgam of content and pedagogy that is uniquely the province of teachers, their own special form of professional understanding;
5. Knowledge of learners and their characteristics;
6. Knowledge of educational context, ranging from the workings of the group or classroom, the governance and financing of school districts, to the character of communities and cultures, and
7. Knowledge of education ends, purposes, values, and their philosophical and historical grounds.

(Shulman, 2004, pp. 92-93)

However, not all seven interrelated professional knowledge bases were applied. As the student teacher participants undertook different courses, knowledge base 1 was excluded. As the GEP is a short program, it is hard for the student teachers to comprehend knowledge bases 6 and 7; instead this research focused on the cultural norms of the school placement. Thus, this research focuses only
on student teacher learning of teaching process knowledge and knowledge of the students. In detail, the present research focuses on five adapted teaching or professional knowledge bases for the teacher:

1. Cultural norms of the school;
2. Strategies of classroom management;
3. Curriculum;
4. Teaching practice;
5. Student learning style.

### 3.3.2 Reflective thinking

Reflective thinking, which is manifested in reflection, conveys various meanings, and indicates the occurrence of professional learning. Dewey explained the notion of reflection as:

> Reflective thinking, in distinction from other operations to which we apply the name of thought, involves: 1) a state of doubt, hesitation, perplexity, mental difficulty, in which thinking originates, and 2) an active searching, hunting, inquiring, to find material that will resolve the doubt, settle and dispose of the perplexity.


In this regard, this research uses Loughran’s perspective of reflection (1996, p. 96); he asserts that there are two aspects that are common in reflection, including *problem*, and *framing and reframing*. In this regard, reflection involves the ability to see a problem from different perspectives – frame and reframe ability (Schon, 1983, 1987) – which is “the most important aspect of developing reflective practice as it influences the subsequent actions in practice” (Schon, 1983, 1987, cited in Loughran, 2002, p. 35).

To visualise the concept of reflection in order to enhance the understanding of whether reflective practice takes place among the student teacher participants, this research adopted the following figure of Clarke (1995, p. 246). It represents the description of Schon’s definition of reflective practice. However, this present research focuses only on the reflective thinking, rather than reflective practice, as displayed in the following figure. In this case, the data collection of this research was completed when the student teachers submitted their reflective reports upon returning to Melbourne.
A practitioner is reflective when he or she:

- Is curious or intrigued about some aspects of the practice setting
- Frames that aspect in terms of the particulars of the setting
- Reframes that aspect in the light of past knowledge or previous experience
- Develops a plan for future action

Figure 3.3 Schon’s definition of Reflective Practice (Clarke, 1995, p. 246)

Thus, the actual reflective practice, which includes the plan for action could not be confirmed. Triangulation is needed to confirm if the plan is actually carried out.

3.4 Context for learning in the GEP

Many studies on programs to internationalise student experience report some concerns, which, they argue, affects the students’ learning; these include the context of the program and the situation of the student participants (Hoff, 2008). Regarding the program, seven factors are reported to have had an effect on student learning (Engle & Engle, 2003); these factors include; length; knowledge of target language; extent of the use of target language during program overseas; context of the course; accommodation type; experiential learning and on-site mentoring. Indeed, another study revealed similar arguments concerning the external factors which may also affect the student learning (Portillo, 2004); these include length and location of the program; content of study; pre-departure and on-site orientation programs and service learning opportunities; type of accommodation; independent travel; contact with hosts and target-language friends. In the case of the student’s situation, some internal factors included student background, characteristics and personal circumstances, such as language proficiency, intercultural sensitivity level, previous experience abroad, previous exposure to cultural differences and academic discipline (Portillo, 2004).

In an attempt to comprehend the student teachers’ learning experience from participating in the GEP, it is crucial to understand some circumstances, such
as the context in which the experience takes place. The following describes some aspects of the program that are important for learning to occur.

Having international experience does not guarantee that student teachers gain learning experience from participation in the GEP. Similar to study abroad programs, the GEP provides international experience. Thus, it shares the same requirements of promoting learning for program participants. In this context, this research concerns itself with some perspectives to promote learning, which are applied complementarily. The following Figure 3.4 illustrates these various perspectives, which might affect the occurrence of learning.

With regard to cultural learning, Byram (1997) suggested the importance of fieldwork to accommodate the development of skill to interact with different cultures. In this case, fieldwork provides the opportunity to interact directly ‘in real time’ with a different culture. Without immersion through fieldwork, behavioural learning appears hard to develop.

**Figure 3.4** Various aspects influencing student teacher learning through teaching experience in a different culture.

Deardorff (2008) suggested the importance of meaningful intercultural interaction and contends that brief interaction is insufficient to get meaningful interaction. This argument is supported by J. Bennet (2008), who claims that cultural contact does not necessarily lead to the development of intercultural
competence. Indeed, Byram (1997) also suggests having corresponding planned activities as part of the program’s objectives to develop particular elements of intercultural competence.

Paige (2009, p. 335) argues that “psychological stress increases as the degree of cultural difference between one’s own and the other’s culture increases”, implying that different cultures can provide opportunity for intercultural learning. As explained earlier in this chapter, less cultural difference only provides opportunity for ‘intracultural’ rather than ‘intercultural’ learning as ‘intercultural communication’ takes place “when large and important cultural differences create dissimilar interpretations and expectations about how to communicate competently” (Lustig & Koester, 2003, p. 51).

The necessity of reflective thinking to promote cultural learning has been suggested by Paige (1993), Byram (1997) and Deardorff (2008). Deardorff (2008, p. 45) argues that:

participants in education abroad experiences must be aware of the learning that takes place at each point, and must be given the process skills necessary to analyse their development of intercultural competence...including reflection...

Further she suggests reflection may include “reflections on their own cultural identity as, well as reflections on their interactions with those in the host culture” (Deardorff, 2008, p. 45).

Comprehensive preparation (Deardorff, 2008; Paige, 1993) and support during fieldwork by an intercultural mentor/teacher (Byram, 1997; Deardorff, 2008) are regarded as important factors. These scholars assert that, to develop intercultural competence, including cultural learning in a wider context, preparation must be conducted intentionally. This includes planning and designing intercultural programs, including mentoring to support the students during their time overseas.

With regard to professional learning, the perspectives by which to understand professional learning in the GEP reveal that reflection is the significant indicator of student’s professional learning. In addition to dissimilarities between the Vanuatu and Melbourne contexts, which seemed sufficient to promote reflection, there were student factors, as argued by some scholars,
which in this research are considered important. In this regard, Atkins and Murphy (1993) suggest that certain cognitive and affective skills are necessary to engage in reflection, including self-awareness, description, critical analysis, synthesis and evaluation.

3.5 Summary

This chapter described the various theoretical perspectives, which have been adopted in seeking to understand the phenomena under investigation. It showed that to understand learning in the broader context of experience requires a comprehensive understanding of various aspects, both student and program factors. Using this theoretical framework to understand the phenomena contained in the research questions, the following chapter – Research Design and Method – will explain how to address the research questions using the chosen methods, and how the research was conducted through the case study and survey.
CHAPTER FOUR

Research Design and Methods

4.0 Introduction

To investigate student teacher learning experience through participating in an international program such as the GEP, it is important to consider the most relevant approach and how it should be pursued. In this chapter, the research design and methods used to study student teacher learning experience will be described.

Building on the theoretical perspective of student learning from international experience presented in chapter three, a theoretical consideration of the reasons for the research design and methods will be presented. In addition, the rationale for employing a mixed-methods research design, as well as further theoretical reasons for using survey and case study as the methods to collect and analyse data, will be discussed.

This chapter presents the survey of student teachers’ perceptions of learning experience in the GEP and the ethnographic case study of the teaching practicum in Vanuatu in 2010. The analyses that flow from these two methods are complementary, as both of them are essential to the present study. The last section elaborates also the processes of data analyses to lay the foundation for a discussion of research findings in later chapters.

4.1 Research Questions, the GEP and Ethnographic Research

The internationalisation of student experience initiatives are manifested in many forms of out-bound mobility programs, such as the Global Experience Program of the Faculty of Arts and Education, Deakin University. In particular, this GEP aims to “develop the knowledge, cultural sensitivity and skills needed to address diversity within the educational environment” among student teachers (Deakin, 2009, p. 3). This program has been conducted in several
countries such as Vanuatu, India, NT, Switzerland, Thailand and China, for more than five years.

Given the background of the GEP, I decided to investigate student teacher learning experience through two lenses. The first lens aims to explore their learning experiences through understanding their lived-experience from participating in the GEP, while the second one examines student teacher learning experience in terms of their perceptions. Thus, the main rationale for using these two methods is to capture the comprehensive insights of student teachers’ learning experience through their participation in the GEP, particularly as the program has been conducted in various countries and at different times. Investigating the deep meanings of the learning experience are studied by understanding, through their narratives, the student teachers’ experiences, encompassing their thoughts, perceptions and beliefs, during their teaching practicum overseas. At the same time, an examination of student teacher perceptions approaches the broader insights of the learning experience.

In detail, the investigation of learning experiences, from both a professional and cultural perspective is, throughout, aligned with the objectives of the GEP. As described in Chapter Two, the central research questions for this research are:

1. What perceptions did the student teachers have regarding their learning in the GEP?

2. What was the lived experience of the student teachers participating in the 2010 Vanuatu GEP?
   a. How were the student teachers prepared before departure?
   b. What were the student teachers’ preconceptions related to living and teaching in Vanuatu?
   c. What were their lived experiences of living and teaching in Vanuatu?

3. How is culture learning interpreted through the case study findings; and how are intercultural sensitivity and competence interpreted through the findings in the case study?
4. How did the student teachers construct their professional learning and reflective thinking developments in the GEP?

Based on the research questions and the context of the GEP, an ethnographic methodology was employed, as it seemed to be the most relevant research approach for several reasons.

Initially, the central research questions reflect that this research is about the study of the experience of student teachers participating in a program in a university. Thus, it focuses on a group of university students. In this regard, Cousin (2009) suggests that an ethnographic approach might be applied in the investigation of a group of students in a higher education program.

Moreover, the research question implies that the focus of the research is on the experience of a group of students. In this context, this research follows what Bryman (2004, p. 10) called ‘ethnography-as-fieldwork’, which is defined as “the study of people in naturally occurring settings or fields by means of methods which capture their social meanings and ordinary activities, involving the researcher participating directly in the setting, if not also in the activities, in order to collect data in a systematic manner, but without meaning being imposed on them [the students’ responses] externally”.

In this regard, an ethnographic approach allows the interpretation of the attitudes, experiences, language and shared patterns of behaviour of the student teachers and the immersion of the researcher in the GEP location (Cushner, 2008). Creswell (2008) further explains that the ethnographic methodology enables the study of the context of the experiences, which is necessary to understand fully the learning experience itself. It allows the researcher to describe his/her position and involvement with the group, which could affect the researcher’s perspective during the research. Ethnographic research supports this objective since it involves the production of a ‘thick’ picture of the research findings. It depicts what is going on in the culture-sharing group, and identifies its specifics, in order to place the reader in the natural setting, including the context or setting, situation, or environment surrounding the cultural group of the study.
Further consideration involves the issue of internationalisation. Chapter Two revealed that the GEP is, for the purposes of this research, positioned in the context of internationalisation. As a consequence, the research design and methods should allow for an examination of the influence of internationalisation through contact with a different culture.

With respect to the importance of intercultural competence as a student learning outcome of internationalisation (Deardorff, 2004, 2006a, 2006b, 2008), an attempt was made to look into the likelihood of student teachers developing intercultural competence, which is defined as “the ability to communicate effectively and appropriately in intercultural situations based on one’s intercultural knowledge, skills and attitudes” (Deardorff, 2004, p. 194). Therefore, an approach was needed that enabled an examination of the experience of student teachers, which is influenced by the different cultural setting of the overseas teaching practicum. In this context, an ethnographic approach appears to be appropriate since it is “an excellent way of gaining insights into a culture or social process, particularly those in complex behavioural settings, and particularly those involving other cultures and subcultures, including those of organizations and institutions” (Punch, 1998, p. 162).

As the GEP has been conducted in various places and times, an ethnographic approach is even more relevant, since it is “implicitly or explicitly multi-sited, even though the focus may be in a single field” (Cousin, 2009, p. 112). Thus, an ethnography can be used to yield data that is rich in both the specific and general features of the research context (Cousin, 2009).

Further concerns involve the context of the GEP and the research questions, which requires this research to collect both broad and in-depth data to provide the complete picture of a student learning experience; this suggests the necessity of using mixed-methods. In this context, ethnographic research seemed to be the appropriate approach since it allows the use of mixed-methods. In this regard, Pole and Morrison (2003, cited in Scott & Morrison, 2007, p. 91) argue that “the methods associated with a positivist approach can be incorporated in an ethnographic study as long as the quantitative methods adhere to the epistemological principles of naturalism”. This research affirms
this because, even though student teachers’ perceptions of learning were collected through survey and analysed using descriptive statistics, this research interpreted or understood the perception of learning through the lens of naturalistic qualitative perspective emphasising how to understand learning as it takes place.

The following section discusses the rationale for choosing a mixed-methods design. It provides justification for using a survey and a case study as the methods for collecting and analysing data from theoretical perspectives.

4.2 Mixed-Method Design in Ethnographic Research

With the aim of investigating student-teacher learning experience, this present research constitutes an interpretive study. Therefore, it has been conducted within a qualitative methodology. In this context, the application of mixed-method design is still appropriate as qualitative research is inherently ‘multi methods in focus’ (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005, p. 5); qualitative methodology utilises “the approaches, methods and techniques of ethno-methodology, phenomenology, hermeneutics, cultural studies, survey research and participant observation”. In this case, the researcher is involved with “semiotics, narrative, content, discourse, archival and phonemic analysis, statistics tables and graphs, and numbers” (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005, p. 7). Further, it locates the researcher in the real world, connecting to the research site, participants and other relevant, such as document and archives.

The central research questions and their context determine the choice of a method or procedure for research (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005). In more detail, Punch (1998) explains that, as the basic plan for a research study, the research design includes the strategy, the conceptual framework, the questions of who or what would be studied, and the procedures for data collection and interpretation. In this regard, the present research has been designed to use mixed-methods, comprising two separate data collection and analysis procedures, which has been visualised in the following figure.
The main reason to apply a mixed-method design was to build on the strengths of both qualitative and quantitative data and approaches in order to provide a complete picture of a social phenomenon or issue under investigation (Creswell, 2002; Punch, 1998). The qualitative data was rich and complex, and the approach was well-suited to studying lived experience in as natural a way as possible, in this instance, the learning experiences through participating in the GEP. The quantitative data drew the dimensions of the phenomenon, while its approach allowed for standard comparisons and brought objectivity to the research.

The mix of methods in this research started from the data collection, as each component of research was designed with respect to different research questions. Then it generated two different data sets, requiring the analyses of the results to be conducted separately, and the findings were compared to each other in the last stage (Alexander, Thomas, Cronin, Fielding, & Ellis, 2008).

The two methods served to reveal more accurate and multifaceted findings, which were complementary to each other. Hence, the mixed methods in this research refer to the integration rather than combination of two methods. Integration is defined as “a process that brings different methods (data sets, analyses, interpretations) into a relationship with each other to form a coherent whole, without translating one component of the study into another form” (Alexander, et al., 2008, p. 136). Clearly, integration took place at the later
stage of this research, during analyses of two different data sets generated by separate methods.

The process has been described as the process of “following a thread” (Alexander, et al., 2008, p. 136). In this regard, “an emergent finding in one data set was identified as having resonances in others” (Moran-Ellis et al., 2004, cited in Alexander, et al., 2008, p. 136), as the exploration of thematic threads in the other data sets were further analysed to generate an integrated account on the research topic.

In this design, a survey to glean the general perceptions of the student learning experience from a large number of student teachers was conducted as the first part of the research. The case study was conducted as the second part to explore thoroughly the themes emerging in the data. Hence, it revealed the learning from the actual lived experience of the student teacher participants, including the natural setting or context of the GEP in which the learning experience took place.

The first part of the data collection was conducted in Melbourne during May to December, 2010, while the second part of the data collection took place in Vanuatu on August, 2010, over three weeks. Clearly, the quantitative data from the first collection served to complement the qualitative data of the second part, whereby the overall findings were expected to provide a complete picture of student teacher learning under investigation. The following figure illustrates the participants for this study.

![Survey of perceptions of student teacher participated in the GEPs in various countries in 2008, 2009, 2010](image)

![The 2010 Vanuatu GEP case study](image)

![Surveys of perceptions of student teachers](image)

![Ethnographic case study of the 2010 Vanuatu GEP](image)

**Figure 4-2 Participants of this research**
• **Why survey?**

The survey was used to address the second research question – What perceptions did the student teachers have regarding their learnings from the GEP? The objective of this research question is to document the learning experience among student teachers who had completed their GEPs; this was able to be captured by investigating the perceptions of their learning experience vis-a-vis learnings in the GEP.

As the GEPs have been conducted in various countries and at different times, a method was needed which allowed the investigation of the perceptions of all student teachers who had completed a GEP. In this study, the total student teachers group who had completed their GEP was referred to as the ‘population’. In this context, a survey was selected as the method to address this research question, as it enabled the understanding of the perceptions within a given population (Creswell, 2002). Therefore, the type of research question and research context led to the adoption of a survey method, which enabled the collecting of data on the various insights of the learning experience of a large number of student teacher participants from different locations and times.

• **Why case study?**

Case study was used to address the first research question - What was the lived experience of the student teachers during participation in the 2010 Vanuatu GEP? The objective of this research question was to study closely the lived experience of the student teacher participating in the GEP.

However, it was not possible to study closely the lived experience of all student teachers, since the number of student teachers who completed their GEP was large, and they had conducted their GEP in different locations and at different times throughout the year. Thus, the investigation focused on only a small number of participants in order to be able to investigate closely their lived experiences. In this context, the case study was selected as the method to address this research question. Therefore, as the method, the case study allowed the study of the lived experience of student teacher participants, being defined as “an in-depth exploration of a bounded system (e.g., an activity, event, process, or individuals) based on extensive data collection”, in which
“Bounded means that the case is separated out for research in terms of time, place, or some physical boundaries” (Creswell, 2008, p. 476). However, since the case study is also perceived as the object of research (Stake, 2003), in this research, the Vanuatu GEP in 2010 was regarded as the object of study, to be studied in depth, and in its natural setting, recognising its complexity and its context (Punch, 1998, p. 150).

More particularly, the case study approach was chosen as it allowed the study of the GEP in a certain location in a particular year, with a particular group of people (Merriam, 1998; Punch, 1998; Stake, 2003). Thus, the student learning experiences gained from participating in the GEP could be studied descriptively and heuristically. Specifically, the case study allowed for a descriptive approach, the eventual aim being to provide a, “rich, thick description” of the phenomenon or issue being investigated. This description aimed to cover “as many variables as possible and portray their interactions” (Merriam, 1998, p. 30). Moreover, the case study enabled the revelation of a thorough understanding of the student teacher learning experience from participating in the GEP. The case study also allowed for a more interpretive approach to the findings, in particular, the interpretation of the learning experience as the lesson learned from the GEP; thus, it aimed to extend the reader’s experience or confirm the current knowledge of the learning outcome of an internationalisation program, as the case under study.

The reason for choosing the 2010 Vanuatu GEP as the case study was because the 2010 Vanuatu GEP was deemed able to provide sufficient insights into the issue; this method of selection is known as the instrumental case study approach (Creswell, 2002; Merriam, 1998; Stake, 2003). In other, words the case of the 2010 Vanuatu GEP in this context served as a facilitator to understand a phenomenon or an issue (Merriam, 1998; Stake, 2003), which was, in the broader context of internationalisation, about student learning from participating in an internationalisation program.

Furthermore, as this study was an ethnographic research study, obviously the case study was conducted in the form of an ethnographic case study, a method defined as “a case analysis of a person, event, activity, or process set within a cultural perspective” (Creswell, 2002, p. 483). Thus, as in ethnographic case
study, this research focuses on in-depth exploration of the actual case, including the shared patterns of behaviour exhibited by the participants as a group that developed as interactions occurring over time. This is commensurate with Bryman (2001, p. 77), who defines ethnographic case study as “exploration of the case or cases as they present themselves naturally in the field and by the researcher’s direct involvement and participation in them”.

4.3 The Survey of Student Teachers’ Perceptions

A survey was used to collect and analyse the data in order to address the first research question – What perceptions did the student teachers have regarding their learning in the GEP?

4.3.1 Designing the questionnaire

In Chapter Three, the theories underpinning this study were elaborated, and the learning experience as the phenomena under investigation was defined in terms of professional and cultural learning. The questionnaire was generated from evidence of the learning experience from previous studies, which were discussed in chapter two in the review of the literature. This evidence of learning reflects broader dimensions of the concept of ‘learning experience’.

Thus, the generation of questions drawn from previous research enables the recognition of aspects of the learning experiences among student teachers who participated in the GEP. In this case, the indicators of learning experience from participating in the GEP are specific and observable, and certified by its existence drawn from previous studies (Drew, Hardman, & Hosp, 2008). In this research, the questions were designed to cover some aspects of the culture learning (Paige, 2006a) and the professional learning (Shulman, 2004).

Before generating the questions, the specific rules in designing a questionnaire using a Likert scale were discussed with an expert in quantitative research at the School of Education, Deakin University. The general aim in questionnaire design is to produce clear, unambiguous questions and response options which have a marked degree of clarity and specificity (Babbie, 2001). With regard to the Likert scale, items or questions are in the form of statements and related to
The questionnaire for the present research contains two sections. The first section gathers thirteen questions on demographic information, including ‘other international experience and cultural background’. The second section focuses specifically on the learning experience from participating in the GEP. This section has two subsections, including cultural and professional learning. A four-point Likert scale is employed, asking participants to rate their responses as ‘Strongly Disagree’, ‘Disagree’, ‘Agree’, and ‘Strongly Agree’.

### 4.3.2 Validity of the questionnaire

In a survey, the validity of the questionnaire is crucial to carrying out high quality research. Validity is defined as “the extent to which an empirical measure adequately reflects the real meaning of the concept under consideration” (Babbie, 2001, p. 142). In this study, construct validity and face validity were applied. Construct validity refers to the deduction of “hypotheses from a theory that is relevant to the concept” (Bryman, 2004, p. 73). The issue of face validity is addressed to increase the validity of the questionnaire with regard to its content, through several extensive discussions with a supervisory panel (Bryman, 2004). In addition, a further opinion was sought on the questionnaire from the Office of Professional Experience, Faculty of Arts and Education, Deakin University. The opinions of these experts were valuable in ensuring that the questionnaire really measured the concept/phenomena under investigation – that is, the learning experience from participating in the GEP.

Having satisfied the demands of content validity for the research questionnaire, a trial was then conducted. For this purpose, the questionnaire was sent to three student teachers who had completed the GEP in the previous year. Based on the trial, some questions were reworded to ensure that the questions were easily understood and unambiguous. The trial also suggested the time needed to complete the questionnaire.
4.3.3 Administering the questionnaire

The respondents of this survey were student teachers who participated in the GEPs. Their names were collected from the GEPs’ onsite coordinators and the Office of International Partnerships, the Faculty of Education and Arts. The questionnaires were sent to the participants in two ways, based on the time of participation in the GEP. For those who participated in 2009, the questionnaires were sent through their email addresses on the 1st and the 13th of May, to be returned by the 25th of May, 2010. There were around 60 questionnaires distributed, and the response rate was around 20%.

For those participating in the 2010 GEP, the questionnaire was distributed via the on-site coordinators of the GEP’s, at different times, according to their schedules. The questionnaires were enclosed in an individual envelope to ensure confidentiality, and administered by the coordinators on the last day of the GEPs to get the maximum response from participants. Some responses were returned through emails as a convenience for the participants. In total there were 40 responses collected by the end of the semester break, in late December, 2010.

4.3.4 Reliability of the questionnaire

Reliability in survey research involves techniques that ensure whether the instrument used to collect data is sufficiently reliable to be used; this is demonstrated through consistent answers across the survey (Babbie, 2001). In this regard, once the responses were collected, the reliability of the questions was examined – that is, whether the questions tapped into the same themes.

A chi-square test was conducted for each element, as a chi-square statistic can be used for testing the significance of a relationship between several variables (Vanderstoep & Johnston, 2009). Vanderstoep and Johnson (2009, p. 99) define that “if a chi-square is statistically significant, it means that there is a relationship between the two nominal variables”. The chi-square statistic chosen for this purpose is the Pearson chi-square (Bryman, 2001). For education research, the α-value is set at 0.05.
With regard to the questions for investigating cultural learning, the results showed that there were no significant (NS) relationships between the questions in all elements. Thus, there was a lack of relationship between questions in each element of Culture Learning. It meant that all questions tapped into different aspects of Culture Learning, which suggested that the questions covered the broader aspects of Culture Learning.

Moreover, the chi-square test that examined the relationships between the five elements of Culture Learning also revealed similar results — that is, no relationship was discovered between the elements. It was, thus, concluded that all questions tapped into different aspects of culture learning; thus, all questions covered the broad notion of Culture Learning, as defined by Paige (2006a).

In relation to the reliability of questions to examine professional learning, the same test was conducted. The calculations of the chi-square test gave results similar to the previous analyses of the questions for cultural learning; that is, all questions tapped into different aspects of professional learning, although, the result for PL1 was significant.

Overall, the significant relationships between the questions suggested good reliability of the questionnaire. The complete calculation is included in the Appendix 4.4.

### 4.3.5 Data analysis procedures

In this present research, survey data analyses involved coding and employing relevant statistical tests. The responses from 40 respondents were coded according to the coding book, which was written after composing the questionnaire. Coding was also conducted for the open-ended questions. The Microsoft-Excel and XLStatistics were used to process the collected data. The frequency of the responses were counted and presented in the tables. This data processing was also performed to summarise the demographic data.
4.4 The Background to the Case Study of the 2010 Vanuatu GEP

Case study method was employed to collect and analyse data to address the first research questions, which aimed to describe the lived experience of student teachers from participating in the 2010 Vanuatu GEP. In detail, the overarching questions are:

- What were student teachers’ preconceptions related to living and teaching in Vanuatu?
- What was the context of their experiences?
- What were their lived experiences of living and teaching in Vanuatu?

The following part explains how the case study was conducted including how this present research addressed some important issues in qualitative research, such as ethics and trustworthiness.

4.4.1 The case and participant selections

The case selected for this research was the 2010 Vanuatu GEP. The Vanuatu GEP was chosen because it was considered that the Vanuatu GEP was sufficient to “provide insights into an issue or to redraw a generalisation” (Stake, 2003, p. 137), due to its specific context as being the most relatively established GEP compared to the GEPs in the other destination countries – India, China, Thailand, Malaysia, Switzerland, Japan and NT (Prior, 2006). Moreover, the 2010 GEP was selected because this research was undertaken in that year. This brought a further consequence for the method of selection of the student teacher participants. They were selected based on the convenience sampling strategy. In this case the participants were selected because they were available and willing to be involved in this research (Punch, 1998). There are three groups of participants including student teachers, Vanuatu supervising teachers and the GEP on-site coordinator. The total of student teachers in this case study is 13. The supervising teachers were selected on the basis of their appointments as the supervising teachers for student teachers: this was decided by their school principals.
4.4.2 Getting to know the participants and their consent

Initially, the on-site coordinator was approached was in early 2010, prior to the pre-departure meetings, to inform him of the research plan. Then, as he was interested in this study, he was asked to sign a consent letter to allow him to participate in the research. Although he was not the object of the study, he was interviewed and involved in the research through his support; hence, his consent was required for ethical purposes.

As the on-site coordinator supported the research project, he invited me to join the pre-departure meetings to get to know the student teachers as the potential participants. In one of the meetings, I was given time to explain my research to the student teachers, including the importance of study and how I would conduct my research in Vanuatu. After attending several meetings, I invited the student teachers to participate, and, as all of them agreed to participate, they were asked them to sign the consent forms, which contained information about the proposed study (purposes, procedures and the use of outcomes), voluntary participation, and confidentiality (Babbie, 2001). Thus, the student teachers were aware of the conditions of the research, which was important to avoid deception and protect their right as participants, as they might have a different understanding of the purpose of the study from the researcher (Creswell, 2002).

Moreover, as I planned to visit schools to conduct classroom observations; I needed to get approvals from the principals. In this case, the on-site coordinator helped to get the approvals from the principals of the assigned schools in Vanuatu. Thus, with the support from the on-site coordinator, I was able to provide evidence of school placement arrangements to Deakin University Human Research Ethics Committee (DU-HREC). The consent letters from all parties – the on-site coordinator, the student teachers and the principals – are attached (Appendix 4.1).

4.4.3 The role of the researcher

In the light of ethnographic case study research, it is important for me to acknowledge my role as the researcher. In this regard, as an interpretative study I needed to have sustained and intensive on-site experiences with the
participants (Creswell, 2002; Locke et al., 2007, cited in Creswell, 2009). Hence, issues such as history and cultural background or personal issues might have shaped the study. To address this concern, I needed to position myself within the report and identify my point of view or stance, to allow for readers to better understand the topic, the setting or my interpretation of the phenomena (Denzin, 1997, cited in Creswell, 2002, p. 494).

In this research, my role was as an outside observer, who had no connection in the design and implementation of the GEP. Also, I had not been a participant in the previous trips with the students. I had started this research by attending pre-departure meetings and asking the student teachers to participate in my study. I distributed my questionnaires for the survey in the initial stages of this research, through both electronic and printed versions. My supervisors and the on-site Vanuatu GEP coordinator were the gatekeepers in this research who gave me access to the student teachers as the main participants. For my case study, though I positioned myself as an outside observer, I developed close relationships with the student teacher participants as a result of living together in the same motel, but relationships which were also limited by my position as the researcher. This was to avoid the possibility of me going native, due to ‘having too close a relationship to the participants’ (Creswell, 2009, p. 72).

4.4.4 Data collection: methods and themes

Data collection for this case study took place for the duration of the GEP, which was from 6th to 29th of August, 2010. During this time, my main consideration involved the ethical issues in conducting the research. In this case, I was fully aware that, coming to a new country, which was completely different to their former experience, seemed to be the main issue faced by the student teachers in conducting their international teaching practicum. Hence, to avoid the possible additional hassle or stress among them from their involvement in my research, I needed to limit my interaction with student teachers to give them more space; primarily, they needed time to adjust to the different culture and to prepare for their practicum. Thus, my objective was to put maximum effort into conducting the research in an unobtrusive manner (Bryman, 2001).
Nevertheless, it did not prevent me from collecting the data ethically. Hence, I attempted to play the role of an overt researcher, which in this case, Bryman (Bryman, 2001, p. 61) defines as the “acquisition of a new role in an unfamiliar setting”. In this context, I attempted to follow Bryman’s advice (2001, p. 61) – the researcher “must win acceptance in the new role, undergo an extensive period of resocialisation into the practices and values of the groups, give an enormous time commitment to the field in order to experience the full range of the events and activities in the setting”. In this regard, I engaged myself as much as possible in the students’ activities, both informally and formally. Starting on the first weekend, I spent the whole time with them visiting tourist destinations together on the island. After school hours, I went to the shops or internet café or restaurants with groups of student teachers. In particular, I joined the whole group attending the activities arranged by the on-site coordinator, visiting Vanuatu Cultural Centre, Vanuatu National Museum, Nakamal house and the Vanuatu Chief’s house.

As an ethnographic case study, several methods were used to collect data, including questionnaires, interviews (audio-taped), reflective reports and documents, and participant and non-participant observations (Punch, 1998) to get sufficient and unambiguous information (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005). With this combination of data collection methods, I was able to fully feel and understand the context of the GEP in which the student teachers experienced their living and teaching in Vanuatu. In particular, visits to the assigned schools for classroom observations, and interviews with the supervising teachers enhanced my understanding of the student teachers’ teaching experience in Vanuatu classrooms.

- **Pre-departure questionnaires**
  On the last pre-departure meeting with the student teachers in Melbourne, I asked them to complete the pre-departure questionnaires. This aimed to identify their pre-existing understanding of Vanuatu and its schools, teachers, students and people, their expectations of living and teaching in the Vanuatu GEP, and their previous international experiences (Appendix 4.2).
• **Semi-structured interviews**

Initially, I planned to interview the student teachers only once while we were in Vanuatu. However, I changed and decided to interview them twice, for certain reasons, in the first week and the last week of their stay in Vanuatu.

In this case, as this research was an ethnographic research, I needed to interview in the form of an unstructured or in-depth interview, which refers “to engaging in as informal a face-to-face encounter as possible, so that it appears almost like a natural conversation between people with an established relationship” (Bryman, 2001, p. 67). Thus, developing a good rapport with the main participants – the student teachers – was crucial. The importance I attached to having good relationships with the student teachers was because I aimed to get what Patton (Patton, 1980, p.196, cited in Marx, 2008, p. 123) stated about the purpose of interview:

> “to find out what is in and on someone else’s mind … to access the perspective of the person being interviewed … we interview people to find out from those things we cannot directly observe … the assumption is that the perspective is meaningful, knowable, and able to be made explicit”.


Indeed, the fact that I lived in the same motel provided the advantage of having a lot of opportunities to know each other better.

However, the context of the different culture of Vanuatu seemed to escalate the situation of the international teaching practicum, which obviously gave some stress to a certain extent; this resulted in my questioning the efficacy of relying on a single interview. It seemed to be too risky as a means of getting sufficient and good data. In particular, I come from a different cultural background from the student teachers – I am a middle-aged Muslim woman who wears a *hijab* – the head covering of a Muslim woman; this had the possibility of adding an extra ‘concern’ for the student teachers who had agreed to participate in my research. One of the participants revealed, in a private conversation, that even talking to me was her first experience of having a ‘conversation’ with a person from a different cultural and religious background, which possibly indicated her unease at confronting cultural difference.

To assist me with my interview, I developed an interview protocol containing a list of questions asking student teachers about their experiences in daily life,
inside and outside of classrooms/ schools, including their relationships with the supervising teachers and students (Appendix 4.2). In the protocol, questions to interview the on-site coordinator are included. It asked questions about the coordinator’s expectations of students’ learning experiences from participating in the GEP. Also, I asked if there were issues of concern regarding the relationship between student teachers and their supervising teachers.

- **Reflective reports**
  The participants were asked to write in their reflective journals upon returning to Melbourne. Though it was meant to be a personal journal, the reflective report aimed to reveal what the student teachers know, feel, do and how and why they do it with respect to their perspectives on Vanuatuan students, the Vanuatuan classroom, learning and recognition of the point of view on which they based their perceptions (Cortazzi, 1993). It also served as a vehicle for them to express their views on education, their ability to notice what their students learned and how they developed their ability to learn about their students. In this regard, they were given suggestions of topics to reflect on, including their perceptions on learning, challenges during their teaching practicum in a different culture, impacts of the GEP on their career aspirations, and the differences with teaching practicums in Australian schools (Appendix 4.2).

- **Documents**
  In this research, to enhance my writing up of the ‘thick’ case study, I collected a variety of records in the form of research papers, papers from books, field notes, and tapes of talk (Bryman, 2001; Creswell, 2009). In this regard, I collected secondary data on the GEP from the School of Education and the on-site Vanuatu GEP coordinator. Some information on educational matters in Vanuatu was retrieved from the internet. Other printed information on culture was copied from the National Museum in Port Villa. Documents about Vanuatu school practices, socio-economic features, and culture were collected from the local national library.

- **Participant and non-participant observations**
  As I lived with the student teachers in the same motel, I had the opportunity to observe their life closely; this reflected what Bryman (2001, p. 59) states about
observation, which he defines as “data gathering by means of participation in the daily life of informants in their natural setting: watching, observing and talking to them in order to discover their interpretations, social meanings and activities” (Bryman, 2001, p. 59). In this regard, as I shared a motel room with three student teachers, and my room was in between the other two rooms that were each occupied by four student teachers, I obviously spent a great deal of time with them, allowing us to develop close relationships in the field.

However, there were times that, for ethical purposes, I needed to restrain myself from interaction with the student teachers. In this case, I observed them in the classrooms without participating in their teaching activities; I sat in the classroom for about 30 minutes to one hour to observe the physical setting, the participants, emerging activities and interactions, conversations and my own behaviour (Merriam, 2009). In this research, I conducted classroom observations only in the second week, as I expected that, after teaching for one week, the student teachers might have become familiar with the school context so that my presence in their classroom would not give extra disturbance.

- **My personal field notes**
  I wrote my field notes to record the participants’ behaviour and activities in Vanuatu (Creswell, 2009). The formal observation involved classroom observation, which was conducted once for one hour for each participant. In addition, I observed the student teachers’ daily life. In detail, my observation notes included the physical setting, participants, activities and interactions, content of conversations, including the subtle factors, such as informal and unplanned activities, symbolic and connotative meanings of words, non-verbal communication, such as dress and physical space, my own behaviour or comments and reflections (Merriam, 1998). Hence, I kept my fieldwork journal or notes on every issue encompassing the experiences of personal, professional and intercultural aspects.

**4.4.5 Data analysis**

As a case study, the data analysis in this research was started before arriving in Vanuatu, since I had collected data using the pre-departure questionnaire in Melbourne. As I read the data to understand the student teachers’
preconceptions of teaching and living in Vanuatu, I read through the next data collection drawn from the first interview in Vanuatu in attempting to further understand their responses and to develop further analytic questions. This analytic process allowed me to make adjustments in attempting to address the overarching research questions. In other words, this process of adjusting or altering research questions to follow the line of thought of the participants gave me more authentic and fuller data (Creswell, 2009).

Moreover, my decision to conduct interviews twice for each student teacher gave me the opportunity to discuss further the data from the first interview with the student teachers in the second interview; this allowed me to seek clarification, which served also to increase the accuracy of data. The validity of the data was increased further through the triangulation method employed (Creswell, 2009). In this case, the data collected from interviewing the GEP coordinators and supervising teachers through semi-structured interviews was aimed, for triangulation purposes, at increasing the validity of this research. Similarly, other data drawn from my personal field notes during formal and informal observations was compared to the data from interviews and reflective reports to check the consistency of the data revealed by the student teachers.

- **Coding and memoing**
  After completing the transcriptions upon returning to Melbourne, I sent all the transcribed documents to the student teacher participants to get their comments. Then, after leaving Vanuatu, the analytic thinking proceeded as a reflective and on-going process over time, in order to discover recurring themes or events that stood out.

Indeed, the data analysis referred to “the process of systematically arranging and presenting information in order to search for ideas”, a process involving coding the data, discovering themes and developing propositions (Minichiello, Aroni, & Hays, 2008, p. 258); thus, I read, then coded the data and, after reading thoroughly all the data (Creswell, 2009) , I wrote its memos, called ‘labelling the data’ (Punch, 1998, p. 206). In this case, I followed the coding as suggested by Bogdan and Biklen,(1992, p. 167-172, cited in Creswell, 2003, p. 193), including: “setting and context codes; perspectives held by subjects; subjects’ ways of thinking about people and objects; process codes; activity
codes; strategy codes; relationship and social structure codes; and pre-assigned coding schemes”. At the same time, I tried to draw some graphs or diagrams to summarise and visualise my thoughts; and, finally, I wrote some reflective comments after completing the coding of my data collection.

**Writing up the data and further analyses**

After the data was coded and given memos, I attempted to identify the emerging themes, which started with identifying descriptive and low inferences, followed by integrating data using higher-order concepts (Creswell, 2008). In this case, the process in the data analysis involved distilling how things work and naming the essential features in themes in the cultural setting. The analysis of the patterns of behaviour, beliefs and languages were conducted to “reach some conclusions about the meanings learned from studying the participants and sites” (Wolcott, 1994, cited in Creswell, 2002, p. 491).

The following chapter describes the ethnographic case study. I generated a description of the setting, people, categories or themes for analysis. The case study depicts what was going on in the culture-sharing group, and to identify its specifics in order to place the reader in the natural setting. This included the context or setting, situation, or environment surrounding the cultural group of the study. The results of this study in a rich, thick description of the student-teacher lived experience of living and teaching in the Vanuatu GEP. It covered what Merriam (1998, p. 30) outlined: “as many variables as possible and … their interactions”. Following Merriam’s lead, I attempted to write a case study that conveyed a heuristic quality in presenting my understanding of the phenomena or issues of study. Furthermore, I wrote the case study as an interpretive study, including the discovery of new meaning serving to extend the reader’s experience or confirm the current knowledge of the case under study (Merriam, 1998).

A narrative mode was used to portray the lived experience of student teachers conducting a teaching practicum in Vanuatu. The field notes were translated into text, which Hammersley and Atkinson (1995, cited in Pole & Morrison, 2003, p. 90) describe as “constructing a narrative of everyday life”. Moreover, student quotations are included to give an indication of the researcher being
immersed in the location (Pole & Morrison, 2003, p. 91). Then, to develop a comprehensive analysis, I interconnected the themes into a broader category. This eventually assisted me with the interpretation of the data in the case study. In this case, the analysis of the data from the different type of participants aimed to serve as a triangulation strategy.

