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**Conceptualising and Assessing Intercultural
Competence of Tour Guides:
An Analysis of Australian Guides of Chinese Tour Groups**

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ABSTRACT

The aim of the research was to develop and test a framework that conceptualises the intercultural competence (IC) of tour guides, and assesses the impact of tour guides' IC on the guided tour experience.

The literature reveals the significance of the guide's cultural mediation role in facilitating guided tour experiences. Especially important outcomes of this role are satisfied tourist experiences and minimised intercultural difficulties between tourists and hosts. There are also suggestions in the literature that tour guides need to be interculturally competent in order to be effective cultural mediators. However, there is a paucity of empirical research relating to the cultural mediation role of tour guides. Little theoretical and empirical attention has been given to what constitutes the IC of tour guides, what factors are associated with intercultural competence, and the impact of guides' IC on the guided tour experience. No research has been conducted in this area relating to Chinese-speaking tour guides in Australia.

This thesis investigates, first, how tourism stakeholders perceive tour guides' roles, and what knowledge, skills, attitudes and personal traits they think tour guides need to possess to fulfil their roles. The findings suggest that tour guides need to perform multiple roles, of which cultural mediation is a particularly important one in the context of guiding Chinese group tours. Other roles that were identified as important were to provide information, to manage the tour itinerary, to care for the health and safety of clients, and to provide good customer service.

Second, this research adopts an integrative approach to operationalising the IC of tour guides. Factor analysis was performed to test the factorability and construct validity of the IC of tour guides. The research findings demonstrate that the IC of tour guides is a three-dimensional construct consisting of social-interpersonal competence, cultural competence and language competence. The three-factor model appears to be an appropriate theoretical framework for analysing the IC of tour guides. This model integrates the various components of IC at both the conceptual and measurement levels to enhance the model's predictive and explanatory power. Moreover, the three components of the IC model are

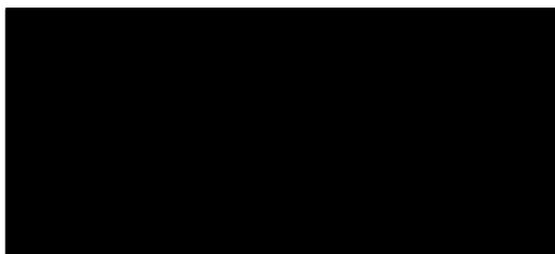
consistent with the basic competencies required of guides, as suggested by the tourism literature. In these two aspects, the model provides an appropriate theoretical framework for and contributes to our knowledge of intercultural communication and tour guiding.

Third, the research assesses both factors influencing the IC of tour guides and variables associated with tourists' evaluations of their guided tour experiences. The results suggest that the Chinese visitor's perception of the intercultural competence of their tour guide is a good predictor of their satisfaction with the guided tour experience, and that guiding competence has a positive effect on the visitor's guided tour experience. This is an important finding of the current study, and appears to be the first report in the tourism literature of such empirical evidence.

The current research compares what visitors and guides perceive to be the relative importance and actual performance of particular aspects of their tour guides' intercultural competence. The results suggest that visitors and guides tend to rate the importance of individual IC items in a similar way, but that visitors tend to rate the performance of guides at lower levels than the guides' self-assessment of their own performance. These and other findings provide a basis for a series of recommendations relating to industry practice and policy-making, including recruitment, selection and training of tour guides in Australia, the revision of competency standards for guides, and the introduction of a tour guide certification or licensing system for guides of inbound Chinese tour groups.

DECLARATION

To the best of my knowledge, the work enclosed within is that of the author alone except where due reference is made in the text. This thesis has not been submitted previously, in whole or in part, to qualify for any other academic award. The content of the thesis is the result of work, which has been carried out since the official commencement date of the approved research program.



Xin Yu

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Research Background

1.1.1 Role of Tour Guides in Intercultural Settings

Much of tourism is a social and cultural activity. Encounters that occur between the host and visitors often bring together persons with different cultural, ethnic, value and lifestyle characteristics (Richardson, 1996), and thus have the potential to contribute to understanding between cultures. However, cultural differences do not automatically or necessarily lead to positive intercultural exchange. In certain circumstances, such as when cultural distance exists between tourists and the host environment, there can be communication difficulties that undermine the quality of the intercultural contact between tourist and host, and, therefore, the experience (Furnham, 1984).

Several studies (e.g., Holloway, 1981; Pearce, 1984; Cohen, 1985; Pond, 1993; Smith, 2001; Yu, Weiler & Ham, 2001) have suggested that tour guides play a direct role in mediating cultural exchange between visitors and host cultures, in minimising interaction difficulties and ultimately in enhancing tourists' experiences.

Visitors join guided tours for a variety of reasons, but there is increasing evidence that the desire to acquire new and rewarding intercultural experiences, and to avoid interaction difficulties in a foreign land, are central motivators for international visitors who engage the services of a guide (Laws, 1995; Weiler & Ham, 2001). According to Wang, Hsieh and Huan (2000), at the moment, group travel appears to be the preferred mode of travel for Asian visitors to Western countries. Asian tourists depend on well-trained guides to overcome their cultural and language barriers and strike the right balance between cultural buffering and immersion. Indeed, all tour groups travelling abroad largely experience the visited country in a way that is at least partly filtered and structured by a single mediator, their guide (Pearce, 1982b). The guide may influence where tourists go, what they see, what aspects of the host culture they are exposed to, how the host culture is translated and presented as well as the group's interaction with host communities and social settings. Thus, Christie and Mason (2003:1) have observed, 'tour guides offer their clients more

than a superficial introduction to a new environment, country or culture'. The guide's performance influences the tourist's experience in fundamental ways (Pearce, 1982a; Arnould & Price, 1993).