Further analyses are discussed in chapters 6, 7 and 8. I wanted to interrogate the survey results through further analysis of the key findings by examining the students’ experiences in the case study. In this case, I used the models of Paige (2006a) and Shulman (Shulman, 2004) to interpret data in examining the evidence of cultural and professional learning. In this context, the findings included the examination of student experiences captured in key quotations. These provide evidence of learning from the GEP experience. Thus, the overall findings of the data analysis comprised both the lessons learned from the case study from participating in a GEP and the perceptions of learning experience.

4.4.6 Ethics and reflexivity

Further ethical considerations took place after data collection, during data analysis and interpretation; I was bound to protect the anonymity of the participants, roles and incidents on the research site. The pseudonyms were used to ensure the anonymity of the participants. However, there existed the probability of the difficulty of addressing this issue, due to the small number of participants in the location. In this regard, the participants had been informed about this possibility. Furthermore, the data from this research would be protected for six years from the completion of this thesis (Deakin Ethics). Next, I was constrained to provide an accurate account of the collected data, which involved checking the accuracy of data with the participants.

With regard to reflexivity in this research, initially I included in this chapter an acknowledgement of myself to inform the readers about my role, position and perspective in this research. In addition, as suggested by Creswell (2002), I avoided using any language or words which were biased against the participants in terms of gender, sexual orientation, racial or ethnic group, disability or age. Secondly, I prevented the possibility of suppressing,
falsifying or inventing findings to meet my audience’s or my own needs (Creswell, 2008).

Concern regarding reflexivity during interpretation and in writing the report was also crucial (Bryman, 2001; Creswell, 2002). According to Bryman (Bryman, 2001, p. 127) “reflexivity and interpretation are integrally bound together, since the attribution of meaning to the data needs to be done reflexively”. Reflexivity refers to the application of reflection on the social process, requiring a critical attitude towards data, and the recognition of the influences of factors such as the location of the setting on the interpretation of the data and the writing of the thesis. Thus, to be reflexive, I discussed the research problem in Chapter Two thoroughly; this was followed by the “provision of enough excerpts in the text to allow the readers to make inferences themselves” (Bryman, 2001, p. 132). Moreover, in detail, I followed the suggestions from Bryman (2001) to explain clearly my own position and that of the participants in order to make clear the power relations within the research, in particular, to identify the effects of class, gender, race, and religion on the practice and the writing up of thesis. Moreover, I outlined the grounds for categorisation in interpreting the data, in order to recognise whether it was constructed or came originally from the respondents.

### 4.4.7 Trustworthiness and credibility

With regard to the reliability and validity of this study, the reliability in a qualitative study is associated with context and situation-specificity, authenticity, comprehensiveness, detail, honesty, depth of response and meaningfulness to the respondent (Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2000). In particular, reliability refers to the consistency of the research (Gibbs, 2007 in Creswell, 2009). In this context, several reliability procedures discussed by Creswell (2009) were performed. In addition to producing accurate transcriptions, the data was compared constantly during the process of coding and memo-ing to avoid a shift in the meaning of the codes. In this case, I cross-checked and reworked the codes several times to maintain my consistency in coding.
Trustworthiness refers to the issue of validity in qualitative research, which is also expressed in different terms, such as authenticity and credibility. It is about the accuracy of the findings that can be based on the points of view of the researcher, the participants and the readers (Creswell & Miller, 2000, cited in Creswell, 2009). Validity is influenced by: “interviewer bias and effects; the accuracy of respondents’ memories; response tendencies; dishonesty; self-deception and social desirability” (Punch, 1998, p. 182). In particular, for this research, the cross-cultural study involved problems in interpreting responses from the various participants with different cultural backgrounds. To address these issues, I applied strategies such as “respondent validation, triangulation and reflexive field notes” (Cohen, et al., 2000, p. 120; Creswell, 2009; Merriam, 1998). With regard to triangulation, this research conducted methodological triangulation involving the use of multi-methods for data collection, such as interview, questionnaire, journal and field notes. With regard to my field notes, I attempted to produce a comprehensive description to convey the findings. Overall, I conducted an iterative process of increasing the validity of this research by taking the transcription of interviews back to the participants to get their comments for confirmation, in addition to the preceding process of data confirmation in Vanuatu. While in Vanuatu, during the second interviews, I checked my understanding of the participants’ comments from the first interviews.

4.5 Summary

This chapter presented the way in which this research was conducted last year. It informed the theoretical rationale of the research design and the selection of research methods to connect the research questions with the real world. This research applied a mixed-method design, consisting of survey and case study to investigate the research questions.

The survey method enabled me to collect the general insights of the learning among student teachers gained from their participation in the GEP. Moreover, with the ethnographic case study approach, the context of the Vanuatu GEP in 2010 and the lived experience of the student teachers during their international teaching practicum in Vanuatu could be captured.
CHAPTER FIVE

The Ethnography of the GEP

5.0 Introduction

This chapter reports on the overall ethnographic study of the GEP. It encompasses two sections. As the GEP has been conducted at various countries for almost 10 years, in order to understand student learning through the GEP, the survey of perception of learning in the GEP from a large number of student teachers who completed their GEPs in various countries in 2008, 2009 and 2010 is presented in the first section. This section serves to address the first research question – What perceptions did student teachers have regarding their learning from participating in the GEP?

The second section focuses on the ethnographic case study of the 2010 Vanuatu GEP. It covers the lived experience of student teachers during their participation in the 2010 Vanuatu GEP, and aims to address the second research question – What were the actual lived experiences of student teachers undertaking the 2010 Vanuatu GEP?

5.1 Student Teachers’ Perceptions of Learning in the GEP

To start with, Subsection One presents the student-teacher participants’ backgrounds. Subsection Two describes the student teachers’ recognition of their experience, with regard to perceived cultural learning from their participation in the GEP. Subsection Three addresses the question of what the student teachers’ believe with regard to their professional learning.

5.1.1 Profile of the survey participants

The majority of survey participants were female (93%) with an age-range of around 20 (90%) and, at the time of the investigation, were undertaking a course of study with a major in primary education (68%). Most of them were, at the time of the survey, in their third year of study (57.5%) and, of the practicum locations offered; the highest number had conducted a teaching
practicum in Vanuatu (40%). In addition to the Northern Territory, the other destination countries selected by the participants of this survey included Malaysia (8%), China (5%), Thailand (5%), India (5%) and Switzerland (5%).

Regarding ethnicity, most of the survey participants are Australian born, except one participant, who is of Asian descent and was born overseas. However, several participants have offered that one of their parents is not of Australian origin, but has a European background. Another exception is one participant who was born in Australia, but whose both parents are not Australian-born.

Furthermore, most of the survey participants had travelled overseas before participating in the GEP. In this case, 20 participants had visited both Western and non-Western countries (50%), while eight students had been to Western countries (20%) and six students, had been to non-Western countries, such as Thailand and other tourist destinations, such as Fiji and New Caledonia (30%). The survey also revealed that only one participant had actually gone overseas for merely a holiday or family visit (2.5%). The majority reported that their purpose of travelling overseas was a combination of recreational and family purposes (45%); the other purposes included volunteering, study/exchange student, working and living overseas due to parent’s job – in total 40%.

As mentioned in Chapter Four, the demographic variables are drawn to foreground the student teachers’ learning experience in the GEP (Medina-Lopez-Portillo, 2004, cited in Hoff, 2008; Rizvi, 2007a).

5.1.2 Perceptions of culture learning

The student teachers’ perceptions of cultural learning are investigated using 13 questions in the survey questionnaire. To reiterate, Paige’s Five Dimensions of Culture Learning (2006a), as outlined in Chapter 3, are used to identify the cultural learning that might take place among student teachers. Thus, this section describes the student teachers’ responses that reflect the student teachers’ perceptions of learning in terms of:

- Learning about self as a cultural being – CL1
- Learning about the elements of culture – CL2
- Culture-specific learning – CL3
• Culture-general learning – CL4
• Learning about learning – CL5

Although the responses are supposed to be categorised as: Strongly Disagree (SD), Disagree (D), Agree (A) and Strongly Agree (SA), due to lack of variability, the responses were clustered into positive and negative responses. The following table provides the findings for student teachers’ perception of cultural learning. The following table presents the responses for each question of each element of culture learning.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No</th>
<th>Questions and elements of Culture Learning</th>
<th>RESPONSES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning about self as a cultural being - CL1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q1</td>
<td>After participating in the GEP, I am more aware of my own culture</td>
<td>28 (78%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q8</td>
<td>After participating in the GEP, I am able to understand my pattern of behaviour, values and ways of thinking.</td>
<td>32 (89%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning about the elements of culture – CL2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q6</td>
<td>After participating in the GEP, I am able to recognise various visible elements of local student culture such as foods, clothing and festival.</td>
<td>36 (95%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q7</td>
<td>After participating in the GEP, I am able to recognise elements of local student culture such as communication, behaviour, values and beliefs.</td>
<td>37 (97%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Culture-specific Learning- CL3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q3</td>
<td>After participating in the GEP, I am able to appreciate local student pattern of behaviour</td>
<td>35 (92%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q4</td>
<td>After participating in the GEP, I am able to appreciate local student values</td>
<td>38 (100%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q5</td>
<td>After participating in the GEP, I am able to appreciate local student ways of thinking</td>
<td>35 (95%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q9</td>
<td>After participating in the GEP, I am able to understand different social interaction and ways of communicating between Australian and local students</td>
<td>36 (95%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q10</td>
<td>After participating in the GEP, I am able to understand different values between Australian and local students.</td>
<td>38 (100%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Culture-general Learning – CL4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q2</td>
<td>After participating in the GEP, I am able to appreciate the different culture of local students</td>
<td>37 (97%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q11</td>
<td>After participating in the GEP, I am able to develop coping strategies to adjust myself in a new culture.</td>
<td>37 (97%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning about Learning –CL5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q12</td>
<td>After participating in the GEP, I am able to develop skills of observation and reflection to learn about local student culture</td>
<td>35 (97%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q13</td>
<td>After participating in the GEP, I am able to develop my skill of interaction with local students</td>
<td>38 (100%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Tabel 5.1 Student teachers’ responses for culture learning

In general, the majority of participants believed that they had learnt about the local culture of their GEP destination country, as the majority of responses
were positive to all questions. In particular, all student teachers were convinced that they were able to appreciate their local students’ cultural values, and to understand the different values between Australian and local students; and develop skills to interact appropriately and effectively with local students.

Although most of the student teachers believed that they had learnt about culture by participating in the GEP, the emerging awareness of their own culture in the GEP received the highest number of negative responses (22 percent). This means not many students actually gained their awareness of their own culture from participating in the GEP.

With regard to Learning about Self as a Cultural being (CL1), the majority of the student teacher participants believed that they learnt about this element of culture. As Q8 obtained more positive responses than Q1, it is reasonable to assume that, in this case they were more confident that they understood ‘their own ways of thinking, values and behaviour’, rather than that they had increased their awareness of ‘their own culture’ from their participation in the GEP. In detail, there were 78 percent students who believed that they gained awareness of own culture (Q1), and there were 89 percent who convinced that they understood their own ways of thinking, values and behaviours from participating in the GEP (Q8). Thus, among the five elements of Culture Learning, ‘Learning about the Self as a Cultural Being’ were not experienced by the majority of student teachers.

In addition, the majority of student teachers also believed that they learnt about the various elements of culture (Learning about the Element of Culture –CL2). In this case, the participants thought that they knew less about the various visible elements of their local students’ culture, such as foods, clothing and festivals/ ceremonies (Q6), rather than their students’ communication, values and behaviour (Q7); positive responses for Q6 were 95 percent, while Q7 obtained 97 percent. This indicates that more students were not confident that they were able to recognise their students’ cultural aspects in terms of foods and clothing. However, more student teachers believed that they were able to recognise local culture in terms of communication, behaviour, values and beliefs.
With regard to *Culture-Specific Learning (CL3)*, all students were confident that they were able to appreciate their local students’ values as all responses were positive for Q4. Similarly, as Q10 also obtained only positive responses, it could be interpreted that all of them understood the different values embraced by Australian students and local students. However, culture-specific learning (CL3) was also considered as the hardest learning to gain as the number of student teachers who understood their host students’ behaviour was the least (Q3). Furthermore, more student teachers believed that they were able to appreciate their local student ways of thinking (Q5) and to understand different social interaction and ways of communication between Australian and local students (Q9).

Recognition of *Culture-General Learning (CL4)* also becomes evident in the majority of responses. In this case, the same number of students believed that they were able to appreciate their local students’ culture (Q2) and to cope with cultural difference (Q11). Thus, with respect to *Culture-General Learning*, the student teachers were confident that they were not only able to understand their local student’s culture, but also able to develop coping strategies to adjust with the issues rooted in cultural differences.

Since *Learning about Learning (CL5)* receives more positive than negative responses, just like the other elements of *Culture Learning*, it could be regarded that the student teachers thought they knew how to learn about a different culture. In this regard, all student teachers’ belief that they learnt about local culture through interaction with their local students was demonstrated through 100 percent positive responses for Q13. However, fewer students agreed that they learnt through observation and reflective thinking, as Q12 received 97 percent positive responses. In other words, more student teachers were able to develop skills of interaction rather than observation and reflective thinking in order to understand a different culture.

To explore further the student teachers’ perception of cultural learning from participating in the GEP, the participants were asked their comments about cultural learning through an open-ended question – Do you have any comment in respect to cultural learning? The term used is *cultural learning* instead of
Culture Learning in order to capture the genuine student teachers’ understanding or perspective of learning about culture.

It was found that 25 student teachers (63%) responded to this question. There was one student teacher (2.5%) who argued for not learning about culture in their GEPs. Majority of student teachers (60%) reported that they learnt about host country’s culture related to teaching and personal development, and in terms of various dimensions of learning – knowledge, attitude and skill.

In particular, the student teachers’ cultural learning was described as follows. With regard to teaching, a student teacher was able to connect knowledge of local culture with his/ her lesson plan preparation as he/she believed that local students respond to foreign teachers differently from local teachers.

I found it very useful to learn about the classrooms and their cultures before I was required to teach them. This helped me to plan my lessons and behaviour management strategies before I entered the classroom. I also found it useful to learn about the traditions and culture of Thailand as it helped me to understand the habits of some of my students. This includes the difference in behaviour and attitude that Thai students had forwards their foreign teachers compared to their Thai teacher.

Another student teacher considered that it was important to incorporate knowledge of local culture into the curriculum.

It is important that every child had the opportunity to share their culture, and that they can find some part of the curriculum that directly relates to them and their cultural knowledge.

A student teacher also recognised that they needed a different kind of strategy to engage local students in their teaching learning activity.

Have a lot of commitments outside school, compared to Australia kids. The ways of encouraging participation in class are different to Australia.

Learning from participation in the GEP was also recognised through their ability to cope with the emerging problems in the field.

The GEP helped me learn a lot about myself and how I cope in certain situations. It allowed me to challenge myself and expect myself to meet the demands of these challenges. It was hard in every single way, being away from home, surrounded by a different language and culture, but it also lead me to believe I have the confidence to teaching in a classroom setting.

Students and teachers had generally different dispositions than those in Australia, which required adjustment on my behalf to accumulate.
In respect to various aspects of cultural learning the following comments illustrates their learning. A student teacher explained that they learnt more about tradition and custom of the local culture, which represent cultural knowledge.

While we were there it was the festival of lights and this was a great celebration to observe. The students also had a day where we engaged in festival activities. We also visited the temples and other factories. I was surprised to see how much of their work is still hand done;

I gained an understanding as to why students in NT are "behind" in terms of educational standards. This is largely due to differences in culture. I believe that if all Australians were able to gain an insight into the lives an indigenous people then we might be able to make a difference to their lives;

I have learnt a lot about the Ni-Van culture from participating in this GEP;

The following excerpts illuminate that the student teachers did not only gain cultural knowledge, but also developed awareness and the ability to be sensitive and to appreciate host country’s culture.

India has rich and vast cultures and beliefs. Being immersed in this has given me a better understanding and appreciation of these practices;

I gained more insight, knowledge and awareness than any other practicum while on GEP. Being immersed in an environment of greater cultural diversity allowed me to learn faster about cultural practices and know how to be more sensitive to cultural issues;

Overall, these finding support the general perception that the majority of student teachers learnt about host country culture. It provides more insights on cultural learning, including aspects of teaching, cultural knowledge and skills.

5.1.3 Student teachers’ insights of professional learning

As mentioned previously in Ch 3, the five adapted knowledge bases of Schulman (2004) have been adopted in this research to examine the student teachers’ perception of professional learning from participating in the GEP. They include:

- Cultural norms of school – PL1
- Student learning style – PL2
- Curriculum – PL3
- Strategies of classroom management – PL4
- Teaching practice – PL5
In this regard, there are 12 questions to investigate student teachers’ perception of professional learning. The following Table 5.2 provides the overall responses for all questions of professional learning.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No</th>
<th>Questions and elements of Culture Learning</th>
<th>RESPONSES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Cultural Norms of the School - PL1</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q1</td>
<td>My GEP experience has broadened my understanding of differences between Australian and my local school in term of cultural norms of the school.</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q6</td>
<td>The GEP experience has enabled me to use an appropriate teaching approach according to the cultural norm of the school.</td>
<td>38 (95%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Student Learning Style – PL2</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q5</td>
<td>My GEP experience had broadened my understanding of differences in student learning style between Australian and local student.</td>
<td>40 (100%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q10</td>
<td>My GEP experience has enabled me to adjust my teaching with my local student learning style</td>
<td>38 (97%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Curriculum- PL3</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q3</td>
<td>My GEP experience has broadened my understanding of differences between Australian and host school in regarding curriculum</td>
<td>34 (85%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q8</td>
<td>My GEP experience has enabled me to infuse global or cultural perspective in my teaching materials.</td>
<td>36 (90%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Strategies of classroom management – PL4</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q2</td>
<td>My GEP experience has broaden my understanding of different practices of classroom management of Australia and host country</td>
<td>36 (90%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q7</td>
<td>My GEP experience enabled me to use different strategy of classroom management.</td>
<td>32 (82%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Teaching practice – PL5</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q4</td>
<td>My GEP experience has broadened my understanding of difference of teaching practice between Australia and host school</td>
<td>38 (95%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q9</td>
<td>My GEP experience has enabled me to adopt different teaching approach.</td>
<td>35 (88%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5.2 Student teachers’ responses for professional learning

Similar to responses for cultural learning, the majority of student teachers believed that they learnt about aspects of teaching from their participation in the GEP, as most responses were positive for all 10 questions.

The table shows that all student teachers believed that they understood the cultural norm in their local schools and their local student learning style during their participation in the GEP. In this case, when the student teachers were asked if they knew about the differences of school cultural norms between schools in Australia and destination countries, no one gave negative response.
Similarly, all student teachers thought that they understood the differences, between students in Melbourne and their destination countries, in the ways of learning. The largest number of negative response was given to learning about developing ability to teach with different classroom management. In this case, there were 18 percent negative responses to Q7.

The majority of student teachers believed that their professional learning about school cultural norms (PL1), student learning style (PL2), classroom management (PL4), and teaching practice (PL5) involved the acquisition of understanding, rather than skill or ability development. Moreover, the student teachers’ learning of teaching about curriculum was involved with developing ability, rather than knowledge acquisition.

With respect to the cultural norms of the school – PL1 – all students believed that they learnt about local school cultural norms, rather than developed an appropriate teaching approach according to the cultural norms of the school. All student teachers were confident about gaining an understanding of local school cultural norms; although fewer students (97%) thought that they were able to apply an appropriate teaching style in line with the cultural norms of the local school.

With respect to PL2 – Student learning style – the table reveals that all respondents considered that they gained a broadened understanding of differences in teaching practice between Australia and the host school. However, fewer students (97%) believed that the GEP experience enabled them to adjust their teaching practice with local students’ learning style.

As previously mentioned about the different patterns of learning, with regard to curriculum, 15 percent of students gave negative responses, as they did not agree with the statement that they learnt about differences in curriculum between Australian and destination country. Surprisingly, more students thought that they were able to infuse global or cultural perspective in their teaching material.

With regard to PL4 – Strategies of classroom management, the majority of student teachers considered that they learnt about different classroom
management from their experience in the GEP. In particular, more students believed that they understood the different practices of classroom management of Australia and the host country; and only 10 percent of participants did not agree with this belief. However, there were more students – 18 percent of student teacher participants – who did not think that they were able to use different strategies of classroom management.

The table also reveals that the majority of student teacher was very confident that participation in the GEP enhanced their understanding of different teaching practices between Australia and the host school; only one student did not agree (3%). However, there were more students (13%) who did not believe that the GEP experience enhanced their adoption of a different teaching style.

Further investigation of what student teachers think about their professional learning in the GEP was conducted through open-ended question – “Do you have any comment for professional learning? There were 25 participants (63%) who responded to the open-ended question. It was found that small number of student teachers argued for not gaining learning about teaching and similar number of students who considered their experience in the GEP was similar to the general teaching round in Melbourne.

The majority mentioned that they learnt aspects of professional learning including the influence of culture on teaching & learning, and learning about teaching aspect only without mentioned about cultural issues

Some illustrations of professional learning include learning about the influence of culture on teaching and learning.

- Understanding of how cultural upbringing has an influence on learning styles, behaviour and attitudes towards education.

- Predominantly learning to teach in completely different context and with very limited resources and background understanding of school, students, culture, etc.

- It was a great cultural experience, I loved getting to know students and teachers and learning about their lives. In terms of teaching however, I felt there were a lot of ‘talk’ about these new and wonderful practices and inquiry strategies for the classroom, but these were not actually put into practice in the classroom. The classroom was very much a rote style of learning.

- It was a great experience mainly because it was so different from here in Australia. Culturally very different. Flexibility was the key to enjoying the difference.
Apart from those students, other ten (25%) believed that they learnt about teaching practices, but did not mention their relation to culture.

In particular I was able to adopt my classroom management style and learn new techniques that I have been able to implement into my teaching back at home.

Actively involving students in a successful teaching strategy.

Classroom management skills.

It made me think about the type of teacher I want to be in terms of the behaviour management strategies that are effective and the importance of getting to know your students.

I learned to be a calmer teacher up the front of the classroom. If the students are not behaving I would give myself time to assess what is going wrong with my current behaviour management strategy and alter it in the particular classroom situation, instead of worrying about the fact that the class is not responding or listening to me.

The open-ended question supports the general findings of the survey that majority of the student teachers learnt about teaching. It provides more insights that they learnt about teaching and the influence of culture on teaching and learning.

Overall, all student teachers perceived that had learnt various aspects of both cultural and professional learning. These include abilities to appreciate host student values, understand the different values between Australian and host students values, develop skills of interaction with host students, understand school cultural norms and understand student learning behaviour. The findings from open ended questions for cultural and professional learning gave evidence which support these general perceptions.

Moreover, the number of student teachers who were able to recognise of own culture was the smallest for cultural learning, whilst for professional learning, the smallest number of student teachers thought that they were not able to apply different classroom management strategies.

Having known the general beliefs of learning from the GEP among the participants, the following section illustrates the 2010 Vanuatu GEP case study in order to place the reader in the natural setting. The case study, which includes the context or setting situation, or environment surrounding the cultural group of study aims to depict what was going on in the culture sharing group, and to identify its specifics.
5.2 The 2010 Vanuatu GEP Case Study

As mentioned in Chapter Four, the GEP has been conducted for eight years in several countries; thus the 2010 Vanuatu GEP was selected as the case study for this research. In this case, the purpose of this case study is to document the experience of the 13 student teacher participants before and during a three-week teaching practicum in Vanuatu in 2010. In an attempt to provide a complete portrayal of the 2010 Vanuatu GEP, this case study was structured as follows:

- student-teacher profiles
- overview of the Vanuatu GEP: the roles of the on-site coordinator and his expectations of Deakin participants
- preparation before departure in 2010
- reasons to participate, preconceptions before departure and expectations
- arrival in Vanuatu
- ‘living’ in Vanuatu
  - first week of experience
    - primary encounter with Vanuatuan people
    - an earthquake: stay or leave?
    - early days of teaching in a different culture: What a difference!
  - more exposure to local life
    - so many differences!
    - cultural immersion
    - learning community in the motel
  - wrap up

5.2.1 The case study participants

There were 13 student teachers who participated in the 2010 Vanuatu GEP, and all agreed to take part in this research: two male and 11 female, the majority of them were in their twenties; only one was a mature age student. The group comprised four students in the second year, six in the third year, one in the fourth year, and two were in the Graduate Diploma. Hence, there were four student teachers who conducted the GEP as their first teaching experience; in contrast, one student was in her last stage of teaching rounds. Eight students were undertaking primary education; and the rest were doing secondary courses.
All the student teachers were of Australian descent and came from middle class families; this had allowed most of them to enjoy holiday trips overseas several times before their departure to Vanuatu. The majority of the participants had previously travelled to various countries, both Western and non-Western; one person had only travelled to a Western country – the USA and Canada; and three of them had visited Non-Western countries, including Thailand, Indonesia, Vanuatu and Burma. The length of the students’ travels varied from some weeks to almost a year, except for one, who had lived overseas due to her parent’s job.

5.2.2 The roles of the on-site coordinator

According to the Handbook of the GEP (Deakin, 2009), the roles of all on-site coordinators include the management of pre-departure preparations in Melbourne and some arrangements in the target country, including accommodation arrangements and school placements. In an interview in 2010 with the on-site coordinator for the Vanuatu program, he revealed that he has managed this program for the seven years that it has run. He detailed that the number of student teachers participating in the program has, over the years, ranged from 14 to 25. Most of them have been female and have had a major in primary education within the humanity disciplines; interestingly, few have been from Science and Mathematics.

The Vanuatu GEP coordinator elaborated on his particular on-site roles, which he differentiated into professional and parental roles. His professional role involves:

- the arrangement of cultural program activities,
- supervision at schools, including the provision of feedback and evaluative reports, and assisting the Vanuatu supervising teachers in completing supervision reports for the student teachers.
- the conducting of at least two classroom observations for each student teacher. At this time, he observes the student teachers for about one hour while they are teaching, focussing on the area of teaching specified in their lesson plans.
CHAPTER 5: THE GEP ETHNOGRAPHIC STUDY

- the provision of oral and written feedback after the classroom observation; the latter is in the form of a reference letter upon returning to Melbourne.

- the management of feedback from the student teachers to the Vanuatu community in order to share their experiences; this is done by publishing brief articles and pictures in the local newspaper.

With regard to his parental role, he is responsible for the welfare and well-being of the student teachers during their stay in Vanuatu.

In my attempt to describe the experience of student teachers participating in the GEP, the on-site coordinator’s perspectives of student teacher learning from the GEP are important. This is because the on-site coordinator plays a significant role in providing the opportunity for student teachers to gain experience both in living and teaching in Vanuatu.

With respect to the student teachers’ experience in Vanuatu, the on-site coordinator claimed that the student teachers would gain knowledge and cultural sensitivity, which he expected the students to be able to transfer to their teaching on their return to Melbourne:

...they will [gain] information about the school, the Pacific Island, ...the developing country...I also expect them to demonstrate almost every day a sensitivity, a sense of tolerance to a society...that very different. And then I expect them to be able in short and long term to be able to transfer their ease with another culture to their classroom.

This is indeed, part of the goals of the GEP, as stated in the GEP Handbook:

...to develop the knowledge, cultural sensitivity and skills needed to address the diversity within an educational environment.

(Deakin, 2009, p. 3)

Moreover, the on-site coordinator argued that the Vanuatu GEP provides an environment which is conducive to achieving the expectations of the student learning experience:

I think one thing I have discovered here is that Vanuatu has multicultural classrooms. Kids in Vanuatu schools come from different tribes, different islands, cultures, languages and they might have the same skin colour, but they are different. So, every day they [the Deakin student] are confronted with a multicultural environment.

Furthermore, he also claimed that the students have the possibility to develop their professional skills from their teaching in Vanuatu, due to its marked difference from their normal experience:

so, I think I expect them ... to demonstrate an adjustment to limited resources. Students have to rely on their skills so I guess I really expect them to demonstrate
flexibility, a willingness to learn and adapt. I’d like them to go back to Australia to learn more about this learning style.

He further asserted his expectation that the student teachers be open to incorporating the topics they developed, in the Pacific Island region, within their teaching. This reflected his expectation for the students to gain an international perspective upon their return to Melbourne.

The collection of this anecdotal information attempted to determine the experiences that the 2010 Vanuatu student teachers might gain from participating in the program. The next section aims to describe the experiences of these student teachers during several preparation meetings, which are an essential part of the GEP.

**5.2.3 Preparation before departure in 2010**

According to the coordinator, there were six meetings in total between April and three days before departure in early August, 2010. On joining the group mailing list, I found there were eight e-mails sent in between the meetings by the co-ordinator to update the participants with the latest information necessary for participation, including the notes from the previous meeting and the agenda for the following meeting. As I had just met the coordinator on April, I got the chance to attend the onward meetings starting from the third meeting on May through the last formal meeting.

Student teachers started their journey of teaching abroad through attending the recruitment process. Those who wanted to participate in the GEP were asked to complete a Student Profile Form and pay the deposit for airfare and accommodation.

- *The third meeting, May, 2010*

I attended the third meeting, where I met the student teacher participants for the first time. The onsite co-ordinator started the meeting with asking everybody to introduce themselves to the group.

I saw the student teachers’ enthusiastic faces. They were hearing what school they had been placed in. The coordinator allocated two student teachers for each school, and they moved into their pairs in order to get to know each other.
After announcing the school placements, the coordinator talked about the schools, including the Vanuatuan students, the teachers, and the Vanuatuan people in general. I noted, in my journal, the information from the coordinator that Vanuatuan people are very relaxed or laidback, compared to Australians. I regarded this information as ‘interesting’, and I tried to imagine how it would be living in such an environment. I wondered whether the student teachers were stricken by this story of the ‘laidback attitudes of Vanuatuan people.

Some students who had completed their Vanuatu GEP last year attended this meeting, as well, to share experiences. They brought their photo albums, which attracted the candidate participants’ attention. I saw them having intense conversations, as it was an opportunity to seek answers from a person who had experienced the GEP first-hand. I overheard them talking about classroom activities/ teaching plans, what resources to bring and logistical issues, such as the budget for the trip and where to get cheap currency.

- **The 4th meeting, early June, 2010**

At this meeting, the onsite co-ordinator underlined the importance of the student teachers remembering to bring resources to Vanuatu, such as pencils, coloured pencils, books and story books; he informed them that most of the schools lacked resources. This information seemed to affect the student teachers. They became very concerned about the under-resourced condition of Vanuatuan schools, which was reflected later in many responses on the pre-departure questionnaire.

The discussion continued with a variety of issues, such as the culture and history of Vanuatu and other practical topics. These included attending to the participants’ general needs, such as buying groceries, the transportation system, and the local currency, as well as school practices, such as starting and finishing times. The on-site coordinator mentioned also that Vanuatuan students are very shy and quiet, and the importance of teachers wearing appropriate clothing at school – simple under-the-knee dress and short sleeved tops for females.
• **The fifth meeting, mid—July, 2010**

The fifth meeting was the last ‘formal meeting’, and did not include discussion on any particular topic about Vanuatu. The co-ordinator informed the student teachers of their itinerary and asked them to choose their roommates - one motel room in Vanuatu would fit four people.

As I was scheduled to give the participants a detailed account of my research in this meeting, the co-ordinator informed the group about my intention to invite the student teachers to become my research sample. I gave them the Plain Language Statement to allow them to understand about their involvement in my research. In this meeting, I also asked them to complete the pre-departure questionnaire in order to know their pre-existing thoughts about the experience they were about to have.

• **The sixth meeting, late July, 2010**

The sixth meeting provided an opportunity for the participants to finalise their preparations and discuss any unresolved issues. The students seemed comfortable and prepared for their journey, but I wondered what thoughts were going through their minds as I was expecting them to return the pre-departure questionnaire.

• **Farewell to Melbourne, 3 days before departure, August 2010**

The final meeting at night, three days before departure, was a ‘farewell’ event to allow the program participants and families to get to know each other. This was necessary in order to build trust and good rapport, since we were to stay together for three weeks in Vanuatu. While speaking later with the participants, they suggested that even more opportunity to form relationships within the group would have been appreciated as a part of pre-program preparation.

5.2.4 **The student teachers before departure**

As the student teachers returned the pre-departure questionnaires which were distributed on the fifth preparation meeting, their preconceptions of the teaching round they were going to start in a few days were described as follows.
Reasons to participate in the GEP and the Vanuatu GEP

Majority of the student teachers believed that undertaking a GEP in another country would give more opportunities for employment, particularly to teach overseas:

So I thought Vanuatu would broaden my opportunities of in the future of being able to work in a low socio economic school overseas.

I also believe that participation in the program will distinguish me from other graduate teachers when applying for jobs.

In addition, they wanted to develop teaching skills; this they believed, involved becoming more resourceful, less reliant on resources, and more flexible and adaptable. There were almost half of the participants who expected to gain personal development, such as becoming more confident in themselves:

My main reason was to challenge myself. I attended a well off school and have done placements in fairly well off areas. I feel comfortable, but it is all I know, so I wanted to see how I would cope without all the wonderful resources that are so readily available

Furthermore, there was only one who expected to understand different culture:

I also hope to teach overseas once I finish my course and thought that doing the GEP was a great way to experience what it might be like. I am very interested in different cultures and learning about different countries, this was a great way to go about it.

However, this picture of student teachers’ reasons for participating in a GEP changed when they were asked for their reasons to go to Vanuatu as their GEP’s location. The majority of the student teachers gave responses, which reflected their awareness of what they might experience in the Vanuatu GEP; the combinations of teaching experience, experience of different culture and impacts on future career:

I am interested in this practicum in Vanuatu in 2010 because this trip would be a fantastic experience as it will allow me to teach in a foreign country and learn their way of life. … I will learn about their culture, teaching style, ways of life and get to know the kids. I believe this experience will allow me to grow as a teacher and will be very beneficial for my future career.

…It will clearly assist me in accreditation for teaching at the end of the year but also give exposure to dealing with issues relating to different cultures, languages and educational structures…

…I believes a good teacher is one with many different experiences; I want to be the best teacher that I can. I have always wanted to teach overseas, I think the cultural different will be something I will always remember….

These anecdotal comments illustrated the reasons of the student teachers participate in the any GEP, including employment, teaching skills, personal development. However, with regard to reason of participating in the Vanuatu
GEP most of the student teachers referred to gaining teaching experience in different culture.

- **What the student teachers know about Vanuatu, its schools, students, curriculum and teaching practice**

With regard to the existing knowledge of Vanuatu and school, the majority responses illuminated the common knowledge of Vanuatuan geography, language and history. The following responses illustrated some understanding of Vanuatuan people:

> Vanuatu is a developing country with 4 main cultures- English, French, Chinese and Ni-Vanuatuan. Its capital is Port Vila. From past visits I know the people to be extremely friendly and welcoming and enjoy a simplistic and carefree lifestyle.

With regard to Vanuatuan schools, most of the student teachers revealed their main concerns about the lack of resources at schools. The other issues, from the most to the least of concerns, included large class sizes, chalk-and-talk pedagogy, the use of English as the third or fourth language, and short school hours.

The majority expected the Vanuatuan school culture to be relaxed-‘laid back’. A few participants predicted that the Vanuatuan school culture would be less structured in terms of its curriculum and lack of discipline among students and teachers. These responses illuminated their awareness about what to expect in Vanuatuan schools as they were informed about this situation by the on-site coordinator during preparation meetings.

In the case of Vanuatuan student behaviours, less than half of the student teachers mentioned the unruly behaviour and the use of a stick to manage classroom behaviour that they had heard about during the pre-departure sessions. Surprisingly, there was one student teacher who had a different perception towards Vanuatuan students:

> Yes, I think things will be more relaxed and students will be better behaved because they are lucky to be educated.

This response was the only response illustrating the concern over student behaviour but was not related to the shy behaviour which was mentioned by the coordinator in the pre-departure meetings.
When asked about what they knew about teaching practices in Vanuatu, almost all participants pointed out about the practice of talk and chalk pedagogy.

Yes as we’ve been informed that their main form of teaching is chalk and talk where the teacher writes on the chalk board and the children write it down.

Only a few participants remarked on the use of textbooks as the source of teaching: “Everything comes from a book”.

In terms of student learning style, most of student teachers assumed that the Vanuatuan student learning style would result from the teaching style performed by their teachers. In this case, the student teachers argued that the Vanuatuan teachers’ teaching style would actually limit their students in learning, allowing them to rely on information from their teachers; thus, they mainly write down from the blackboard:

…. I have been told the teaching style is chalk and talk. This would allow the students to only learn from copying off the chalkboard….  

Students are probably used to a chalk and talk style. Maybe they crave a more active and creative teaching approach.

It was shown that the student teachers had broad information on various issues such as lack of resources, large class size, chalk and talk, ESL, laidback culture/ lack of discipline, less structured curriculum, unruly behaviour/ stick, teaching from books and copy from board.

- **Perceived challenges in doing teaching round in Vanuatu**
  Although famous as a tropical tourist destination, only few student teachers knew Vanuatu history and geography. The majority respondents considered the cultural differences and language barrier as the challenges in participating in the GEP:

  I think there will be challenges because of a potential language barrier as well as a culture one…

  I think living in Vanuatu a challenge may be that English isn’t their first language; therefore there might be a language barrier. I also think it will be a challenge living in a country with such a different culture than Australia, although it will be interesting

When asked with more specific question, which regards to the perceived challenges of teaching in Vanuatu, the majority expressed the same concerns-language and cultural barriers.

The challenges I anticipate in teaching in Vanuatu are problems knowing to teach to make class interesting and relevant, some language barriers and cultural barriers and being able to engage with the students.
I think the language would be a challenge for me if the students do not speak much English. I also think the difference in cultures will be challenging at first.

They also mentioned the lack of resources and large class sizes.

The challenges I anticipate in teaching in Vanuatu are learning how to teach effectively in an ‘unfamiliar’ environment. Learning to adjust to and accommodate different cultures, languages and school curriculums and teaching strategies would likely be quite demanding. Limiting resources and likely large class sizes will further exacerbate the challenges relating these issues.

These challenges were seen as important preconceptions in terms of the student teachers’ awareness of the living and teaching situation they were about to enter. Their concern over possible language and cultural barriers in their teaching pointed the way for the subsequent focussed investigation of their cultural learning.

- **Expectations from participating in the GEP**

  When asked about their expectations from the GEP, in particular with regard to the skills they expected to develop, the majority expected to develop their teaching skills, in particular which related to the challenges of different culture and language barrier in Vanuatu:

  The program will be challenging due to the language barrier so I feel that my communication skills will benefit greatly. I also will need to be flexible and adapt to the different learning environment. I will concentrate on speaking clearly and slowly so that the children understand my expectation.

  I also hope to gain the ability to easily adapt to different teaching circumstances and become a teacher who is flexible and willing to take on all challenges.

  I think that my classroom management skills will develop further from doing a GEP....

  ...is gaining experience and skills in teaching in unfamiliar and very challenging environments....

  The student teachers also mentioned about gaining the expected teaching skills generated due to the specific context of Vanuatuan schools such as the limited resources:

  …I don’t want to rely so heavily on resources and facilities to be able to teach well and I am hoping that this experience will challenge me to use different strategies that I will be able to bring home.

  …it will teach me to be more resourceful as a teacher and rely less on the internet and more on my own skills and attributes.

  Moreover, in addition to teaching skills, more than half of the participants expected to get an experience of a different culture, such as ‘experience in
dealing with students from diverse backgrounds’; and develop an understanding of a different culture, such as ‘an understanding of a different culture that I have never had before’ and ‘a better understanding of the different cultures we have in the world’; and an appreciation of a different culture, such as ‘an appreciation of a different culture’ and ‘appreciation for a culture other than my own’.

Furthermore, apart from gaining understanding and skills related to teaching and culture, the student teachers reported also their expectations of personal development, such as confidence in self and teaching ability:

- Mostly confidence in myself and my teaching ability…
- What I hope to gain from the practicum experience in Vanuatu is to grow as a person…
- This experience will hopefully improve my interpersonal skills.
- I hope to become a more confident teacher from participating in the GEP.

This section described the majority of student teachers awareness that there would be many differences that they would encounter: the schools, the students, the teachers and the overall culture.

- **What did they say about preparation?**

As the student teachers completed their preparation meetings, this question informs what they feeling of attending the preparations.

The majority of student teachers stated that they were ready to go to Vanuatu for several reasons, including had a lot of resources and attempted to not concern about what year or subject to teach:

- Mentally I feel ready. I suppose the only unsettling thing does not know what class, what resources etc. But, I am not too concerned about it.

A few student teachers although felt prepared, they still concerned with some issues such as student behaviour and different teaching style:

- I feel quite prepared, as I have some resources that I can use. I am concerned about just how different the teaching will be, and if the students will listen to me.

Not knowing what year and subject to teach seemed to make small number of student teachers feel unprepared:

- I am scared that I am underprepared, even though I have heaps of resources prepared.

The fact that I don’t know what I will be teaching or the level of the students is very concerning to me.
But, there were some responses illuminated opposite arguments:

I have a lot of recourses for the class as I believe I will be teaching a bit but I also believe this experience is about seeing how you can think on the spot and be able to come up with a lesson from littler resources as that’s how the teachers in Vanuatu work.

A little experience I have had before means I am aware not to be too stressed about the vast differences to the Australian system and just adapt to the situation. The relevance of my Australian Knowledge possibly not being relevant to them could be an issue.

The value of preparation was also mentioned later in Vanuatu. A female student teacher stated that the information obtained from the preparation sessions was useful in preparing themselves to see the reality in Vanuatu.

Yeah...as Warren said, people are very slow...no rush as they live...so I expected that and it helped a lot

The majority of student teachers aimed to gain teaching experience in a different culture. The preparation meetings informed them about living and teaching in Vanuatu, which brought their awareness about the experience they might face. It pointed them to perceive language and cultural barriers as the main challenge. Overall, the prevailing attitude of the student teachers appeared to be positive as though knowing all the differences in Vanuatu, they still had high expectations from their participation in the GEP; and the majority considered themselves as ready for the experience.

The following section will present a brief account on the arrival in Vanuatu to give background information as the context of student teacher experience of living and teaching in Vanuatu.

**5.2.5 Arrival in Vanuatu**

In early August 2010 I arrived with the group of 13 student teachers and on-site co-ordinator at Port Vila, the capital city of Vanuatu, which is located in the South island of Efate. Vanuatu consists of 80 islands, which are mostly volcanic. The weather was very hot and humid as The Republic of Vanuatu is located in the tropical region - South West Pacific Ocean between 17 degrees and 22 degrees South and 168 degrees and 172 degrees East (Vanuatu, 2002).

The following is the map showing the location of Vanuatu and Port Vila.
CHAPTER 5: THE GEP ETHNOGRAPHIC STUDY

Figure 5.1 Map of the Republic of Vanuatu

On arrival at the airport, all looked happy though tired after five hours flight from Sydney; we were especially entertained by a group of local singers, who sang while playing their traditional guitars and other traditional musical instruments. We felt special as if they were personally greeting and welcoming us to their country. A student teacher brought her vivid experience of this welcoming scene, which she wrote in her reflective report in Melbourne.

One of the first things I noticed when we first arrived at Port Vila airport was how friendly the locals were. …No matter where we were or what we were doing people were always friendly and welcoming and would say hello.

As I saw the people at the airport, recollection of people in my childhood comes alive. The Vanuatan is just alike the Papuan: dark skin, medium body and curly black hair – the people from my childhood as I spent 13 schooling years in West Papua - is Melanesian. Similarly, they have more than hundreds vernacular languages, but share similar values, customs and culture. As with Papuan, family and the village community are important in Vanuatuan life.

That afternoon, straight away, the on-site co-ordinator called a minivan, which fitted all of us and we left for our final destination for that day – our motel. On the way to our motel, from the window I could see the picturesque nature of this small developing country – people walking on the small dirt road in what appeared to be an extensive rural area. To my mind, the people appeared to be
very modest – people dressed in their faded clothed and walking in their dirty old thongs.¹

As we were passing more urban areas heading toward our motel, I could see Westerners. As Vanuatu is a tourist destination country, this was not surprising.²

5.2.6 ‘Living’ in Vanuatu

It was a short ride from the airport to our motel where all participants were to stay together. After being welcomed by the owner, who explained about the facilities in the motel and gave us our key, we managed to get ourselves to our room as we knew who our roommates were to be. Eleven female student teachers shared 3 rooms, while the two male participants lived in one room and the co-ordinator had his room, which served also as the meeting room. The location of the motel is strategic, allowing some participants to walk to their schools. It is also within walking distance to the local shopping centre and market.

5.2.6.1 First week of experience

The first evening in Vanuatu, we went to a nearby restaurant to have our dinner together. That night everybody seemed to be talking actively and the coordinator had his time to announce our schedule for the following days. Since we had arrived on a weekend, the group had sufficient time to know each other and had time to explore the city and some tourist attractions using public transport.

- Primary encounter with Vanuatuan people

Living for several days in Vanuatu before starting to teach was going to give the student teachers ample time to experience local life. So... when I spoke to

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¹ In 2002, the population was estimated to be 201,621, of which 78% lived in rural areas (Vanuatu Government, 2002). The simple life of majority Vanuatuan reflects their lack of necessities as a report stated one of the largest components of household cash-expenditure was school fees and 60% of household income was spent for transportation for a child to school. (Vanuatu Diagnostic Trade Integration Study Report, 2008)

² But, after independent from the UK and France since 1980, European was the other major ethnic group of population. Hence, Vanuatuan people are largely multilingual; as French and English are considered official languages besides Bislama and vernacular languages (Vanuatu Government, 2002).
them on the Sunday evening, they told me about their first impressions of the local people.

…they are very different, very friendly, very helpful…offer to help, which you wouldn’t get in Australia. I’ve been pleasantly surprised by that

I just found, everybody really friendly, like you just walk down the street and everyone like hello, good morning.

I find that they’re really friendly…

One student teacher told me that the pre-departure meetings had helped her to recognise the reality that she was now seeing first-hand in Vanuatu.

Yeah…as Warren said…people are very slow…no rush as they live…so I have been expecting that and it is helping a lot

However, one student teacher seemed to find it a bit hard to accept the laidback culture of the Vanuatuan people they were observing while they are at the restaurants waiting for being served, as they felt it created inconvenience.

I think the whole Vanuatu like that. The country runs on what they call ‘island time’. So everything is slow. You go to the restaurant and it slows. You order something and it might come in half an hour or ten minutes. You order drink….might take a while. It is island time.

Furthermore, before arriving in Vanuatu, the student teachers considered the hot weather, language barrier and transportation as some of the perceived challenges to living in Vanuatu. Though, with regard to local transport, some student teachers appeared to be in ‘shock’ as they said: “I am amazed at the amount of traffic and buses and trucks…and the lack of safety…” and “…they pile people in the car …”

- An earthquake: stay or leave?

One afternoon the student teachers had just come back from teaching when an earthquake at a 7.5 on the Richter-scale hit Vanuatu. It was only the second day of teaching. Some student teachers who were in their motel rooms rushed out to the front yard. They all looked panicked. After everything had settled down, the coordinator suggested to everybody to call home to inform their families that they were fine although he had informed the Faculty about our safety. That night, he asked everybody to have a meeting. Several issues were discussed. The owner of the motel gave an assurance that the motel was built with earthquake proof structure. There were two guest speakers from the local geology office and a Deakin academic who was conducting her research in
Vanuatu. They provided invaluable information about safety measures in the case of an earthquake. Nevertheless, the majority of the students argued that the earthquake was not considered as something that would influence their decision to do teaching practicum in a foreign country.

As a series of tremors happened every day and seemed to be last until the rest of the week, I wondered if the students wanted to stop their practicum or have other opinion about the situation. It was a surprise as they took it as ‘positive’ experience, so that they did not see the urgency to cancel their practicum or change their view of conducting teaching in other country.

…So this was an amazing experience. I wouldn’t change my opinion. The earthquake makes it more exciting

… I wasn’t scared ….. in the day I only had 6 kids in my class because there was a tsunami warning and they were in the hills …but it wouldn’t stop me from wanting to go

Other opinion on this issue is that disaster could occur in any part of the world suggested to face the reality and just go with it as referred in the following excerpt.

….it was pretty scary but the day after … was fun but I mean different things happen in different countries and yeah you just go with it, like I would definitely recommend people to come here

• *Early days of teaching in different culture: What a difference!*

Today was the first day of teaching round. Everybody knew what school to teach. The whole morning, together with the onsite coordinator, we introduced the student teachers to their schools. With a mini bus we visited each school starting from the closest one, and end with the school on the Ifira island.

The 13 student teachers were allocated to five primary schools and one secondary school in the mainland Province of Efate and one primary school on the Ifira Island, which could be reached by boat from the mainland in about 15 minutes.

The physical condition of schools attracted the student teachers’ initial attention as we were talking about their first school experience while undertaking the GEP. In this case, a student stated that information given at the pre-departure sessions about the limited resource of the Vanuatuan school
caused them not to have high expectation from their participation in the GEP, in particular about the Vanuatuan schools, students and teachers.

It was what I’ve expected and probably more. I’ve got a class of forty children which is a lot in a small classroom. There even isn’t walking space so no room to sit on the floor or circle sort of like that so it is difficult. It is really big school. There are about 700 children in the school and very confined. All of the classrooms are on top of each other. There is not much space.

The students who taught in the poorest school described her school as:

My school just seems do not have very much. The classroom is just like a shed with one light in it, which had never turned on so it is very dark.

Similarly, other student teacher detailed the limited resources in her classroom:

The kids all have little like a - five books. And the teacher has one text book like teacher hand book and like the student version of that book. The kids are supposed to have a copy of that but the order for them just has not come so it is only one in the whole class and this book is like 10 years old book.

However, the student teachers who taught at a good school did not share this story. As the student teachers had perceived that all Vanuatuan schools were in poor condition, these two students were able to see the reality that there is also school which has all the facilities owned by average schools in Melbourne.

… I’m really surprise to [find] how much resources our school has and like how developed it is and it’s really organized and how they do things and yeah it’s really good and the Australian principal, she seems really sweet and it’s quite similar back home and so yeah I was surprised.

As they were talking about the physical condition of the schools, I interrupted them, asking what else they had noticed from their couple of days of teaching. Some student teachers were able to recognise a range of common practices at their local schools.

These included the practice of ‘devotion’ at public schools, stemming from the fact that Vanuatu is a country influenced by Christian values. A female student said that:

…. they have … prayer in the morning even before lunch they have prayer. And, sometimes they sing a song, this one before lunch time. Sometimes they sing a song or just someone makes the speech, which is turn like 3 sentences long or thank God.

As she added that Devotion involves the Vanuatuan students performing prayer lead voluntarily by a Vanuatuan student, she further commented that: ‘It is a surprise that the kids put their hands up to be picked to lead the devotion by reading a few sentences’.
Unexpectedly, a girl who had just come back from teaching joined our discussion and emphasised that she did not get surprised about the ‘laidback culture’ of Vanuatuan teachers and students, as she had known about it.

It is island time. Teachers walk up to school late. Kids walk up late. …I don’t know everything seems ….island time. The whole country seems like that. It’s just really relaxed.…. 

Furthermore, the fact that English could be the second, third or fourth language for Vanuatuan students indeed created tensions for some student teachers. In this regard, a student teacher suggested evaluating the Vanuatuan student’s level of English to prepare a relevant lesson plan.

….the kids … don’t speak English as their first language. So even, if they are at grade six, they know [only] basic English

The Vanuatuan students’ problem with English was detected as some student teachers realised that their students were inclined to speak in the local language – Bislama – during the lesson.

….. I can tell when some other kids repeat it in Bislama because they look at each other. And then the child answers me after someone else explains for what I’ve said, which is a bit hard. And also, when we play a few games, I have like told them the new one and when I instruct, some kids look around and another person would repeat what I’ve said in Bislama. …. So it’s pretty hard for them to understand…although their pronunciation is funny and incorrect

Sometimes they like to speak Bislama to each other. And like., they said that to me “but I can’t understand you”…And then, one of them like, o, she doesn’t speak Bislama speak English, like, [the kid] told them [the class] to speak English to me. And then, they did. But um yeah, apart from that like they understand me a bit

I think they struggle with my accent yeah I think they struggle with that a bit. No.... they don’t have any other problem yeah

Indeed, the communication breakdown occurred as the student teachers had had difficulties to understand Vanuatuan students.

My children are supposed to speak in English but I find … some of them very difficult to understand. They said something and I don’t know

Apart from experiencing language barrier during teaching in Vanuatuan classrooms, the student teachers told different stories about their Vanuatuan student behaviours. Some of them considered their Vanuatuan students were ‘well behaved’.

Not really [having negative experience]. It only has been two days. The kids are so nice and welcoming and they seem to enjoy me in the class room;
The students, all have been, perhaps because we are a bit different, they have been very attentive and polite

In particular, one student teacher seemed to be surprised as she found her Vanuatuan students were not as she had expected.

No [no students roam]. They are attentive students. They all sit on their desks. Mostly doing work and asking for help from someone else. They are actually really well behaved. I got told that I learn a lot about behaviour management over there. And these kids are amazingly well behaved so I was expecting it will be really hard.

Moreover, other students concerned about the large number of students in their classrooms as it raised issue of class room management.

...the classes are massive. I have 42 students in my class while in Melbourne I would have half of that. So that is really tricky. I don’t know yet how to deal with class room management and stuff...that’s going to be tricky. But there was not enough desk and chairs and some of the children had to sit on the floor.

Actually, there was only small number of student teachers who had perceived that Vanuatuans students had negative behaviour, which leaded the used of cane-stick. However, in fact many student teachers remarked about the presence of negative attitudes or behaviours, including a high level of noise/yelling, roaming, inattention and boredom.

....They speak in a very loud voice, but when it comes to me asking them a question, they get shy and won’t answer, and they yell a lot, no, not at me, they yell at each other.

...there are a few kids I can’t control them like there are a few kids at the front like sit down and really quiet listening and they often tell the others to be quiet so that was good. There is one older boy who kind of helps me tell the other kids to be quiet. [When] the teacher wasn’t in the classroom, one of the kids actually come to me and said: ‘Teacher here is the stick’. Oh, thanks, but I [did not want to use it].

Eventually, some student teachers reminded me that information during pre-departure preparation session supported them in preparing their lesson plans. In this case, they were aware that the grade level of Vanuatuans children was about two years below the Australian standard.

....I think the program co-ordinator is right when he said the children are two years behind. Like I am doing the year nine lunar moons but in Australia I have done it in year 7 and 8 and stuff. I think ... they are very much a step or two behind as the years progress they don’t seem to progress that much.

....I thinks our teaching is a bit hard because the things we said they don’t really understand, everything, like I teach measurement today. And then they’ve never been taught measurement before. And I just try kind of discuss something, like what kinds of things do we measured. And no one put their hands up. And I kind of ask what you use to measure. And no one put their hands up. So I was kind of to feed them the answers.
However, the student teachers who taught at good schools did not agree with their preconception of the academic ability of the Vanuatuan students, which was perceived to be two years below Australian students. As, the Vanuatuan students at their school displayed a high standard, they realised now that their preconception of Vanuatuan students who have low academic ability was not true.

5.2.6.2 More exposure to local life
Almost two weeks into the teaching experience, the daily schedule was now more familiar; – they were, as one student put it, “... teachers in the morning and tourists in the afternoon”. As I was allowed to visit the student teachers at school and observe their teaching, I realised that the daily engagement with Vanuatuan students and teachers indeed gave the student teachers an exposure to ‘real local school’s life’. Having enough disclosure to day-to-day local school life, some student teachers seemed to recognise further the big differences. As they were trying to understand their students, supervising teachers and how the whole system work, for some of them their endeavours to adjust to local life brought some tensions.

- So many differences!!

As time went by the student teachers witnessed their Vanuatuan students were turning up late, taking long lunches ... even the teachers were taking liberal breaks! I overheard some GEP students trying to make sense of, what they saw as a very ‘laidback’ approach:

... everything is much more relaxed ... the attitude that time doesn’t really matter....in the school it is not a big deal at all.

To some students, knowing about ‘laidback culture’ was not the same as experiencing it; I could feel the sense of frustration during our conversation in the second week.

Yes there’s definitely island time for example recess at our school is 9:30 and for example, we don’t get back into class room until like 10 past 10. And yeah even though we’re ready to go back into the class room and they’ve heard the bell and everything they like to take their time. My class is also very laid back and yeah they probably only answer 1 question throughout the whole time. Like no it’s their culture, it’s their way of life. It’s the relaxing culture and country and everything is easy going. I’m a super organized
But, I am a bit disappointed because they have school from 7.30 to 3.30…and they still behind, which is sad.

This afternoon, I was sitting on small old chair - close to the door in a very modest classroom – the room was dark as the three windows are only on one side of the wall adjacent to the door, and these are covered with educational materials hung using cord – students’ drawings and posters of multiplication and lists of English vocabulary. The class seemed to be crowded as there were around 30 kids of Grade four. The Vanuatu teacher was sitting at the back since she gave her chair at the front class to the student teacher. It was at the beginning of Math lesson. I felt a bit daunted already as the class was very noisy – buzz sound; they were talking in Bislama! Some kids were wandering around in the classroom. The student teacher could not control the students. But then the supervising teacher took over the class: ‘shush….stop talking…’ [she was ordering the students to be quiet – switch English and Bislama several times]. Once the class settled, she gave the signal to the student teacher to take over the class and moved back to her chair at the back of the classroom.

This situation – the negative behaviour of Vanuatuan students – was shared by some other student teachers.

....They were talking and I couldn’t really control them, like, I said ‘be quiet’, but they didn’t listen that much

… it’s the end of the terms so they are just getting restless and they weren’t doing work at all and it’s really hard to control

Back in the motel, one of these student teachers argued that the negative behaviour I witnessed among the Vanuatuan students was caused by the absence of discipline in the classroom.

Yeah, I guess it is a culture thing about them. They just hit each other and yell at each other. While back home in Australia, a child will be punished for doing that. But here is nothing, the teacher turns a blind eye

I was sitting in other classroom doing observation when I heard the students – Grade seven – speaking in Bislama during the English lesson. And even worse, the student teacher recognised that some of them refused to do the task she had given: ‘….. I just ask them to do exercise but they are not’. For almost one hour, the Vanuatuan students appeared did not appear to write anything, which
they were supposed to do. The student teacher nervously kept reminding the class what and how to do it, while writing the instructions on the board.

Furthermore, although the student teachers had been told in Melbourne that the Vanuatuan students are shy and very quiet, none of them perceived it as an issue of concern. However, having the experience of teaching them caused them to recognise the Vanuatuan students’ learning behaviour. In this case, they were recognising how the Vanuatuan students are ‘shyness’ or ‘quietness’ as well as lack of ability to answer a question individually, which resulted in a feeling of disappointment among some student teachers.

Just like today, I was observing a student teacher teaching a Grade Ten Food Technology lesson. There were only 8 students – all female. Since the beginning of the lesson until almost one hour later, when I decided to leave for another classroom observation, I hardly heard the Vanuatuan students talking—no question, no comment. To fill the classroom, the student teacher talked all the time. But, I saw some of the Vanuatuan students were moving to borrow colour pencils—yes! they did work—on the quiet’!. The feeling of irritation emerged.

...you will have about 20 minutes to work.’ ‘...you don’t have much time left. You got about 10 minutes left.’ Have we got any one admitting that not finish but finish?

I did not hear anybody answered these questions.

Sounding a bit frustrated the student teacher said:

... Really shy. They are still very shy. I meant they’ve warmed up to me but ….the majority are still incredibly shy. Like I tried to do presentation and they were hopeless. Not one kid would actually speak

Indeed, this negative experience of Vanuatuan student learning behaviour seemed to pertain in their reflective reports, which had been written upon returning to Melbourne containing similar stories.

The major teaching challenge at Malapoa High School was getting the students ‘involved in the class’. The students were all very reticent to participate in class discussions and, when they did, their opinions were usually barely audible...

However, one student teacher argued that the silence among the Vanuatuan students was typical in Vanuatu classroom. In this context, she said the
Vanuatuan students were also quiet when taught by their own Vanuatuan teachers.

... They are comfortable with her [Vanuatu supervising teacher]. They are still quiet, very quiet. But I can tell they have a very good relationship there. She is quite fair... she emphasises the importance of schooling...

With regard to Vanuatuan students’ preference of way of learning, which some student teachers called it as ‘rote learning’ also caused stress as they appeared not to be able to accept it.

All they do is just write...whatever written on the board. It’s very shame ... they did not really get much done during the day, I don’t think.

Furthermore, negative experiences also emerged due to the relationship with Vanuatuan supervisor teachers. All student teachers had the preconception about ‘talk and chalk’ as the only pedagogy among Vanuatuan teachers. However, they seemed could not accept the reality when they observed the practice conducted by their supervising teachers.

Well, very traditional. Everything is pretty much like the teacher write on the board and the children copy but ... the teacher discussing with the kids what things mean ... they just to copy and stuff.

Well, actually I found it really boring because the teaching style. Just like, she read straight out of the text book and she says, like you know, do question one, two, three, four, five and then. That’s it. She does not help them or anything like that

While here in these class rooms she sits in the front and she sets the exercise to work. And then just leave them for about 30 minutes to do it

Furthermore, many student teachers argued that they had not had the opportunity to interact with their supervising teachers who were absence most of the time during their teaching practicum. Several times, I did my classroom observations without their presence. Other student teachers reported that in many occasions their supervising teachers would be in the classroom for about 10 minutes before left the classroom. This situation created tension amongst the student teachers since they had expected to get feedback from their supervising teachers:

... whilst here the teacher wasn’t here all the time. They really don’t have any criticism- positive or negative to give. They just so excited to have you. It doesn’t really matter what you teach and other things

... the whole [teachers and students are slow]. The teacher slows. When I am not teaching, it is really boring. I sit there and I am completely bored. I even don’t know
what the teacher does. He walked out of the class room. He gives the exercise and he leaves. And the kids just sit there and do it…

Further unpleasant relationships with their supervising teachers were found:

…she just kind of want them to be quiet…maybe she didn’t think what I was doing wasn’t really learning because they weren’t really writing down.

…I am struggling to understand my supervising teacher. She talked really quiet and with some accent…I said pardon…pardon…but I felt bad.

…my teacher gets things wrong like spelling words and stuff which kind of frustrate me. Something like: ‘You teach them wrong’…

However, a few of them was still lucky as their supervising teachers had been with them most of the time. Even one of them remarked that his supervising teacher had helped him with curriculum preparation:

My supervising teacher pretty much solved it for me [material for teaching]. He has given me where he is going. For their senior years, they do have a set curriculum what they got to study. And then Jen, he gave me the textbooks, where he has working through. Where particularly for junior years old, he said there is a guide but I will probably branch off it a bit…..

Other students also had similar experience with their supervising teachers.

…it had like suggestive activities…but she didn’t really tell me how to do them

..she would say yeah and did not really say much in comments…

…some feedback from my supervising teacher that it is better if I talk a bit slower…

…anything that I suggest she said: ‘Great’.

Many student teachers remarked on these differences, which had appeared to be ‘creating stresses’. It is no doubt that all student teachers held the preconception of Vanuatuan teachers’ talk and chalk pedagogy as they had been told about this information during the pre-departure sessions. However, some experiences of student teachers still reflected their shock of having the experience.

…I found it really boring because the teaching style….she read straight out of the text book and ….do question one, two, three…She does not help them or anything like that…”

…it’s horrible…the teacher looks bored…there’s nothing…no stimulation…no changing activity…no engagement….

…no discussions..no interaction between the teacher and students…it seems like they have been told to be quiet…they used to be being there and being silent.
However, when I dug deeper... “tell me how you’re feeling” ... they assured me that they were okay.

…. over here I just have to do what they’re doing

Nevertheless a student teacher had the experience that her supervising teacher was not happy with her teaching style:

I found my supervising teacher was a bit nervous. …today she kept telling them too be quiet, and I didn’t want them to be quiet because I want them to talk…It was not a naughty noise…so, I was kind of telling them to be quiet and sometimes to be aloud….they were just discussing.

- Cultural immersion

The weekends were always free time for the group. They spent their time exploring the inland tourist attractions including a volcano in an island in the Southern part of Vanuatu and the local village churches. Normally, after school hours during week days were supposed to be free time as well when the student teachers would just spend their time to attend their personal needs, such as shopping or going to internet cafe.

However, there were particular afternoons in the weekdays when we all spent the day together as we were attending the activities arranged by the on-site coordinator. These included visits to some cultural centres such as Nakamal - the Man House, Vanuatu Cultural Centre; watched local drama in Bislama; and a local female politician to discuss current issues in Vanuatu in particular about women in development.

This afternoon, we were walking down with the on-site coordinator to a cultural centre, which was located fifteen minutes walking from our motel. Since end of the first week actually he gave us our bulletin containing program activities for the coming week. And, for today’s activity, we were going to hear an elder from the cultural centre to talk about Vanuatu culture³.

³ So, we were there at the Nakamal house- traditional house, where the elders talked about their cultural practices and other related issues. Since its independence, ‘Kastom’- shared culture - and Christianity play important roles in building national identity. ‘Kastom’ emphasises tradition and respect for civilian leaders – the ‘Chief’ system (Prior, Mellor & Withers, 2001a). The ‘Chief System’ establishes these community values through a mechanism, which directs and manages community behaviours. Therefore, the system of Chief, from village level to the National Council of Chiefs, and the ‘Nakamal’ - the community building in each village - , represent the traditional culture of Vanuatu. The ‘Nakamal, - meaning ‘men’s house or meeting
Apparently, the speaker was an old man who spoke very softly and in a very reserved manner. Everybody seemed to find it difficult to listen, especially for people with English as a second language background like myself – it was harder. Many times the coordinator asked him politely to speak louder, but he just could not do it. A student teacher argued that the way this man talked represented Vanuatuan culture, as she found it similar to the way Vanuatuan students talk in her classroom - incredibly quiet and reserved.

Probably, but mostly it is a culture thing because they don’t like seem to like even you’ve seen that tonight the man who talked to us he was so quiet, very reserve and like it’s just a culture thing.

Indeed, the majority of student teachers recognised this behaviour - ‘quiet/shyness’ - of their Vanuatuan students. I recalled that the coordinator had told about this concern during the preparation sessions and referred it as part of Vanuatuan culture. The other student teacher supported the argument stating that the ‘silence’ in the classroom was caused by their ‘shyness’.

‘If someone make a noise they being told to be quite. It is a stigma attached to school. It is like they have to work in their silent. And I have been trying to encourage them to use their creativity and ideas and discussion and bouncing ideas for discussion...you know...and that is impossible.’

Moreover, she experienced a difficulty in communicating with her Vanuatuan students due to the cultural difference manifested in different kind of communication among Vanuatuan students.

Where as in Australia I would be able to identify it quicker because we could communicate effectively....

In regarding the content of the speech/talk by the elderly at the Nakamal house, some student teachers argued that it helped them to understand their Vanuatuan students.

... not in a major way I wouldn’t think yeah, maybe a little bit of understanding of the students a bit more.

However, he changed his opinion as he said the talk was irrelevant since the daily practice has been different.

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*ground* - is a ritual space in which to discuss and make decisions publicly, and are commonly populated by men. It is the role of the chief to process conflict resolution, based on the values of conciliation and reconciliation, which are related to social tolerance and citizenship (Prior, Mellor and Withers, 2001a).
..the context that they live in the chief’s have some degree of power over them or over
the society in general or be it that I think it seems to be waning a little bit. Yup, I
wouldn’t say it was a major issue or influence

Other comment on the speech indeed revealed a student teacher’s understanding about culture, which actually seemed to be comprehensive.

I think that the most of the activities were more about learning about the history of
Vanuatu then learning about the current culture. And I think mainly what we mainly
pick up at the schools is more of the current culture and how people currently live and
it is interesting to also see the more historical side of things

Similar comment was given by another student teacher, which reflected her understanding of culture.

I don’t think it would relate to my teaching experience. It would just help me learn a bit about Vanuatu and the culture but I think more of the culture is past culture and not culture that happens now. It’s more history it seems

However, other student teacher argued about the visit since she was not keen to go to the cultural centre.

Like I think being at school and going to town and living here I’ve learnt enough about their culture and their lifestyle but with all these extra speakers it just became a hassle for me

The excerpts revealed what the student teacher gained from their experience of visiting the cultural centre – Nakamal. It supported the argument that student learn from experience. In this regard, the visit to cultural centre could be considered as an important experience for the student teachers. Although some of them argued that they did not learn the relevant knowledge of culture, the experience of visiting Nakamal seemed to be positive as it gave an opportunity to learn about local culture.

Learning community in the motel

As the group lived together on the same motel for three weeks, since the first week of arrival I could sense the routine of living in the motel. After dinner time, I could see that most of the time the student teachers are very busy with their lesson plans. Tonight, a girl from next door who were in her second year of study come to our room in which I share with three girls who one of them was also in her second year of study and doing the same course. They seemed to have serious discussion and I saw my roommate gave a book to that girl. On the interview I asked her opinion of living in the motel which she said very
beneficial as they could share teaching resources and ideas for lesson plan. Other student teachers said similar opinion.

I discuss with other people … because this is my first year for teaching practice so if I was stuck on something I would ask one of them because they have more experience. I enjoy that everyone knows everyone and that they can all help me

Moreover, other students also mentioned that living in the same place made their life easier as they could share their new experience, feelings and predicaments of living in different country on a day-to-day level basis. It also included organising trips and other activities, such as shopping and visiting the local church.

…. me and Steve I’m environmental science and he’s agricultural science so it’s pretty similar we both been teaching like basic science and stuff so you know we get some ideas off each other and talk about lessons plans and stuff. But mainly with the other people we’ve just been hanging out and having fun …. the four secondary [student] teachers ….are all in basically completely different fields ….we can’t just really share much but while as with the primary girls they can all share stuff a lot more because they’re all doing the same thing….

….I think it’s good because that we kind of write lessons plans all at the same time…… you can organize trips and stuff and like we’re all together and we live together all the time. Like its really good support for each other or like if we need something from each other

……I was able to get from them to give to them and as far as ideas just broad things about you know discussing Australia or how to deal with students we have all got similar issues with secondary

Indeed, every day after teaching I realise one or two girls visit our room or the other way round, my roommates come to the other rooms to chit chat about their experience of teaching that day. I was just listening to their stories of new experience, feelings and predicaments of living in different country on a day-to-day level basis and sharing laugh if they had funny experiences. Sometime we end up going to shop or just make plan for the coming weekend.

But mainly with the other people we’ve just been hanging out and having fun you can organize trips and stuff and like we’re all together and we live together all the time. Like its really good support for each other or like if we need something from each other

Furthermore, the student teachers reported also that living together with the coordinator enabled them to consult about teaching plan. Indeed, the coordinator conducted a briefing after school hours on the first day of teaching. It gave chance for the student teachers to discuss their problem arisen during the first day of teaching. Few times my roommates told me that they just come back from meeting the onsite coordinator as they had some concerns about their
teaching preparations. In this context, some of the student teachers appreciated the feedback and the availability of support.

It appeared to be trivial but it was crucial to have a coordinator on the field as some students might experience problems and want to get advice or merely need somebody to listen to their stories. Thus, the coordinator’s attention on-site was really sought; in particular there were some occasions, such as students were sick and bitten by dog, when the attendance of the coordinator was really needed.

I think is very important that we have the coordinator. And because he lives here for so long so he has a lot of advices. He knows the school here. He knows most of the teachers. It is good to have somebody who organise everything here. Like sometimes I come to him asking if you have ideas about this and that and he help us

….Like (co-ordinator) is available for any question to help. Because he [could help with] …. his opinion. Because you didn’t get that back home. You are only get the opinion from your supervising teacher (in Australia). And that’s it

He’s a fair person to talk to like I had a problem last night and I would go and talk to him and I would just sit down and he was great to talk to like I didn’t want to talk to anybody else except just to him and yeah he sat down with me and we would talk

Yeah I asked him a few times. I’m pretty happy with him he’s been very welcoming and accepting and willing to help so he’s been available all the times and if we need anything pretty much more than that

Yeah he’s really good except when he’s not in his room when I want to print things uhm but I mean yeah I mean I didn’t really need that much help from him but I’ve heard from the other girls that he’s really helpful. But he was really good when he came to visit like saying stuff quietly like that was helpful and like writing good comments and constructive comments

Furthermore, the coordinator published bulletins at the end of the first and second weeks containing the plan of program activities for the following weekdays. The bulletins included some expressions of appreciation for the success of activities during the week days. It also served to remind the student teachers to be responsible for getting the evaluation report from their Vanuatu supervising teacher before leaving Vanuatu and writing a reflective report upon returning to Melbourne.

5.2.6.3 Wrap up
This week was the last week of practicum, and I saw and felt the euphoria among the student teachers. They all looked content after experiencing both the positive and negative experiences that I had been observing for two weeks. Since Monday of that week, almost all of them had been busy staying back
after school hours. They were helping to train Vanuatuan students with their preparations for the end-of-school term cultural-night performance, which was a common activity in the majority of schools.

Thus I was eager to find out what had been their school experience during the last week of the teaching practicum. In particular, what did they remember about their three-week overseas teaching practicum?

On Wednesday morning of that last week, after observing a student teacher’s lesson, the Vanuatuan supervising teacher and I were talking about when and where I was going to interview her; at the same time, she wanted to show the student teacher the building to which she should go back in the afternoon after school hours to decorate the hall for the cultural-night program. I noticed that this student teacher had a very good relationship with her supervising teacher in terms of understanding and respecting each other.

She is really good. I can understand her clearly. It is not like the other students who couldn’t understand their supervising teachers. She is really positive….she has a really forward kind of teaching…way of teaching

In another interview session, a student teacher talked to me in her “crack sound voice” as she claimed that she had just endured a very negative teaching experience during her study. She convinced me that she had been stressed out since a little Grade Two boy behaved in what she considered as an inappropriate manner. She believed that that communication breakdown was caused by cultural misunderstanding.

Another student teacher proudly told me that during those last days, her Vanuatuan students had been warmer to her. I remembered sitting in her classroom the week before and being impressed with her interactions with her students. On that day, it did not seem to me that the preconception that Vanuatuan students were shy was true.

…Yeah, they are often very shy and especially when they ask questions but now …they are all around me …following me and asking questions…I think they are not shy anymore but …I think I know them better now.

Although not all experiences were positive, the last days in Vanuatu were filled with ‘parties’, whereby some Vanuatuan students gave ‘presents’ to student teachers, such as a locally-designed dress with a motive from the area.
This section provided the ethnography case study of the Vanuatu GEP illustrating rich experiences of living and teaching of 13 student teachers in Vanuatu in 2010. Several themes emerged including the role of the on-site coordinator, preparation before departure, experiences in the first week, and experiences in the following weeks.

In particular, it shows what roles have been played by the on-site coordinator. This includes how the student teachers had been prepared and what has been compiled in terms of materials or issues given to the participants in order for them to learn from their experiences of living and teaching in different culture. Specific account has been written to understand the student teachers’ preconceptions and attitudes before departure. The first week experiences revealed how the student teachers encountered the Vanuatuan people and how they learnt to recognise and understand the various differences. The last theme provided a richer context of the GEP describing the student teachers’ adjustment and coping strategies in order to survive both in their life and in their teaching practices, the emerging learning community at the motel, and the various activities which they considered as the way to learn about Vanuatu and its people. The description in this theme covered also the various student teachers’ experiences of teaching including their observation of the behaviour of Vanuatuan students and teachers reflecting their learning of Vanuatuan culture and teaching aspects.

5.3 Summary

This chapter described the student teacher learning experiences in the GEP. The first section presented the findings of the survey of 40 student teachers’ perceptions of cultural and professional learning from participation in the GEP. It showed that majority of survey participants have positive perception that they observed both host country’s culture, and teaching aspects, such as host country’s student learning style.

The second section provided the 2010 Vanuatu GEP ethnographic case study, which described the experiences of the 13 student teachers participating in the GEP. It provided the context of the GEP encompassing the preparation before
departure and actual experiences of living and teaching in Vanuatu including visits to local cultural centres. Thus, it set the background information to contextualise the forthcoming analysis.

In general, the survey showed that most students believed that they had a very well developed understanding of culture, cultural learning and their teaching practices. These were supported with some illustration of lived experiences in the case study. However, these understandings need to be further investigated in order to demonstrate whether the survey results are also evidence in the case study results. Learning and understanding about culture and cultural teaching is a complex set of understanding and the survey and description of the case study might not have captured a range of different ways of understanding culture and cultural learning. Thus, the case study will be analysed in the forthcoming chapters through the application of some theoretical perspectives, which will enhance the understanding of student teacher learning through the GEP.
CHAPTER SIX
Culture Learning in the 2010 Vanuatu GEP

6.0 Introduction

This chapter aims to address the first part of the third research question – How is culture learning interpreted through case study findings?

As this research investigates the student teacher cultural learning through the context of internationalisation of the curriculum, the Five Culture Learning Dimensions (Paige, 2006a) forms of the analysis of culture learning (Paige & Goode, 2009, p. 334). In general, this study views culture as:

values, beliefs, attitudes, preferences, customs, learning styles, communication styles, history/ historical interpretations, achievements/ accomplishments, technology, the arts, literature, etc- the sum total of what a particular group of people has created together, shares and transmits.


Paige’s concept of the dimensions of culture learning consists of: 1) Learning about the self as a cultural being; 2) Learning about elements of culture; 3) Culture-specific learning; 4) Culture-general learning; and 5) Learning about learning (Paige, 2006a, pp. 40-41). However, in this present research, the second dimension – Learning about elements of culture (CL2) – is excluded since there is insufficient data to differentiate CL2 from CL3 in the experiences of the students.

6.1 Learning about the Self as a Cultural Being – CL1

This section will investigate how student teacher’s behaviour and values changed as a result of the GEP, and demonstrate some aspects of Learning about self as a cultural being (CL1).

According to Paige (1993), learning about the self as a cultural being is the basic element in learning a culture. It refers to the development of an awareness of one’s own culture, which affects one’s own identity, preferred patterns of behaviour, values and ways of thinking. Awareness of one’s own culture may enhance the interpretation of different cultural phenomena.
The case study shows an emerging cultural awareness in the process of the student teachers’ comparisons of their new experiences of teaching in Vanuatu with their prior experiences of teaching and learning in Melbourne. This evidence can then be considered as the student teachers’ construction of learning about the self as a cultural being.

An illustration of self as cultural being is evident from the following student’s gaining of awareness about herself from exposure to a different culture.

But it is like the culture thing. If I was their teacher I think I could develop some sort of [ways] to make them comfortable with me. At the moment three weeks is not enough to make them comfortable with me. I teach so differently…more loud…more expressive. It is different. Everything about me is so different. It will take more than three weeks to make them used to me…and I don’t know…

This student teacher shows awareness that developing the self as a cultural being means making the Vanuatuan students feel comfortable. The student teacher has an awareness of how teachers could create discomfort for others simply because they are from another culture and teaching in a way less familiar to the Vanuatuan students. This demonstrates a realisation of how the student teacher might be different from the students—“Everything about me is so different”—and that others need to get used to her way of communicating in the classroom and her ‘expressive’ practices.

In the case of another student teacher, she is able to generalise about the cultural identity of Australian children and their interactions with teachers as being very different to her experience in Vanuatu. This demonstrates how this student teacher is able to make a comparison between cultures, identifying herself as belonging to a culture different to the culture she was experiencing, with different cultural preferences. This is reflected in the following:

It is just really different to how Victorian students interact with teachers generally. Things like … they just don’t understand the same cues like Australian kids have … Victorian students have been brought up with all these cues.

A student teacher recognises that Vanuatuan students have a different attitude to the use of time.

Yes there is definitely island time, for example, recess at our school is 9.30 and for example, we don’t get back into class until like 10.10… -my class is also very laid-back … they probably only answer one question throughout the whole time … it is their way of life … I am a super-organized person and over here I just have to do what they are doing.
This quote shows that she realises the presence of cultural variation in her Vanuatuan classroom. As she says, her Vanuatuan students were ‘very laidback’; she is aware of their different attitude to time. She understands how this cultural difference operates as she remarks – ‘they probably only answer one question throughout the whole time’ and emphasises that – ‘it is their way of life’. She develops her awareness of herself as a cultural being, reflecting ‘I am a super organised person’.

Similar development of self as a cultural being through the recognition of Vanuatuan students’ attitude to the use of time is as follows.

It is a lot more laidback here compared to home…they do not have to worry… about deadline…some students did [homework] …and some students did not…I heard it is like that in tropical islands and yeah it’s okay.

This student teacher shows her different attitude to time; she generalised and compared her Vanuatuan students with Australian students observing that ‘it is a lot more laid back here compared to home’. She observed how the different culture worked, reflecting that ‘they don’t have to worry about deadlines’. As she said ‘it is like that in tropical islands’ and ‘okay’, this might suggest her understanding of and respect for Vanuatuan culture. This quote demonstrates the student teacher’s gaining of awareness of her own attitude of time illustrating her learning of herself as a cultural being.