However, the performance of tour guides can vary widely. They, indeed, have the ability to make or break the tour (Schmidt, 1979). Tour guides who are culturally inattentive can compromise an entire travel experience through insensitivity, communication problems or an authoritarian style projected at the wrong time (Lopez, 1980). It is also possible for a tour guide to isolate tourists from a visited community (Schmidt, 1979), effectively depriving them of the very connection they came to experience, even though the tourists themselves may be unaware that it is happening. If this type of 'insulated adventure' experience occurs, those tourists in search of something different and exotic may be dissatisfied and the experience may fall far short of achieving mutual understanding (Wang, 1999).

The gap between expectation and reality was recognised over twenty years ago by Pearce (1982) who argued that the mediating effect of tour guides on intercultural tourist experiences represented an area in need of research. However, there is still a paucity of empirical research in this area. Of the handful of studies conducted, most are either descriptive in nature or in the category of a priori conceptualisation. There is a lack of both theory building and empirical testing of what makes an effective cultural mediator, and on the mediating effect of guides on visitors' experiences (Yu, Weiler & Ham, 2001). In addition, the focus has been on the mediating effect of guiding western tourists in developing countries, with little research targeting tour guiding of new visitor segments, for example, outbound tour groups from developing countries such as China. This is probably because the expansion of these market segments is a relatively recent phenomenon. Theory and research have neither anticipated the increase in Chinese tourists to countries such as Australia, nor recognised the importance of the cultural mediating effect of tour guides on the experiences of Chinese visitors. It is the goal of the present research to address these gaps in the literature.

1.1.2 The Study Focus: Chinese-Speaking Tour Guides in Australia

Outbound travel by Chinese citizens has grown rapidly in recent years. In the year 2000, over 10 million Mainland Chinese travelled outside China. It is predicted that by the year

2020 China will become the fourth largest country of tourist origin in the world (World Tourism Organisation, 1998).

For Australia, in the year 2001, the annual growth rate of Chinese visitor arrivals was 38%. Similar growth is set to continue for at least the next eight years. The latest forecasts from the Australian Tourism Forecasting Council (2002) indicate that the number of Chinese visitors to Australia will reach more than 1.4 million annually by 2012, this is beyond the growth of any market. As a point of comparison, this doubles the number of tourist arrivals from New Zealand in 2001/02, Australia's largest current overseas market (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2000). Clearly, the Australian government and tourism industry see China as an important target market in need of strategic planning and marketing efforts.

However, it is the policy of the Chinese government that the development of Chinese outbound travel needs to be organised, planned and controlled (China National Tourism Administration, 2001). Control is achieved using a number of mechanisms such as the use of single-trip passports, restricting travel options through approved travel agencies and tour operators, and limiting travel to designated destinations. By the year 2002, China had approved 22 destinations for outbound travel¹. Of these destinations, Australia was the first western country to be given Approved Destination Status (ADS), which enables Chinese nationals to use ordinary passports when applying for tourist visas for visiting Australia (Tourism Forecasting Council, 1999).

For the moment, ADS gives Australia a certain competitive advantage. However, that advantage could change in the likely event that ADS is granted to other major world tourist destinations in North America and Europe. Australia will then face stiffer competition in the emerging Chinese market. Consequently, the quality of the Chinese tourists' experiences will determine, at least in part, Australia's success in maintaining its market share (Yu, Weiler & Ham, 2001).

Under the ADS scheme, Chinese holidaymakers must join an ADS group tour if they wish to visit Australia. These ADS group tours are fully inclusive, and require a Chinese-speaking local guide for every group. These guides are expected to lead the groups to

¹ The designated destinations were: Singapore, Malaysia, Thailand, the Philippines, Indonesia, Australia, New Zealand, South Korea, Japan, Vietnam, Laos, Cambodia, Brunei, Nepal, Hong Kong, Macao, Myanmar, South Africa, Turkey, Egypt, Malta, Germany.

places of interest, deliver commentary and interpretation of the attractions of the visited region, and mediate interactions between the group and the host as well as control of the tour (that is they are responsible for safety and security as well as the itinerary). As a result, tour guides looking after Chinese tour groups serve as the main point of contact between the destination and their Chinese clients.

For Chinese tourists, Australia is perceived as the closest Western destination offering distinctly non-Asian attractions and various western cultural experiences. However, most Chinese tourists speak limited English and have to rely on tour guides facilitating their intercultural experience. Thus, a tour guide's performance as a cultural mediator is an important factor contributing to the quality of Chinese visitors' experience (Yu, Weiler & Ham, 2001). Justification of the importance of this role is discussed in more detail in Chapter Two.

Despite the importance of the tour guide's job for the Chinese market, no known studies have been conducted on Chinese-speaking tour guides in Australia in general, and on cultural mediation in particular. However, although anecdotal evidence suggests that many of these guides are able to facilitate non-stressful, interesting and satisfying interactions for visitors, some, while having the advantage of speaking their Chinese clients' language, have low levels of English language proficiency and limited knowledge of Australian geography, history and culture. Therefore, despite their official status as 'Australian residents', they struggle with cultural fluency in much the same way as their clients, and lack the in-depth knowledge and cultural competencies necessary to facilitate the intercultural experience that their Chinese visitors are seeking as discussed in more detail in Chapter Three. Given the importance of guides as cultural mediators for Chinese tourists in Australia (Yu, Weiler & Ham, 2001), research on the competence that these guides need to perform effectively as a cultural mediator, factors influencing their intercultural performance, and the subsequent effect on tourist experience, seem both timely and important (Yu, Weiler & Ham, 2001).

To serve as a mediator between cultures, a tour guide must possess competencies that are relevant to each culture, and according to Bochner (1981), monocultural individuals, that is those competent in only a single culture, are generally ineffective mediators. Taft (1981) argued, 'the mediator must be able to participate to some extent in both cultures. Thus, a mediator must to some extent be bicultural'. Bicultural guides would thus be expected to

perform better than monocultural guides, and such performance would be reflected in higher satisfaction rates, for example, of Chinese tourists with their intercultural experience in a country such as Australia. Therefore, the present study proposes that a tour guide must be interculturally competent in order to play his/her cultural mediatory role.