The above quotes suggest the different ways of gaining an awareness of how we are all linked to our cultural identity, even though we may not be conscious of it. In the first and second excerpts, the development of self as a cultural being is constructed through recognitions of the differences in some aspects in communication with Vanuatuan students. The third and fourth quotations reflect this notion of self through observation of the different attitude towards time among the Vanuatuan students. These findings indicate differences in communication and the valuing of time, highlighting cultural differences and suggesting reflective learning about self and cultural ways of being in the classroom.

By comparing their own behaviour and values related to communication and time with their experience in this kind of new culture, they are recognising and
Thus, their recognition or gaining of awareness of the differences, with regard to behaviour related to communication and attitude to the use of time, could be considered as the student teachers’ learning about the *self as a cultural being*. This kind of learning might support the student teachers to be able to be more sensitive when dealing with students who come from different cultures, as they might have differences to them in their ways of communicating or valuing time, due to their different cultural backgrounds.

### 6.2 Culture-Specific Learning – CL2/CL3

With regard to the *learning about elements of culture – CL2*, Paige (2006a) asserts the importance of having a thorough understanding of culture as it enables a learner to learn a culture effectively. This involves understanding culture from an intercultural perspective, whereby culture is differentiated as ‘objective’ and ‘subjective’ culture (Bennett, Bennett, & Allen, 2003). The former refers to ‘the institutions and products of a culture group’, whilst the latter involves ‘the learned and shared patterns of beliefs, behaviours, and values of groups of interacting people’ (M. Bennett, 1998, cited in Paige & Goode, 2009, p. 337). Hence, *learning about elements of culture (CL2)* involves the ability to differentiate objective culture from subjective culture.

With respect to the third dimension – *culture-specific learning* (CL3), Paige (2006a) defines it as an understanding of the ‘target culture’, which refers to the culture of the host country; in this case it is the GEP destination country. Thus, the following analysis of *culture-specific learning* refers to learning about Vanuatuan objective and subjective culture.

In this research, the analysis of the element of culture learning (CL2) was excluded from the present study since the collected data from the case study did not indicate significant findings that could be used to differentiate the student teachers gaining of *learning about elements of culture (CL2)* from *culture-specific learning* (CL3). Therefore, the following analysis from the case study will examine how student teachers observe their interactions with
Vanuatuan students and teachers, including their students’ behaviour, and demonstrate their understanding of Vanuatuan objective and subjective culture (CL3).

How a student teacher constructs the meaning of Vanuatuan culture as a ‘way of life’ illustrates culture specific learning because it focuses on particular elements of culture.

Like our culture in Australia is about creativity, especially in Melbourne like with everything we have a comedy festival and we have always a music show coming and we have an art gallery and all that stuff is seen as really important, but over here it’s not, and it is about culture … like over here, culture is agriculture. It is farming.

Well you just learn about the way of the Vanuatuan people because they are quite different from people in Melbourne. In here people are very community-oriented.

The first quote illustrates that this student teacher considers ‘creativity’ as Australian culture, which she sees as manifested in the arts; on the other side, culture in Vanuatu, she believes, is associated with farming as ‘a way of life’.

Similarly, the second quote shows a perception of ‘community’ as a representation of Vanuatuan culture.

Vanuatuan culture is also understood as ‘tradition’:

A culture shock. …I arrived to school to find that the chief of the village’s mother had passed away. I feel grateful that the community of the village allowed me into their lives, to see how their culture works; I learnt an amazing amount of their traditions.

I could see people sitting down around outside of the room making a kind of barrier with the head couched into their laps where they are crying out loud (….later we learnt it was called ‘wailing’ and that was something common in the culture here when there is a death)

The first quote shows that this student teacher had culture shock as, unexpectedly; she had to attend a ceremony for the dead in Vanuatu. She mentions the ceremony as ‘their traditions’ and considers that attending the ceremony gave her an understanding of ‘how their culture works’. Thus, she constructs her learning of a specific Vanuatuan culture in terms of how a tradition is practiced. The second excerpt reflects a like experience of a memorial ceremony, which could be regarded as the student teacher’s construction of culture.

These are examples of specific cultural elements that were recognised by the students. As they represent ‘the institutions and products of a culture group’
that M. Bennet (1998, cited in Paige & Goode, 2009, p. 337) referred to as objective culture, these quotes could be considered as reflecting the student teachers’ perceptions of Vanuatuan objective culture.

According to J. Bennet, et al., (2003, p. 243), the elements of subjective culture include:

- *Language use (the social context of language)*
- *Nonverbal behaviour (as it generates context for language, and as stand-alone signs)*
- *Communication style (pattern of rhetoric or discourse)*
- *Cognitive style (preferred norms of logic, information-gathering, etc.)*
- *Cultural values (assignment of goodness for certain ways of being, such as individualism or collectivism)*

The following excerpts are evidence of the student teachers’ perspectives of culture that could be considered as illuminating Vanuatuan subjective culture.

Some student teachers refer to ‘friendly behaviour’ as ‘Vanuatuan culture’.

It is awesome … everyone is just so friendly. It’s a great part of their culture.

It just because you know everybody here … but yes, it is a very friendly culture.

They are very different, very friendly, very helpful … offer to help, which you wouldn’t get in Australia. I’ve been pleasantly surprised by that.

I just found that everybody is really friendly, like you just walk down the street and everyone is like ‘hello, good morning’.

These quotes show that these student teachers regard being ‘friendly’ as a feature of Vanuatuan culture, using an expression like ‘friendly culture’. As behaviour is a manifestation of a culture (Bennett, 1998, cited in Paige & Goode, 2009) the behaviour of ‘friendliness’ could be considered as a representation of Vanuatuan culture. The behaviour of friendliness could be associated with the ‘community orientation’ of the Vanuatuan people, which is considered as a manifestation of collectivistic culture that commonly exists in the Pacific islands, such as Vanuatu (Ting-Toomey & C.Chung, 2005).

‘Laidback behaviour’ is also perceived as Vanuatuan culture, as shown below:

I think the whole of Vanuatu is like that. The country runs on what they call *island time*. So everything is slow. You go to the restaurant and it’s slow. You order something and it might come in half an hour or ten minutes. You order a drink … it might take a while. It is *island time*.

Everything is much more relaxed … (there is) the attitude that time doesn’t really matter.

They are very laidback. You know that it is a very relaxed culture.
The first quote shows that this student teacher recognises Vanuatuan culture in terms of people’s use of time. She refers to it as ‘island time’ to express the unhurried behaviour of Vanuatuan people in a public place like a restaurant; thus, she constructs her perception of Vanuatuan culture as she undergoes the process of understanding how this cultural difference works.

Similarly, the second and third quotes reflect the same construction of Vanuatuan culture. The student teacher’s concept of Vanuatuan culture in the second quote is explained with the expression that ‘time doesn’t really matter’, while, in the third quote, this is expressed with the term ‘relaxed culture’. These three quotes demonstrate the student teachers’ construction of Vanuatuan culture in terms of the unhurried approach to time among Vanuatuan people.

The following are other illustrations of the student teachers’ perceptions of ‘laidback behaviour’.

- Generally teachers failed to arrive at school on time … and students were often left alone unsupervised in classrooms while their teachers talked in the staffroom.

- School culture is much more relaxed, which I love.

- I found that wasted time was an issue across the whole curriculum.

All these quotes describe ‘laidback’ or ‘relaxed culture’ or ‘island time’ as Vanuatuan culture in the school context, which is constructed differently. The student teacher in the first quote perceives that the excessive use of time exists, reflecting a lack of discipline among Vanuatuan teachers and students. The student teacher in the subsequent quote constructs her perception of Vanuatuan culture in terms of ‘relaxed behaviour’, which is manifested in the form of ‘school culture’. The last quote above shows that the student teacher considers that this unhurried approach to time occurred ‘across the whole curriculum’.

Thus, all six quotes show that the student teachers that ‘laidback culture’ was manifested in the Vanuatuan school context; this is shown in various expressions, including ‘the attitude that time does not really matter’, ‘lack of discipline’, ‘relaxed school culture’, and ‘laidback across the curriculum’. This particular aspect of culture mentioned by the student teachers can be called ‘polychronic time’ – a cultural value which exists in certain cultures, including
cultures in the Pacific islands, such as Vanuatu (Lustig & Koester, 2003, p. 215; Paige, et al., 2006, p. 65; Ting-Toomey & C.Chung, 2005, p. 61). In polychronic culture, time is considered as an unlimited resource and available whenever needed; that underlies the behaviour of people who hold the values, such as teachers, students and the overall population in Vanuatu. As laidback behaviour is a manifestation of polychronic time value, the student teachers who refer to laidback behaviour as Vanuatuan culture could be considered as understanding the meaning of Vanuatuan subjective culture.

Some student teachers view Vanuatuan students’ shy behaviour as Vanuatuan culture.

They are still very shy. I meant they have warmed up to me but … the majority are still incredibly shy … not one child who wants to speak in the presentation. So it’s very difficult. I think it is a culture thing.

And even if the students have the options it seems like they have been told to be quiet … when I try to make discussion … there is hardly any because they are used to being there and being silent.

They are very quiet, but they do, if I ask a question, will answer a question but not individually. They answer it in a group. I won’t pick somebody. They won’t give the answers.

In the first excerpt, the student teacher said ‘not one child who wants to speak in the presentation’ to illustrate the behaviour of shyness, while in the second excerpt, a student teacher referred to the difficulty of drawing responses from the students: ‘I try to make discussion … there is hardly any’ reflecting the lack of classroom discussion that expresses the behaviour of shyness. The student teacher in the last excerpt perceives that Vanuatuan students are shy, as they did not answer her question individually. She said ‘they answer it in a group’ to describe the behaviour of shyness.

These quotes show that the student teachers are able to recognise the shy behaviour easily as they found it difficult to engage the Vanuatuan students in their classrooms. These quotes reflect that the student teachers have different perceptions of shy behaviour, including the ‘inability to speak publicly’, ‘no discussion’ and ‘no individual answer’. This behaviour could be a manifestation of collectivist culture in which people are concerned a lot with ‘face saving’ (Bhawuk & Brislin, 1992), whereby in the case of children, “if you do something wrong, you feel ashamed” (Paige et al., 2006, p. 64).
Research shows that “students from collectivistic culture are not likely to ask question to their teachers” (Lustig & Koester, 2003, p. 118); this could be the reason for their shy/quiet/silent behaviour. Thus, this shy behaviour could be considered as an example of Vanuatuan subjective culture, as it is a manifestation of collectivistic value, which is a ‘Vanuatuan cultural core value’ (Ting-Toomey & C.Chung, 2005, p. 61). These quotes demonstrate the student teachers’ understanding of Vanuatuan subjective culture.

Some student teachers perceive the unruly behaviour of Vanuatuan students as Vanuatuan culture.

They speak in a very loud voice, but when it comes to me asking them a question, they get shy and won’t answer. … It was hard. It was a challenge. I guess it is a cultural think about them. They just hit each other and yell at each other. While, back home in Australia, a child will be punished for doing that. But here - nothing, the teacher just turns a blind eye.

In this quote, the student teacher elaborated unruly behaviour in the following way: Vanuatuan students ‘speak in a very loud voice’, ‘hit each other’ and yell at each other’. She considers it as part of Vanuatuan culture as it ‘stood out’ in her Vanuatuan class, which she did not find in her school placement in Melbourne.

In addition to a ‘very noisy classroom’, the student teacher depicts, in the following quote, the unruly behaviour when she says: ‘the teachers do not really enforce discipline’.

Very noisy classroom that gives you headache at the end of the day … the teachers do not really enforce discipline.

In the next quote, the student teacher views unruly behaviour as where ‘they all shouted together’ and ‘everybody talking’. It is regarded as Vanuatuan culture which is different from Australian culture, as she implies that students in Melbourne are not like that and said ‘that is a big difference’.

They all shouted together at once so it is hard to hear their answers because everybody talking … that is a big difference.

The student teacher in the following quote experiences a different kind of ‘unruly behaviour’.
The Vanuatu kids, they are bit more of ‘a free spirit’ so they would get up and wander in classroom and stuff like that, while back home, most of the kids will put up their hands and ask you if they can move’.

Unruly behaviour is described as Vanuatuan students ‘get up and wander’ in classroom. She considers it as Vanuatuan culture when she says: ‘back home, most kids will puts up their hands and ask you if they can move’. Thus, this student teacher perceives this example of unruly behaviour as Vanuatuan culture; she compares it with student behaviour in Melbourne classroom, finding it completely different.

The following excerpt shows that the student teacher considers unruly behaviour in a very negative way, using the terms ‘aggressive’ and ‘violent’ to label the unruly behaviour of Vanuatuan students.

Students seem to be very aggressive and seem to deal with their issues violently.

The student teachers describe the unruly behaviour of Vanuatuan students in various expressions, including ‘loud voice’, ‘noisy’, ‘hit each other’, ‘yell each other’, ‘shouted together’, ‘all talking’, ‘wander in the classroom’, ‘aggressive’ and ‘violent’. The various constructions of unruly behaviour are also reflected in ‘no discipline’, ‘no punishment’, ‘no students ask for teacher permission’ and ‘no kids put their hands up to communicate’.

Nevertheless, what the student teacher witnessed and labelled as ‘unruly behaviour’ in Vanuatuan classrooms was merely a picture of classroom behaviour which is different from what they had experienced in Melbourne. The cultural gap between the student teachers and Vanuatuan students results in the negative label; “cultural differences can lead to dissimilarities in interpretations and expectations about competent behaviours for students and teachers” (Lustig & Koester, 2003, p. 291). Thus the cultural gap results in “differences in expectations concerning such classroom behaviours as the rules for participation and turn-taking, discipline and control, and even pedagogical approaches, such as lectures, group learning and self-paced work” (Lustig & Koester, 2003, p. 291).

Some student teachers observe Vanuatuan students’ non-verbal behaviour as follows:
But, culturally the kids use more sort of facial and sign languages; like, they use their hand motions instead of saying what they have been thinking ... kind of thing.

This quote shows that ‘facial and sign languages’ is considered as Vanuatuan culture. This student teacher referred to ‘hand motions’ to describe the sign language. Similarly, the student teacher in this second quote perceives Vanuatuan culture analogous to ‘body language’ and ‘gesture’:

I started to pick up on their body language and small gestures that I could decode.

These quotes show that these student teachers identify aspects of subjective culture in terms of non-verbal language. They used a variety of terms to express their understanding of non-verbal language, including ‘facial and sign language’ and ‘body language’. Their ability to construct this conception of culture in terms of non-verbal language is shown through their expressions, such as ‘raising eyebrow’, ‘hand motions’ and ‘small gesture’. These quotes suggest that these student teachers construct culture in terms of ‘non-verbal behaviour’ which represents ‘an element of subjective culture’ (Bennett, et al., 2003, p. 243).

Overall, the findings from the case study reflect that the student teachers construct their learning of Vanuatuan objective and subjective culture in many forms. The student teachers construct their understanding of Vanuatuan objective culture through their recognition of the ‘way of life’ and the ‘tradition’ of Vanuatu and its people. Their learning of Vanuatuan subjective culture is shaped through their observation of ‘laidback behaviour’, ‘silent behaviour’, ‘friendly behaviour’, ‘unruly behaviour’ and ‘signs and facial languages’.

The students refer to more examples of subjective culture than of objective culture. This contradicts Cushner and Brislin (1996, cited in J. Bennett, et al., 2003), who assert that objective culture is relatively easy to identify. As this research provides opposite findings to this theory, an extensive study is required to prove this theory.

6.3 Culture-General Learning – CL4
Paige (2006a) considers the culture-general learning as broad intercultural experiences ‘that are common to all who visit another culture’; hence the knowledge and skills gained through this learning are ‘generalisable in nature’ and ‘transferable across cultures’. This research focuses on the adjustment, culture shock and adaptation of the student teachers (Paige & Goode, 2009, p. 337), since the GEP is only a short program.

The following discussion from the case study reflects the student teachers’ perception of their experience which could be regarded as their understanding of culture-general knowledge and development of culture-general skills and could be considered as demonstrating the student teachers’ construction of Culture-general learning – CL4.

My kids are grade 6. It is apparently a slow class, so I am doing things like I am teaching grade 2 in Australia … so it’s a bit different … No [worry about this situation]. That’s what they are. I am not worried about it at all…we are here only for three weeks. If it was my class, I would be stressing out because so much to do … but it is not my job.

The student teacher in this quote is able to gain cultural knowledge about how Vanuatuan culture works. It shows that this student teacher considered ‘laidback’ behaviour as Vanuatuan culture. Her understanding of how the culture works is described as “my kids are grade 6…so… like I am teaching grade 2 in Australia” reflecting how much time was spent throughout the day for teaching grade 6. This quote shows also her ability to recognise the ‘potential stress’ during the teaching round, as she says: “If it was my class I would be stressing out because so much to do”. It depicts also the identified coping strategies in order to suppress the potential stress through rationalising her thought. As she says: “that’s what they are … we are here only for three weeks … it is not my job”. Hence, this quote demonstrates how she develops a coping strategy to prevent the stress emerging, through building some rationalisation that reflects her understanding of the impact of culture on their interaction.

A similar story of a student teacher’s stress over laidback behaviour is presented here:

What I have noticed here - they do everything so slowly. They have no need to rush in, they don’t need to do it quickly. Everything seems to be so relaxed, well no pressure to get it done quicker. No [problem with that]. Well, it is different. The
school work is a little bit frustrating. I have done lessons plans. They just take so long to do. I allocate 20 minutes to do them; you know they took 2 hours to do it. It is frustrating, but I think its fine. I think teaching is a challenge in Vanuatu. And it is only my second teaching round so, yeah frustrating because it is slow. It is frustrating but I think it is fine. It’s what they do. I can’t handle it.

This student teacher recognises that laidback behaviour is a common phenomenon in Vanuatu, including in the school context. She understands the impact of culture on her teaching when she says: “I think teaching is a challenge in Vanuatu”. It leads to her realisation of her stress, saying that “The school work is a little bit frustrating”, but, then she is able to develop her thought to counter her frustration, which is reflected in: “It is frustrating but I think it is fine. It’s what they do. I can’t handle it”.

Another student teacher raises concerns about the shy behaviour of Vanuatuan students:

They are still very shy. I meant they have warmed up to me but … the majority are still incredibly shy … not one child who wants to speak in the presentation. So it’s very difficult … I think it is a culture thing … well I have a very … incredibly stressful…Yeah. It must be … [their culture]. Nothing else.

In this quote, the student teacher not only recognises the shy behaviour among Vanuatuan students but also understands its impact on her teaching round, as she says: “They are still very shy … not one child who wants to speak in the presentation”. She expressed her stress, saying that “it’s very difficult … incredibly stressful”. Her acceptance of shy behaviour as Vanuatuan culture, which is reflected in “I think it is a culture thing”, represents her coping strategy.

Other student teachers are only able to recognise ‘stress’:

That lesson was very upsetting because I … knew it was going to be challenging to get them to stand up and talk about it. It didn’t work because I stood up and they sat there for ages and … didn’t do anything I wanted them to do, so that was upsetting.

In the short term … [fine] but if I was here … long term … it would drive me insane … I’m probably looking forward to more structure in my life.

In the first quote, the student teacher recognises shy behaviour as the cultural difference. Her understanding of the impact of shy behaviour on her teaching directs her to recognise her stress, as she says: “That lesson was very upsetting”. Similarly, the student teacher in the next quote is able to identify her ‘potential stress’ which she argued “would drive me insane” if she had to
stay longer than the teaching round period. This suggests that during the 3-week teaching period, she is able to manage herself for not feeling stress. Her perception that she is in Vanuatu for only three weeks represents her ‘temporary coping strategy’.

These quotes demonstrate how some student teachers are able to gain culture-general knowledge much more readily, compared to the other student teachers. The first three quotes suggest that the student teachers are able to understand the impact of the cultural difference on their teaching that leads to their realisation of the stress. Some student teachers display their abilities to develop cognitive coping strategies, including perceiving the phenomena of difference as a cultural phenomenon, encouraging them to think about their experiences: “I can’t handle it … it’s not my job … it’s how they are”. Thus, these expressions represent their construction of coping strategies in order to continue their teaching round. The last two quotes did not provide any indication of coping strategies developed from the negative experience in Vanuatu.

The following quote reflects a student teacher’s perception of the necessity of interacting with different culture.

I think you need to be sensitive to other people’s culture and backgrounds and respect their cultures and you make an effort to let them know that you understand where they’re coming from and you make them feel welcomed. You are getting to see where people are coming from and what they value and make sure that you let them know that you value their culture.

This quote shows that this student teacher displays some aspects of culture-general skills. The ability to respect illuminates in “be sensitive to other people’s culture and backgrounds, and respect their cultures”. This quote also illustrates her tendency towards empathy, tolerance and control of emotions through her comments: “to let them know that you understand where they’re coming from and you make them feel welcomed”. This quote suggests that this student teacher has an understanding of culture-general skills, although it did not demonstrate her development of the skills.

Another student teacher illustrates her adjustment in her teaching:
I am used to Melbourne and the kids are shy too in Melbourne but it’s just different like … whenever I walked up to the kids they just stopped working.. So I don’t want that to happen so I don’t usually go up to them to watch their work.

This student teacher is aware of her Vanuatuan students’ shy behaviour, which was gained as she compared Vanuatuan students with Australian students in Melbourne. This comparison encourages her to recognise the shy behaviour from a cultural perspective, which promoted her to display the ability to have empathy to or tolerate a different culture. It is illuminated in her behaviour when she says: “I don’t usually go up to them”.

Another student teacher shows her ability to adjust:

They are very quiet, but they do, if I ask a question, will answer questions but not individually. They answer it in a group. I won’t pick somebody. They won’t give the answers.

In this quote, the student teacher understands how shy behaviour impacts on her teaching, which is reflected in: “They answer it in a group”. Her skill to adjust is illuminated in: “I won’t pick somebody”, reflecting her ability to tolerate or empathize with the shy behaviour.

This discussion shows that, in the context of the international teaching experience, the student teachers are able to learn some important aspects of culture-general learning. Gaining this element of culture learning suggests that the student teachers might be able to adjust easily to live in a different culture, as their responses depict some indications of culture-general knowledge and skills. These include developing rationalisation in order to accept the cultural difference, such as: “that’s what they are … we are here only for three weeks … it is not my job”; “It’s what they do. I can’t handle it”; and “I think it is a culture thing”. Their general-culture skills are illustrated as: “I don’t usually go up to them”, and “I won’t pick somebody”.

These findings from the case study support the survey findings that the student teachers did gain learning of culture from their short teaching experience in a different country, not only about cultural knowledge, but also about cultural skills.
6.4 Learning about Learning – CL5

Paige and Goode (2009, p. 337) argue that “knowing about how to learn and using specific strategies” leads to intercultural competence. Aspects of this learning include the strategies to learn culture, such as the use of media, interactions in local culture, and the reflections of one’s own cultural experiences.

The following discussion describes the student teachers’ activities in Vanuatu, illustrating their perspective of learning from the activities.

Some student teachers present their perceptions of visiting cultural centres in Vanuatu, including the Vanuatuan Cultural Centre, Nakamal and the Vanuatu Chief’s House as follows.

I think they contribute differently …were more about learning about the history of Vanuatu than learning about the current culture.

Not in a major way, I wouldn’t think, maybe a little bit of understanding of the students.

In these quotes, the student teachers perceive that they learnt about Vanuatuan culture from their visits. The student teacher in the first quote said that “they contribute differently” whereby ‘they’ referred to ‘his visits’ to those cultural places. It shows that he recognised that he had learnt through the visits; this demonstrates his recognition of learning through visits to cultural centres.

Another student teacher reveals that she learnt from the visits to cultural places, revealing her awareness of gaining learning from the visits. It displays her construction of a concept of learning Vanuatuan culture through visiting cultural centres, as she admits ‘a little bit of understanding of the students’.

Student teachers visit churches in Vanuatu for some reasons:

- It is good to see the culture and see other people’s perspective on it (motivation of going to church).
- I want to get experience about the people. They are passionate.
- It is just to get the experience. It was amazing, never experienced something like that in my life.
In the first quote, the student teacher perceives that her visit to church allowed her to learn about Vanuatuan culture. She is aware that visiting church could be considered as a means of learning about Vanuatuan culture. Similarly, the second and third quotes reflect the student teachers’ awareness of gaining experience from attending church. All these quotes reflect that the student teachers construct their learning of Vanuatuan people.

Another student teacher’s different mode to learn Vanuatuan culture is identified as follows:

"Probably but mostly it is a culture thing … even you’ve seen that tonight the man who talked to us, he was so quiet, very reserved and like, it’s just a culture thing."

This quote shows that this student teacher attempted to conclude her observation after listening to a man at the Vanuatuan Chief’s House. This student teacher referred to ‘he was so quiet, very reserved’ as a representation of the cultural behaviour of Vanuatuan people. The recognition of Vanuatuan culture through direct observation takes place, as she was able to observe the man at the Vanuatuan Chief’s House; this might suggest her construction of learning of Vanuatuan culture through observation.

Immersion or living in Vanuatu is considered as a means to learning a culture:

"I think being at school and going to town and living here, I’ve learnt enough about their culture and their lifestyle."

This student teacher perceives that she learnt while living and teaching in Vanuatu. Her awareness of the opportunity to learn through living in Vanuatu could be considered as her construction of recognising a mode by which to learn Vanuatuan culture.

The following quote shows that a student teacher considers that he learnt from his discussion with his Vanuatuan supervising teacher.

"He would just state the obvious yes, they are very shy … it is the way they have been taught … you write it on the board and they quietly write it down."

This student teacher perceives that discussion with Vanuatuan people enables him to gain cultural knowledge. This quote might suggest that this student
teacher constructs his learning of learning through his recognition of learning through direct interaction with his Vanuatuan supervising teacher.

This discussion reveals that some student teachers were actually alerted that there were varieties of opportunities to learn Vanuatuan culture from participating in the GEP. However, the quotes suggest that they might not be aware about the occurrence of learning. The case study findings reveal that there are varieties of modes to learn about Vanuatuan culture; this is parallel with the survey finding.

The following table provides a summary of culture learning from the case study findings.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Culture Learning in the case study</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Learning about the self as a cultural being – CL1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Awareness of own personal character; own attitude to the use of time; and Vanuatuan students’ non-verbal language.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Culture-specific learning – CL3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Vanuatuan objective culture:</td>
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<tr>
<td>• tradition;</td>
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<tr>
<td>• a way of life.</td>
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<tr>
<td>The Vanuatuan subjective culture:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• laidback behaviour;</td>
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<tr>
<td>• shy/ silent behaviour;</td>
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<tr>
<td>• friendly behaviour;</td>
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<tr>
<td>• unruly behaviour;</td>
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<tr>
<td>• facial and sign behaviour.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Culture-general Learning – CL4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Developing rationalisation as a coping strategy;</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Displaying skills to tolerate, respect and empathy.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning about learning – CL5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Visits to cultural centres and local churches;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Observation;</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Immersion;</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Discussions with Vanuatuan supervising teachers about Vanuatuan student behaviour.</td>
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Table 6.1 Summary of the student teachers’ culture learning in the 2010 Vanuatu GEP

The table shows that the student teachers gained not only cultural knowledge of Vanuatu but also an awareness of their own cultural practices; they developed
skills to adjust in a different culture; and display various strategies of learning Vanuatuan culture.

In particular, with regard to CL1, the case study revealed that the student teachers gained awareness about their own attitude to the use of time and ways of communication. Perhaps, a greater clarification and theory around culture is needed in order to identify how it could be identified and defined. In fact, understanding the term ‘culture’ according to Paige (2006a; Paige, et al., 2003) includes patterns of behaviour, values and ways of thinking are parts of culture.

The case study shows that student teachers were able to learn about five differences of subjective culture compared to two of objective culture. These findings are the opposite of a perspective which sees that objective culture is relatively easy to identify (Cushner & Brislin, 1996, cited in Bennett, et al., 2003). This suggests that the student teachers had a lack of theoretical perspective of differences between objective and subjective culture. However, more extensive study needs to be undertaken to investigate student’s observation of cultural differences.

6.5 Summary

With regard to what they learnt from the GEP, the findings from the case study and survey provides a complete picture of student teachers’ culture learning.

The case study showed that the student teachers’ experiences could be considered more as subjective culture than objective culture suggesting their abilities to recognise subjective culture more than objective culture. This was different to the perspective that objective culture is easier to recognise than subjective culture (Cushner & Brislin, 1996, cited in Bennett et al., 2003). The ethnographic study in Chapter Five illustrating that the Vanuatuan culture was very different to Australian culture might explain this finding.

This chapter discussed the analysis of the culture learning of student teachers in terms of what they learnt from the GEP. The next chapter will investigate the cultural learning in terms of changes in the student teachers’ world view and cultural competence they developed this through their participation in the GEP.
CHAPTER SEVEN
Interpreting the Development of Intercultural Sensitivity and Competence in the 2010 Vanuatu GEP

7.0 Introduction

This chapter aims to address the second part of the third research question – How are intercultural sensitivity and competence interpreted through the findings in the case study? As this research is investigated within the context of the internationalisation of the curriculum, the analyses of intercultural sensitivity were based on the Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity (DMIS) (Bennett, 1993), while intercultural competence was analysed using Deardorff’s (2008) model of Intercultural Competence (Paige & Goode, 2009, p. 334).

This chapter comprises two sections. The first section provides an interpretation of the emerging intercultural sensitivity among student teachers. This is followed by an analysis of the possible development of intercultural competence of student teachers through their participation in the 2010 Vanuatu GEP.

7.1 Analysis of Intercultural Sensitivity Development

The previous chapter illustrated the culture learning of student teachers in the GEP. This section examines the quality of their learning, and how they review their decision about cultural difference. Thus, Bennett’s Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity (DMIS) was applied to interpret the thirteen student teachers’ intercultural lived experience in the 2010 Vanuatu GEP.

The DMIS was applied as it assumed that the development of intercultural sensitivity increases with the movement of attainments from cognitive to affective/behavioural dimensions involving ‘a learner’s subjective experience of cultural differences’ (Bennett, 1993). In this case, having knowledge of cultural difference may lead an individual to develop affective and behavioural
skills influenced by “the manner in which a person construes, evaluates, and responds to difference” (Bennett, 1998, cited in Smith, Paige, & Steglitz, 2003, p. 94).

The examination of the quality of the student teachers’ learning emphasises their ‘cognitive patterns and socio-emotional reactions’ (Hook, 2000, p. 68), and focuses only on how student teachers ‘construe and re-construe’ their experiences of cultural differences, including laidback, shy, unruly and friendly behaviour (M. Bennett, 1993).

The analysis of student teachers’ intercultural sensitivity development is conducted by mapping the student teachers’ interpretations of and reactions to cultural differences onto the stages within the DMIS: ethnocentric stages (Denial; Defence; Minimisation); and ethno-relativistic stages (Acceptance; Adaptation; and Integration).

7.1.1 Denial

This is the first stage in the DMIS, wherein people’s lack of knowledge of difference results in the behaviour based on their own world views. People often deny cultural difference as they are not able to recognise the evidence of cultural difference when they encounter a different culture (Bennett, 1993).

This sub-section discusses an analysis how a student teacher could be considered as in Denial stage as she disagreed to perceive shy and laidback behaviour as cultural phenomena.

A student teacher denied shy behaviour as a cultural phenomenon:

I think the whole ‘culture thing’; it has been used as an excuse and barrier to have behind we are not doing this or achieve this. I just think now that if you taught the kids to do it and it is just something that you become comfortable with it and I don’t believe if it is a culture thing. I mean they can get up and I just believe it is not a culture. It is only something that you comfortable to use it.

She argued that viewing shyness as a cultural phenomenon was “an excuse and a barrier to have behind”. This quote shows her argument that ‘it is not a culture’ if she could not engage Vanuatuan students in her classroom discussion, but merely because the Vanuatuan students were not taught to do it.
In the following quote, this student teacher said “they have not been brought up to speak up”. It reflects that this student teacher might consider the ‘shy behaviour’ among Vanuatuan students as “a deficiency in intelligence or personality of the other” (Cushner, 2004, p. 54).

They just never talk. They have not been brought up like Australian has been brought up like we have to speak up. We have to talk in the front of people. So give presentation they just never do it. And then it will be difficult. They never discuss. Sometimes the last particular question but there was never any bounce back idea. Nothing.

The quote shows this student teacher’s objection of shyness as a cultural phenomenon although she acknowledges that Vanuatuan students had never spoken up. In this case, her ‘inability to see’ the Vanuatuan students’ silent behaviour from cultural perspective seems to concur with M. Bennett’s (1993, p. 30):

People simply does not consider the existence of cultural difference, even in the face of seemingly obvious differences in human behaviour associated with world affairs or domestic multicultural issues, a person at this stage of development believes that cultural diversity occurs elsewhere.

Given the context, this student teacher could be considered to be in Denial stage.

There are other quotes showing similar student teacher’s perspective of denying or doubting shy behaviour as a cultural phenomenon.

The students were all very reticent to participate in class discussions and when they did their opinions were usually barely audible. This is probably largely due to what they are accustomed to.

This quote shows that this student teacher considers ‘silence or reticence among Vanuatuian students’ as merely a result of ‘what they are accustomed to’, and nothing to do with culture. Thus, this quote implies that this student teacher perceives shy behaviour is caused by a personal, rather than a cultural factor (Bennett, 1993).

Some student teachers regard shyness as merely a feature of personal character rather than a cultural phenomenon.

The students generally did seem to gradually become more interested and involved in my lessons over time. Some of educational game activities they did seem to enjoy after an initial reluctance to engage.
They are often very shy. But now the kids today they were all around me. I think they are not shy anymore but I think like they know me better now.

In the first quote, the student teacher perceived that as a personal character (Bennett, 1993), Vanuatuans’ behaviour would change over time as he said “the students generally did seem to gradually become more interested and involved in my lessons over time”. The second quote reflects similar perception of another student teacher that Vanuatuans’ behaviour of shyness corresponds to personal character (Bennett, 1993). These quotes indicate the student teachers’ inability to identify shy behaviour as a cultural phenomenon.

However, perceiving shy behaviour as ‘student’s character’ is debatable. In Vanuatuan context, ‘shy behaviour’ seems to be much more about culture-cultural phenomenon than personal character, as “culture refers to what a group of people have in common with each other and how they are different from other groups” (Paige, et al., 2006, p. 52).

Unlike this student who displays cultural denial, most student teachers accept differences as cultural differences. The following quotes show some student teachers’ perspectives of shy behaviour, in which they make generalisation of shy behaviour reflecting a perception of shy behaviour as cultural phenomenon.

I found that students in Vanuatu were much quieter and less willing to participate in group discussions and presentations than students in Australia.

Within the classroom, they [Vanuatu students] are shyer than Australian kids.

Ni Vanuatu kids are very shy.

I am used to Melbourne and the kids are shy too in Melbourne but it’s just different.

Most student teachers perceive that shy behaviour is commonly found among Vanuatuans, which is mentioned through various expressions such as ‘students in Vanuatu were much quieter’, ‘Vanuatu students are shyer’, and ‘Ni Vanuatu kids are very shy’. As shy behaviour is generalised as Vanuatuans’ behaviour, the behaviour of shyness/silence/reticence could be classified as a cultural phenomenon rather than personal or universal dimension of human behaviour. Overall, the student teachers who hold various
perspectives about shy behaviour such as ‘effect of Vanuatuan teaching practice’ and ‘student’s character’ could be considered as in Denial stage of the DMIS.

The following part discusses an analysis of student teachers’ sensitivity toward ‘laidback culture’. The quotes from the student teachers’ reflective reports, which were submitted in Melbourne, illustrate some observation of laidback behaviour.

School starts at different time…teachers arrive late without warning from the principal.

Punctuality; classes rarely started at 8 when they were meant to due to lack of organisation regarding the bell.

The quotes show that the student teachers deny laidback behaviour as a cultural phenomenon. Although had been perceived as a cultural phenomenon in the first and second interviews in Vanuatu, the student teachers did not mentioned laidback behaviour as a cultural phenomenon in their reflective report. The quotes show that the student teachers considered laidback behaviour as a reflection of incapability of the schools to govern and discipline teachers. Other student teachers perceived laidback behaviour as merely ‘the weaknesses of the school’s organization’. In these quotes laidback behaviour was not viewed from the context of ‘cultural experience’ but ‘professional experience’, whereby it might be considered as ‘an example of moral defect’ or ‘personal reason’ (Bennett, 1995, p. 25; Paige, et al., 2006, p. 108). Although this analysis suggests that these student teachers could be posited in Denial stage, their non-judgmental responses toward the other cultural differences in the other stages of DMIS advises to not consider them as in Denial stage.

Therefore in this analysis, there is only a student teacher who could be considered as in Denial stage. As shown in the initial analysis of Denial stage, this student teacher asserts that silence among Vanuatuan students is mostly caused by the way they have been taught in the past. In her reflective report, this student teacher argues similarly that lack of punctuality and low attendance among teachers and students as a matter of ‘weaknesses of the organisation of the school’. As she denies both silence and laidback as cultural phenomena, this student teacher is considered as in the stage of Denial.
7.1.2 Defence

In the second stage - *Defence* stage, people start to recognise different culture. At this stage, the evaluation of cultural difference can be positive or negative, which is perceived as threatening in comparison to own norm-referenced groups. Here, people may respond in three different ways: *denigrate* another culture; become *superior*; or *uplift* the local culture (Bennett, 1993).

The following are some quotes showing some student teachers’ negative and positive reactions toward cultural differences, including laidback and friendly behaviour in the first interview in Vanuatu.

A student teacher’s negative evaluation toward ‘laidback behaviour’ of Vanuatuan students and teachers is as follows:

> I meant that …it is an inferior school system.

In this quote, this student teacher appears to show ‘superiority’ as he considered Vanuatuan school system influenced by laidback behaviour as being ‘inferior’ (Bennett, 1993).

The second and third quotes below show student teachers’ reaction toward ‘friendliness’ of Vanuatuan people.

> I just found everybody really friendly like you just walk down the street and everyone like hello. It’s kind of a bit of a shame about people in Australia, like why don’t we say hi to everyone? I find it is really nice.

> I find they are really friendly…every person will basically say hello and in Australia nobody says hello and I find that very insulting that we could not say hello to each other…they are really friendly.

These student teachers appear to uplift Vanuatuan culture saying that “it is really nice” and denigrate their own culture referred that “a bit of a shame about people in Australia” and “very insulting that we could not say hello to each other” (Bennett, 1993).

Those quotes show that based on the first interview in Vanuatu, the student teacher in the first quote could be considered as in *Defence* stage as he evaluates laidback behaviour negatively. The student teachers in the second and third quotes could be considered as in *Defence* stage as they *uplift* friendliness and *devalue* Australian people.
7.1.3 Minimisation

The third stage—Minimisation—is for people who minimise cultural difference and continue operating under their own cultural paradigm, assuming that other people share the same values. For these people: cultural similarities—human similarity—are more important than cultural difference; and they focus on the commonality of all groups and on what is generally good in all cultures; thus, they deny difference. In this case, the similarity of people and the commonality of basic values are viewed in ethnocentric terms (Cushner, 2004, p. 56). Moreover, there is a tendency that these people recognise and accept culture in terms of ‘objective culture’ such as food (Cushner, 2004).

The following are some quotes from the second interview and reflective report, which illuminate attempts to ignore shy and unruly behaviours as cultural differences and to be more concerned with student’s similarity.

I feel they were just like any other children in any other culture…any child can be shy but, I don’t know…they are great children… I didn’t have a problem with that [shyness/silence].

Kids are kids, no matter where in the world you go and at times I found the students very overwhelming and noisy but I thoroughly enjoyed my experience teaching them.

These quotes imply that these student teachers tend to emphasis the similarity of Vanuatuan students to other students around the world, by saying that ‘any other children in any other culture…any child can be shy’, and ‘no matter where in the world you go and at times I found the students very overwhelming and noisy’. Thus, these quotes show an emphasis on the similarity of behaviour reflecting “human similarity seems more profound than cultural difference” (Bennett, 1993, p. 41), and imply an assumption that people share the same values. To minimise the difference in order to continue with their teaching practicum, they all said ‘I didn’t have a problem’ and ‘I thoroughly enjoyed my experience teaching them’ even though they faced many negative experiences stemming from these cultural differences in the GEP.

Thus, in this analysis, these two student teachers could be considered as in Minimisation stage.
7.1.4 Acceptance

In the fourth stage, **Acceptance** - people show a critical change due to recognition of other behaviours and values; and begin to respect and accept the different culture. In this case, they recognize and appreciate other different culture as they understand about the culture and develop interest about it. Thus, they have positive attitudes and curiosity toward different culture (Paige et al., 2006). Respect for other culture starts with respect for cultural differences in behaviour before respect for differences in values. In this case, M. Bennet (1993, p. 49) explains that recognition and non-evaluative respect for variation in behaviour and communication style is the first stage in a move away from Ethnocentrism.