Tourism literature reveals little theoretical and empirical attention to the components of intercultural competence, to what factors contribute to tour guides' intercultural competence or to the mediating effects of tour guides on tourists' experiences (Yu, Weiler & Ham, 2001). However, the concept of intercultural competence is well studied in the field of intercultural communication mainly in the context of sojourners, foreign students or immigrants but seldom in the context of tour guiding. This thesis then turns to the literature of intercultural communication to develop a conceptual framework for studying the intercultural competence of tour guides². Tour guiding represents an ideal context for intercultural communication because of its interface between the visitor's culture and that of the host. Cultural adaptation is often considered to be the desired outcome of sojourners' intercultural competence. However, the present study differs from those studies that focused on sojourners, in that it argues that the outcomes of tour guides' intercultural competence should include effective cultural mediation, that is, the ability to not only personally adjust to an intercultural living environments, but to facilitate the intercultural experience of others.

The study of intercultural competence is influenced by various disciplines such as psychology, social psychology, socio-linguistics and communication. However, while various approaches and methodologies are used to study intercultural competence, there is a trend toward integrating the existing approaches to enhance the predictive and explanatory power of the intercultural competence model. Considering the advantages of the integrative approach, the current study adopts this approach to investigating tour guides' intercultural competence.

² This framework will be presented in chapter 2.

1.2 Research Aim

The aim of the research is to develop and test a framework that conceptualises the intercultural competence (IC) of tour guides, and assesses the impact of the IC of tour guides on the guided tour experience.

1.3 Objectives

To address the research aim, the following research objectives have been established.

1. To explore the roles undertaken by tour guides and the competence needed to perform these roles;
2. To identify the underlying dimensions of the IC of tour guides, assess the relative importance and actual performance of the IC of tour guides, and develop and test a model of the IC of tour guides based on these dimensions;
3. To examine the relationship between the background characteristics of tour guides and their perception of IC;
4. To explore tourists' most memorable experience and their guides' role in that experience; and
5. To examine the impact of the IC of tour guides, the background characteristics of tourists and trip characteristics on the evaluation of the guided tour experience.

Specific hypotheses and a theoretical framework that shows the relationship between these variables emerge from the literature review and therefore are presented in Chapter Two (Section 2.6 and 2.7).

1.4 Definitions

Each of the following terms is used throughout this thesis in a particular way, thus it is useful to define and explain these terms at the outset.

1.4.1 ADS Scheme

ADS is an acronym for 'approved destination status' which is one of the mechanisms used by the Chinese government to control Chinese outbound travel for holidays (details regarding the main purposes of travel to Australia by Chinese visitors are discussed in Chapter 3). ADS means that Chinese holidaymakers can only go to certain designated destinations in tour groups organised by a selected number of travel agencies. By the year 2002, China had approved 22 destinations for outbound travel for holidays through the 21 approved Chinese travel agencies. Initially, in 1997, only residents of Beijing, Shanghai and Guangdong could apply for ADS visas to visit Australia. In July 2002, China National Tourism Administration (CNTA) extended the number of designated travel agencies operating outbound business in China (China National Tourism Administration, 2002). Accordingly, the Chinese government and its Australian counterpart have also agreed to expand the ADS arrangement into other Chinese regions (Department of Industry, Tourism and Resources, 2002a). In the near future, additional ADS travel agents will be nominated and approved to handle ADS business to Australia (Australian Tourism Commission, 2002).

1.4.2 ADS Chinese Tour Group to Australia

Under the ADS scheme, Chinese holidaymakers must join an ADS group tour if they wish to visit Australia. These ADS group tours are fully inclusive, with fixed dates of departure and return. It is required that each group be accompanied by a Chinese-speaking local (Australia-based) guide in addition to a tour leader from Mainland China.

1.4.3 Guiding and Guides

Defining guiding is a complicated issue due to the multifaceted and dynamic nature of the guiding job. The Oxford dictionary (1989:481) defines a guide as a 'person who shows others the way, especially a person employed to point out interesting sights on a journey or visit'. In this definition, providing direction is indicated as the primary role of a guide. This pathfinding role is the original function of a guide who acts as a geographic guide to offer directions (Cohen, 1985).

The International Association of Tour Managers (IATM) and the European Federation of Tourist Guide Associations (EFTGA) define a tour guide as a person who guides groups or individual visitors from abroad or from the home country around the monuments, sites and museums of a city or region; to interpret in an inspiring and entertaining manner, in the language of the visitor's choice, the cultural and natural heritage and environment (European Federation of Tourist Guide Associations, 1998).

These industry bodies perceive the tour guide's role as providing not only direction but also cultural and environmental interpretation. It is implied that interpretation is a part of guiding. The practice of interpretation was originally used in the United States National Park Service, and then adopted by others in both the public and non-public sectors (Pond, 1993). "The goal of interpretation is to convey the magnificence of a place, inspire visitors, and ultimately convince them of the need to preserve park lands". "Interpretation provides 'the sociological, educational, and cultural underpinning of guiding'" (Pond, 1993:71). Cohen (1985) posits that interpretation is the essence of the cultural mediating role of tour guides. As a result, interpretation is increasingly recognised by tourism industry bodies and researchers as a key function of guiding (Cohen, 1985; Weiler, Johnson & Davis, 1991; Pond, 1993; Gurung, Simmons & Devlin, 1996; Weiler & Ham, 2001).

In addition, the aforementioned definitions underlines the multifaceted nature of the guiding job by categorising tour guides based on types of tours for example, inbound or domestic; the tour setting such as city or regional; the subject matter for example, cultural, natural heritage and environment as well as clients' languages.

As indicated in their organisational names, we can see that the IATM and EFTGA also distinguish between the job of a tour manager and a tour guide. Tour manager, often used interchangeably with courier, tour escort and tour leader, refers to a person who escorts the group during the entire trip, and is mainly responsible for managing the logistical aspects of the tour (Cohen, 1985). A tour guide, normally city based, accompanies the group on day tours and sometimes on overnight tours. His or her major role is to provide the group with information on the visited place(s). The tour guide might also undertake some of the administrative responsibilities of a tour manager (Holloway, 1981). However, in many cases, especially in non-urban areas, the roles of tour manager and guide are often merged and the differences between the two are blurred.