A student teacher reacts toward various cultural differences as below, which suggest her to be considered as in **Acceptance stage**.

> Completely different here I supposed. And, the school culture is much more relaxed which I love.

This quote shows that this student teacher recognised or acknowledged laidback behaviour. She also accepted and enjoyed it saying that “the school culture is much more relaxed which I love”, which was in line with “cultural difference is acknowledged, accepted and enjoyed” (Bennett, 1993, p. 47).

The following quote shows student teacher’s recognition and understanding of laidback behaviour referring that “it’s slower in doing everything” and “it’s like that in tropical islands”. It reflects also positive attitude toward laidback behaviour as she said ‘it’s okay’, which constitutes non-evaluative respect for laidback behaviour (Bennett, 1993).

> It’s relaxed so like it’s slower in doing everything and they don’t have to worry as much about deadlines and stuff…it’s difference but I heard it’s like that in tropical island and it’s okay.

The student teacher reacts similarly reflecting positive attitude toward friendly behaviour as she said “It is awesome everyone just so friendly” (Paige et al., 2006). It shows non-evaluative respect toward friendly behaviour.

> I love how everyone is so friendly. It is awesome everyone just so friendly. It is a great part of their culture.
The following discusses that a student teacher changes his perspective from denigrating laidback behaviour in the first interview to understanding and accepting the laidback behaviour as cultural phenomenon.

Laidback is reflected in everything they do; like you need to do assignment in 3 days is kind of a hard concept. We can do thing whenever we want to. It does not matter. You just get through a whole lot less content here so school just goes a whole lot slower because like the concept of time has only been here since Missionary settlements. So it is very new concept for the Vanuatuan people.

The quote shows that he understood laidback behaviour as he said “the concept of time has only been here since Missionary settlements. So it is very new concept for the Vanuatuan people”. This reflects what Paige et al (2006, p. 58) explain as “they may not necessarily agree with all they see practised within another culture, they can at least, understand the reasons behind what they witness”.

Moreover, his acceptance of laidback culture is reflected as he said ‘It does not matter. You just get through a whole lot less content here so school just goes a whole lot slower’ illuminating “the existence of difference is accepted as a necessary and preferable human condition” (Bennett, 1993, pp. 47-48).

Another student teacher displays similar perspective of laidback behaviour.

However, sometimes the very laidback culture of Ni-Vanuatu shines through and the concept of quality education sometimes fall by the wayside. A problem that I observed of my local colleagues was punctuality to morning classes in particular but all classes in general.

In this quote, this student teacher gave “non-evaluative” reaction toward laidback behaviour (Bennett, 1993, p. 49). It shows that he acknowledged laidback behaviour as a cultural phenomenon as he referred explicitly laidback culture rather than laidback behaviour. He understands how the culture works as he mentioned about lack of punctuality in all classes, but he did not give negative evaluation as before in the first week. Thus, these quotes suggest that this student teacher should not be considered in Defence (Denigration) stage but in the Acceptance stage.

The following quote shows an emerging respect attitude through the development of interest in some cultural differences.

I am interested in the attitude that time doesn’t really matter.
This student teacher had interest in laidback behaviour suggesting that she had ‘curiosity toward different culture’ (Paige et al., 2006).

The respect attitude of a student teacher emerges through similar construction of sensitivity development toward unruly behaviour of Vanuatuan students.

I am excited because I get to know the kids. Hopefully they will listen to me by the end. I like the country and learn about it.

They just interest me because I know nothing about their culture.

I think it has something to do with the teachers using the stick and that she thinks it is the only way to control their behaviour. It is a bit annoying like I want to know why if that’s the only way and they are so young.

These three quotes from the first and second interviews of the same student teacher show that this student teacher has a strong interest in Vanuatuan culture. It displays her curiosity as she said that ‘I am excited’ in the first quote, ‘They just interest me’ in the second quote, and ‘I want to know why’ in the third quote. This student teacher seems to demonstrate Paige’s (2006a) description of people in Acceptance stage.

The above quotes indicate that the student teacher had been interested in Vanuatuan students since in the first interview, even though she had endured negative experiences appearing in the following quote.

They are still like I had some really bad days. It’s end of terms so they are just getting restless and they were not doing work at all and it is really hard to control.

It shows that she had negative experience as she said ‘I had some really bad days’ but she did not give negative evaluation and seemed trying to understand the situation as she said that ‘It’s end of the terms so they are just getting restless’ (Bennett, 1993).

These quotes suggest that this student teacher could be considered as in Acceptance stage because her reactions toward unruly behaviour illuminate her interest in Vanuatuan students and culture since the beginning. Experiencing of unruly behaviour of Vanuatuan students did not provoke her to make negative reactions instead she displayed a developing interest in why the Vanuatuan teachers used stick to control student behaviour.
It is shown that the emerging respect attitude took place through several ways, including having ability to hold judgment, acknowledge and develop curiosity. These could qualify these student teachers to be in the stage of *Acceptance*.

### 7.1.5 Adaptation

In the fifth stage—*Adaptation*—people are able to adjust their behaviour and think from the perspective of the other; this is known as empathy. In particular, they become flexible and able to integrate the relevant part of the other culture into their world view or perspective, which is referred as ‘transforming cognitively’ (Paige and Goode, 2009). In this stage, they may also be able to adapt their behaviour to fit into the new cultural context.

The following quotes show some responses from a student teacher revealing her positive evaluation of shy behaviour as the cultural difference.

> When I asked them some questions about the work they are doing, they are a bit shy and they sort of hide their heads. So I think just building their confidence. I will keep going along that sort of line and see how we go.

> The children were very shy and it was a challenge to get them to speak out in class. I encouraged kids to speak out by praising them for their efforts and work (both written and oral) and this helps them to gain enough confidence to join in discussions and speak out in class.

In the first quote, this student teacher recognises the shy behaviour. As she respects the cultural difference, she tries to solve the problem, which was reflected in “I think just building their confidence”. Saying that “I will keep going along that sort of line and see how we go” reflects her attempt of developing “skills for relating to and communicating with people from different culture” (Bennett, 1993, p. 51).

The second quote shows her attempts to encourage Vanuatu's students to engage in her teaching by giving praises: “…Student definitely thrived on praise – they especially loved to receive little drawing from me in their books and also stickers”. As these quotes demonstrate that this student teacher does not only respect but also develop ‘skills for relating to and communicating with people from different culture”, it suggests she should be considered as in the *Adaptation* stage rather than in the *Acceptance* stage.
This student teacher’s observation of her Vanuatuan students’ English competence suggest further consideration of positioning this student teacher in *Adaptation stage*.

I think the experience has helped me to understand the struggles and needs of those students. The students don’t speak English as their first language, so I had to be very clear and also patient.

In this quote, this student teacher recognises the language barrier of Vanuatuan students. It developed her ‘empathy’ as she said that “the experience has helped me to understand the struggles and needs of those students”. This encourages her to develop skills in teaching students whose English is not their first language reflecting in “so I had to be very clear and also patient”.

The same student teacher gives response reflecting her ability to empathise with Vanuatuan students.

> You need to respect about other people value and opinion and cultures, and be considerate of them so that you are sensitive to their needs and what they believe in as well, so that you can cater for them. If I know that one of my kids in the classroom come from particular culture I can incorporate books and resources from their culture in their normal classroom so it will not always western things.

In this quote, this student teacher shows her ability to adjust her teaching in order to accommodate her Vanuatuan student’s cultural needs, which could be considered as an indication of the development of empathy. As C. Bennet (1995) asserts, the *Adaptation stage* emphasises the development of empathy which involves respect for the cultural difference and the ability to imagine oneself in the other world view, this student teacher could be considered as in the *stage of Adaptation* of DMIS.

Overall, these quotes represent her adaptation to her Vanuatuan students’ cultural background through developing skills and empathy to enhance communication with Vanuatuan students, including ‘giving praising’; ‘be very clear and patient’; and ‘using various cultural material for teaching’. The above quotes reveal that this student teacher indeed has the ability to approach various Vanuatuan student cultural differences, which is the main indicator of people in the *stage of Adaptation*. 
7.1.6 Integration

Regarding the last stage of the DMIS- Integration - people at this level are in the process of integrating as they develop the ability to have multiple frames of reference and can identify and move freely among multiple groups of cultures. C. Bennet (1995, p. 60) described the Integration stage as “the attempt to integrate disparate aspects of one’s identity into a new whole, while remaining culturally marginal”. Moreover, people in this stage are always mindful in their interactions with different cultures.

The following quote shows a student teacher response, which might reflect his ability to shift his world view in order to view things from Vanuatuan students’ cultural perspectives.

I’m not sure about completely mimicking western style education. First, I’m not sure it suits their culture and dispositions. Secondly, it would be a shame if they lost some of the good aspects of their schools; the students are generally very courteous, polite and humble.

It shows that this student teacher was able to make a judgment based on a ‘contextual evaluation’ as he said “I’m not sure about completely mimicking western style education” reflecting his disagreement for Vanuatu education system to adopt western style. This contextual consideration “allow for ethical choice and action in the profoundly relativistic world implied by an ethnorelative identity” (Bennett, 1993, p. 60). It is shown as he said ‘I’m not sure it suits their culture and dispositions’.

This student teacher gives his opinion on the important of having discussion with Vanuatuan supervising teacher.

It depends if I was going to teach in Vanuatu then I would have learned way more from [my Vanuatuan supervising teacher] than I learned from the Australian teachers but I plan to teach in Australia next year so what I learnt from there I think is more relevant than what I learnt from Johnson. But only because we’re going to teach in Australia.

This quote shows this student teacher’s ability to use a different world view according to the context as he said “if I was going to teach in Vanuatu then I would have learned way more from my Vanuatuan supervising teacher than I learned from the Australian teachers”. This is probably what Bennet (Bennett, 1995, p. 61) mentioned as “skills to shift cultural context”. In this case, he did
not evaluate the teaching style of his Vanuatuan supervising teacher, which is obviously – ‘talk and chalk’ - as negative as he said ‘if I was going to teach in Vanuatu then I would have learned way more from Johnson [his Vanuatuan supervising teacher]’. This reflects his ability to evaluate its application from the context of Vanuatuan educational system and culture.

Thus, this analysis might suggest that this student teacher has the ability to view using two different cultural perspectives. Hence, he could be considered to be in the stage of Integration. The following table summarises the interpretation of the development of intercultural sensitivity among the student teachers using the DMIS.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>DENIAL</th>
<th>DEFENCE</th>
<th>MINIMIZATION</th>
<th>ACCEPTANCE</th>
<th>ADAPTATION</th>
<th>INTEGRATION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Denied laidback behaviour</td>
<td>Denigrated laidback behaviour</td>
<td>Similarity of shy behaviour</td>
<td>Respected laidback behaviour</td>
<td>Show empathy toward ESL students</td>
<td>Integrate ‘talk &amp; chalk’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• It was a manifestation of weaknesses of the organisation of the school</td>
<td>• School system was inferior</td>
<td>• Children in any culture could be shy</td>
<td>• Non-judgemental/ evaluative toward laidback behaviour</td>
<td>• Spoke clearly and were patient</td>
<td>• Based on contextual evaluation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• It was not a culture</td>
<td>• Uplifted friendly behaviour</td>
<td>• Similarity about unruly behaviour</td>
<td>• Understood laidback behaviour</td>
<td>• Included Non-western material for teaching</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• They had not been brought up to speak up</td>
<td>• Vanuatuan people were friendlier than Australian</td>
<td>• Children in any part of the world could be unruly</td>
<td>• Curiosity toward unruly behaviour</td>
<td>• Adjust to shy behaviour</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 7.1 Interpretation of intercultural sensitivity development among student teachers in the 2010 Vanuatu GEP
The table shows that in the case study most the student teachers recognised several cultural differences including laidback behaviour, shy behaviour, unruly behaviour, friendly behaviour, English as a Second Language (ESL), and talk and chalk teaching style. Although facing the same experience of cultural differences the student teachers responded differently reflecting the variability of intercultural sensitivity development among them.

It shows also intercultural sensitivity depends and is valid according to specific cultural differences, e.g.: a student teacher might have low sensitivity toward laidback behaviour but was able to adjust toward behaviour of shyness or silence. It is difficult to assume or generalise that they have developed intercultural sensitivity as a result of GEP.

This section identified that there was a case whereby a student teacher denigrated laidback behaviour, which was manifested in undeveloped school system, in the first week of arrival, but was able to develop strategies to adjust his teaching in the last week of staying in Vanuatu; and it was illuminated in his reflective report. Moreover, there was a significant change of perception among the student teachers about laidback behaviour, which they perceived as a cultural phenomenon during teaching round in Vanuatu but in their reflective report, which was written in Melbourne illuminate a change of perspective. It was contextualised in professional framework rather than cultural context as lack of professionalism in Vanuatuan education system.

These two significant changes suggest that the three week GEP duration is sufficient to trigger student teachers to reflect on their experience of differences. Secondly, lack of theoretical perspective of culture and interculture concepts contributes to student teachers’ inconsistency illuminating ambiguity in interpreting their own learning.

7.2 Analysis of Intercultural Competence Development

The previous section provided an interpretation of the student teachers’ development of intercultural sensitivity in Vanuatu. The following sub-section investigates cultural learning in terms of the development of competence rather than merely a change or shift of perspective. To analyse the possible
development of intercultural competence among the student teachers, their intercultural lived experience in the 2010 Vanuatu GEP is interpreted using Deardorff’s (2008) model of Intercultural Competence and Byram’s (1997) skills of interactions.

The Deardorff’s model was chosen as a dynamic model since it enables to identify the competence in three forms of learning dimensions comprising knowledge, skills and attitude (Paige & Goode, 2009, p. 337), while Byram’s skills of discovery and interaction assists in the analysis of skill development.

The following discusses the analysis of intercultural competence development through identification of the student teachers’ responses which depict the elements in the five categories in the Deardorff’s model of intercultural competence and Byram’s (1997) skills of interaction, as follows:

1) Attitudes of respect, openness, curiosity and discovery;
2) Knowledge of cultural self-awareness, deep cultural knowledge, and socio linguistic awareness;
3) Skills to listen, observe and evaluate; and to interpret, reflect and relate;
4) Internal outcome [internal shift of reference]; and
5) External outcome [effective and appropriate communication and behaviour in intercultural situations], which is examined through the application of Byram’s (1997) skills of interactions.

7.2.1 Attitude

In this model, attitude refers to the “attitudes of Openness, Respect, and Curiosity and Discovery” (Deardorff, 2008, p. 37).

The following quote shows the emerging student teachers’ attitude of openness (withholding judgment) toward unruly behaviour:

Yeah well I think it has something to do with the teacher using the stick and that she thinks it’s the only way to control their behaviour and she told me that their family told her to use it if they’re not behaving and we use it at home and you need to use it as well at school. One time I had to yell at the kids and she was outside and heard and told them off and said to me sorry about that and that was okay I had trouble like that managing behaviour, because I find it hard to tell kids off.
In this quote, a student teacher describes unruly behaviour of Vanuatuan students and her difficulty to control their behaviour. The quote shows that the corporal punishment is well accepted at school and home as her supervising teacher informed her that “we use it (stick) at home and you need to use it as well at school” and “I had to yell at kids”. Although having such difficult time in the teaching round in Vanuatu, this student teacher was able to recognise the connection between the teacher’s punishment methods and those of the broader family; however, she was not able to replicate this. She was able to control herself for not giving negative comments on the Vanuatuan students’ behaviour. Instead she tried to understand the Vanuatuan students’ behaviour, and said that “I think over here the kids are different like they fight more or more misbehaved I’m not sure. Just the way they’ve grow up I guess”. It represents her ability to develop ‘rationalisation’ in order to understand the unruly behaviour. This quote demonstrates this student teacher’s attitude of openness as she was able to withhold herself from giving negative judgment toward Vanuatuan students’ unruly behaviour.

A student teacher’s attitude of openness toward laidback emerges as follows:

What I have noticed here they do everything so slowly. They no need to rush in. they don’t need to do it quickly. ...everything seems to be so relaxed, well no pressure …to get it done quicker... No [problem with that]. Well, it is different. The school work is a little bit frustrating. I have done lessons plans. They just take it so long to do. …I allocate 20 minutes to do, you know they took 2 hours to do it...it is frustrating but I think it’s fine. .....I think teaching is a challenge in Vanuatu. And it is only my second teaching round so yeah frustrating because it is slow.....It is frustrating but I think it is fine. It’s what they doing. I can’t handle it.

This quote illustrates that this student teacher found difficult to accept the laidback behaviour of Vanuatuan students and teachers, which she described as “they do everything so slowly”. Her difficulty to face the laidback behaviour is reflected as she said “The school work is a little bit frustrating.... frustrating because it is slow”. Enduring such a different experience did not make her give negative comments about Vanuatuan teachers and students or their behaviour of laidback, rather she attempts to understand and accepts it as she referred - “It is frustrating but I think it is fine. It’s what they doing. I can’t handle it”. Thus, this quote suggests that this student teacher was able to refrain from giving negative judgment about the laidback behaviour reflecting her attitude of openness toward laidback behaviour.
Overall, these quotes show that these student teachers had un-easy or uncomfortable experience. However, their ability to withhold judgment allowed them not to judge the Still, having this attitude with the absence of negative comment does not necessarily mean they agree with the different culture. Therefore, although they illustrated the cultural difference negatively, they remain open to difference.

The following quote reflects the emerging attitude of respect toward friendly behaviour.

“It is awesome everyone just so friendly. It’s a great part of their culture.”

In this quote, this student teacher observed Vanuatuan people’s behaviour which she described as “everyone just so friendly”. Her respect was reflected as she said “It’s a great part of their culture’.

A student teacher’s response suggests the importance to respect other culture.

“I think you need to be sensitive to other peoples culture and backgrounds and respect their cultures and you make an effort to let them know that you understand where they’re coming for and you make them feel welcomed. You are getting to see where people are coming from and what they value and make sure that you let them know that you value their culture.”

This student teacher understood how to respect another culture as she said “make an effort to let them know that you understand where they’re coming for and you make them feel welcomed”. She shows her ability to value other culture as she said “You are getting to see…what they value”.

This quote shows even though the different culture gives uncomfortable experiences, the student teacher still respects and values it. Even more, this student teacher expressed ‘respect’ overtly in the second and third quotes.

Unlike the attitudes of openness and respect, the attitude of curiosity (tolerating ambiguity) could be detected from the pre-departure questionnaire, which asked about the reasons and expectations of the student teachers to teach in Vanuatu. They revealed that most of them had decided to participate in the Vanuatu GEP because they would like to get more opportunities for employment by undertaking the GEP. This was in line with their expectation, which was to be more skillful in classroom management and teaching. The least
expectation was to understand and appreciate a different culture. Furthermore, when asked why they choose Vanuatu for their GEP, there were only 3 of 13 student teachers who expressed overtly their interest in the exposure of different culture. Thus, it is shown that it was only three student teachers, who genuinely had interest in Vanuatuan culture before departure to Vanuatu. In the light of this limited expression of curiosity, it is important to see if this underwent any change during their experience.

The following quotes from interviews and reflective reports show an indication of the attitude of curiosity amongst few student teachers:

[when the teacher left the classroom] they were talking and I could not really control them, like I said be quiet but they did not listen that much. Yeah [I feel hard about this]. I am excited [that I will teach in another two weeks] because I get to know the kids. Hopefully they will listen to me by the end…[did not feel it hard because] I like the country and learn about it.

This quote is taken from the first interview in Vanuatu. This student teacher shows her interest in Vanuatu since the first interview, which was conducted in the first week of arrival in Vanuatu. Although she finds it hard to control the Vanuatuan students she still has the interest, which is reflected that “I am excited [that I will teach in another two weeks] because I get to know the kids”. This might illuminate her attitude of curiosity.

This student teacher describes her interest in Vanuatuan student behaviour.

It’s because it is a bit annoying like I want to know why if that’s the only way and yeah they’re so young and I think now that they use the stick and that they’re used to it so if I just raise my voice and now they don’t find that frightening so that now the stick is the standards now and since they are still young, this will continue on till they’re older.

This quote shows similar expression of this student teacher’s interest on Vanuatu students. She recognised that her Vanuatu supervising teacher used a cane stick to control student behaviour. This seems to raise her curiosity as she said “it is a bit annoying like I want to know why if that’s the only way and yeah they’re so young”. This might reflect that this student teacher’s curiosity becoming stronger as this quote was taken in the last week of staying in Vanuatu.

It was suspected that this student teacher had had the attitude of curiosity prior to teach in Vanuatu. As she had uneasy experience since the first week of
teaching due to the very different culture between Australian and Vanuatu, it seemed hard to comprehend that she becomes interested in and develops curiosity about the Vanuatuan student culture due to participation in the GEP. She could be one of the few student teachers who stated in their pre-departure questionnaires that they had interest in Vanuatu including its culture.

7.2.2 Knowledge

Knowledge includes cultural self-awareness, deep cultural knowledge and socio-linguistic awareness (Deardorff, 2008). The first element of knowledge—Cultural self-awareness (awareness of one’s own cultural norms) is an essential knowledge as it shapes how to view other culture based on generic understanding of one’s own culture which is used to compare against other culture.

A student teacher’s attainment of awareness of her own teaching style, which might be influenced by her cultural identity, is described below.

Yes. But it is like the culture thing. If I was their teacher… I think I could develop some sort of [ways] to make them comfortable with me. At the moment three weeks is not enough to make them comfortable with me. I teach so differently; louder; more expressive. It is different. Everything about me is so different. It will take more than three weeks to make them used to me.

This quote shows this student teacher becomes aware of herself as an Australian teacher as she found her Vanuatuan students might feel uncomfortable saying that “If I was their teacher…I think I could develop some sort of [ways] to make them comfortable with me”. This leads her to compare herself with her Vanuatuan supervising teacher driving her to attain her realisation of her ‘culturally different character’ as an Australian teacher, which is “I teach so differently; louder and more expressive”. It represents an individualist cultural value, whereby people talk ‘overtly and explicitly’ and give ‘reactions on the surface’ in contrast to Vanuatuan people embracing collectivist culture, who are ‘covert and implicit’ and ‘reserve reactions’ (Lustig & Koester, 2003, p. 112). This recognition of own cultural characteristic represents her awareness of herself as a cultural being.

The following quote shows that this student teacher was able to realise that she did not share the same cues with Vanuatuan students; she had never thought
before that cues as parts of non-verbal communication could be practised differently in another culture.

It is just the way the kids interact with teachers. It’s just really different to how Victorian students interact with teachers generally. Things like “okay..they just don’t understand the same cues like Australian kids have – Victorian students have been brought up with all these cues. So they understand that when your- because also I am Australian so I understand the same cues as them. So when I am doing one thing they understand what it means.

Thus, this immersion in Vanuatuan culture promotes her realisation that students from different culture might not understand her teaching as they come from different cultural background. Her recognition that “it’s just really different to how Victorian students interact with teachers generally” reflects the emerging awareness of the different culture. This could be considered as her acquisition of the knowledge of cultural different awareness although the quote did not illustrate her recognition of her own cultural practice of non-verbal communication.

These quotes show that the differences of teaching style and classroom cues which created disharmony in communication trigger the student teacher to observe and reflect on their intercultural experiences. As they were able to identify the source of the problem, and recognise of their own culture; it becomes their learning. Hence, being in Vanuatu did not guarantee the student teachers to gain awareness of her own cultural practices. Only the first quote suggests that a student teacher gained recognition of her culture. The other quote advises that being in Vanuatu enabled her to gain realisation of the cultural gap between her as an Australian teacher and Vanuatuan students, such as differences in non-verbal languages. However, this did not encourage her to recognise her own cultural practices.

The second element of knowledge - Deep cultural knowledge comprises both deep understanding & knowledge of culture refers to “a thorough understanding of other worldview’s influences on cultural development, and the role and impact of specific cultures in the world”, and culture-specific information includes “underlying cultural values and communication style, which are necessary to understand behaviour of different culture” (Deardorff, 2008, p. 38).
A student teacher recognises Vanuatuan students’ shy behaviour in her classroom. She perceives it as a cultural phenomenon, which was reflected in her statement, “I meant they have warmed up to me but …the majority are still incredibly shy… I think it is a culture thing”.

They are still very shy. I meant they have warmed up to me but …the majority are still incredibly shy…no one child who want to speak in the presentation. So it’s very difficult. I think it is a culture thing. Yeah, there is a lot of different values…in grade 6…public speaking is really valued in Australia…it is not here at all.

The quote shows that she understands the impact of this culture as she said “no one child who wants to speak in the presentation”. In addition, she also has the culture-specific information, which is “there is a lot of different values…in grade 6…public speaking is really valued in Australia…it is not here at all”. It explains the underlying value that influenced the Vanuatuan student behaviour. Vanuatuan students tend to be silence as a “manifestation of cultural expectation in classroom in collectivist culture” (Lustig & Koester, 2010, p. 294).

Recognition of non-verbal language represents a student teacher learning cultural knowledge from Vanuatu.

Things about the children like they raise their eyebrows when they mean yes because a lot of the time I was like why aren’t they answering me and they aren’t saying yes and they were just raising their eyebrows….so I thought why aren’t they responding but they were.

This student teacher understood how the cultural difference works saying that “they aren’t saying yes and they were just raising their eyebrows” in her first encountered with non-verbal language. She understood the implication of the culture illuminating communication broke down as she did not get the expected responses from Vanuatuan students. Through observation, she gained culture-specific knowledge that “they were just raising their eyebrows….so I thought why they aren’t responding but they were”. It meant that “non-verbal messages that are used in place of the verbal ones function as a substitute for the verbal channel” (Lustig & Koester, 2010, p. 200).

These quotes advise that the student teachers were able to gain deeper cultural knowledge including Vanuatuan student shy behaviour and its association with Vanuatuan values. The second learning includes also the recognition of
Vanuatuan students’ non-verbal language and the specific cultural knowledge of the substitute function of non-verbal language.

The third element of cultural knowledge - *Socio-linguistic Awareness* (awareness of relation between language and meaning in societal context), refers to “how a language is used within a societal and social context” (Deardorff, 2008, p. 38).

The following quote reflects a student teacher’s observation of the use of English amongst Vanuatuan students.

> I think the experience has helped me to understand the struggles and needs of those students. The students don’t speak English as their first language, so I had to be very clear and also patient.

This quote shows that this student teacher was able to identify the difficulty of her students as English was not their first language. This suggests that she gains cultural knowledge in term of Vanuatuan students’ use of English, which represents her emerging socio-linguistic competence. It is reflected when she said “I had to be very clear and also patient” suggesting a strategy to address the problem.

The following suggest also the student teachers’ development of socio-linguistic competence.

> I think they struggle with my accent yeah I think they struggle with that a bit. I’ve noticed they’ve all spelled incorrectly and I think it’s because pronunciation or how they have heard it from their teacher and they’ve just gone with that and sometimes the teacher gets it a little bit wrong too so that’s just the way they learn it and they’ve learnt it wrong from the start and but you know they get pretty good considering that’s their 4th language.

In the first quote a student teacher said that “they struggle with my accent” as she observed her students difficulty to understand her. Her ability to identify her accent as the cause of students’ problem in communication reflects her emerging socio-linguistic competence.

The second quote also illuminates a student teacher’s development of socio-linguistic competence. This student teacher develops her socio-linguistic competence through her identification of wrong pronunciation as the reason for Vanuatuan students to spell incorrectly. Her linguistic competence appears also as she identifies that “they have heard it from their teacher… sometimes the
CHAPTER 7: INTERCULTURAL SENSITIVITY AND COMPETENCE

teacher gets it a little bit wrong too so that’s just the way they learn it and they’ve learnt it wrong from the start”. This quote shows her gain of cultural knowledge includes her development of socio-linguistic competence.

7.2.3 Skills

The important skills required to acquire awareness and knowledge about other cultures includes skills to listen, observe and interpret; and to analyse, evaluate, and relate (Deardorff, 2008, p. 38).

The following quotes might show indications of the student teachers’ attainment of the skills to Listen, Observe and Interpret.

When I asked them some questions about the work they are doing they are a bit shy and they sort of hide their heads.

It shows that this student teacher displays the skill to listen as she “asked them some questions”. As she said, “they sort of hide their heads”, which reflects her skill to observe. Her ability to interpret her observation is depicted in her statement that “they are a bit shy”.

Similarly, the following quote suggests a student teacher’s ability to observe; she said “I tend to walk around in the classroom”.

I think they are very shy. I tend to walk around in the classroom but they found it a little bit intimidating at first.

When she said “they found it a little bit intimidating at first”, this indicates her ability to interpret her Vanuatuan students’ feelings of shyness.

Another student teacher’s development of skills to Listen, Observe and Interpret is as follows:

The only thing that I can go by in Vanuatu is what sort of work that they produce. You know like, today, apparently one girl was very quiet but today she did fantastic work, which shows me that she is probably a visual learner. I learnt about her in my last lesson.

This quote shows a student teacher’s ability to listen and observe her Vanuatuan students when she said “one girl was very quiet but today she did fantastic work”. As she said “she is probably a visual learner”; this illuminates her interpretation of the Vanuatuan student she mentioned in her quote. The quote suggests also that her observation of Vanuatuan students was only
through “what sort of work that they (Vanuatuan students) produce” and, from this, it can be interpreted that she is probably a visual learner.

These quotes demonstrate the student teachers’ ability to listen, observe and interpret their observation of Vanuatuan student behaviour in order to understand their students’ shy behaviour. They show that teaching Vanuatuan students enabled the student teachers to develop their cognitive skills of observing, listening and interpreting.

An indication of the skills to Analyse, Evaluate, and Relate among the student teachers is shown below.

Yeah, the longer I worked with them the more willing they were to work with me. Like in the first week they were all sitting there behind their hands being shy and not giving me answers and stuff whereas like this week I would be just like get up like they would just get up straightaway. I would not have to fight. They were definitely easier to work with as the weeks went on the students.

This quote shows a student teacher’s analysis of Vanuatuan students’ engagement in classroom activities. As she evaluated their behaviour, she said that “the longer I worked with them the more willing they were to work with me”. She related her analysis and evaluation during the first two week of the GEP and concluded that “they were definitely easier to work with as the weeks went on”.

Another example of gaining the skills to Analyse, Evaluate and Relate appears as follows:

They’ve become a bit better at that but they’re still a bit afraid to get things wrong. They seem to be really apprehensive about being creative.

This quote reflects that this student teacher recognised the shy behaviour of Vanuatuan students. She analysed that Vanuatuan students are still shy when she said, “they’re still a bit afraid to get things wrong”. She evaluates her Vanuatuan students’ behaviour, saying that “they seem to be really apprehensive about being creative”.

The following quote reflects a condition whereby a student teacher seems to display the skills of analysis, evaluation and relatedness.
And to be honest whenever I walk up to the kids they just stop working so I don’t want that to happen so I don’t usually go up to them to watch their work hoping after the first week that everything will be a bit better.

This quote shows that this student teacher analysed and evaluated her Vanuatuan students’ behaviour and said that “whenever I walk up to the kids they just stop working”. This student teacher’s statement that “I don’t usually go up to them to watch their work” demonstrated the development of the skills to relate.

These quotes suggest that the student teachers display cognitive skills, which are obviously gained from their interactions with Vanuatuan students. In this regard, despite the different reasoning held by the student teachers, their understanding of Vanuatuan student behaviour and values helps them to navigate their actions in responding to the different student behaviour.

### 7.2.4 Internal outcomes

Both cognitive skills; and skills of interaction (Byram, 1997) together with the attitudes and knowledge mentioned previously contribute to the development of intercultural competence, which comprises internal and external outcomes (Deardorff, 2008). The desired internal outcomes involves with a shift of frame of reference allowing to adjust to difference culture, which includes ability to ‘switch’ between different communication styles (Deardorff, 2008, p. 38).

The following quote illustrates some pieces of evidence of student teachers’ development of adaptability and flexibility (Deardorff, 2008, pp. 38-39). Adaptability is reflected both in the ability to adjust to different cultural environments and to switch between communication styles, ‘much in the way someone would switch between languages. Flexibility is reflected in the used of different behavioural styles and able to change between the different worldviews.

Adjustment of a student teacher toward shy behaviour is presented below:

They are very quiet, but they do, if I ask a question, will answer questions but not individually. They answer it in a group. I won’t pick on somebody. They won’t give the answers.
This student teacher recognised her Vanuatuan students’ behaviour of shyness. Her adjustment toward shy behaviour in Vanuatuan classroom illuminates in the quote as she said “I won’t pick on somebody”. It reflects her flexibility as well as she displayed a different behavioural styles changing from asking question individually to in a group. This quote suggests her empathy as she has the ability to switch into Vanuatuan students’ worldview that prefers to answer questions in a group.

A student teacher’s adjustment toward laidback behaviour is as follow:

My kids are grade 6. It is apparently slow class, so I am doing thing like I am teaching grade 2 in Australia. So it’s a bit different. No [worry about this situation]. That’s what they are. I am not worried about it at all. We are here only for three weeks. If it is my class I will be stressing out because so much to do. But it is not my job.

This student teacher’s adjustment is reflected as she said “I am doing thing like I am teaching grade 2 in Australia”. It demonstrates her behavioural changes as she switches teaching year 6 into 2 illuminating her flexibility. This quote also reveals her ability to empathise Vanuatuan teacher, as she said “that’s what they are”.

The following quote illuminates another student teacher’s emerging adaptability and flexibility.

The kids are shy too in Melbourne but it’s just different. Whenever I walked up to the kids, they just stop working. So, I don’t want that to happen so I don’t usually go up to them to watch their work.

The student teacher’s adjustment was recognised as she said “I don’t want that to happen [Vanuatu students stop doing their work] so I don’t usually go up to them to watch their work”. Obviously, it displays also her flexibility as she adjusts her teaching style, which was reflected in: “I don’t usually go up to them to watch their work”.

A student teacher’s adaptability, flexibility and empathy toward cultural difference appear bellow:

It depends if I was going to teach in Vanuatu then I would have learned way more from Johnson than I learned from the Australian teachers but I plan to teach in Australia next year so what I learnt from there I think is more relevant than what I learnt from Johnson, but only because we’re going to teach in Australia.
As this student teacher said “It depends if …” illuminating his ability to adjust to Vanuatuan cultural classroom. It suggests his gain of an ability to adapt to different culture. This quote suggests that this student teacher displays an ability to adjust as he said “if I was going to teach in Vanuatu then I would have learned way more from Johnson than I learned from the Australian teachers”. It reflects his flexibility as his adjustment might involve his change of behaviour in his teaching style. His empathy illuminates as well in this quote as he said “I plan to teach in Australia next year so what I learnt from there I think is more relevant than what I learnt from Johnson”. It suggests that he has the ability to switch his behaviour according to a certain worldview illuminating his empathy.

In this regard, despite the different reasoning hold by the student teachers, their understanding of Vanuatuan student behaviour and values, help them to navigate their actions in responding to the different student behaviour. Most of the quotes indicate that the student teachers are flexible as they develop behavioural changes. The quotes also suggest that most of them did not develop skills to relate.

### 7.2.5 External outcomes

Desired external outcomes refers to ‘behaving and communicating effectively and appropriately (based on one’s intercultural knowledge, skills, and attitudes) in an intercultural situation (Deardorff, 2008). Thus, the behaviour and communication forms of interaction are observable and much depended on the individual’s attitude, skills and knowledge of intercultural.

In the model, it is shown that to move from Internal Outcome to External Outcome an interaction with different culture is required. Thus, this model considers that the ‘Desired External Outcome’ cannot be achieved without ‘the real experience of interaction’ with different culture. Therefore, the ‘Skills of Interaction and Discovery’ of Byram’s model (1997) of intercultural competence was used to examine the ‘interaction’ dimension of intercultural competence, which is necessary as “the knowledge needs in order to communicate with different culture is hard to predict” (Byram, 1997, p. 6).
The following quote could be considered as an example of the emerging skills of discovery and interaction. This student teacher attempts to investigate why Vanuatuan teacher used stick to control Vanuatuan students. It is a significant phenomenon to her as she knows that there is a stick in her classroom.

Yeah well I think it has something to do with the teacher using the stick and that she thinks it’s the only way to control their behaviours and she told me the other day that their family told her to use it but they say you need to use a stick because they’re not behaving and we use it at home and you need to use it as well at school.

This quote shows that this student teacher talked to her Vanuatuan supervising teacher about her concern of the use of stick to control Vanuatuan students’ negative behaviour. This quote demonstrates her skill to discover information underlying the use of stick as she said that “she [her Vanuatuan supervising teacher] told me the other day that their family [Vanuatuan students’ parents] told her to use it”. This suggests that Vanuatuan students have really bad behaviour both at home and school. As she talked with her Vanuatuan teacher, this also indicates her emerging skills to interact with different culture. This quote demonstrates her ability to discover the relation between stick and Vanuatuan student behaviour.

The following quotes come from the same student teacher who wanted to confirm the information she gained from her Vanuatuan supervising teacher.

But then I was talking to the library teacher and she was from America and she just said that they were really badly behaved because they weren’t taught how to behave properly.

This student teacher discussed her concern of the use of stick to manage students’ unruly behaviour, with a volunteer from US Corp, who happens to live in the island for almost 4 years. Thus, this quote also suggests an indication of this student teacher development of skills of discovery. This illuminates in the quote as she said “they were really badly behaved because they weren’t taught how to behave properly”. Clearly, it is shown how this student teacher interacted with other in order to discover the information that she thought as importance to confirm the information given by her supervising teacher about the unruly behaviour among Vanuatuan students.

An indication of skill of interaction of student teachers is as follows:
Well, I think the actual chalk and talk lesson went well because that’s what they are used to. Although they were reluctant to answer questions but they over time they did get more involved and I think they become more confident and comfortable. After a while they seemed to enjoy it.

This quote shows that this student teacher adjusted himself as he said “I think the actual chalk and talk lesson went well because that’s what they are used to” reflecting he taught using ‘talk and chalk’ teaching style. The quote reflects that his interaction is drew upon his existing knowledge about the teaching practicum in Vanuatu which mostly involves talk and chalk pedagogy. This quote suggests that he had better interaction with his Vanuatuan students over the time through his application of ‘chalk and talk’, which could be considered as illuminating his development of interaction skill in communicating with Vanuatuan students. These various quotes display student teachers’ skills of interaction reflecting the attainment of external outcomes among the student teachers from their participation in the GEP.

The following table presents summary finding for the analysis of intercultural competence development.

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<tr>
<th>Attitudes</th>
<th>Knowledge</th>
<th>Skills</th>
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<tr>
<td><em>Attitude of openness (withholding judgment)</em></td>
<td><em>Ability to gain awareness of own character and recognise cultural gap through observation of non-verbal languages</em></td>
<td><em>Skills to Listen, Observe and Interpret and Skills to Analyse, Evaluate, and Relate involves shy behaviour</em></td>
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<td>• Ability to withhold negative response toward unruly behaviour and laidback behaviour</td>
<td><em>Deep cultural knowledge</em></td>
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<td><em>Attitude of respect (valuing other cultures)</em></td>
<td>• Ability to value friendly behaviour and laidback behaviour</td>
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<td>• Ability to value friendly behaviour and laidback behaviour</td>
<td><em>Socio-linguistic awareness</em></td>
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<tr>
<td><em>Attitude of curiosity (tolerating ambiguity)</em></td>
<td>• Ability to tolerate unruly behaviour</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Ability to tolerate unruly behaviour</td>
<td><em>Ability to recognise the Vanuatuan students’ English as a second language; the Vanuatuan student’s difficulty to listen due to the student teacher’s accent; the Vanuatuan students’ wrong pronunciation as they spell incorrectly.</em></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Cultural self-awareness</strong></td>
<td><em>Ability to recognise shy behaviour and non-verbal language</em></td>
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<td><em>Deep cultural knowledge</em></td>
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<td><em>Socio-linguistic awareness</em></td>
<td><em>Ability to recognise the Vanuatuan students’ English as a second language; the Vanuatuan student’s difficulty to listen due to the student teacher’s accent; the Vanuatuan students’ wrong pronunciation as they spell incorrectly.</em></td>
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Table 7.2 Summary of the emerging elements of intercultural competence among student teachers in the 2010 Vanuatu GEP

With regard to the attitudes of openness, the student teachers show that they had the ability to withhold themselves from giving negative comments for Vanuatuans’ unruly and laidback behaviour. Some of them displayed the attitude of respect toward friendly and laidback behaviour, while a student teacher showed her interest in unruly behaviour illuminating her emerging attitude of curiosity.