Sociologists provide another perspective of analysing the guiding role, Schmidt, (1979); Holloway, (1981); Cohen, (1985); and Quiroga, (1990), for example, place emphasis on the social function or the social mediatory role of tour guides. Based on his empirical study, Holloway (1981) reveals that tour guides act as a catalyst to stimulate social interaction on a coach tour, while Quiroga (1990) maintains that tour guides facilitate tour members' acquaintance and social rapport, hence playing an important role in developing group dynamics. Cohen (1985) notes that the social function of guides is not only inner directed that is within the group but also outer-directed, linking visitors to the local population, to tourist sites and facilities. Although integration and mediation are seen as desirable social functions of guides, tour guides can also manipulate their role to insulate their travel party from the social environment such as by withholding certain access (Schmidt, 1979).

Another issue is that guiding is not institutionalised in many places. The definition of the guiding role is thus subject to different interpretations. Most of the studies on guiding are concerned with how to define the guides' roles with little research attention on the role performance of tour guides in general and on cultural mediating role in particular.

1.4.4 Local (Australia-based) Chinese-Speaking Tour Guides

The term local (Australia-based) Chinese-speaking tour guides used in this thesis refers to tour guides, employed by the Australian ADS tour operators, who lead ADS groups to the important sites of a city or state in Australia, provides commentary of cultural and natural attractions in Chinese language, facilitate communication, understanding and interaction between tourist and host, and manage the tour. Most of these tour guides are based in major tourism cities including Sydney, Canberra, Melbourne, Brisbane and Gold Coast and look after Chinese visitors during their stay in each respective city. A few of them may conduct intra-state guiding. These tour guides migrated from either Mainland China or other parts of Asia. Most of them are permanent residents of Australia.

1.4.5 Defining Cultural Mediator

The term cultural mediator was first introduced in the book *The Mediating Person: Bridges between cultures* edited by Bochner (1981). "A cultural mediator is a person who

facilitates communication, understanding, and action between persons or groups of different culture" (Taft, 1981: 53). More specifically, a mediator's task might include "disseminating information, promoting mutual understanding, forming culturally relativistic attitudes, producing cross-cultural empathy, spreading international goodwill and reconciling disparate cultural practices" (Bochner, 1981:306).

There is a diverse set of social roles such as language interpreter, business agent for a foreign company or tour guide in which cultural mediation is a central requirement (Taft, 1981). Although the mediating role is not legitimised, mainly voluntary in nature, people in these social roles make a considerable contribution to intercultural understanding. Taking the mediating function of translators and interpreters as an example: translators and interpreters do not only translate texts (surface meaning). They also translate cultures (deep meaning) because the context of texts is culturally-bound (Taft, 1981; Katan, 1999). By translating culture (mediating culture), a translator or interpreter can represent one culture to another faithfully and contribute to mutual understanding and accurate cross-cultural knowledge (Taft, 1981).

In the context of tour guiding, although tour guides may play several roles and perform various functions, in intercultural settings, tour guides, similar to translators, work at the interface between tourist culture and host culture, thus assuming an additional role as cultural mediators (Schmidt, 1979; Holloway, 1981; Pearce, 1982a, 1984; Cohen, 1985; Hughes, 1991; Pond, 1993; Bras, 2000; Smith, 2001; Yu, Weiler & Ham, 2001). Traditionally, tour guides, as cultural mediators are indigenous people but are marginal in their society. They are very familiar with the local environment and have a basic understanding of the tourists' culture and needs (Cohen, 1985; Smith, 2001). "These go-betweens, usually bilingual, interpret indigenous culture to their clients and serve important functions of cultural interpretation" (Smith, 2001:276).

1.4.6 Defining Intercultural Competence

The concept of intercultural competence has been explored and researched under many different labels such as cross-cultural adjustment (Benson, 1978), cross-cultural adaptation (Kim, 1995; Cui, Berg & Jiang, 1998), intercultural effectiveness (Hammer, Gudykunst & Wiseman, 1978; Cui & Awa, 1992), intercultural competence (Dinges, 1983; Lustig &

Koester, 1999) and intercultural communication competence (Wiseman, Hammer & Nishida, 1989; Chen & Starosta, 1996).

Due to the 'considerable divergence' of the use of the term intercultural competence (Kim, 2001), a number of issues need to be given attention before the definition of intercultural competence is presented. The first issue relates to the use of the term 'cross-cultural' versus 'intercultural'. A commonly accepted distinction in the intercultural literature is that 'cross-cultural' involves comparisons of communication by people from two or more cultures, while "intercultural' refers to communication between people from different cultures" (Ting-Tomey, 1999:16). However, sometimes the two terms are used interchangeably.

The second issue is that competence and effectiveness are the two terms widely used by scholars studying the outcomes of intercultural interaction. Although some researchers use the two terms interchangeably, the majority of intercultural scholars prefer to use the term competence (Koester, Wiseman & Sanders, 1993) since competence comprises both effectiveness and appropriateness (Chen & Starosta, 1996). Based on the above discussion, the terms intercultural and competence are considered as the appropriate terms for the current study.

Definitions of competence are numerous. Most researchers acknowledge communication competence as "the ability to interact effectively and appropriately with others" (Chen & Starosta, 1996:358). Spitzberg and Cupach (1984) proposed a comprehensive model of competence. They proposed that, in social and interpersonal interaction, competence is composed of several inter-related components: knowledge, abilities possessed, and behaviours displayed by interactants as well as the impressions made about each other during the interaction process.

The term intercultural competence is often defined as being similar to the term communication competence except for its contextual dimension that is communication between people with different cultural backgrounds (Chen & Starosta, 1996). "Intercultural communication competence can be conceived as the ability to negotiate cultural meanings and to execute appropriately effective communication behaviours that recognise the interactants' multiple identities in a specific environment" (Chen & Starosta, 1996:353). In addition to emphasising the effective and appropriate ability to interact with people, this

definition of intercultural competence places more emphasis on negotiating culture meanings and on contextual factors (Chen, & Starosta).

The main intercultural communication components (qualities) include knowledge (cultural awareness), motivation (psychological adaptation), skill (personal attributes and communication skills) and context (Hammer, 1989; Spitzberg, 1989; Spitzberg, 1996; Lustig & Koester, 1999; Kim, Laroche & Tomiuk, 2001; Kim, 2001). These components facilitate communication competence.

Although there is no universally agreed definition of intercultural competence, this study chooses the definitions of communication competence developed by Spitzberg and Cupach (1984) and intercultural competence developed by Chen and Starosta (1996). This is because the two definitions contain reference to effectiveness and appropriateness, which are generally agreed among communication scholars as the two most critical elements of competence. A tour guide's communication with visitors involves "creating and interpreting messages" relevant to the host and tourist cultures, "creating understanding", "making connections" between hosts and tourists (Moscardo, 1999:5), and minimising interaction difficulties between different cultural groups. Tour guides communicate their social and cultural world to visitors, thus influencing how the local original tourist resources for example local cultural characteristics are transformed into touristic experiences (Bras, 2000). Therefore, in the context of the current study, in addition to cultural adaptation, cultural mediation should be considered as an important part of tour guides' effective intercultural communication.

1.4.7 Guided Tour Experiences

"Experience is the inner state of the individual, brought about by something which is personally encountered, undergone or lived through" (Cohen, 2000:251). The guided tour experience is multidimensional resulting from a number of aspects such as quality of facilities (accommodation, tourist attractions, transportation), tour guiding, social relationships and customer service. While each component may affect tourists' overall satisfaction with the tour, the tour guide is a key component of the guided tour experience (Schmidt, 1979; Geva & Goldman, 1991; Hughes, 1991; Wang, Hsieh & Huan, 2000).

1.5 Methodology

The current research adopts a quantitative approach, using hypothesis testing, systematic explanation and statistical analysis in order to identify the multiple dimensions of a tour guide's intercultural competence, and to explain what influences tour guides' intercultural competence and what variables are associated with tourists' perceptions of the IC of tour guides. Qualitative data are also used to uncover perceptions that tourism industry representatives have about the research topic. These perceptions are used to inform the design of questionnaires for the surveys of visitors and tour guides in the later stage. Qualitative data are also gathered in the visitor survey to add depth, provide insights and help validate the quantitative data gathered in the survey. Thus, qualitative and quantitative methods are intertwined in the design of this research, the data collected, and the analysis and reporting of the data. This combined methods approach aims to reduce the limitations inherent in adopting one specific study approach and provide greater depth and breadth of understanding of the research topic. More detailed discussion of research methodology is presented in Chapter Four.

1.6 Significance of the Study

The study on conceptualising and assessing the IC of tour guides is significant in several ways. First, it empirically investigates the tourism stakeholders' perceptions of the roles of tour guides in general and their cultural mediating role in particular.

Second, this research operationalises the IC of tour guides by integrating the various components of IC at both the conceptual and measurement levels. By statistically analysing the factorability and construct validity of the IC of tour guides, the thesis aims to develop a theoretical model for the IC of tour guides that extends beyond current models of IC and enhances the predictive and explanatory power of an IC model in a tour guiding context.

Third, the review of tourism literature reveals a dearth of research on the performance of tour guides in general, and on the impact of the IC of tour guides on tourist experiences in particular. The current research addresses this limitation by assessing the perceived importance and actual performance of the IC of tour guides as well as the impact of the IC of tour guides on the guided tour experience. The comprehensive conceptual framework

includes factors influencing the performance of tour guides and variables associated with tourists' evaluation on their guided tour experiences. Finally, the results of the research are expected to have implications for practice and policy for the tourism industry and the Australian Government related to the improvement of tour guiding quality and ultimately the tourist experience, particularly for the Chinese market.

1.7 Research Delimitation

This thesis seeks to identify factors associated with the IC of tour guides and variables associated with guided tour experiences, but its scope is limited in at least three ways. First, with respect to factors associated with the IC of tour guides, the measurement scale of cultural identity employed by this study contains only a limited number of indicators, not a full scale, therefore, it only provides an indication that cultural identity is a good predictor of intercultural competence. In addition, the literature notes that situational variables such as a tour operator's organisational culture and industry practice can also account for variations in the IC of tour guides. The current study does not statistically test the relationship between situational factors and the IC of tour guides. The impact of situational factors on guides' IC is analysed based only on findings that have emerged from this study.

Second, the guided tour experience is complex and multidimensional. It comprises a number of aspects such as quality of facilities, social relationships and quality of tour guides. The current research does not assess all elements of guided tour experiences, but focuses only on one aspect, that of the IC of tour guides and its impact on visitors' global satisfaction with their guided tour experience.

Third, the thesis measures the impact of the variation of only a limited number of tourists' background factors and trip characteristics on guided tour experiences. Variables such as occupation, income level, travel motivation and expectation are beyond the scope of the current study.

1.8 Structure of the Thesis

To achieve the research aim, the thesis includes six chapters. Chapter One provides an introduction to the study including an overview of tour guiding in intercultural settings as a basis for the study's focus. This chapter also introduces the research aim, objectives, key definitions, a brief overview of the research methodology employed, the significance of the study, research delimitations, and the structure of the thesis.

The second chapter provides a rationale for the study of the intercultural competence (IC) of tour guides and argues the need for an integrative approach to conceptualising and assessing the IC of tour guides. The first section of the chapter illustrates the important links among culture, communication and tourism, with a focus on explaining cultural differences both as a factor pulling visitors to particular tourism destination and as a cause of interaction difficulties among hosts and visitors. The second section discusses the dynamics of the guiding role with a focus on the significance of the cultural mediating role of tour guides in the guided tour experience. Section three reviews various approaches to the study of intercultural competence and provides justification for the integrative approach (cognitive, affective and behavioural competence) to the tour-guiding context. The fourth section reviews previous studies on the guided tour experience to identify the key functions of a guided tour and measurement issues in evaluating the guided tour experience. Together the four sections provide a basis for the current study's objectives and research hypotheses and inform its conceptual framework, which is presented in Section 2.7 of Chapter Two.