Through comparison with Vanuatuans while teaching, a student teacher was able to realise her own character representing the acquisition of cultural self-awareness. Another student teacher showed her ability to identify the cultural gap through observation of non-verbal language, but the finding did not suggest her ability to realise her own cultural practice related to non-verbal language.

With regard to the competence to attain deep cultural knowledge, some student teachers were able to recognise shy behaviour and non-verbal language. In this case, they also displayed the associated competence of ability to understand the impact of the cultural differences and its ‘culture-specific information’, such as its underlying value.

The student teachers showed also an ability to understand the practice of English in their Vanuatuans classrooms. They were able to recognise their students’ English competence, wrong pronunciation, and difficulty to listen due to her accent.

The student teachers developed their behavioural skills as they observed their Vanuatuans’ shy behaviour. These included skills to listen, observe and
interpret; and to analyse and evaluate. The findings suggest that they did not develop skill to relate.

With regard to internal outcome, there were several abilities reflecting their internal outcome in terms of flexibility. These involved behavioural changes in terms of questioning style; teaching strategy; and teaching behaviour. A student teacher’s adaptability was manifested in his ability to adjust his learning about teaching during teaching practicum, as he said that: “if I was going to teach in Vanuatu then I would have learned way more from Johnson than I learned from the Australian teachers”. The student teachers displayed their empathy as they were able to see from the perspective of Vanuatuan students and teachers, which guided them in their changes of behaviour.

The external outcome was demonstrated through the student teachers’ development of skills to discover information related to unruly behaviour, as well as to interact with Vanuatuan teachers and students.

7.3 Summary

This chapter discussed the analysis of cultural learning of student teachers which revealed the student teachers’ worldview and cultural competencies which they might develop through their participation in the GEP.

With respect to how the student teachers reacted toward these perceived cultural difference, which demonstrated their intercultural sensitivity development, the analysis suggested that being immersed in the same culture did not lead the student teachers to have the same growth.

Having known the student teachers’ culture learning and world views, the examination of student teacher lived experience revealed their learning outcomes in terms of intercultural competence. It was shown that some of them displayed competencies in cognitive, behaviour and affective learning domains comprising competence to interact with different culture.

To conclude, the student teachers’ construction of cultural learning could be interpreted using the three theoretical frameworks. They provided
complementary analyses encompassing three learning dimensions of cognitive, behaviour and affective. The student teachers learnt not only about cultural knowledge of destination country but also learnt about their own cultural norms and developed the attitudes, and skills necessary to interact with Vanuatuan students. The next chapter will investigate the student teacher learning of teaching as their professional learning since the GEP is a program which provides teaching practice.
CHAPTER EIGHT

Professional learning in the GEP

8.0 Introduction

This chapter aims to address the fourth research question – How do the student teachers construct their professional learning and reflective thinking developments in the GEP? This is crucial, as the persistent argument in the internationalisation of the curriculum must include a limited examination of the underlying assumptions of the program (Rizvi, 2007a). In this case, as the GEP is a program that offers teaching experience overseas, it is necessary to investigate student learning about teaching in the GEP. Thus, professional learning in the GEP refers to the learning of teaching in the GEP.

This chapter comprises two sections. The first section provides the analysis of professional learning from the case study findings. The second section discusses the interpretation of the development of reflective thinking, as it is demonstrated in the case study.

8.1 Analysis of Professional Learning

The analysis of professional learning focuses only on teacher’s professional knowledge base that relates to teaching. It includes five adapted elements of teachers’ professional knowledge bases: school cultural norms; strategies of classroom management; curriculum; teaching practice; and student learning style (Shulman, 2004).

8.1.1 Cultural norms of Vanuatuan schools

School cultural norms are part of the ‘knowledge base of educational context’, “ranging from the workings of the group or classroom, the governance and financing of school districts, to the character of communities and cultures” (Shulman, 2004, p. 93). Thus, school cultural norms of a Vanuatuan school could be interpreted as the representation of shared behaviours at schools linked to the beliefs and values of Vanuatuan culture.
This sub-section will investigate the student teachers’ observation of the classroom practices in Vanuatuan schools, including students’ behaviour, and their ability in adapting their teaching to suit the Vanuatuan school context.

The student teachers in these quotes noted that a key difference in school norms was in the shy behaviour of the students. As explained in Chapter Six, these descriptions could be associated to the student behaviour in a collectivist culture, which means that the students in a collectivist community are not likely to ask questions of their teachers (Lustig & Koester, 2010).

However, the student teachers expressed shy behaviour differently. The following quote shows that, for one student, the shy behaviour was referred to as: ‘no one kid would actually speak’.

Really shy. They are still very shy. I meant they’ve warmed up to me but … the majority are still incredibly shy. Like I tried to do presentation and they were hopeless. No one kid would actually speak.

Another student teacher described shy behaviour as students being ‘very reticent’ and ‘barely audible’:

The major teaching challenge at Malapoa High School was getting the students ‘involved in the class’. The students were all very reticent to participate in class discussions and when they did their opinions were usually barely audible.

The following is another illustration of shy behaviour at a particular time in a Vanuatuan classroom.

Lessons that I observed are not only from my supervising teachers, which consist of the teachers writing on the board and the students writing it down. That’s it. No discussion. No interaction between the teacher and students. There might be discussion from the teacher side but no interaction. And even if the students have the options it seems like they have been told to be quiet. So even in my classes when I try to make discussion, there is hardly any because they are used to being there and being silent’.

It shows that the Vanuatuan students were not expected to ‘talk’. The Vanuatuan teacher ‘might discuss’ something about the lesson, but there were no responses from the Vanuatuan students, even if they were given the time to talk. This student teacher found that the Vanuatuan students were quiet when she wanted to make a discussion as she said “there is hardly any…they are used to... being silent’. Another student teacher made a generalisation that Vanuatuan students were much quieter than Australian ones. This student
teacher remarked also that shy behaviour made the greatest difference between
the two schools.

I found that students in Vanuatu were much quieter and less willing to participate in
group discussion and presentations than students in Australia. This was probably the
greatest difference in teaching as you could rely less on active student participation
and had to lead all of the discussion.

All quotes illustrate that the student teachers focussed on the shy behaviour of
Vanuatuan students, illuminating the distinct cultural norm of Vanuatuan
schools. The shy behaviour is described through various expressions, including
‘no presentation’; ‘reticent’; ‘barely audible’; ‘no classroom involvement’, ‘no
classroom discussion’, and ‘used to being quiet’. These quotes demonstrate
that the behaviour of shyness/ silence of Vanuatuan students highlights one of
the key differences in school culture and practices between the Australian and
Vanuatuan system, as identified by the student teachers.

The student teachers’ ability to adjust their teaching to suit Vanuatuan school
cultural norms is reflected in their reactions or responses toward the Vanuatuan
student behaviour, especially shyness.

The kids are shy too in Melbourne but it’s just different. Whenever I walked up to
the kids, they just stop working. So, I don’t want that to happen so I don’t usually go
up to them to watch their work.

The student teacher who adjusted her teaching behaviour said “I don’t want
that to happen [Vanuatuan students stop doing their work] so I don’t usually go
up to them to watch their work”.

Another example of student teacher’s adjustment in teaching is shown below:

They are very quiet, but they do, if I ask a question, will answer questions but not
individually. They answer it in a group. I won’t pick on somebody. They won’t give
the answers.

This student teacher recognised her Vanuatuan students’ behaviour of shyness
and that they prefer to answer in a group. Her adjustment in teaching is
represented as she said, “I won’t pick on somebody”.

These quotes suggest that some student teachers were able to adjust their
teaching to Vanuatuan school cultural norms through changing their
questioning method and behaviour in teaching –that is, to restrain themselves
from being too close to the Vanuatuan students.
Thus, it is demonstrated here that student teacher learning challenged the common assumption about lack of student learning in a short internationalisation program; the findings show that the student teachers adapted to, and aligned their teaching with, the cultural norms of the Vanuatuan school’.

8.1.2 Vanuatuan student learning style

Student learning style is a representation of the “knowledge base of learners and their characteristics” (Shulman, 2004, p. 92). As a broad concept, learning style is explained as:

Clearly, the task, the situation, and the material influence the ways that children are encouraged to learn or behave, and few families encourage only field-independent or field-sensitive learning, even though, on the average, they may use one type of strategy more than the other. The predominant or general teaching style of a family may thus be of basic importance in deciding the direction a child’s learning preferences may take. Insofar as these teaching styles reflect a certain set of values held by parent and family, values that in many cases are clearly culturally determined, one may posit that cultural differences in learning-style preferences develop through children’s early experiences (Cox & Ramirez, 1981, p.63, cited in Diaz, 2001, p. 61).

This perspective on the relationship between culture and learning behaviour suggest the importance of considering student learning style, which is developed through early experiences and influenced predominantly by ‘values held by parent and family’. Vanuatuan student learning style could be considered as a student characteristic reflected in their behaviour in learning preferences influenced by values and beliefs in Vanuatuan culture. As the student teachers are not familiar with the Vanuatuan culture or the family values, it would be different from the style the student teachers are accustomed to.

This sub-section will investigate student teachers’ observation of Vanuatuan student learning behaviour, and their ability to adjust their teaching to match the Vanuatuan student learning style.

Student teachers’ observations of Vanuatuan student behaviour in the classroom related to learning are as follows:

I believe the students learning was based on ‘rote’ learning, learning from memory. When I first arrived I read some of the class books with the children and was surprised to see that they could read it very well, all the way through the books. I later realised
this was because the class only had a few books so the students have to memorise the story; they are no longer reading the words, just remembering them. The only way they know how to learn is by copying off the board, which doesn’t necessarily mean they understand and learn what they are copying down.

In this quote, a student teacher’s preconception of Vanuatuan students’ academic ability was challenged as she found they read fluently. Once she realised that there were only a few books in her class, and the students read together; she knew that they did not read; rather, that they memorised the books. Her construction of Vanuatuan student learning style refers to what she said — “by copying off the board” and “learning from memory”.

The following quote shows that Vanuatuan student learning style is described similarly: “Bizarrely, for the most part, the students went about copying from the board very studiously and with great focus”. The word bizarrely is significant because it illustrates how unusual she found this way of learning.

The students are mainly expected to learn by copying from the board. Bizarrely, for the most part the students went about copying from the board very studiously and with great focus. However, I’m quite sure that they aren’t really learning from this. For example, when given maths questions on the board, most students couldn’t answer them and just waited for the teacher to write the answers before they themselves wrote them in their books.

This student teacher argued further that the Vanuatuan students were not learning as she tried them with math questions, which were left unanswered. Another student teacher associates this learning style with claims that the Vanuatuan students ‘lacked creativity’.

They always copy and lacked creativity. They were unable to use initiative, or do self-directed learning. All they do is copy and memorise for a test, but no actual learning is happening, no skills for learning are developed.

This student teacher remarked also that the students’ behaviour of copying and memorising results in the Vanuatuan students having ‘no skills for learning’. This excerpt shows this student teacher’s definite construction about what is learning and how learning takes place.

Furthermore, another student teacher felt that Vanuatuan student learning style was demonstrated by the teachers ‘have things written down’ and that ‘she just kind of wanted them to be quiet’:

She just kind of wanted them to be quiet …Maybe she didn’t think what I was doing was really learning because they weren’t really writing down. You know might be if
they have things written down, they feel like they have done work, whereas in Australia you could learn anything without having it to write it down, you can learn something by experiencing it and discussions.

These quotes show the students’ illustrations of Vanuatuan student learning style, which include ‘remembering words’, copying off the board’, ‘no actual learning’, ‘no reading’, a ‘lack of creativity’, and ‘no skill for learning’. All these expressions describe a particular learning style, which is known as ‘rote learning’. It involves “learning, which is achieved through rote memorisation, teacher’s notes, and classroom in which silent is urged and highly structured” (Clarke, 1995; Exley, 2005). Those quotes demonstrate the student teachers’ construction of rote learning as the Vanuatuan student learning style.

The following quotes reflect a student teacher being innovative in their classroom management and situation in classroom in order to take into consideration Vanuatuan student ‘rote learning style’.

… in Vanuatu, most children struggle to recognise verbal instructions but rather recognise visual cues when written on the chalk board, e.g.; ‘Fill in the gaps with the words below.’… This was observed when I tried to explain a task I had for the students and after trying to give clear details they sat there and looked confused but as soon as I wrote it on the board they started writing.

This excerpt shows this student teacher’s ability to identify a problem rooted in the Vanuatuan student learning style of ‘rote learning’; as she said: “most children struggle to recognise verbal instructions”. When she understood how Vanuatuan students learn and their preferred learning method, which was through ‘copying off from the black board’, she knew what she had to do to solve the problem. She adjusted herself to the task, saying that: “as soon as I wrote it on the board they started writing”. This reflects her endeavour to tailor her teaching to enhance Vanuatuan students in their learning, affirming that “teaching techniques need to reflect and respond to the cultural values, experiences and learning styles of different ethnic groups” (Shade, 1989, cited in Gay, 2005, p.360). This quote suggests that this student teacher adjusted her instructions to include also non-verbal instructions, which come from a reflection of her construction of knowledge of student learning style.

Another student teacher also recognised and understood the Vanuatuan student learning style of ‘rote learning’. She attempted to ‘solve’ the problem through implementing her Australian teaching method; she referred to “the group work
and hands-on activities that we do in Australia. I tried to implement Australian methods”.

The most significant difference to me was the way they learnt. Just superficial, copying off the board, as opposed to all the group work and hands-on activities that we do in Australia. I tried to implement Australian methods but as the students weren’t used to it, it was quite challenging.

The quote shows that this student teacher’s endeavour to teach using Australian teaching methods was not successful. Thus, her construction of learning included gaining an understanding of how the Vanuatuan students learn, which was through ‘rote learning’. However, she did not have the ability to address the problem; she considered rote learning as “just superficial” learning. The Vanuatuan experience reinforced her belief that rote learning was bad, but she did not develop any skills to address this problem.

It is that kind of assumption about cultural learning and professional learning that a GEP program, which emphasizes cultural and professional experience gained overseas, could change the. This finding reflects that the student teachers did not maximize their professional learning, as there was not enough relevant support in the field. The excerpts demonstrate that the student teacher learning was located solely in recognising the Vanuatuan student rote learning style. The provision of cultural knowledge that addresses Vanuatuan values might help the student teachers to develop pre-knowledge of the rote learning style of Vanuatuan students, and thus to adjust their teaching style more readily. The availability of academic support might also encourage the student teachers to adjust their teaching behaviour to suit the rote learning style of Vanuatuan students.

8.1.3 Vanuatuan curriculum

Curriculum knowledge refers to the “particular grasp of the materials and programs that serve as tools of the trade for teachers” (Shulman, 2004, p. 92). In detail, knowledge of curriculum includes a broad understanding of:

- Different views of curriculum and what they suggest for educational goals and the teacher’s role;
- How to develop and carry out curricular plans that are coherent and have a high probability success; and
- How to make sound curricular decisions and address curricular issues that arise
Thus, the understanding of the Vanuatuan curriculum should involve not only material about subject content, but also other activities related to planning and delivery of the curriculum.

The following sub-section will investigate the student teachers’ observations of the Vanuatuan school curriculum and their preparation of lesson plans in an effort to deduce their ability to adjust their teaching style to the context of their practicum.

In describing the Vanuatuan curriculum, a student teacher argued that it is an unstructured curriculum; thus the Vanuatuan teachers did not need to prepare lesson plans. She said “I did not witness any sign that lessons were planned in advance”. She observed also how the curriculum was delivered: “Teachers simply worked through the books that they were given for their year level”.

Hence, the Vanatu curriculum is perceived to be ‘relaxed’, ‘unstructured’, with ‘no need for preparation’, and a tendency to ‘work through the book’.

The most significant difference between teaching in Vanuatu and teaching in Australia is definitely the relaxed, unstructured curriculum. The teachers in Vanuatu never seemed as stressed as the teachers in Australia. I did not witness any sign that lessons were planned in advance. Teachers simply worked through the books that they were given for their year level.

This student teacher’s understanding of the Vanuatuan curriculum is also reflected in the following quote.

I think the program co-ordinator is right when he said the children are two years behind. Like I am doing the year nine lunar moons but in Australia I have done it in year 7 and 8 and stuff. I think … they are very much a step or two behind … as the years progress they don’t seem to progress that much.

This student teacher’s recognition of the Vanuatuan students’ academic level shows his partial understanding of the ‘content’ of Vanuatuan curriculum. As he said, “they are very much a step or two behind”, which suggests his awareness about what to prepare for his teaching. However, in order to better prepare his understanding of curriculum and expectations, there is room for the GEP to further inform students about the education system in which they will find themselves on their GEP practicum.
In addition to academic level, the student teachers’ understanding of the curriculum is illuminated through their recognition of the English level of Vanuatuan students.

The kids they don’t speak English as their first language. So even, if they are at grade six, they know (only) basic English.

The student teacher identified that the Vanuatuan students at Grade Six have a very basic understanding of English. The following quote shows a similar perception of the Vanuatuan students’ level of English. This student teacher noticed that some Vanuatuan students speak Bislama in the classroom.

I can tell when some other kids repeat it in Bislama because they look at each other. And then the child answers me after someone else explains what I’ve said, which is a bit hard. And also, when we play a few games, I have like told them the new one and when I instruct, some kids look around and another person would repeat what I’ve said in Bislama. …. So it’s pretty hard for them to understand.

These quotes suggest that the student teachers’ construction of the Vanuatuan curriculum is reflected through their interpretations of Vanuatuan students’ grade level and English competence, apart from their direct observation of the curriculum, which they see as mainly ‘unstructured’.

Having this kind of understanding about the Vanuatuan curriculum, the following quotes display the student teachers’ comments reflecting their ways of teaching in Vanuatuan classrooms. It also illuminates their development of understanding of the necessity to adjust their lesson plans according to the needs of the Vanuatuan students.

I think that I had to become more versatile and adaptive to teaching than I was prior to my teaching experience in Vanuatu. I had to be flexible to the challenges I faced with the students and in re-planning the level of my lessons to suit the needs of students. When faced with copying, I had to find solutions to the problem and redesign my lessons to suit.

This student teacher understood that the very unstructured nature of the Vanuatuan curriculum suggested to her that she should be more flexible; she said, “I had to become more versatile and adaptive to teaching than I was prior to my teaching experience in Vanuatu”. Her understanding of Vanuatuan students’ rote learning’ style raised her consideration of the need to prepare relevant lesson plans: “When faced with copying I had to find solutions to the problem and redesign my lessons to suit”. Thus, this quote served also to demonstrate the student teacher’s construction of Vanuatuan student learning.
style in addition to curriculum knowledge, in terms of developing an understanding of the need to adjust lesson plans to take into account the student ‘rote learning’ style.

A student teacher’s understanding of the Vanuatuan curriculum is reflected in his observation of teaching science in Vanuatu:

Here I suppose science is very much theoretical science. Straightaway here I noticed science is pretty much theoretically based. Practically based (teaching) is almost impossible for the teacher to teach science here. They have no resources. I saw their cupboard of science equipment and there’s nothing there.

This student teacher recognised that to teach science he had to change his strategy from activity-based to what he saw as “very much theoretical science”. This understanding was generated when he realised that the school did not have any equipment that he could use to teach science. This quote shows his construction of the science curriculum, which he viewed as simply ‘theoretical science’.

These quotes demonstrate the student teachers’ construction of a professional knowledge of the curriculum. It depicts the knowledge gain of the student teachers in terms of their abilities to evaluate student academic level, prepare appropriate lesson plans and devise methods to deliver the lesson plan. In particular, it includes the ability to evaluate students’ academic ability in order to be able to prepare the relevant lesson plan and appropriate methods for teaching.

Although student learning is debatable in short internationalisation programs, the findings suggest that the student teachers did learn about teaching in the GEP. The availability of more academic support might give different findings for this research.

### 8.1.4 Strategies of classroom management

Strategies of classroom management are part of ‘general pedagogical knowledge’, which refers to “those broad principles and strategies of classroom management and organisation that appear to transcend subject matter” (Shulman, 2004, p. 92). In detail, classroom management is defined as below:
the philosophical beliefs of teachers; understanding philosophical, social, and
debt needs of students, creating positive student-teacher, student-student, teacher-
parent relationships; increasing student motivation for learning; minimising the
disruptive and altering the unproductive behaviours of students; the organisation of the
classroom; and the delivery of effective instruction


It shows that strategies of classroom management involve not only pedagogical
knowledge for managing negative student behaviour, but also a wide range of
teacher’s belief, student conditions, student motivation, classroom organisation
and effective instruction.

This sub-section will investigate student teachers’ observations of classroom
practices and how they adjust their classroom management strategies to suit the
Vanuatuan context.

The following quotes illustrate the student teachers’ observations of classroom
practices. It illuminates their understanding of classroom management, which
they generated through identifying a problem and addressing the identified
problem.

Finally I found that students had trouble following verbal instructions as they are so
used to simply taking notes from the board. I had to both explain the activities
verbally, as well as writing them on the board, and then going from group to group to
check comprehension.

This student teacher identified that the Vanuatuan students did not understand
her instruction, when she said “I found that students had trouble following
verbal instructions”. Her knowledge of the way Vanuatuan student learn,
which she described as “simply taking notes from the board” suggests to her a
way of solving the problem by providing written instructions.

Another student teacher observed similar problems in her classroom which she
identified in the following way: “in Vanuatu most children struggle to
recognise verbal instructions”.

In Australia we tend to explain out aloud the instructions but here in Vanuatu most
children struggle to recognise verbal instructions but rather recognise visual cues
when written on the chalk board, e.g.; fill in the gaps with the words below. When
writing instructions the students would even wrote down the instructions into their
book. This was observed when I tried to explain a task I had for the students and after
trying to give clear details they sat there and looked confused but as soon as I wrote it
on the board they started writing.

This student teacher found that ‘after trying to give clear details’ about a task,
the Vanuatuan students ‘sat there and looked confused’. She remembers their
behaviour of copying off the board, and that she wrote some instructions on the board; she observed that the Vanuatuan students tend to recognise ‘visual cues when written on the board’.

These quotes demonstrate some student teachers’ constructions of classroom management. They relate to their identification of the Vanuatuan students’ behaviour of not following their instructions, which were delivered orally. Their realisation of the Vanuatuan students’ learning style, which was mainly copying off the board, enabled them to come up with an appropriate way of delivering instructions (Shulman, 2004). It emphasised also that knowledge of students’ characteristics and learning behaviour is important to developing effective instructions (Shulman, 2004). In this case, some visual representations, such as writing on the board, are necessary to enhance the ability of ESL students to contextualise classroom discourse (Curran, 2003).

The following quote shows a different illustration of a student teacher’s understanding of classroom behaviour

I have this one kid. He just will not speak to me at all. And I was not yelling at him. I got him to sit next to me because he was running outside- running doing laps in the class and running away from me. When he going come back in the classroom I got him to sit next to me on the floor. And he stays there. And then I said: Okay when you are ready to go, tell me. We can talk and then you can go ... okay. You just need to tell me. Look. I put you here because I am really disappointed in a way that ...I put this in a simple English so he could understand that. I am really disappointed with you with the way you’ve behaving. But we can have a little chat when you are ready. And then you know that should be fine. All what I want you to do is just acknowledge me. You know what I want to do is to introduce acknowledgement.

This student teacher observed that one of her students has no discipline, which she described as “he was running outside- running doing laps in the class”. She wanted to teach a discipline as she believed it would change the boy’s unruly behaviour, saying that “what I want to do is to introduce acknowledgement”. This quote suggests that this student teacher was able to identify a solution to address the student’s negative behaviour. But, her strategy of classroom management, which is “I got him to sit next to me on the floor and I said: “Okay, when you are ready to go … you just need to tell me”, was not successful.
other kids to come up and I was like ‘tell him in Bislama if he wants to go outside all what he needs to do is talk to me just no need to do anything just any kind of acknowledgement’. And they told him and he started whacking all the stuff. And you know what I said is just sit there. And other kids left food for him. There was fruit next to him and he just sitting there like I didn’t know what to do. It was very difficult. It was just a culture barrier.

This quote illuminates her inability to manage the Vanuatuan student and the organisation of her class and teaching around this incident; it shows that there was a communication breakdown: “he just sat there for the whole time… he wouldn’t nod, wouldn’t look at me. As he just sat there just looking at the ground… he started whacking all the stuff …like I don’t know what to do. It was very difficult. It was just a culture barrier”. The following quote shows her thinking about this incident.

It is just the way the kids interact with teachers. It’s just really different to how Victorian students interact with teachers generally. Things like … they just don’t understand the same cues like Australian kids have – Victorian students have been brought up with all these cues so they understand [the cues] that … because also I am Australian so I understand the same cues as them. So when I am doing one thing they understand what it means.

These series of quotes from a student teacher shows that there was a conflict of values or beliefs between the student teacher and the Vanuatuan boy. On one side, the student teacher believed that the student must be disciplined, which in this case involved telling the teacher before going out of the classroom. These beliefs/values were drawn from her belief system as an Australian student teacher. On the other side, the Vanuatuan student believed that he could just go out and in the classroom anytime he wanted, as there was no rule that he needs to tell the teacher if he wants to go out from the classroom. The phenomenon about the absence of such a rule – acknowledging the teacher before going out – was confirmed by the other student teachers, who reported that the Vanuatuan teachers are not really concerned with negative behaviours such as noise, walk/ run in the classroom, thus illuminating the perception of the unruly behaviour of Vanuatuan students from the student teachers’ point of view. In other words, the student teacher appears to interpret the Vanuatuan student’s behaviour using her own belief/value, which was contradictory to the Vanuatuan student’s belief. This leads her to solve the problem from her own perspective, which is influenced by her own cultural background; this reflects the emerging cultural gap between them.
These quotes suggest that this student teacher was able to recognise the problem of classroom behaviour. Although she was aware of the influence of culture on classroom practice – which is illustrated in the way that she explained the student behaviour and her own belief of how the student should behave – she was not able to develop an appropriate strategy to manage the Vanuatuan student’s behaviour.

In the second quote, this student teacher said “It was just a culture barrier”. In the last quote, she constructed her cultural learning saying that “they just don’t understand the same cues like Australian kids have – Victorian students have been brought up with all these cues so they understand [the cues] that … because also I am Australian, so I understand the same cues as them”. Therefore, this student teacher was able to identify the cultural gap in terms of cultural knowledge, but she was not able to develop her classroom management skills. She did not know what to do in order to communicate with the little Vanuatuan boy, let alone to teach him about ‘acknowledging the teacher’ before going out of the classroom.

This discussion suggests that, contrary to the general assumption of a lack of student learning from short internationalisation programs, examination of this GEP shows that the student teachers learnt to recognise the existing cultural difference between teacher and students. However, the provision of sufficient academic support for the student teachers on the field might enhance their learning of teaching and would prevent similar incidents happening. With the appropriate support, such an incident might become an avenue for a student teacher to learn to shift her/his teaching perspectives, develop an understanding of the situation and enable him/her to develop relevant strategies for classroom management behaviour.

8.1.5 Teaching practice

Teaching practice constitutes the ‘pedagogical content knowledge’, which refers to “special amalgam of content and pedagogy that is uniquely the province of teachers, their own special form of professional understanding” (Shulman, 2004, p. 92). Thus, teaching practice refers to knowledge about
teaching “that is particular to content areas and the diverse interests and abilities of learners” (Exley, 2005, p. 21).

The following sub-section will investigate the student teachers’ observation of Vanuatuan teachers’ teaching practice including how of they cater the Vanuatuan students’ interest and ability, and how the student teachers adjust their own teaching to suit the Vanuatuan students.

The following are some student teachers’ observations of their Vanuatuan supervising teachers’ teaching practice.

Well, very traditional. Everything is pretty much like the teacher write on the board and the children copy but …the teacher discussing with the kids what things mean …. they just to copy and stuff.

This student teacher shows that the teaching involves only “write on the board and the children copy”. The teacher appeared to have an explanation for all students. The quote did not specify if the teacher addressed any specific need of students.

The following quote displays similar meaning of teaching practice of Vanuatuan teacher. It involved with reading out of the text book, and the teaching was meant for all students.

Well, actually I found it really boring because the teaching style. Just like, she read straight out of the text book and she says, like you know, do question one, two, three, four, five and then. That’s it. She does not help them or anything like that.

This student teacher provided her observation of her Vanuatuan supervising teacher, which she explained as involving with little explanation apart from copy to and from the board.

Also the style of teaching demonstrated by my supervisors was hugely different from any that I had seen in rounds at home. Teaching involved simply writing notes from the textbook onto the board and having student’s copy them with little or no explanation.

All quotes show those Vanuatuan teachers’ teaching basically involved copy and little explanation about the lesson. They indicate also that the Vanuatuan teachers delivered the same lesson for all students; there was no teaching according to the need and interest of Vanuatuan students.
These teaching practices in Vanuatuan schools raised the student teachers’ awareness of their own teaching practices, which were developed through their previous teaching round in Melbourne.

The following quote shows an understanding of teaching practice in Vanuatu. The construction of this student teacher’s understanding of teaching practice in Vanuatu illuminates in her understanding of teaching practice of Vanuatuan teachers and how it affected herself as a student teacher. It shows that the simple teaching of Vanuatuan teachers encouraged her to become ‘more adaptive and flexible’.

Teaching in Vanuatu has made me more adaptive and flexible as a teacher than I was previously and I believe having faced the challenges I faced here that I am better equipped to teach in Australia.

Similar perception of teaching practice in Vanuatu is given below:

Finally some kind of profession development could help teachers to learn new teaching skills other than simply writing notes out from the textbook. This may also engage students more in class and encourage them to attend more classes.

This student teacher identified that Vanuatuan teacher’s lack of professional development, and suggested they may be in need of ‘new teaching’ skills to be able to engage students in their teaching.

As the knowledge of teaching practice includes also ability to adjust teaching according to the interest and abilities of students, the following quotes demonstrated the student teachers abilities to adjust their teaching to various needs of Vanuatuan students.

In particular, the following quote demonstrates student teachers’ development of teaching strategies as a response to Vanuatuan student low level of English competency.

The kids did not know a lot of words. I just like to read it to them because I’d like to model the language. Because when the teacher talks and any one in Vanuatu, they have their accents. They say things like ‘th’ and they say ‘de’ so when the kids write instead of writing ‘th’ they write it –such as- with- they write it ‘wid’. So I just like to model the language because my ways of speaking promotes a better ways of spelling. So I like to read a book all of the time. And I try to speak very slowly and the picture books are great because it has images and stuffs.

This student teacher shows her development of teaching strategies involving ‘model the language’ to encourage Vanuatuan students to have better ways of
spelling, read a story, and speak slowly. The student teacher in the following quote applied her strategy as she said “speak slower…break it down”.

And yeah I also have started to adapt to their culture. I start to speak slower and my English is more broken like I break it down and I say the things which matter.

These excerpts show that the student teachers learnt about teaching during their short participation in the GEP although it was limited to cater the Vanuatuan students whose English was a second or third or fourth language.

This sub-section shows that teaching round in Vanuatu encouraged the student teachers to compare their own teaching with that of the Vanuatuan teachers. The experience reinforced the student teachers’ beliefs of their own teaching as the good practice as they witness the Vanuatuan students as the ‘product’ of the ‘talk and chalk’ pedagogy. Moreover, the quotes suggest that the student teachers were able to develop new teaching in order to address the Vanuatuan student low level of English.

Overall, the quotes reveal a range of lived experiences demonstrating the occurrence of professional learning in terms of gaining knowledge of and developing teaching practice. The following table provides summary of the findings of professional learning in the GEP.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Professional Learning in the case study</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cultural norms of Vanuatuan school – PL1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Shy behaviour as a manifestation of school cultural norms in Vanuatu.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Adjusted teaching through changing questioning method and behaviour in teaching.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vanuatuan student learning style – PL2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Rote learning as a representation of Vanuatuan student learning style.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Developed effective instruction – to include non-verbal instruction.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vanuatuan curriculum – PL3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Un-structured Vanuatuan school curriculum.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Developed lesson plan for ESL students.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Adapted lesson plan to limited resources.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strategies of classroom management – PL4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Recognition of student behaviour as a distinct behaviour to address.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Developed effective instructions.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Teaching practice – PL5

- Recognition of ‘talk and chalk’ pedagogy.
- Reinforcement of belief that own teaching practice is the good one.
- Developed teaching strategies to teach ESL students.
- Become more adaptive and flexible in facing lack of teaching resource.

Table 8.1 Summary of professional teaching learning in the 2010 Vanuatu GEP

The findings show that the student teachers’ experiences of teaching Vanuatuan students appeared to trigger their own learning. Their attention to Vanuatuan students’ behaviour, learning styles and learning abilities enabled the student teachers to learn from their experiences.

With regard to the cultural norms of the school, the student teachers were able to adjust their teaching through changing the questioning method and behaviour in teaching. They were also able to develop effective instruction, such as to include non-verbal instruction to address the student learning style of rote learning.

The case study findings showed that Vanuatuan student behaviours triggered the student teachers to augment their skill of developing an effective instruction. It was found also that the student teachers recognised the ‘talk and chalk pedagogy of their supervising teachers and it reinforced their beliefs of what good teaching practice is. The teaching context of Vanuatu developed their teaching strategies for ESL students and enabled them to become more adaptive and flexible in teaching.

The case study findings showed that the student teachers identified the unstructured curriculum in Vanuatuan schools and it allowed them to develop the appropriate lesson plan for Vanuatuan students as ESL students, and adjust their lesson plans to the limited resources of Vanuatuan schools.

8.2. Interpreting Reflective Thinking Development

This section aims to investigate the student teachers’ construction of reflective thinking practice, since reflection is necessary, not only for teaching learning, but also cultural learning from international experience, as discussed in
Chapter Three (Byram, 1997; Deardorff, 2008; Paige, 1993). In particular, the survey findings in Chapter Five show that the majority of student teachers (90%) perceived that they developed more reflective thinking practice than observation skills (70%).

As argued by Clarke (1995), reflective thinking is triggered mostly by the non-routine contexts; thus, the Vanuatu GEP, which provides a very different teaching situation from that which the student teachers are used to could be considered as providing ‘the non-routine context’ to reflect. Moreover, as a ‘problematic’ situation is also considered to drive reflection (Loughran, 2002, p. 35), the Vanuatu GEP could be considered as a relevant context, since its unfamiliar context could be perceived as ‘problematic’ for the student teacher.

In this section, the student teachers’ reflective reports were analysed to understand the student teacher’s reflective thinking development through addressing the following questions:

- What were the contexts or situations that triggered or promoted reflective thinking?
- What were the aspects of teaching the student teachers reflected on?
- What were the associated contexts, skills and attitudes that emerged in the process of reflective thinking among the student teachers?

In this case, reflective thinking is considered to take place if the following ‘four conditions are illuminated in the reflective reports’ (Clarke, 1995, p. 246):

1) Trigger: is curious or intrigued about some aspect of the practice setting;
2) Frame: frames that aspect in terms of the particulars of the setting;
3) Reframe: reframes that aspect in the light of past knowledge or previous experience;
4) Plan: develops a plan for future action.

The Vanuatuan students’ different behaviour that prompted the student teachers’ apprehension leads to their reflection. The following two quotes suggest the occurrence of reflective thinking among the student teachers.
One of the major issues that I found was facing the school is behaviour management. The students are continuously fighting with each other and talking over the teacher. The teacher’s behaviour management strategy is a stick, she hits them whenever they are talking/ not listening or not sitting up straight. I could see that behaviour management is clearly an issue in the class, and the teacher’s strategy of using a stick would not be helping the situation, as the students are now unaffected by any other type of behaviour management. I believe to fix the problem it is essential that the teacher stops using the stick to control the class. Also to help control the students’ behaviour, an idea would be to engage them more. The reason the students misbehave is because they are bored and uninterested; if the lesson is fun and engaging they would be more likely to participate and behave.

This quote shows that this student teacher is concerned with the use of a stick to manage Vanuatuan students’ behaviour. The Vanuatuan teacher’s use of the stick could be the trigger for this student teacher, as this teacher behaviour is illegal in Australia, so really the student teacher is in a difficult situation about the code of ethics and legal framework of the teachers’ work. She frames the problem as ‘using a stick to control student behaviour’. Then she reframes that ‘there are other ways to control student negative behaviour’. Based on the new frame of looking at the problem, which is ‘to stop using a stick’, she draws from her existing knowledge/ theory of strategy to attract students’ attention. She comes up with suggestions to make the lesson more interesting.

Students seem to be very aggressive where ever they are whether it’s in or out of the classroom and seem to deal with their issues violently. This usually just consists of a small hit over the head but I believe it could get very violent at times. The teachers just seem to see this as a ‘normal’ thing and let it go on in and around the classroom. Students also seem to talk a lot to each other when someone else is talking … I believe teachers need to implement a school rule where all students are to keep their hands to themselves and they should also encourage this to parent for in and around their home to keep the consistency. I also believe the teachers should try implementing a more encouraging behaviour strategy to get the student attention rather than embarrassing and excluding students. While teaching in the classroom a strategy I used was ‘hands on heads’ which seems to work extremely well and encouraged everyone to stop what they are doing without being exclusive.

This quote shows a student teacher’s reflection on Vanuatuan student behaviour. This student teacher’s amazement at seeing her Vanuatuan supervising teacher ignore what she considered as the unruly behaviour of the students, prompted her to think about managing negative behaviour. Her recollection of past knowledge advised her that “teachers need to implement a school rule”, including “implementing a more encouraging behaviour strategy to get the student’s attention rather than embarrassing and excluding students”.

An observation of Vanuatuan student behaviour activated another student teacher’s attention. She explains below:
Classroom management was one of the major issues I was faced with during my teaching experience. As it was only my second teaching practicum, I had not learnt many classroom management tips and found that I was losing my voice by the end of each day from trying to talk over the top of the students. As time went on I learnt many valuable classroom management techniques that I plan to adopt in future teaching practice. As well as classroom management skills I learnt many other things from effective time management to lesson planning to teaching a wide variety of subjects.

As this student teacher said “Classroom management was one of the major issues” she had; it reflects her framing of experiencing the difficulty of managing behaviour. When she identified that there should be a way to handle the behaviour of students, she was trying to reframe her experience. However, as this teaching was her second round suggesting she was lack of existing knowledge and experience to draw on, it caused her to be unable to come up with a ‘plan’. As she said “As time went on I learnt many valuable classroom management techniques that I plan to adopt in future teaching practice”; this illustrates that she had the solution to manage her student behaviour. Thus, she appears to develop new knowledge about classroom management techniques from the GEP, but it is not clear if it is generated from her reflection.

The following quote suggest a similar situation whereby the behaviour of Vanuatuan students triggered a student teacher to reflect on their learning. As the quote did not indicate any attempt to reframe, it might suggest that the student teacher developed learning from the total experience. This quote did not specify what he means by ‘skills for managing a classroom’ although he remarked “The skill … I have developed most whilst being here is classroom management”.

The second skill that I have developed most whilst being here is classroom management, this placement has tested my skills for managing a classroom a lot more than previous placement. This has been due to absence of supervisors, large concrete classroom and large class sizes full of enthusiastic kids.

The Vanuatuan student learning behaviours attracted the student teachers’ responses. In the following quote, the student teacher found that Vanuatuan students’ academic abilities were not like what she thought.

I believe the students learning was based on ‘rote learning’ – learning from memory. When I first arrived I read some of the class books with the children and was surprised to see that they could read it very well, all the way through the books. I later realised this was because the class only had a few books, so the students have memorised the story; they are no longer reading the words, just remembering them. The only way they know how to learn is by copying off the board, which doesn’t necessarily mean they understand and learn what they are copying down...I think
that reading, guided reading in particular, is very important for students and that is a major issue that this class does not do any type of it.

In preparation meetings, the onsite coordinator informed the student teachers that, for Vanuatuan students, English could be their first, second or even third language, as there are three formal languages in Vanuatu – English, French and Bislama. So, when she saw that the Vanuatuan students read the books fluently she became suspicious. She framed the situation as ‘students read well their books together’. Her suspicion lead her to reframe this into ‘student needs to read individually’, suggested her new understanding of the reason why the students read well together. As there were only a few books in the class, the students must have memorised the books as she said “they are no longer reading the words, just remembering them”, which reflects the concept of ‘rote learning’. Hence, she suggested for the school to provide a ‘guided reading group’ to help the students to read, not to memorise.

Another student teacher’s concern about Vanuatuan student learning behaviour is as follows:

Australian teaching style is very hands-on to help the students stay engaged in their learning as students seem to easily get distracted in lessons over 50 minutes where as Vanuatu seen to use the ‘chalk and talk’ where the teachers write on the board and the students copy, this is sometimes done for over an hour as most classes are two hours long. In Australia we tend to explain out aloud the instructions but here in Vanuatu most children struggle to recognise verbal instructions but rather visual cues when written on the chalkboard, e.g., ‘Fill in the gaps with the words below’. When writing instructions the students would even wrote down the instructions into their book. This was observed when I tried to explain a task I had for the students and after trying to give clear details they sat there and looked confused but as soon as I wrote it on the board they started writing.

She framed the situation; she explained out aloud the instructions as that is the way she had already learnt from her experience as a student teacher and the way she was brought up. When the problem emerged that the students did not react, her existing knowledge about Vanuatuan students, who were used to writing from the board, suggests new insight to solve the problem. She reframed the situation; she wrote the instructions on the board, e.g., ‘Fill in the gaps with the words below’, then, she saw that the Vanuatuan students started to work.

Observing the very different teaching practice in Vanuatu, indeed, triggered various responses from the student teachers. The following quotes show some
student teachers’ observations of their supervising teachers’ teaching practice. In the first quote below, this student teacher framed the current teaching as being about ‘copying; as she said “the teachers copy notes from a text book onto the board and ask their students to copy it into their note books”.

Currently the teachers copy notes from a text book onto the board and ask their students to copy it into their notes book. This is not a very effective way for kids to learn. The school should provide teachers with Personal Development to help improve their teaching and make the lessons more student-centred.

This teaching practice disturbed her as it is very different to what she had learnt about teaching. So, from the current frame of teaching involving copy from book into board and to be copied by the students into their books, she reframed it into a different teaching practice when she said, “The school should provide teachers with Personal Development to help improve their teaching”.

For the plan, she suggested “making the lessons more student-centred”.

A similar reflection triggered by the practice of talk-and-chalk pedagogy appears as follows.

Lack of knowledge of other ways to teach, given that many of the local teachers here I observed had been educated locally to varying standards I think that in many ways they are not taught how to effectively plan student centre lessons and hence stick with what they know …I would recommend … introduction of how to run learner centred activities for teachers as PD [Professional Development] days.

It shows that this student teacher reframed his experience of teaching in terms of the need to apply student-centred teaching. As he drew on his existing knowledge of teaching strategies, he suggested the need for the Vanuatuan teacher to run student-centred teaching.

‘Talk-and-chalk’ pedagogy encouraged another student teacher’s reflection, similar to the previous ones.

The most significant difference to me was the way they learnt. Just superficial copying off the board as opposed to all the group work and hands on activities that we do in Australia. I tried to implement Australian methods but as the students weren’t used to it, it was quite challenging.

I don’t know that my approach to teaching has changed. It has taught me what not to do. Small amounts of notes are fine, but I really don’t believe any real learning takes place. So I will endeavour to include higher order thinking into my teaching at home.

In the first quote, this student teacher reframed her experience that she had to teach using Australian method. Drawing upon her past knowledge, she applied
her ‘plan’, including group-work and hands-on activities. This quote suggests that she conducted ‘reflective practice’, rather than ‘reflective thinking’ as she exercised her ‘plan’, even though she concluded that “as the students weren’t used to it, it was quite challenging”.

The second quote indicated that this student teacher reframed her experience to teach using Australian method. As she said “It has taught me what not to do” and “Small amounts of notes are fine”; this indicates that she did teach using the Australian method in Vanuatu. However, as she said “but I really don’t believe any real learning takes place”; this suggests that she again reframed her experience. Her reflection would be to include higher order of thinking in her teaching when she teaches in Melbourne.

Another concern of talk-and-chalk pedagogy is as follows:

This experience hasn’t changed my approach to teaching. I will continue to use a constructivist approach to teaching and learning, where the students are active participants in the learning process, discovering and coming to conclusions by themselves. The experience has reinforced the benefits of this approach... The students were not used to a constructivist approach to teaching and learning, so when I emphasised a hands-on interactive approach to learning the students were out of their comfort zone and became very excited and unsettled.

This student teacher reframed her experience of teaching in order to explain her not using the ‘talk-and-chalk’ method. The quote suggests that she taught using, not ‘talk-and-chalk’ but a constructivist approach as she said “When I emphasised a hands-on interactive approach to learning the students were out of their comfort zone”. Hence, this quote shows also that this student teacher involved ‘reflective practice’ and not only ‘reflective thinking, in particular, she said that “This experience hasn’t changed my approach to teaching. I will continue to use a constructivist approach to teaching and learning”. Her reflection concludes that: “The experience has reinforced the benefits of this approach.” This suggests that she did not gain new knowledge or develop new skills; instead she gained a reinforcement of her belief about the benefits of constructivist approach.

The following is another student teacher’s reframing of looking at the current teaching practice in Vanuatu.
Teachers don’t cater for the variety of abilities and skills in their classroom. Teachers need to learn teaching strategies that allow them to cater for the wide variety of abilities in their class. They need activities for the strugglers, and also ones for the brighter students. This could be achieved through professional developments and further education. Also, it would be nice if each teacher could be given a handbook that discusses different teaching strategies that they could use—that way they will have something concrete that they could refer to and use in their classroom to help them improve their teaching approaches.

In this quote, this student teacher’s observation of her supervising teacher’s teaching practice, which did not care about the different abilities of the students, caused her to recall her past knowledge. She reframed this in such a way as to suggest that the Vanuatuan teacher should address the different abilities of students in the class. Further, she suggested that the school provide a teaching handbook as a resource to improve teaching practice in Vanuatu.

Another student teacher reframed the teaching practice of talk-and-chalk that he witnessed in his school as follows:

As a result, simply changing teaching methods at higher levels at Malapoa is unlikely to be completely satisfactory. In an ideal world teachers throughout primary and secondary schools would expand their teaching strategies to accommodate a wider range of students and improved learning opportunities for all...However, I am not sure about completely mimicking western style education. Firstly, I’m not sure it suits their culture and dispositions. Secondly, it would be a shame if they lost some of good aspects of their schools; the students are generally very courteous, polite and humble.

This student teacher reframed the experience to suggest that the current teaching practice should be changed, but he was not be able to construct the precise frame. However, he proposed a ‘plan’, demonstrating his reflection when he said “their teaching strategies to accommodate a wider range of students and improved learning opportunities for all”. This quote suggests also that from reflection, this student teacher has come to the idea of the danger of adopting a western style for Vanuatu.

Another student teacher reflected on the limited resources;

The experience mainly just reinforced how different their system is and how difficult it is for them to provide high standard education when money is so limiting. From a personal point of view it certainly builds resilience and resourcefulness given the lack of resources and the lack of understanding of how things operate in general.

This student framed himself as a teacher who is used to having resources. His teaching in Vanuatu reframes him as teaching without resources. His response – “it certainly builds resilience and resourcefulness given the lack of resources”
suggests that he was able to build his ability to teach with limited resources
drawing from his existing knowledge of teaching. Yet, he did not mention his
‘plan’ to elaborate his skills of being resourceful.

A similar result of his reflection is shown in the following quote.

I believe that ‘flexibility and versatility’ has been the biggest personal ‘strength’ that
I have developed from this experience. I had to adapt to not having the resources and
support that I am used to in Australian schools, and utilise what limited resources
they did have. For example, my school did not have sport equipment so I created a
game using scrunched up balls of paper.

Reframed as ‘teaching without resources’, this student teacher actually taught
with limited resources, as she gave an example of her activity: “my school did
d not have sport equipment so I created a game using scrunched up balls of
paper”. Thus, this quote suggests that she practised ‘reflective practice’ in
addition to ‘reflective thinking’. Her reflection suggests that she developed
‘flexibility and versatility’ as her biggest personal ‘strength’ gained from the
GEP.

Below is another student teacher’s reflection from experiencing a lack of
resource in Vanuatuan schools.

…I have developed most during this practicum are being resourceful, given such
limited range of resources even those available for purchase in Vanuatu are quite
hard to come by, it has really taught me to be more resourceful in my approach to
teaching. I think that I have started to see activities in a light throughout the
experience and overall will be able to run a classroom on less money if needed
to….I would recommend...getting resources that lend themselves to no cost
activities rather than the current text books that list expensive activities that just get
ignored by the teachers.

Triggered by a lack of resources, this student teacher reframed himself as
teaching without resources. He was able to have a plan, which included using
inexpensive material for teaching, rather than buying the expensive material
listed in the textbook.

The findings reveal that the student teachers reflected on various issues during
their teaching round in Vanuatu. There are four topics that trigger the student
teachers to reflect upon their teaching practice, including: Vanuatuan student
unruly behaviour; learning style; talk-and-chalk pedagogy; and lack of
resources.
In particular, the student teachers are able to view the problems from different perspectives. With regard to Vanuatuan student behaviour, the student teachers reflected on some aspects of teaching including the use of a stick to control negative behaviour and an absence of classroom rules. Although the student teachers reflected upon the same aspects of teaching, some student teachers displayed reflective thinking while others changed some aspects of their teaching through reflective practices. Thus this teaching practice in the Vanuatu classroom produced both reflection and reflective practices. Those who reflected on how to stop the use of stick and impose classroom rules to manage student behaviour, came up with suggestions, such as to create interesting lessons, to apply other strategies to engage students, and to avoid ways that exclude students. Other student teachers who reflected on the need to impose classroom rules to manage student behaviour developed their own practicality related to managing student behaviour. Thus, these student teachers demonstrated not only ‘reflective thinking’ but also ‘reflective practice’ during the GEP. The findings show that they developed ‘skills of classroom management’, although the analysis of a reflective thinking process did not evince any explanation of the term.

There are two aspects of Vanuatuan student learning behaviour that the student teachers reflected on, including Vanuatuan student ‘rote learning style’ and the use of verbal instruction with limited or nonverbal instruction. Reflection of the ‘rote learning style’ of the Vanuatuan student teachers enabled her to come up with a suggestion as to how to improve Vanuatuan student reading ability, which is to apply guided reading groups. The student teachers who reflected on the delivery of classroom instructions were able to develop ‘real teaching skills’, such as developing written instructions on the board.

With regards to the practice of talk-and-chalk pedagogy, the findings show that the student teachers reflected on many aspects of teaching, demonstrating their ability to see the same problem from various perspectives. In particular, there were some student teachers who taught using group work and hands-on activities, arguing that ‘talk-and-chalk’ did not encourage the Vanuatuan students to learn. The results of their ‘reflective practice’ suggest that their teaching round in Vanuatu reinforced their beliefs of the benefits of the
student-centred approach although they observed that the Vanuatuan students became unsettled and anxious.

Other student teachers who also reflected on the same issue – talk-and-chalk pedagogy reframed the problem in other ways. In this case, they reflected on the need to replace talk-and-chalk pedagogy with other methods and to cater for the varied abilities of Vanuatuan students. Their reflective thinking encouraged them to recommend implementing student-centred teaching, accommodating a wider range of student needs, and applying higher-order thinking.

The analysis of student teachers’ reflections on the issue of lack of resources suggests that they were able to adapt themselves to teach using limited resources. Their experience demonstrated reflective practices rather than reflective thinking. The results of their reflective practice confirmed to them that they became more resilient, resourceful, flexible and versatile. Thus, this analysis revealed that reflection lead to professional development as well as personal development.

To sum up, the student teachers demonstrated reflection on several issues including, the use of stick to control student behaviour; no classroom rules; rote learning style; single lesson for various abilities; and talk-and-chalk pedagogy. This reflective thinking resulted in the student teachers adapting their practices, including devising an engaging lesson, avoiding strategies that embarrass and exclude a child; applying guided reading groups; applying student-centred teaching; and applying teaching strategies which engage students on various academic levels.

### 8.3 Summary

This chapter aimed to address the general arguments relating to programs concerned with the internationalisation of the curriculum; to date there had been only a few investigations of the underlying assumptions of a program such as the GEP. However, this assumption was challenged, as evidence of professional learning, reflective thinking and practice development emerged from the analysis.
In general, professional learning includes both the gaining of knowledge of aspects of teaching and the development of abilities on certain aspects of teaching. This includes the student teachers’ development of an ability to reflect on certain differences during their teaching practice. This analysis has shown that the student teachers’ reflection on these four issues encouraged them to modify their teaching practices, which demonstrates the occurrence of reflective practice, rather than merely reflection in their thinking.
CHAPTER NINE

Conclusion

9.0 Introduction

As this research has been positioned within the context of internationalisation of the curriculum, it has taken up the challenge to respond to perspectives that short programs of international study may not really produce student learning or intercultural learning. Scholars like Rizvi (2007a) have suggested that such programs are ‘quick fixes’ for internationalising the curriculum. Rizvi (2007a) argues that there has been scarce evidence of student learning through short international professional experience programs demonstrating the achievement of internationalisation, of which the GEP is an instance. Similarly, Stronkhorst (2005) proposes that the evaluation of actual learning outcomes, in terms of international and intercultural competencies, is rarely demonstrated. These arguments have prompted this research to take up the challenge to examine what student teachers do learn from their international experience and to evaluate their learning in terms of cultural and professional learning. In this case, this chapter draws conclusions about whether student teachers’ learning gained from their teaching experience in Vanuatu can be considered as evidence of the GEP’s contributing to the goal of internationalisation of the curriculum.

In an attempt to evaluate the contribution of the GEP to internationalisation of the curriculum, the first section reviews critically the analysis of student teachers’ cultural learning and assumptions about the nature of culture, identity and diversity. The second section demonstrates the theoretical veracity of the intercultural models employed in this thesis, including the rationale for using the models, underlying assumptions, and the logic of stages in the development of intercultural sensitivity and competence. The third section evaluates critically the notion of professional learning in the light of internationalisation of the curriculum, including the complexity of attempts to examine how understandings about teaching and learning emerge in intercultural contexts. The fourth section presents some considerations for future research through
which the methodology may expand the outcomes of the thesis. The potential and limitations of the GEP for achieving the goals of internationalisation of the curriculum are considered in the last section.

### 9.1 Cultural learning and the complexity of culture in internationalising the curriculum

The agenda of internationalisation of the curriculum refers to various terms, such as cross-cultural understanding, intercultural learning, intercultural competence, intercultural sensitivity, and intercultural effectiveness (Crichton & Scarino, 2007; Deardorff, 2006b, 2008; Eisenchlas, et al., 2003; IAU, 2012; Leask, 2004; Rizvi, 2000, 2007a; Stone, 2006; Trevaskes & Eisenchlas, 2003). Internationalisation requires that students learn about:

- other cultures and modalities of cultures to develop intercultural sensitivity and communication competence from intercultural exchange, which highlight both the cognitive and ethical dimensions of intercultural learning (Rizvi, 2007a, p. 393).

Culture is considered dynamic, complex and constantly changing through contact with others (Rizvi, 2000, 2007a; Rizvi & Lingard, 2000; Rizvi & Walsh, 1998) and “is continually in the process of change, brought about by the participants in the culture as they live and work” (Crawford & McLaren, 2003, pp. 130-134). An intercultural exchange that has the possibility of cognitive and ethical learning would need to take into account broader contextual understandings about the country/culture in which it takes place in order to develop cultural sensitivities that demonstrate a range of learnings about the culture. Hence, the changing nature of culture suggests the need to consider postcolonial insights and globalisation perspectives in understanding the complex meaning of culture. I will now address these insights.

#### 9.1.1 Postcolonialism

Postcolonialism focuses on “the ways in which language works in the colonial formation of discursive and cultural practices” (Rizvi, Lingard, & Lavia, 2006, p. 250). It includes understanding of the use of language related to postcolonial condition. However, the word “postcolonial” is a complex term as it reflects
various meanings. Initially, postcolonial insight, which is written as “post-colonial”, refers to a historical condition of a nation after independence (Martin & Griffiths, 2012, p. 910). As the GEP was located in Vanuatu, it is important to take into account the socio-historical context of Vanuatu to understand its people because history and movement of people create dynamic changes in society. Consider the extent of changes in Vanuatu as a formerly Anglo-French colony which gained independence in 1980 with English and French as the official languages apart from the traditional language of Bislama (Miles, 1994). Hence, Vanuatu culture may be seen as being in transition from an Anglo-French colonial culture to postcolonial nationhood.

In addition to periodisation meaning, the term postcolonial has referred also to:

its claim to provide a set of literary techniques for analysing colonial texts, its wider interpretation involving a range of theoretical claims about the legacy of colonialism and its political aspirations about its role in creating a more just and equitable world (Rizvi, et al., 2006, p. 251).

These various meanings are depicted in postcolonial theories, including the works of Said, Spivak and Bhabha. Said established that ‘during colonial times, the western binary way of thinking (like-unlike; them-us; rich-poor) was the basis for how colonisers made sense of what they encountered’ and ‘showed how the categorisations were not only binary and oppositional, but also hierarchical, with one term being privileged over the other’ (Said, 1985, cited in Martin & Griffiths, 2012, p. 910). Other theorist, Spivak, proposed “for an ethical encounter with the Third World, people should unlearn their privilege and learn to learn from below (from the subaltern)”, whereby ‘learn to learn’ includes deferral of thinking one’s own cultural superiority (Spivak, 2002, p.6 cited in Andreoti, 2007, pp. 75-76). Furthermore, Bhabha articulated that:

the colonial stereotype is a complex, ambivalent, contradictory mode of representation, as anxious as it is assertive, and demands not only that we extend our critical and political objectives but that we change the object of analysis itself (Young, 2004, p. 183).

Postcolonialism shows how the colonised people were illustrated as “inferior, childlike, or feminine, incapable of looking after themselves (despite having
done so perfectly well for millennia)” (Young, 2003, p. 2). Postcolonial perspectives have been aimed at transforming how people think and behave in order to create reasonable relations between the different people (Young, 2003).

Indeed, there have been many critics of the concept of postcolonialism, including “for deeply politizing the academy” (Rizvi, et al., 2006, p. 249) and what During (2000) argues as ‘reconciliatory postcolonialism’ aims to reconcile colonised people to colonialism rather than to seek critical alternatives against colonialism. Rizvi (2007b, p. 256) suggests we consider postcolonialism only as ‘a political intervention’ in order for postcolonial perspectives to be useful. To employ a postcolonialist perspective is therefore itself a political act that should be recognised as such.

However, the current cultural changes are now influenced by the ever-increasing effects of globalisation. The phenomenon of globalisation has been described as referring to a greater intensity and extent of transnational movement of goods and services, money, people and ideas, manifested in the economic, political, social, cultural, and knowledge areas (Altbach & Knight, 2007; IAU, 2012; Marginson, 1999; Rizvi, 2000; Rizvi & Lingard, 2000). To understand current Vanuatuan culture in terms of the influence of globalisation requires an understanding of the current contemporary social, political, economic and cultural conditions (Hall, 1997; Rizvi, 2005; Young, 2003). The application of postcolonial theories:

...can perform a valuable role, not least because they draw attention to the false universalism of globalisation and show how contemporary social, political, economic and cultural practices continue to be located within the processes of cultural domination through the imposition of imperial structures of power (Rizvi, 2007b, p. 257).

In this case, postcolonial theories enable us to deconstruct the global context in which actual contemporary social and political situations, economy and culture are practised in light of the dominant culture, which is similar to the extension of the former imperial structure of power. In order that postcolonial theories may be used to understand the current practices of globalisation, there is a call
for approaching globalisation historically (Lavia, 2007; Rizvi, 2005, 2007b; Rizvi, et al., 2006).

Given the context, considers postcolonial perspectives – in order to be able to interrogate cultural learning critically; that is to “expand our understanding of how conceptualisations of race, racialization, and culture are constructed within particular historical and current neo-colonial contexts” (Browne, Smye, & Varcoe, 2005, p. 20). This enables to us draw attention to some perspectives that have not been challenged because the intercultural models and are not themselves critically self-reflective and do not encourage the challenging of cultural learnings.

In this light, perspectives of post-colonialism and globalisation are necessary in interpreting cultural learning because they frame a critical analysis of cultural interpretations and practices to show how issues of power and domination are evident.

When such perspectives are applied to the cultural learning of Deakin student teachers during the GEP, then a more critical review of their learning within a dynamic cultural context reveals more complex interpretation of their learning. This thesis investigated the cultural learning of Deakin student teachers, specifically their intercultural learning from involvement in a teaching practicum in Vanuatu in terms of: 1) Paige’s five culture learning dimensions (2006b); 2) intercultural sensitivity development examined using Bennett’s Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity - DMIS (1993), and 3) intercultural competence development examined using Deardorff’s model of intercultural competence (2004). The next part will critically review the students’ learning through post colonial analysis of culture and cultural learning.

9.1.2 Cultural learning in terms of Vanuatuan culture

With regard to what Deakin student teachers learnt about Vanuatuan culture, the application of five elements of culture learning (Paige, 2006b) shows the interpretation of various elements of culture learning among student teachers,
including their understanding of Vanuatuan culture. This model discriminates between ‘objective culture’ and ‘subjective culture’ (Bennett & Bennett, 2004; Bennett, et al., 2003). In this regard, objective culture is defined as “the institutions and products of a culture group”, meanwhile subjective culture refers to “the learned and shared patterns of beliefs, behaviours, and values of groups of interesting people” (Bennett, 1993, cited in Paige & Goode, 2009, p. 337). The elements of subjective culture are said to include ‘language use, nonverbal behaviour, communication style, cognitive style and cultural values’ (Bennett, et al., 2003, p. 243). On this basis, the student teachers’ subjective interpretations of cultural differences in Vanuatu, for example, ‘laid-back, shy, friendly, and unruly’ behaviours are considered as part of their learning of Vanuatuan subjective culture, which apparently is limited only to behaviour compared to the broad notion of subjective culture encompassing communication and cognitive style, language use and cultural values.

The representation of Vanuatuan culture as illustrated by the student teachers depicts the influences of the language of a colonial perspective (Rizvi, et al., 2006). Using a postcolonial lens, Deakin student teacher illustrations of Vanuatuan student behaviour may be seen as representing what Young (Young, 2003, p. 2) considers to be more “a mirror image of themselves and their own assumptions than the reality of what is really there”. Thus, Deakin student teachers tend to describe Vanuatuan student behaviours based on their own assumptions which may not reflect the reality. In this case, when students persist in reading cultural behaviours as ‘laidback’ and ‘unruly’, they have yet to critically reflect on their negative stereotyping. Therefore, when Paige’s model provides evidence that students demonstrate cultural learning, if we analyse their learning through a postcolonial lens, we can see that they are not challenging the origin of their perceptions and not showing awareness of their colonial perspectives. Paige’s (2006b) culture learning model does not necessarily draw the researcher’s attention to the students’ capacity to challenge their own assumptions and unexamined beliefs as they engaged with Vanuatuan culture (Spiro, 2011).
With regard to analysing the influence of globalisation, Rizvi (2011, p. 180) argues that “even though globalisation is a ubiquitous term emerging in daily life, how cultural diversity is understood and addressed reflects the opposite context, which is confined within a national framework”. This might explain Deakin student teachers’ understanding of Vanuatuan culture that despite studying globalisation as a topic at University they still regard and construct Vanuatuan culture as contextualised locally. In other words, what they experience as Vanuatuan culture is a mixture of a range of cultures and influences. They “fail to recognise how it is now experienced in transnational spaces that enable many people to belong simultaneously to more than one country, and remain connected to people and groups across the globe” (Rizvi, 2011, p. 180). Vanuatuan culture is diverse and in addition, the way each student engages with it influences how that diversity is interpreted.

9.1.3 Cultural learning in terms of intercultural sensitivity development

With respect to cultural learning as a shift in worldview due to teaching in Vanuatu, the analysis using the DMIS (Bennett, 1993) shows varied development of intercultural sensitivity among student teachers even though they have experienced the same Vanuatuan culture. Some student teachers were considered as having ethnocentric worldviews as they construed negatively the cultural differences they perceived in Vanuatu. However, to critically review the development of intercultural sensitivity through a postcolonial perspective suggests an extension of analysis which leads to different interpretations.

Take for example, a student teacher’s response – ‘I meant that ...it is an inferior school system’- which may be considered as offensive. This student teacher was not able to evaluate the cultural difference positively as he experienced ‘laidback behaviour’ among Vanuatuan students and teachers. According to the DMIS, this negative evaluation of cultural difference reflects the ethnocentric worldview of this student teacher; thus he was located in the early stage of the model, which is Defence level. A postcolonial view of this
may suggest that this negative comment, which according to the DMIS reflects a low level of intercultural sensitivity, represented Vanuatuan culture unfairly as it was compared unfavourably with the Western standard (which was taken for granted as a reference point), relegating Vanuatuan education system to be devalued (Ashcroft, 2006).

In this case, this student teacher was missing the cognitive and ethical dimensions of intercultural learning. This student teacher was not able to read off cultural difference sensitively (Rizvi, 2011). An ability to read off cultural difference sensitively means that student teacher will be able to not necessarily attribute negative comment toward cultural difference. It would appear that the student teachers were not challenging their dominant perspective in the light of a new cultural context.

On the other hand, some student teachers’ responses reflected positive evaluation of cultural differences suggesting their ethnorelative worldviews. For example, a student teacher expressed a cultural difference as ‘it’s relaxed...it’s slower in doing everything...it’s different...but it’s like that...it’s okay’. In the DMIS, this response reflects ‘acceptance of cultural difference’. It demonstrates a high intercultural sensitivity level suggesting that this student teacher had an ethnorelative worldview as cultural difference is accepted as it is not expressed negatively. Through a postcolonial lens, even though this comment about cultural difference is not negative, it is still difficult to say that this student teacher had the ability to ‘read off’ cultural diversity in a way that Rizvi (2011, p. 180) described as ‘sensitively, relationally, reflexively and critically’, representing a high level of intercultural sensitivity. Instead, this student teacher may be considered as having a relational awareness of cultural difference. Few student teachers were ‘sensitive’ to the cultural differences that they faced in Vanuatuan classrooms, in a way that led them to adjust their teaching to Vanuatuan students’ conditions, suggesting the emerging ethnorelative worldview.
9.1.4 Cultural learning in term of intercultural competence development

This thesis analysed the development of student teachers’ competence to interact with Vanuatuan people through the application of the intercultural competence model of Deardorff (2004, 2006a, 2006b, 2008) and Byram’s (1997) skills of interaction and discovery. It was difficult to conclude if there was any student teacher who really developed intercultural competence through the GEP. Instead, analysis using the model demonstrated that there were various attainments of elements of intercultural competence among student teachers as the model comprises five categories – attitudes, knowledge, skills, internal and external outcomes. For example, the emerging attitude of respect was reflected as – ‘It is awesome ...everyone just so friendly. It’s a great part of their culture’. That another student teacher gained a deep cultural knowledge of Vanuatu was shown through – ‘I meant they have warmed up to me ...but the majority are still incredibly shy...I think it’s a culture thing’. The model shows the development of skills to listen, observe and interpret cultural difference of a student teacher as follow ¬ ‘When I asked them some questions about the work they are doing they are a bit shy and they sort of hide their heads’. It is not clear if gaining only three instead of five elements of the model can suggest the development of intercultural competence as understood by Deardorff.

The application of a postcolonial perspective within the analysis of intercultural competence development reveals further the limitations of this model in identifying the level of competence, concerning the degree to which intercultural development has been achieved. There can be many reasons why the Vanuatuan student was behaving in a particular way. However, the student teachers’ expressions of cultural difference still reflects the ‘innocuous stereotypes’ of Vanuatuan student behaviour (Parsons & Harding, 2011, p. 4) reflecting what Bhabha calls ‘the colonial stereotype’ (Young, 2004). These bland expressions suggest this student teacher cannot be considered as having gained cultural learning although Deardorff’s model enables the identification
of emerging attitudes of respect, deep cultural knowledge and cognitive skills of listening, observing and interpreting.

This section has critically reviewed student teacher cultural learning in the context of internationalisation of the curriculum. The GEP provided the possibility for understanding cultural learning among student teachers. Moreover, the application of a postcolonial lens counters the ‘technicist position’ that does not encourage ‘dialogic engagement’ with entangled issues of culture, school and power (Lavia, 2007). Thus, there is room for further refinement of analysis in order to address the assumptions about culture, identity and diversity depicting the influences of postcolonialism and globalisation; this has the promise of enhancing the analysis of cultural learning and the achievement of internationalisation of the curriculum through the GEP.

Claims about the levels of learning about Vanuatuan culture gained by student teachers in this GEP need to be tempered. However, there was evidence that some students, to a degree, can be considered as having developed elements of intercultural sensitivity as there was evidence of ethnorelative worldviews, including an ability to read cultural differences “sensitively, relationally, reflexively and critically” (Rizvi, 2011, p. 181). With regard to cultural learning in terms of intercultural competence, it is likely to be difficult to evaluate the development of intercultural sensitivity due to the complexity of culture and therefore cultural learning.

9.2 A critical review of the intercultural models

As discussed in the previous section, culture is highly complex and dependent on social, historical and relational interactions. The thesis relied on the use of existing, ostensibly universally-applicable models to capture cultural and professional learning. The previous discussion critically reviewed the cultural learnings as represented by the models to show that the models do not adequately take into account the influences of postcolonial change and globalisation on Vanuatuan culture. In other words, while the models provided
evidence of cultural learning among the students, they did not provide the complete picture of cultural learning and its contextual, historical and social dependences. Hence, this section reviews the rationale for their use, the assumptions that underpin them, and their efficacy in light of the practical experience of employing them in a ‘real’ intercultural context within the context of internationalisation of the curriculum.

9.2.1 Rationale for using the models

The models of Paige’s *five culture learning dimensions* (2006b), Bennett’s *Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity - DMIS* (1993), and Deardorff’s *model of intercultural competence* (Deardorff, 2004) present themselves as relevant theoretical frameworks for international education programs such as study abroad program (Paige & Goode, 2009). The GEP has a similar context to this kind of program as it provides an opportunity for student teachers to gain international experience, and the alleged relevance of these models for international education programs constitutes the main rationale for this particular research to make use of the models. The thesis considered, but did not take up, other models such as the Intercultural Communication Competence (Byram, 1997) and the Intercultural Competence Assessment (INCA) (Byram et al., 2004) for data analyses.

Other reasons for selecting these models can be understood from practical perspectives. The GEP aims to develop intercultural sensitivity and abilities of student teachers to teach in an international environment (Deakin, 2009). In particular, several objectives of participation in the GEP reflect the expected cultural and professional learning gained through participating in the GEP. The GEP serves as an avenue for student teachers to gain both cultural and professional learning experiences necessary for teaching in a multicultural setting. In this regard, there is a need to examine if the objectives and purposes of the GEP have been achieved. From the student teachers’ point of view, there is a need to assess their learning; that is if they gain cultural and professional learning from their participation in the program, or if it is beneficial for them to participate in the program. To be more specific, there is a need to evaluate if
student teachers not only gain cultural knowledge but also develop intercultural sensitivity and competence from participating in the program. As mentioned before, the perspectives of both assessing student teacher cultural learning from participating in a program and further impact of a program on participants have been a persistent argument in internationalisation of the curriculum.

Therefore as the objectives of the GEP include developing knowledge, intercultural sensitivity and skills to teach in culturally diverse classrooms (Deakin, 2009), on face value the three models are relevant for gathering specific evidence which can demonstrate whether these objectives have been met. The application of Paige’s culture learning (2006b) enables us to examine the attainment of cultural knowledge gained through the GEP, The DMIS (Bennett, 1993) serves to analyse the development of intercultural sensitivity through identification of ‘the attitudes, and view points (ranging from monocultural to more complex mindsets) in a person’s development’ (Bennett, 1993, p. 191). Reflecting a dynamic, multi-dimensional approach, Deardorff’s model (2004) is used to assess the development of intercultural competence as it is possible to ‘consider not only the development of competence overtime, but also the extent to which its elements influence each other’ (Deardorff, 2004, p. 192).

In particular, the dimension of ‘development’ defined in the models (the DMIS and intercultural competence development of Deardorff) is considered as the main reason for its selection, as the essence of the GEP’s objectives is about on-going development of student teachers. In this regard, intercultural sensitivity involves changes in a cognitive dimension, while intercultural competence is about the development of abilities with respect to attitudinal and behavioural dimensions necessary to teach in a multicultural setting. Thus, the models provide a complementary analysis of these objectives in a sense that intercultural sensitivity informs knowledge gained, reflecting student teachers’ worldviews or perspectives on cultural differences, while intercultural competence suggests the attainments of abilities and attitudes needed to teach in international settings. Therefore, in combination, these models serve
ostensibly as readily available tools to evaluate the cultural learning gained among student teachers.

9.2.2 The assumptions of the intercultural models

However, these models are not perfect and have limitations in whether they alone or in combination can measure and evaluate cultural learning. In reviewing the assumptions embedded in the models, it is found that in some cases, the models actually may have prevented a full analysis of cultural learning.

The DMIS focuses on the phenomenon of cultural difference. The underlying assumption of this model is that as ‘one’s experience of cultural difference becomes more sophisticated; one’s competence in intercultural relations increases’ (Bennet & Bennet, 2001, p. 13). Westrick (2005) found that all participants who were students at an international school were able to identify a range of cultural differences and none of them gave negative responses. This finding supports the previous assumption; it suggests that the students experienced sophisticated cultural difference resulting in the development of intercultural sensitivity. Similarly, this thesis found that some student teachers construed particular cultural differences positively; some of them were even able to adjust their teaching to Vanuatuan students’ needs. This finding resonates with the model; however, the model does not support further interpretation.

Indeed, the relationship between sophisticated experience and intercultural sensitivity may be viewed quite differently. There was a student teacher who had a sophisticated experience of cultural difference suggesting the person had an ethnorelative worldview, but, did not follow with an increasing of competence in intercultural relations. This student teacher reflected an ethnorelative worldview, but actually also described negatively another instance of cultural difference.

With respect to Deardorff’s model of intercultural competence (2004, 2006a, 2006b, 2008), this model implicates attitudes, considered as the basic element
in the whole process of intercultural competence development, that are required in order to gain knowledge and skills, and that then form internal outcomes and shape the last element - external behaviour. This model assumes that each element in the model can affect the other elements depicting the non-linear or recursive nature of the development.

The case study describes a student teacher who displayed the cognitive skills to listen, observe and evaluate, as well as skills to analyse, interpret and relate. However, there was no indication that this student teacher exhibited the required attitudes in developing intercultural competence, such as the attitudes of openness and respect. In this case, it is hard to say that this student teacher developed his intercultural competence in any comprehensive way; instead this student displayed the required skills for intercultural interaction, which constituted one element of intercultural competence. Hence, this model is more appropriate to be read as showing only the development of the just some elements of intercultural competence.

Indeed, the interpretation of the development of student teachers’ intercultural competencies was limited to data collected on the student teacher reactions toward specific cultural differences. It is shown that the student teachers developed their elements of intercultural competence differently according to a particular cultural phenomenon. The development of intercultural competence among the student teachers is understood through the attainment of the individual elements of intercultural competence toward specific cultural difference, e.g., a student teacher might be able to respect Vanuatuan student behaviour (attitude development) but not be able to either attain the knowledge of socio-linguistic cognitive development or develop skills to interact with different cultures (behaviour development). It reflected the complexity of understanding intercultural competence development faced when using the intercultural competence concept of Deardorff (2004) and demonstrates the limitation of the model.

Therefore, discussion of the assumptions of intercultural sensitivity and competence models shows that the analyses, while thorough, have been
somewhat circumscribed by the limitations of the models themselves. Both models emphasise a functional model of measuring cultural learning; they function like a ‘tool’ to investigate if students gain general cultural learning from the program. In fact, scrutiny of its assumptions suggests a lack of consideration of the context of the GEP, including the influence of the specific background of the student teachers (such as identity, race and culture) and how these may be very influential in shaping the cultural learning of particular students. Employment of the model within the context of the GEP exposes this shortcoming of the model.

9.2.3 The issue of complexity in understanding the logic of stages in the development of intercultural sensitivity and competence

There are more complexities when the DMIS is used to interpret shifts in sensitivity or the logic of stages over a period of time. This thesis found that there was a student teacher whose worldviews reflected three different stages of the DMIS. This student teacher responded positively toward ‘laidback’ behaviour from the first week of arrival, reflecting her ethnorelative worldview. However, she then provided responses in the second week that suggested a self-perception of superiority as she compared the Australian school system to that of Vanuatu, indicating an ethnocentric perspective. Surprisingly, she was able to adjust her teaching in the third week of the GEP suggesting again an ethnorelative worldview. Therefore, it is hard to interpret this student teacher’s development of intercultural sensitivity in accordance with the model because there appears to be a non-linear development that is dependent on many variables, such as the context, the student and the nature of experience. In this case, the collected data reflect various levels of sensitivity toward various cultural differences at different points of time.

When the development of sensitivity is investigated without focusing on particular cultural phenomena, there is a case ostensibly showing a reversal development. A student teacher demonstrated an ethnorelative perspective in the first week as she explained her positive perceptions and experiences of
teaching Vanuatuan students who she regarded as very quiet, silent and shy. She even elaborated her ways to overcome this situation in her classroom depicting a high level of sensitivity toward shy behaviour. This picture was completely changed in the third week showing her frustration and reflecting the emerging ethnocentric worldview as she referred to a Vanuatuan student who was very unruly. In the event, however, this case did not show a reversal development of intercultural sensitivity. Indeed, the development of intercultural sensitivity of this student teacher should be interpreted based on a particular cultural difference. With regard to the shy behaviour of Vanuatuan students, this student teacher displayed an ethnorelative worldview, while in terms of Vanuatuan student unruly behaviour; this student teacher’s responses reflected an ethnocentric worldview.

Similar to previous analysis of the application of Paige’s (2006b) culture learning, the DMIS (Bennett, 1993) cannot identify the particular circumstance or experience of an individual student that may have caused the apparently different level of sensitivity. Nor can it be used to discern the context of learning associated with the level of sensitivity although the DMIS refers to various levels of sensitivity spanning ethnocentric to ethno-relative stages for a particular cultural difference. Hence, a question such as “What particular experience leads student teachers to have different sensitivities toward the same particular cultural difference?” is hard to answer. This case also suggests the complexity of understanding regarding the development of sensitivity according to the DMIS model - the experience or circumstance that makes an individual move from ethnocentric to ethno-relative stages cannot be addressed.

With respect to the application of the Deardorff model of intercultural competence (2008), the analysis demonstrates the complexity of understandings about the impact of teaching in Vanuatu on student teachers. Analysis using the model shows that a student teacher demonstrated the emergence of curiosity suggesting the attainment of the required attitudes to develop intercultural competence. However, as the pre-departure questionnaire revealed that this student teacher might have a strong pre-existing interest in
Vanuatu, including in its culture, it points to a limitation of this model which does not seem to take this kind of pre-departure knowledge into account. Does it mean that this student teacher has developed the required attitude for developing intercultural competence before departure to Vanuatu? Thus, it is not valid to conclude that if a student teacher developed intercultural competence, it was solely or mainly due to participating in the GEP. This exposes a limitation of the intercultural model of Deardorff (2004).

The interpretation of the development of student teachers’ intercultural competencies was limited to data collected on the student teacher reactions toward specific cultural differences and events. It is shown that the student teachers developed their elements of intercultural competence differently according to a particular cultural phenomenon. The development of intercultural competence among the student teachers is understood through the attainment of the individual elements of intercultural competence toward specific cultural difference, e.g., a student teacher might be able to respect Vanuatuan student behaviour (attitude development) but not be able to either attain the knowledge of socio-linguistic (cognitive development) or develop skill to interact with different culture (behaviour development). This reflects the complexity of understanding intercultural competence development and points to a limitation of the Deardorff (2004) model in accommodating such diversity.

9.3 Professional learning in a global context

In addition to cultural learning, this thesis investigates professional learning gained through international teaching in the GEP in an attempt to address common concerns about the degree of curricular investigation in the context of internationalisation of the curriculum. Section One has shown the importance of considering postcolonial theory and globalisation in examining cultural learning, recognising that culture is itself changing constantly (Crawford & McLaren, 2003; Rizvi, 2000, 2007a). Similarly, this section evaluates critically emerging professional learning in a global context in which cultures are
dynamic and contested by examination through a postcolonial lens. In particular, this section discusses reasons for selecting teaching knowledge bases to represent professional learning for student teachers in international teaching practicum, and how this is interpreted.

9.3.1 Professional learning in terms of teaching knowledge bases

As the GEP provides an opportunity for student teachers to conduct a teaching practicum in another country, the notion of professional learning refers to learning of teaching in different culture. Indeed, learning about teaching among student teachers is very broad and complex to investigate. Therefore, this thesis focuses on aspects of teaching knowledge bases (Shulman, 2004) since they are similar to the objective of the GEP, which is to develop ‘the knowledge, cultural sensitivity and skills’ to teach in a diverse context (Deakin, 2009). However, not all aspects of Shulman’s teaching knowledge bases (Shulman, 2004) were investigated. In particular, content knowledge as the first teacher knowledge base was singled out as student teachers studied various courses. Moreover, the short duration of the GEP, which is only three weeks, added to the difficulty of observing student teachers’ attainment of Shulman’s ‘Knowledge of education ends, purposes, values, and their philosophical and historical grounds’ (2004, p. 93). Therefore, this thesis explored only some aspects of Shulman’s teaching knowledge bases (2004), which referred to student teachers’ learning of 1) cultural norms of Vanuatuan schools; 2) Vanuatuan student learning style; 3) Vanuatuan curriculum; 4) managing Vanuatuan classrooms; and 5) practices to teach in Vanuatuan classroom.