Following on from the review of theory and empirical studies on the cultural mediating role of tour guides and the IC of tour guides presented in Chapter Two, Chapter Three provides the context for the empirical study undertaken for this thesis, focusing on the justification of the geographical and cultural area selected: outbound travel from China in general, and travel to Australia in particular. It begins with an analysis of the growth and changing trends in global travel, followed by an overview of outbound travel from China. It explains the main reasons for strong growth in the Chinese travel market, discusses the significance of this market, and examines the travel behaviours of Chinese visitors. Then, the chapter proceeds with a detailed description of Chinese holiday travel to Australia, including discussion of ADS tour operators and profiles of Chinese visitors and their trip

characteristics, which together underpin the importance of the guiding role in facilitating Chinese visitors' guided tour experiences.

Based on Chapter Two and Three, Chapter Four develops an appropriate research design for conceptualising and assessing the IC of tour guides. A review of research paradigms provides a foundation for presenting the purpose of the research, its theoretical perspectives and methodological approach, justification of the research design and methods for the current study. The remainder of the chapter discusses operationalisation of key variables, sampling methods, data collection procedures, and methods of data analysis. Data sources and reliability and validity evidence of the instrumentation employed are presented, as are ethical issues, translation of questionnaires, and results of the pilot test.

Chapter Five presents the research findings and interpretation of the results by providing a three-factor model of the IC of tour guides as well as empirical evidence of the importance of the IC of tour guides on the guided tour experience. Each section of this chapter presents research findings and discussion of the results, which addresses part or all of one of the five research objectives of this study. Section 5.2 shows how different tourism stakeholders perceive the importance of the roles of tour guides. Section 5.3 reveals the areas in which Chinese-speaking tour guides need to be competent in order to fulfil their roles. Section 5.4 presents the underlying dimensions of the tour guide's intercultural competence. Section 5.5 provides the assessment of the IC of tour guides by both the guides themselves and tourists. Section 5.6 and 5.7 reveal the factors affecting tour guides' IC. Section 5.8 explores the most memorable experience of Chinese visitors during their visit to Australia and tour guides' role in that experience. Section 5.9 provides the statistical analysis of the impact of the IC of tour guides on the guided tour experience. Section 5.10 provides a post-hoc analysis of situational factors on the IC of tour guides. Situational factors were neither tested statistically nor incorporated in formal interview questions, but emerged from the data collection.

Conclusions are drawn in Chapter Six. Chapter Six outlines the contributions of this study in terms of theory, methodology, practice and policy implications. The chapter concludes with limitations of the study and avenues for further research.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to provide a rationale for the study's focus on intercultural competence (IC), and to justify the need for an integrative approach to conceptualising and assessing the IC of tour guides. This review is drawn from several bodies of literature, including tour guiding, cultural mediation, intercultural communication competence, and evaluation of guided tour experiences.

The first section presents a number of definitions of culture and communication and the relevance of the definitions to tourism to illustrate the important link among culture, communication and tourism. The focus is on explaining cultural differences both as a factor pulling visitors to particular tourism destinations and as a cause of interaction difficulties between hosts and visitors.

The second section discusses the cultural mediating role of tour guides. It begins with the discussion of the dynamics of the guiding role. It also investigates the mediating effects of tour guides on tourist experiences, the competence of cultural mediators, and the constraints of the mediating role as well as the limitations of past tourism studies on cultural mediation.

The third section of the review provides a justification for the integrative approach to the study of tour guides' intercultural competence adopted by this research. This section begins with a review of different approaches to the study of intercultural competence in general and the integrative approach in particular, the justification of each component of the integrative approach (cognitive, affective and behavioural) and its relevance and application to the tour guiding context as well as other factors associated with the IC of tour guides.

The fourth section reviews previous studies on the guided tour experience to identify the key functions of the guided tours, the significance of the mediating role in the guided tour experience, and key factors associated with tourists' perception of guided tour experiences. Measurement issues in evaluating the guided tour experience are presented and gaps in past

studies on the guided tour experiences are identified. The various sections in this chapter provide a basis for the current study. The conceptual framework is presented in the final section of this chapter.

2.2 Cultural and Communication Issues in the Guiding Context

The scope of the study of culture and communication is very broad. Kroeber and Kluckhohn (1952) identified more than 160 different definitions of culture, ranging from implicit principles, such as norms, beliefs and values, to explicit elements such as food, drink, music and art. Communication shares the complexity of culture and has over 120 definitions (Jandt, 1998). The current study limits its discussion of culture and communication to the tour guiding context. The following review attempts to illustrate the interrelationships among culture, communication and tour guiding.

2.2.1 Culture and Communication: Definitions

One of the earliest definitions of culture was given by Tylor (1871). He stated that culture is a complex whole, which includes knowledge, beliefs, art, morals, law, customs, and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society. This definition provides a holistic view of culture, including both the implicit principles and the explicit variables of culture for example cultural artifacts. These elements of culture form the main cultural characteristics of a tourism destination.

Culture can also be defined as a learned set of shared interpretations about beliefs, values, and norms, which affect the behaviours of a relatively large group of people (Lustig & Koester, 1999). This approach to defining culture establishes a connection between culture and communication. It acknowledges that culture sets the intergroup boundary, and influences how people perceive themselves and others (Ting-Toomey, 1999). In the tourism context, this concept of culture implies that culture affects the interaction between tourists and hosts of different cultural groups.

Communication is defined as an element of culture (Jandt, 1998), a social activity (Samovar & Porter, 1997), and a process in which the participants create and share information with one another in order to reach a mutual understanding (Rogers & Kincaid, 1981). The exchange of symbolic meanings within communication allows for everyday interaction and enables culture to be passed on from generation to generation (Samovar & Porter, 2001). Communication is also contextual, shaped and bounded by culture.