9.3.2 Professional learning in a global context

With regard to cultural norms in Vanuatuan classrooms, some student teachers considered Vanuatuan students’ ‘shy behaviour’ to be a representation of classroom norms. In this context, the student teachers’ recognition of the cultural difference may initially be regarded as an instance of professional learning.
However, analysis through a postcolonial lens allows alternative interpretations. The student teachers’ interpretation of cultural norms in Vanuatuan classroom indicates that they have not confronted their own assumptions on Vanuatuan students and other unexamined beliefs as they engaged with Vanuatuan culture (Spiro, 2011). In this case, their expression of the cultural difference, which they considered as representing Vanuatuan classroom culture, depicts the ongoing influence of a colonial perspective (Young, 2004) preserving the common belief of classroom norms in collective culture (Lustig & Koester, 2003). Thus, their understanding of cultural difference in terms of teaching knowledge base – the need to understand local school/classroom culture – may only be a limited form of professional learning.

As shown in Section One, student teachers really need to develop an ability to ‘read off’ cultural difference ‘sensitively, relationally, reflexively and critically’ (Rizvi, 2011, p. 181) in order to be considered with confidence as learning from international experience. Having this ability, student teachers will be able to reflect and evaluate their interpretation of cultural difference and use appropriate terms to express cultural difference.

In another example relating to Vanuatuan student learning style, some student teachers were able to identify cultural difference in terms of Vanuatuan student learning styles, which they described as different from that of Australian students. The student teachers regarded this style of learning as ‘rote learning’; in which Vanuatuan students have the tendency to copy from the board studiously all the time resulting in little time for classroom discussion. Some student teachers considered Vanuatuan students’ rote learning’ as negative and as associated with only ‘superficial’ learning. Some of them applied hands-on activities and group discussions in teaching although they found it difficult to engage the Vanuatuan students. In this situation, the ability to recognise the cultural difference in term of student learning style could prima facie be considered as part of student teacher professional learning.
However, a critical analysis may provide a more complete picture of student teacher professional learning. Student teachers appeared not to interrogate their own assumptions and beliefs about teaching (Spiro, 2011). In this case, student teachers’ abilities to recognise cultural difference, which they consider as an illustration of Vanuatuan student learning style, without equally considering their own assumptions and beliefs, limits their professional learning (there is a tendency to see rote learning in negative terms). As they were not challenging their own beliefs or theoretical knowledge about teaching practice, they tended to believe that their practice of teaching was better one and should be imposed in Vanuatuan classrooms. Arguably, they should be able to reflect on what the implications for their teaching are, when facing Vanuatuan student learning styles.

9.4 Some methodological refinement strategies

All studies are necessarily circumscribed in scope and duration, and this one was no different. The previous two sections have explained the challenges of using pre-existing models in attempts to gain a complete interpretation of cultural learning, and the emerging notion of professional learning in a global context. The completeness of the perspectives on meaning of culture and cultural learning gained in this thesis is of course also a function of the method of data collection, which was conducted over a relatively short three weeks period. This section outlines some ways to enhance the quality of the evidential basis for studies of this kind.

First, this research constitutes an ethnographic study of the GEP. Although the ethnographic study was largely written using survey and interview data, it still represents an ethnographic study as the study investigates the experiences of a group of university students (Cousin, 2009) through studying “people in naturally occurring settings ..., involving the researcher participating directly in the settings…” (Bryman, 2004, p. 10) as I explored the interpretive categories of participants in the case study. Moreover, ‘the vast majority of ethnographies also involve interviews’ (Walford, 2007). While this study collected data
through various methods, including written documents, survey, pre-departure questionnaire, on-site interviews, classroom observations, reflective reports and reports from supervising teachers (Appendix 5.4), the overall conceptual frame for the study was interpretive.

The ethnographic study of the GEP could be strengthened by extending data collection methods such as the use of focus groups for the survey participants. The findings from focus group might enhance the quality of interpretations of the observations in the case study. The ethnographic study was also enhanced by exploring the linkages among findings from survey and case study drawing on the strategy illustrated in Figure 4.1 in p.79. The comparison of findings on perceptions and lived experiences is provided in the Appendix 6.1.

Third, with regards to collecting student teacher perceptions through the survey, p.83 has mentioned the main issues in designing the questionnaire. However, further work may be conducted on explicitly linking elements of the questionnaire with the concepts of cultural and professional learning (this is presented in Appendix 4.4). To improve the analysis, it is suggested that the impact of various demographic differences of participants is taken into account, and to consider the effect of different times of data collection.

Fourth, with regards to capturing student teacher lived experiences through case study, there are several considerations to enhance validity of research. As interview is the main method of collecting data in this study, piloting the interview protocol before going to research location/fieldwork would assist in improving the ‘fit’ of the interview protocol to the task it has been set. Next, a schedule of observation should be included in the appendices. For this purpose, Appendix 5.4 is included. The use of various methods of collecting data in case study aiming to address the second research question on how student teacher lived experience is understood, suggests the possibility for methodological triangulation in the case study. For example, methods such as maintaining a diary might provide valuable data both in terms of quantity and quality, importantly allowing a degree of triangulation among different data sets.
Fifth, because understandings around culture and cultural and professional learning as presented in previous sections are likely to be complex, a longer study period appears justified. In particular, for the model of intercultural competence development, the interaction skill is assumed to be the last element to develop after gaining of the aspects of attitudes and knowledge, implying a need for a study longer than the three weeks to which the current study was limited.

Sixth, as some terms in the models of intercultural sensitivity and competence are not clear or fully explicated, there is a need to develop some indicators or guidelines to understand the terms. Take for example, ‘deep cultural knowledge’, an element in intercultural competence model of Deardorff (2004). The explanation provided for this element only mentioned understanding of other worldviews such as the cultural values behind particular behaviour; so a specific relevant question is whether an understanding behind Vanuatuan students’ behaviour can be considered as ‘cultural knowledge of Vanuatuan culture’. Thus, in the case of this research, this thesis suggests the need to have a greater explication of key theoretical concepts in order to better understand (in this case) Vanuatuan student behaviour within a postcolonialist context.

Seventh, research questions should not be treated too narrowly. As this thesis demonstrates, there is value in extending the research questions to include investigation of methodological factors associated with the application of models such as those employed in this thesis.

Eighth, to strengthen the ethnographic study of the GEP, the analysis of student teacher perception collected through survey could include an investigation of the impact of various demographic differences of participants. The analysis should also address the effects of different times of data collection.

In general, this thesis suggests that examination of learning from international experience in the light of internationalisation of the curriculum needs to take into account a critical stance on culture. It is revealed that taking a
postcolonial perspective affords further layers of meaning in interpreting cultural and professional learning in the GEP.

9.5 Potentials and limitations of the GEP for internationalisation of the curriculum

This thesis critically appraises affordances of the GEP in the context of internationalising the curriculum. These include the presence of cultural differences (Paige, 1993) that affect the extent to which the outcomes of the study of the GEP may inform internationalisation more generally. The overall Global Experience Program is actually conducted in several western and non-western countries in order to provide student teachers (who are mostly Australian with European cultural background) a range of different cultural environments, so opportunities exist for case studies in a number of different cultural contexts. As stated in Chapter Three, intercultural experience exists “when large and important cultural differences create dissimilar interpretations and expectations about how to communicate competently” (Lustig & Koester, 2003, p. 51).

This thesis succeeds in revealing aspects of the particular structure of the GEP which are necessary to encourage internationalisation of the curriculum. Basically, the main feature which differentiates the GEP from other internationalisation programs (such as in-country language courses, internships and study tours) is the obligation for student teachers to actually teach in a different culture. The teaching responsibility in a very different culture provides more opportunity to develop intercultural sensitivity and competence, compared to other programs that do not require students to engage so meaningfully with the host country people. Thus, meaningful engagement, which is essential in intercultural experience (Deardorff, 2008) is possible as it is the main feature of the GEP.

Another inherent potential of the GEP to develop intercultural sensitivity and competence as the possible goals of internationalisation of the curriculum, is
the creation of opportunities for reflective practice on matters associated with cultural identity and difference. As shown in the outcomes of this study, teaching in a very different culture such as Vanuatu provides more opportunities (and maybe requirements) for student teachers (and their accompanying academic advisors) to reflect on the meaning and significance of their teaching. In this case, reflection is also a distinctive aspect of learning from international experience (Byram, 1997; Deardorff, 2008; Paige, 1993).

A further GEP potential for internationalisation is that it enables professional development to take place. Student teachers displayed both reflective thinking and practice during their teaching round in Vanuatu, suggesting that some measure of professional learning had taken place (Clarke, 1995; Loughran, 2002). Reflective thinking shows that the student teachers were able to frame and reframe an event or teaching situation, enabling them to identify a problem or gap in teaching practice. Reflective practices were developed as they were able to address the identified problem from their own points of view drawing on an awareness of their own teaching practice and existing knowledge.

It can be argued that structured ‘exposure’ to and engagement with a culture different from one’s own is always an important component of internationalisation of the curriculum, so the location of the GEP in countries such as Vanuatu can become a driving factor in internationalisation. For example, the student teachers visited several places of recognised cultural significance, such as Nackamal and the Chief House. In this way they had the opportunity to observe and interact directly and meaningfully with Vanuatuan people and culture.

The thesis does demonstrate that the very different culture of Vanuatu encourages student teachers to reflect on their teaching activity. Hence, this specific context of the GEP, which provides opportunity to teach in a very different culture, represents an important element for internationalisation of the curriculum.
Examination of the curricular structure of the GEP identifies which part of it is effective in supporting learning. First, the case study described how student teachers were prepared before departure. This thesis suggests that preparation should be extended to include theoretical perspectives on culture, cultural learning, teaching and learning in different cultures, the models of cultural learning, intercultural sensitivity and competence and engagement with postcolonialism and globalisation perspectives in internationalisation. Having these kinds of knowledge will maximise student teacher learning from international experience, enhancing in turn the potential of the GEP for internationalisation of the curriculum.

Another specific feature of the GEP which reflects the potential for the GEP in internationalisation of the curriculum is the provision of relevant academic support on the GEP location. The support not only promotes reflective thinking among student teachers through assisting them to confront their own beliefs in the field in order to enhance their pedagogical development, it also provides accompanying academic staff members with important opportunities to develop their own intercultural understandings.

To conclude, this thesis suggests significant ways in which the GEP can contribute to internationalisation of the curriculum. Although some complexities were found in interpretation of data/data analyses, this research highlights important outcomes in terms of cultural and professional learning among student teachers that they gained specifically from participation in the GEP; this demonstrates some degree of ability to engage ethically with the emerging cultural differences in Vanuatu (Rizvi & Walsh, 1998).

From a postcolonialist perspective, we can see that there were some shortcomings in the student teachers’ appreciation of Vanuatuan culture in relation to their own subjective cultural identities. However, there is also evidence, though limited, that some student teachers displayed a high level of intercultural sensitivity demonstrating the possibility for the GEP to make some important contribution to the goal of internationalisation of the curriculum. In particular, equipping student teachers with sufficient theoretical
knowledge on culture, intercultural and professional learning, and a postcolonialist conceptual frame within which to appraise their experiences, would enable the GEP to develop student teacher cultural and professional learning as the possible objectives in internationalisation of the curriculum in teacher education.
Appendices
Appendix 1: Plain language statement for student teachers

DEAKIN UNIVERSITY
PLAIN LANGUAGE STATEMENT AND CONSENT FORM

TO: Student Teachers

Plain Language Statement

Date: 21 September 2009
Full Project Title: Internationalising the Curriculum: a case study of the Deakin Global Experience Program

Principal Researcher: Associate Professor Ian Robottom
Student Researcher: Sri Soejatminah
Associate Researcher(s): Dr Coral Campbell
Dr Simone White

This Plain Language Statement and Consent Form is 6 pages long. Please make sure you have all the pages.

1. Your Consent
You are invited to take part in this research project.

This Plain Language Statement contains detailed information about the research project. Its purpose is to explain to you as openly and clearly as possible all the procedures involved in this project so that you can make a fully informed decision whether you are going to participate.

Please read this Plain Language Statement carefully. Feel free to ask questions about any information in the document. You may also wish to discuss the project with a relative or friend or your local health worker. Feel free to do this.

Once you understand what the project is about and if you agree to take part in it, you will be asked to sign the Consent Form. By signing the Consent Form, you indicate that you understand the information and that you give your consent to participate in the research project.

You will be given a copy of the Plain Language Statement and Consent Form to keep as a record.

2. Purpose and Background
The purpose of this project is to investigate your learning experience about teaching in different cultures through your international teaching practicum. It is a student project contributing to Sri Soejatminah’s Doctor of Philosophy
Degree under the supervision of Associate Professor Ian Robottom as the principal supervisor.

A total of around 10 people attending teaching practicum at Vanuatu and China will participate in this project. This investigation is important as the goal of higher education in the discourse of internationalisation is to prepare its graduate to enter the globalised workforce.

You are invited to participate in this research project because your experience from GEP is the central for this study. You have been invited to participate in this study because your involvement in GEP. Your name is in the list of the academic coordinators for these locations. However, your involvement is voluntary.

3. Funding

This research is supported by Deakin University’s Higher Degree by Research program and is not funded by any external funding bodies.

4. Procedures

If you agree to participate in this research you will be asked to involve in the following data collection activities on the second week in June for GEP at Vanuatu and November for GEP at China.

- The completion of two questionnaires, which each of the questionnaire will take about 20 minutes to complete. The first questionnaire will be administered before departure asking questions about your expectations and concerns on the school, teachers and students and previous overseas travel. The second questionnaire will be given on the last day of your practicum asking questions about the real experience inside and outside classroom/school.

- A 30 minutes interview with the researcher during which the following topics will be discussed. These include opinion about school –system, curriculum; students (ability and attitude); and teachers (role, communication, feedback and pedagogy). This also covers any negative experience and how to cope with it during overseas. The interviews will be audio taped and transcribed to text to assist the researcher with analysis of the data.

- Allowing the researcher to be present for two hours on a certain day (will be scheduled) on the second week of June (for GEP at Vanuatu) and that of November (for GEP at China) to observe several aspects of your teaching include skills and attitude. In this time I will take a picture of the situation in the classroom during your teaching session.

- Maintaining a reflective journal during June (for GEP at Vanuatu) and November (for GEP at China). In your journal you will be asked to reflect on the following experiences related to your teaching. These include your perception (e.g. your relationships) on the students from different background; supervisor teacher and school system/curriculum; how GEP influence your teaching and career aspiration; and how you will draw the benefit from attending GEP.
5. Possible Benefits

This research will provide a comprehensive analysis of the value of GEP based on your response. It is also expected that the result will give an understanding on the context or nature of GEP in which the learning experience takes place. Therefore, the result of this research may suggest that the GEP has potential to develop you in the areas of personal, professional and intercultural learning. However, we cannot guarantee or promise that you will receive any benefits from this project.

6. Possible Risks

Possible risks for this research are very low. Although this research will have no side effects for the participants, it does require an extra time needed to complete the questionnaires, be interviewed, observed and write a journal.

7. Privacy, Confidentiality and Disclosure of Information

Any information obtained in connection with this project will be confidential. In this case, pseudonyms will be used throughout the study. Your consent form will also be kept confidential. Only the researchers will have access to the data collected including questionnaires, audiotapes, transcripts and journals. All data will only be disclosed with your permission, subject to ethical requirements. If you wish to access the data, indeed you are welcome to do so. Data will be secured in accordance with Deakin University guidelines in a locked filing cabinet at Deakin University and kept for a period of 6 years before they are disposed of.

As there are possibilities for conference presentations and publications to emerge from this project, the information related to your identity will be provided in such a way that you cannot be identified.

However, you should aware of the possibility that you could be identified since the small number of participants in each location.

8. Results of Project

The printed version of the thesis will be made available to you on request.

9. Participation is Voluntary

Participation in any research project is voluntary. If you do not wish to take part you are not obliged to. If you decide to take part and later change your mind, you are free to withdraw from the project at any stage. Any information obtained from you to date will not be used and will be destroyed.

Your decision whether to take part or not to take part, or to take part and then withdraw, will not affect your study and your relationship with Deakin University. This is not an assessment for you.

Before you make your decision, a member of the research team will be available to answer any questions you have about the research project. You can ask for any information you want. Sign the
Consent Form only after you have had a chance to ask your questions and have received satisfactory answers.

If you decide to withdraw from this project, please notify a member of the research team or complete and return the Revocation of Consent Form attached. In this case, all related data will be destroyed.

10. **Ethical Guidelines**

This project will be carried out according to the National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research (2007) produced by the National Health and Medical Research Council of Australia. This statement has been developed to protect the interests of people who agree to participate in human research studies.

The ethics aspects of this research project have been approved by the Human Research Ethics Committee of Deakin University.

Approval has been given by the schools in Vanuatu and China where the research will be carried out.

This research will not collect particular information that needs special law to follow.

11. **Complaints**

If you have any complaints about any aspect of the project, the way it is being conducted or any questions about your rights as a research participant, then you may contact:

The Manager, Office of Research Integrity, Deakin University, 221 Burwood Highway, Burwood Victoria 3125, Telephone: 9251 7129, Facsimile: 9244 6581; research-ethics@deakin.edu.au.

Please quote project number EC [number] -2008.

12. **Reimbursement for your costs**

You will not be paid for your participation in this project.

13. **Further Information, Queries or Any Problems**

If you require further information, wish to withdraw your participation or if you have any problems concerning this project (for example, any side effects), you can contact the principal researcher or the associate researchers or myself as the student researcher at the following addresses.

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DEAKIN UNIVERSITY
PLAIN LANGUAGE STATEMENT AND CONSENT FORM

TO: Student Teachers

Consent Form

Date:

Full Project Title: Internationalising the Curriculum: a case study of the Deakin Global Experience Program

I have read and I understand the attached Plain Language Statement.

I freely agree to participate in this project according to the conditions in the Plain Language Statement.

I have been given a copy of the Plain Language Statement and Consent Form to keep.

The researcher has agreed not to reveal my identity and personal details, including where information about this project is published, or presented in any public form.

The researcher has agreed not to reveal my identity and personal details, including where information about this project is published, or presented in any public form.

Participant’s Name (printed) ……………………………………………

Signature …………………………………… Date …………………………

Please mail or fax this form to the following address:

Sri Soejatminah (Student Researcher)
Faculty of Education, Deakin University, Burwood Campus
221 Burwood Highway, Burwood, Victoria. 3125.

Facsimile: 9244 6755
DEAKIN UNIVERSITY
PLAIN LANGUAGE STATEMENT AND
CONSENT FORM

TO: STUDENT TEACHERS

Revocation of Consent Form

(To be used for participants who wish to withdraw from the project)

Date:
Full Project Title: Internationalising the Curriculum: a case study of the Deakin Global Experience Program

I hereby wish to WITHDRAW my consent to participate in the above research project and understand that such withdrawal WILL NOT jeopardise my relationship with Deakin University.

Participant’s Name (printed) ………………………………………………………………

Signature ………………………………………..Date ……………………

Please mail or fax this form to:
Sri Soejatminah (Student Researcher)
Faculty of Education, Deakin University, Burwood Campus
221 Burwood Highway, Burwood, Victoria. 3125.

Facsimile: 9244 6755
Appendix 4.1: Questions for case study

Questionnaire for student teachers before departure to Vanuatu

1. Write briefly about your own background/culture, where you grew up, your school experiences, any previous travel (including overseas) and why you want to be a teacher?
2. Why did you choose to do a GEP?
3. What skills/abilities do you expect to develop from participating in the GEP?
4. How will you know if you have achieved it?
5. How well-prepared do you feel for the GEP? What are any issues of concern?
6. What challenges do you think you might face in living in Vanuatu?
7. What do you know about schools in Vanuatu?
8. Do you think there will be differences between Vanuatu and Australian schools in terms of: 1) Classroom management; 2) School culture; 3) Teaching practice; 4) Student learning style; 5) Curriculum
9. Do you think the trip to Vanuatu will support you to become a teacher? If yes, how? If no, why?

Week One- INTERVIEW PROTOCOL for student teacher

General issues - (subjective culture/ objective culture/ others)
1. Is there something interesting about local culture?
2. Have you got any negative experience or culture shock?

Educational issues (V students/ teachers/ classroom/ curriculum/ teaching style/ preparation/ culture/ parent)
3. What have you noticed in the classroom? School yard?
4. Do you have any difficulties interacting with the Vanuatu teachers/ Vanuatu students/ Deakin colleagues?

Preparation for living & teaching (Cultural knowledge/ cross cultural communication/ etc)
5. Do you think that you have prepared enough to live in Vanuatu?
6. Do you think that you have prepared enough to teach in Vanuatu?

Week Three- INTERVIEW PROTOCOL for student teacher

Nature (Week days and week end activities/ before & after school)
1. Could you tell me about your daily routine here? What do you do at school and after school?

Local practices(Class room management/ teaching practices/ interaction/ cultural aspects/ etc)
2. What have you observed about the Vanuatu teachers? Supervising teacher? Pupils? About the school? Did you go to other teachers’ classrooms? What for?

Actual learning (school cultural/ class room management/ curriculum/ teaching practices/student learning style)
3. Tell me about a lesson you gave?
How has the supervising teacher responded? The students?: Give comment/ ask questions/
Did you try to make them talk about your lesson? What did you do?
Did the children understand? What should you do to make them understand?
How do you feel about this lesson?
4. Were there any instances where you felt dissatisfied with your teaching?
What? Why? (different culture- meaning/ consequence)
5. How has this practicum been different from your previous practicum experiences? What? Why? Implications?
(self awareness/ general culture/ sub & obj culture/ reflection-learning)
Influential factors (Feedback/ lack of skill/ resource/ knowledge)
6. Do you need feedback during this practicum here? On what?
Have you been assisted by the supervising teacher? What about? How?
Do you like her/ his advice?
Challenges (Interaction/ V student/ class room/ teaching/)
7. What was the most challenging experience you have had? Why?
How have you addressed this issue?
Values (V teacher/ pupils/ school/ skills/ knowledge)
8. What do you take from this experience? What is the evidence or proofs of it?

Week Two- INTERVIEW PROTOCOL for on-site coordinator
1. What are your concerns in preparing the student teachers for the GEP?
What were the materials or activities that you gave?
2. What do student teachers expect to gain from their overseas teaching practicum?
3. Is there any evaluation? What do you evaluate? How do you evaluate?
4. Could you describe your strategies in giving feedback to the student teachers?
5. How did you arrange the supervision with the supervising teacher?
6. What do you think about student learning experiences and outcomes from this teaching practicum? Could you elaborate on it?
7. What do you think student teachers should do to develop their inclusivity in teaching? Or to develop their social responsibility? What benefit should the GEP also give to the local host schools?

REFLECTIVE REPORT for Deakin Student Teachers
Could you write some issues that came up for you during teaching practicum in Vanuatu? The following are examples of issues that might attract your attention:
1. A challenge, dilemma or culture shock that you are grappling with today.
2. An inspiration that will change you when you teach again in Australia.
3. A thought about how this practicum should be structured to give more opportunities to learn.
4. An idea of working in a multicultural environment upon graduation.
5. Other issues that you think about.
6. Could you share with me one or two of your interesting pictures that remind you the most about your teaching practicum in Vanuatu, and then write about it?
Appendix 4.2: Survey questionnaire

1 MAY 2010

Dear student teachers,

I am conducting this survey as part of my doctoral degree under the supervision of Associate Professor Ian Robottom as the principal supervisor. My research title is “Internationalising the curriculum: Learning Outcomes in the Global Experience Program”.

In this survey I would like to explore the learning experiences that you have gained from participating in the Global Experience Program. Your participation in this survey is of course voluntary. Your confidentiality and anonymity are assured. The return of the survey to me implies your consent for your responses to be compiled with other similar responses. Although the survey is coded to allow for follow up with non-respondents, you will not be individually identified with your questionnaire or responses. Please be informed that the use of these data will be limited to this research, as authorised by Deakin University, although results may ultimately be presented in formats other than the dissertation, such as journal articles or conference presentations. If you require further information, please contact me or my supervisors at the addresses below.

I greatly appreciate your participation in this research. The survey consists of three sections and will take approximately 15-20 minutes to complete. Please return the survey via your GEP coordinator.

Thank you for your interest and participation in this study. I genuinely appreciate your time.

Sincerely,

Sri Soejatminah (Student researcher)
Faculty of Arts & Education, Deakin University,
Building M3.04; Ph: 92517206; email address: ssoe@deakin.edu.au

SUPERVISORS:

Associate Professor Ian Robottom (Principal Supervisor)
Faculty of Arts & Education, Deakin University,
221 Burwood Highway, Burwood, Victoria. 3125. Ph: 03 9244 6808

Dr. Coral Campbell (Associate Supervisor)
Faculty of Arts & Education, Deakin University,
Pigdons Rd, Geelong, Victoria. 3217. Ph: 03 52271485

Associate Professor Simone White (Associate Supervisor)
Faculty of Arts & Education, Deakin University,
Burwood Highway, Burwood, Victoria. 3125. Ph: 03 9244 3934
Section 1. Demographic Information

Please tick the box that apply to you.

1. Which of the following racial groups do you belong to?
   - Australia
   - European
   - Middle Eastern
   - Asian
   - African
   - Other: .....

2. Gender: Male □ Female □

3. Which age group do you belong to?
   - Younger than 20 □
   - 20 – 29 □
   - 30 – 40 □
   - Older than 40 □

4. Which course(s) are you enrolled in?
   - Primary Education
   - Secondary Education
   - Primary and Secondary Education
   - Others: .....

5. Currently which year are you enrolled in?
   - Second □
   - Third □
   - Fourth □
   - Other: .....

6. In what year did you participate in the GEP?
   - 2009 □
   - 2010 □

7. In which location was your GEP?
   - Malaysia
   - China
   - Northern Territory
   - Thailand
   - Vanuatu
   - Switzerland

8. Besides the GEP, have you been overseas? No □ Yes □

Please answer the following questions:

9. If yes (you have been overseas), which country did you visit? .....
10. For how long? .....
11. For what purpose? (Recreational/ work/ study/volunteering) .....
12. Where were you born? .....
13. What nationality were your parents? .....

261
Section 2. Learning experience from participating in a GEP

Please indicate the learning experience you have gained from participating in GEP by responding to the following statements on this scale: Strongly Disagree, Disagree, Agree, and Strongly Agree. Tick the box that best represents your opinion.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SD</th>
<th>D</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>SA</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strongly Disagree</td>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>Strongly Agree</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Professional Learning**

My GEP experience has broadened my understanding of the differences between Australian and host schools in terms of:

1. The cultural norms of the school.
2. The strategies for classroom management.
3. The curriculum design (teaching materials/programs).
4. The teaching practices.
5. The students’ learning style.

My GEP experience has enabled me to:

6. Use appropriate teaching approach according to the cultural norm of the school.
7. Use different strategies to manage the classroom from those I use in Australia.
8. Infuse a global or cultural perspective in my teaching materials.
9. Adopt different teaching approaches.
10. Adjust my teaching practice to accommodate my local students’ learning style.
11. Develop my ability on observation of teaching practices.
12. Develop my ability to be reflective (thinking about practice).
Please write in this box below any comments about the professional learning you gained from participating in GEP

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cultural Learning</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>After participating in GEP, I am able to:</td>
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<tr>
<td>13. Become more sensitive of my own culture.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. Appreciate the different culture of my GEP students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. Appreciate my GEP student’s patterns of behaviour</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16. Appreciate my GEP student’s cultural values</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17. Appreciate my GEP students’ ways of thinking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18. Recognise various visible elements of my GEP student’s culture such as foods, clothing and festival.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19. Recognise elements of my GEP student’s culture such as communication, behaviour, values and beliefs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20. Understand my pattern of behaviour, values and ways of thinking.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21. Understand different social interaction and ways of communicating between Australian and GEP students.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22. Understand different values between Australian students and GEP students.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23. Develop coping strategies to adjust myself in a new culture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24. Develop skills of observation and reflection to learn about my GEP student culture.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25. Develop my skills to interact appropriately and effectively with my GEP students.</td>
</tr>
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</table>
Please write in this box any comments about cultural learning you have gained from participating in the GEP

Section 3. Limits and opportunities of GEP

I believe that:

1. The experience from the GEP will enhance my chances of obtaining employment.

2. All student teachers should participate in the GEP.

3. The experience from the GEP is relevant in most work settings.

4. Experience from the GEP can facilitate those who will teach in a multicultural classroom.

Before departure for GEP, I should be equipped with:

5. Multi-cultural classroom teaching strategies

6. Curriculum preparation

7. Intercultural communication

8. Cultural knowledge

Please write in this box below any comments about the limits and opportunities of GEP
Please respond briefly to the following questions

1. Why did you participate in the GEP?

2. Does the experience you gain from GEP meet your expectations? If ‘yes’, briefly describe in what ways? If ‘no’, briefly describe why?

3. Has the GEP strongly influenced the choice of your future career preference? If ‘yes’, briefly describe in what ways? If ‘no’, briefly describe why?
Appendix 4.3: Reliability of the questionnaire

The reliability of questions in each element of culture learning

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Questions within each Elements of culture learning</th>
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<th>p-value</th>
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The reliability of questions in each aspect of professional learning

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Appendix 4.4: Theoretical framework for designing survey questionnaire

A. Dimensions or areas of cultural learning (CL)

   Q1. After participating in GEP, I become aware of my own culture.
   Q8. After participating in GEP, I understand about my pattern of behaviour, my value and my ways of thinking.

2. Learning about the element of culture- CL2
   Q6. After participating in GEP, I am able to recognise various visible elements of my local student’s culture such as foods, clothing and festival.
   Q7. After participating in GEP, I am able to recognise elements of my local student’s culture such as communication, behaviour, values and belief.

   Q3. After participating in GEP, I am able to appreciate my local students’ pattern of behaviour.
   Q4. After participating in GEP, I am able to appreciate my GEP student’s values.
   Q5. After participating in GEP, I am able to appreciate my local students’ ways of thinking.
   Q9. After participating in GEP, I am able to understand different social interaction and ways of communicating between Australian students and GEP students.
   Q10. After participating in GEP, I am able to understand different values between Australian students and local students.

4. Culture-General Learning-CL4
   Q2. After participating in GEP, I am able to recognise adjustment process in a new culture.
   Q11. After participating in GEP, I am able to develop coping strategy to adjust myself in a new culture.

5. Learning about learning-CL5
   Q.12 After participating in GEP, I am able to develop skills of observation and reflection.
   Q.13 After participating in GEP, I am able to develop my skills of interaction with local students.

---

4 Student teacher perceptions about learning from participating in the GEP
B. Areas of professional learning (PL)

1. Cultural norms of the school - PL1:
Q1. My GEP experience has broadened my understanding of differences between Australian and host school in terms of cultural norms of the school.
Q6. My GEP experience has enabled me to use appropriate teaching approach according to the cultural norm of the school.

Q5. My GEP experience has broadened my understanding of differences between Australian and host school in terms of students’ learning style.
Q10. My GEP experience has enabled me to adjust my teaching with my students’ learning style.

Q3. My GEP experience has broadened my understanding of differences between Australian and host school in terms of curriculum.
Q8. My GEP experience has enabled me to infuse global or cultural perspective in my teaching materials.

Q2. My GEP experience has broadened my understanding of differences between Australian and host school in terms of strategies of classroom management.
Q7. My GEP experience has enabled me to use different strategies to manage the classroom from those I use in Australia.

Q4. My GEP experience has broadened my understanding of differences between Australian and host school in terms of teaching practice.
Q9. My GEP experience has enabled me to adopt different teaching approach.

Q11. Experience from the GEP has developed my ability about observation.
Q12. Experience from the GEP has developed my ability to be reflective (thinking about practice).
## Appendix 5.1: Demographic data of survey participants

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Appendix 5.2: Findings of culture learning

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<th>Culture Learning &amp; positive response for each question</th>
<th>Findings</th>
</tr>
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| **1. Learning about Self as a cultural being (CL1)**<br>Q1=78%<br>Q8=89% | • CL1 was the element which received the least positive response.  
• More student teachers were able to come to understand own pattern of behaviour, values and ways of thinking rather than be aware of own culture. |
| **2. Learning about the elements of culture (CL2)**<br>Q6=95%<br>Q7=97% | • More student teachers were able to recognise their host country students’ communication, behaviour, values and beliefs than rather than the visible elements of host culture. |
| **3. Culture-specific Learning (CL3)**<br>Q3=92%<br>Q5=95%<br>Q9=95%<br>Q4=100%<br>Q10=100% | • Host country students’ pattern of behaviour was the least aspect of culture which the student teachers were able to appreciate.  
• The same numbers of student teachers were able to appreciate ways of thinking of host country’s students, and were able to understand different social interaction and ways of communicating between Australian and local students.  
• All student teachers were able to appreciate host country students’ values and understand its difference from Australian’s values. |
| **4. Culture-general Learning (CL4)**<br>Q2=97%<br>Q11=97% | • The same numbers of student teachers were able both to appreciate different culture and develop coping strategies to adjust in new culture. |
| **5. Learning about Learning (CL5)**<br>Q12=97%<br>Q13=100% | • Not all student teachers were able to develop skills of observation and reflection.  
• All student teachers were able to develop skills of interaction with local students. |
## Appendix 5.3: Findings of professional learning

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Professional Learning &amp; positive response for each question</th>
<th>Findings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Cultural Norms of the School (PL1)</td>
<td>Even though all student teachers were able to broaden understanding of local school cultural norms, not all student teachers were able to use an appropriate teaching approach according to local school cultural norms.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q1=100%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q6=95%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Student Learning Style (PL2)</td>
<td>Even though all student teachers broadened an understanding of host country students’ learning style, not all student teachers were enabled to adjust their teaching to the host country students’ learning style.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q5=100%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q10=97%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Curriculum (PL3)</td>
<td>More student teachers were able to infuse global or cultural perspective into own teaching than to broaden understanding of the host country curriculum.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q3=85%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q8=90%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Strategies of Classroom Management (PL4)</td>
<td>More student teachers broadened their understanding of the different classroom management than were enabled to use different styles or strategies of classroom management.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q2= 90%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q7=82%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Teaching Practice (PL5)</td>
<td>Fewer student teachers developed an ability to adapt than to understand the different teaching style of host country.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q4=95%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q9=88%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix 5.4: Data collection from case study

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Method to collect data</th>
<th>Student teachers (13 participants)</th>
<th>Supporting teachers (7 participants)</th>
<th>GEP coordinator (1 participant)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pre-departure Questionnaire</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First Interview (15 minutes)</td>
<td>13 interview</td>
<td>1st interview</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Classroom observation*</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Second interview (around 1 hour)</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2nd interview</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reflective journal</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Documents</td>
<td>Written information on Vanuatuan socio economy, geography and educational practices and research papers on Vanuatuan culture</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Field notes</td>
<td>Overt observations about schools and student teachers</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Schedule of classroom observations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student teacher</th>
<th>Date and time of observation</th>
<th>School</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>17/08/2010, morning</td>
<td>Grade 6, VE School</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>17/08/2010, morning</td>
<td>Grade 2, VE School</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>17/08/2010, afternoon</td>
<td>Grade 1, I Primary School</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>17/08/2010, afternoon</td>
<td>Grade 3, I Primary School</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E</td>
<td>18/08/2010, morning</td>
<td>Grade 3, V C Primary School</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>18/08/2010, morning</td>
<td>Grade 1, V C Primary School</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G</td>
<td>19/08/2010, morning</td>
<td>Grade 7, F School</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H</td>
<td>19/08/2010, morning</td>
<td>Grade 6, F School</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I</td>
<td>20/08/2010, morning</td>
<td>Grade 10, V N School</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J</td>
<td>23/08/2010, morning</td>
<td>Grade 6, M M Primary School</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>K</td>
<td>23/08/2010, morning</td>
<td>Grade 4, M M Primary School</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L</td>
<td>24/08/2010, morning</td>
<td>Grade 10, M High School</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M</td>
<td>24/08/2010, morning</td>
<td>Grade 7, K School</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Appendix 6.1: The relationship between survey and case study findings

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Culture Learning in the survey</th>
<th>Culture Learning in the case study</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Learning about the self as a cultural being – CL1</strong></td>
<td><strong>Awareness of own personal character;</strong>&lt;br&gt;<strong>Awareness of own attitude to the use of time;</strong>&lt;br&gt;<strong>Awareness of Vanuatuan students’ non-verbal language.</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It is easier to recognise own patterns of behaviour, preferred way of communication and values than culture.</td>
<td><strong>Recognition of own culture is the least learning to occur -78%</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recognition of own culture is the least learning to occur -78%</td>
<td><strong>Awareness of own personal character;</strong>&lt;br&gt;<strong>Awareness of own attitude to the use of time;</strong>&lt;br&gt;<strong>Awareness of Vanuatuan students’ non-verbal language.</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Learning about the elements of culture – CL2</strong></td>
<td><strong>The data collection did not support for this analysis as all data are contextualised in Vanuatuan culture</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Although not significant, more student teachers believe of understanding subjective (97%) than objective culture (95%).</td>
<td>The same numbers of participants believe about able to appreciate values of host country’s culture and understand its difference from Australian’s values.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Culture-specific learning – CL3</strong></td>
<td>The Vanuatuan objective culture: 1) transportation; 2) tradition; 3) a way of life.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All participants believe about able to appreciate values of host country’s culture and understand its difference from Australian’s values.</td>
<td>The Vanuatuan subjective culture: 1) laidback behaviour; 2) shy/ silent behaviour; 3) friendly behaviour; 4) unruly behaviour; 5) facial and sign behaviour.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The same numbers of participants believe about able to appreciate ways of thinking and understand differences in communication (95%).</td>
<td><strong>Culture-general Learning – CL4</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The smallest numbers of participants believe about able to appreciate behaviour (92%).</td>
<td><strong>Developing rationalisation as coping strategy</strong>&lt;br&gt;<strong>Skills to tolerate, respect and empathy.</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Learning about learning – CL5</strong></td>
<td>All participants believe that they develop interaction skills with host country students.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The same numbers of student teachers believe that they gain general cultural knowledge and skills (97%).</td>
<td><strong>Visits to cultural centres;</strong>&lt;br&gt;<strong>Visits to local church;</strong>&lt;br&gt;<strong>Observation;</strong>&lt;br&gt;<strong>Immersion;</strong>&lt;br&gt;<strong>Direct interaction with Vanuatuan supervising teacher.</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional Learning in the survey</td>
<td>Professional Learning in the case study</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------------------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Cultural norms of Vanuatu</strong> – PL1</td>
<td><strong>Shy behaviour as a manifestation of school cultural norms in Vanuatu.</strong>&lt;br&gt;<strong>Adjusted teaching through changing questioning method and behaviour in teaching.</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Although all student teachers believed that they learnt about school cultural norms (100%), fewer student teachers were able to apply appropriate teaching (95%).</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Vanuatu student learning style</strong> – PL2</td>
<td><strong>Rote learning as a representation of Vanuatu student learning style.</strong>&lt;br&gt;<strong>Developed effective instruction – to include non-verbal instruction.</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Although all student teachers learnt about student learning behaviour (100%), fewer student teachers who were to adjust their teaching (97%).</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Vanuatu curriculum</strong> – PL3</td>
<td><strong>Un-structured curriculum of Vanuatu school curriculum.</strong>&lt;br&gt;<strong>Developed lesson plan for ESL students.</strong>&lt;br&gt;<strong>Adapted lesson plan to limited resources.</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More student teachers who were able to infuse global perspective (90%) than to broaden understanding of the host country curriculum (85%).</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Strategies of classroom management</strong> – PL4</td>
<td><strong>Unruly behaviour as a distinctive behaviour to address</strong>&lt;br&gt;<strong>Developed effective instructions.</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More student teachers broadened their understanding of the different classroom management (90%) than were enabled to use different styles or strategies of classroom management (82%).</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Teaching practice</strong> – PL5</td>
<td><strong>Recognition of ‘talk and chalk’ pedagogy.</strong>&lt;br&gt;<strong>Reinforcement of belief that own teaching practice is the good one.</strong>&lt;br&gt;<strong>Developed teaching strategies to teach ESL students.</strong>&lt;br&gt;<strong>Becoming more adaptive and flexible in facing lack of teaching resource.</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fewer student teachers developed an ability to adapt (88%) than to understand the different teaching style of host country (95%).</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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