Intercultural communication takes place when individuals from different cultures interpret and share meanings (Gamble & Gamble, 1999). In the context of tour guiding, tour guides' intercultural communication with visitors involves "creating and interpreting messages" relevant to the host and tourist cultures, "creating understanding", "making connections" between hosts and tourists (Moscardo, 1999:5), and minimising interaction difficulties between different cultural groups. As Bras (2000) suggested, tour guides communicate their social and cultural world to visitors, and thus influence how the local original tourist resources such as local cultural characteristics, are transformed into touristic experiences. For example, local tour guides, as cultural intermediaries, present the significance of a place to the visitors through the interpretation of the meanings of the character of the destination. Guides also "create tourist zones and set boundaries" (Bras, 2000: 30).

The aforementioned definitions of culture and communication illustrate how the two concepts are interrelated, and what role tour guides could play in (inter)cultural communication between hosts and tourists. Tourism involves millions of people interacting across cultural boundaries, between tourists and tourism service providers, between tourists and the local residents, and among tourists. It is obvious that tourism is a field where intercultural interaction constantly takes place. How cultures differ, and the impact of cultural differences on tourists' experiences and on their interaction with the host culture will be discussed next.

2.2.2 Impact of Cultural Differences on Tourist Experiences

Every culture has its own set of beliefs, rules and values. There are many ways of identifying the dimensions of cultural difference such as dimensions based on value orientations toward humans, toward nature, toward activity, toward time and toward relationships among people (Kluckhohn & Strodtbeck, 1961), dimensions for identifying

variations of national cultures: power distance, uncertainty avoidance, individualism-collectivism and masculinity-femininity (Hofstede, 1980), and cultural differences based on communication patterns: context, space, time and information flow (Hall, 1990).

The most relevant dimensions for the current study are 'individualism versus collectivism' (Hofstede, 1980) and 'the low context cultures versus high context cultures' (Hall, 1976). These dimensions of cultural variability which reflect "patterns of thinking, feeling and acting" (Hofstede, 1997:5) have received consistent attention among cultural communication scholars. They also explain some of the basic differences concerning communication behaviour between cultures (Gudykunst & Ting-Toomey, 1988a; Triandis, Brislin & Hui, 1988; Schwartz & Bilsky, 1990). In an individualistic culture, such as the United States and Australia, individual goals and achievement guide communication. Emphasis is placed on obligation to self. As a result, people in individual cultures tend to use low-context communication and speak directly on an issue. Collectivistic cultures, such as China and many other Asian countries, tend to consider how to meet the needs and expectations of others when communicating, therefore, in collectivistic culture, maintaining a relationship is more important than fulfilling a task. Thus, members of high-context cultures use implicit styles of communication to avoid confrontation and save face.

Since otherness and strangeness are often essential elements in the touristic experience (Cohen, 1972), cultural differences can also be motivating factors, attracting tourists to particular tourism destinations. This is particularly true for international tourism. Whether culture is the primary travel motivation or not, learning about the other's way of life is almost always part of travel. When people consider culture as the primary motivation of their travel, and request customised cultural programs and experiences, their trip becomes a special interest form of travel known as cultural tourism (Bushell, 2001). This type of tourism enables tourists to have close encounters with the host culture. Whether within a more mainstream form of tourism or a specialised product focused on culture, the opportunity for a cultural encounter is a basic component of travel that involves interpersonal and intercultural communication (Dewar, 2000; Bushell, 2001).

However, cultural differences do not automatically and necessarily become the object of curiosity and interest. In certain circumstances, they might also cause problems (Wang, 1999). Communication difficulties can pose major obstacles in intercultural contacts between tourist and host (Furnham, 1984). For instance, when tourists are unsure of the

host language signs, cues and symbols (Oberg, 1960), language barriers can be a key challenge in interactions. Tourists might also have difficulty in understanding social and cultural norms of the host culture. The norms of a culture specify acceptable and unacceptable behaviour in interaction with others. In other words, "norms are sets of expected behaviour for particular situations" (Gudykunst & Kim, 1997:47). Social-cultural norms relevant to the tourism context might include the use of non-verbal codes, public social behaviour and shopping norms (Martin & Nakayama, 2001).

Non-verbal codes are guided by social and cultural norms. People typically use their own cultural norms to judge the non-verbal behaviour of others. For example, in Australian or American culture, eye contact is expected during communication and interaction. Direct eye contact is considered as an indication of attention and interest. In contrast, in Asian countries such as China, direct eye contact is avoided as an indication of showing respect. Thus, inappropriate use of eye contact may cause discomfort or misunderstanding in interactions between tourist and host.

Different cultural norms result in different behavioural patterns in public. For example, in-group membership is very important in Chinese and other collectivistic cultures, consequently, Chinese are less likely to initiate interactions with strangers in public. Interactions with strangers are often initiated by a third person who is known to both parties. In contrast in cultures such as Australia and the United States, it is possible for strangers to smile and greet each other in the street.

Cultural norms also affect the use of polite expressions. In Chinese culture, feelings of gratitude and apology are expected to be internalised, particularly with family members and close friends. In individualistic cultures such as the United States and Australia, apology and appreciation is used with everyone in every interaction. An individual who does not use such polite expressions may be perceived as rude.

Cultural norms also influence shopping behaviours such as bargaining. Attitudes towards bargaining are different from culture to culture. Asian tourists, particularly the Chinese, simply enjoy bargaining. Without bargaining, they sometimes feel the value of goods is not known. However, in countries such as Australia, the price of goods is fixed and not expected to be negotiable.

Culture then is a multidimensional concept. Thus, aspects of cultural differences are numerous such as communication, values and perceptions. Those aspects described above are not exhaustive but are more observable than some other aspects. According to Reisinger and Lindsay (2002), the greatest cultural differences between Asian and Western cultures can be summarised as follows:

In network patterns (Yum, 1985), self-presentation (Tu, 1985), self-disclosure (Ting-Toomey, 1991), expressing emotions (Schrerer, Wallbott, and Summerfield, 1986), feelings of responsibility for other people (Argyle, 1972), understanding of morality (Retting and Pasarnanick, 1962), accepting compliments (Barnlund and Araki, 1985), perceptions of social interaction (Kim and Gudykunst, 1988), formality (Samovar and Porter, 1988), and understanding of what constitutes friendship (Wei, Crompton, and Reid, 1989) (Reisinger & Lindsay, 2003:299).

However, "the tourist and host encounter is a special form of cross-cultural interaction" (Pearce, 1982b:199). The duration of a tourist's stay in visited places is short compared to other sojourners such as foreign students (Bochner, 1982; Pearce, 1982b; Furnham, 1984) and contact between the tourist and the local population might be limited to obtaining a service, making a purchase or seeing a tourist site.

In summary, while most tourism encounters are transitory and brief, interaction experiences can be either rewarding or frustrating. The acquiring of new knowledge about a host country and pleasant touristic interactions can make tourist experience rewarding and bring added value to the total trip experience. But cultural differences might also cause difficulties in tourist and host encounters.

2.2.3 Guided Tour: Striking Right Balance between Strangeness and Familiarity

"There are variations among tourists in their choices between familiarity and strangerhood" (Wang, 1999:148). It has been established that cultural resources become more appealing to potential tourists when there is less perceived shock, threat or danger in encounters with others. Wang (1999) argued that tourists could be classified according to the tourist experience chosen in relation to the degree of certainty.

Even though tourists have the option to choose different forms of tourism with different degree of novelty, potentially, all tourists seek a rather balanced experience between

strangeness and familiarity (Yiannakis & Gibson, 1992). In one of the earliest studies on guided tours, Schmidt (1979) notes that tourists join guided group tours to seek experiences combining adventure, novelty, escape and culture, and expect tour guides to provide them with not only security and comfort during the tour but also to facilitate a novel experience in a foreign environment.

How tour guides make a tour that meets such tourist experience is the issue to be discussed next. Schmidt (1979) points out that integrating tourists into and insulating them from the host environment are the two contradictory features of the guided tour. For instance, some functions of the guided tour such as providing easy access to material culture (e.g. shopping, dining, visiting museums) and cultural mediation performed by tour guides, do integrate tourists into the environment. But the guided tour is also a source of insulation from the environment. Physical structures and arrangements on tours may isolate tourists from the host community. Tourists more often than not stay in hotels, take charter buses and live in the tourist 'bubble'. However, Schmidt (1979) argues that tour guides can play an important role in dissolving the contradictory features of insulation and integration in guided tours. Tour guides can make the new environment non-threatening for tourists by acting as a buffer and intermediary between the tourist and the host.

In the case of Chinese tourists to Australia, the cultural distance between tourist culture and host culture is great, which has great impact on stress and intercultural interaction (Gudykunst & Ting-Toomey, 1988b). Therefore, cultural mediation is seen as a key role of an inbound tour guide escorting Chinese group tours (Yu, Weiler & Ham, 2001). Tourists from Mainland China, similar to most Asian tourists, when traveling overseas, tend to travel in groups to reduce the impact of cultural distance. Their dependence on tour guides in brokering their intercultural experience tends to be high, partly due to language and cultural barriers (Yu & Weiler, 2001). The following section presents an analysis of the mediation role of tour guides in guided tour experiences.

2.3 Role of Tour Guide as Cultural Mediator

To understand the cultural mediation role of tour guides, this section first discusses the dynamics of guiding role, followed by the mediating role of tour guides on tourist

experiences; competence (qualities) of a cultural mediator; constraints of the mediating role, and limitations of previous studies on cultural mediation in the tour guiding context.

2.3.1 Dynamics of Guiding Role

A recent study (Rodham, 2000) on role theory suggests that traditional approaches to the study of roles have focused on descriptions of what role incumbents do but have not managed to capture their dynamic nature. Rodham's study demonstrates that roles can change when the situation changes, hence the dynamic nature of certain jobs or occupational positions. In the tourism literature, the dynamic nature of the guiding job is related to the contemporary mediating role of tour guides.

Cohen (1985), in a seminal article, posits that the tour guide's role has moved away from its original role of pathfinder towards a mediatory role, a 'pathway' to professionalisation. This process of transition and professionalisation is closely related to the development of tourism as an industry and the emergence of institutionalised tourists on tours (Cohen, 1972). The guide's job, Cohen (1985) argues, has become more 'routinised', and tourists have become more experienced and demanding. Cohen's observation of the change of visitors' needs for guides is supported by some recent studies such as Ham and Weiler (2002) who suggest that tourists ask for and expect an improved guiding services such as fuller information and interpretation of sights, and a much wider range of guiding services and tourist experiences. For example, the interpretative role is found as the essential element of guiding in cruise-based tours. Tourists expect their guides to provide them with new insights into the visited place through quality interpretative guiding (Ham & Weiler, 2002).

According to Cohen (1985), the mediating function of a tour guide includes two components: social mediation and cultural brokerage. Social mediating involves being a go-between, linking visitors to the local population, and to tourist sites and facilities, and making the host environment non-threatening for the tourist. Cultural brokerage, which is considered by Cohen as a primary role of the professional tour guide, is the second component of the guide's mediatory role. Using communication as an agent, cultural interpretation may be the most important function of culture brokering (Cohen, 1985). Effective interpretive communication such as provoking tourists to attach new and

profound meanings to a place or feature (Tilden, 1977) is seen as vital to the quality of tourist experiences.

2.3.2 Mediating Role of Tour Guides on Tourist Experiences

As shown in Table 2.1, a number of tourism researchers (Schmidt, 1979; Holloway, 1981; Pearce, 1982a, 1984; Cohen, 1985; Hughes, 1991; Pond, 1993; Gurung, Simmons & Devlin, 1996; Bras, 2000; Ap & Wong, 2001; Smith, 2001; Yu, Weiler & Ham, 2001) have also given their attention to the mediating role of tour guides.

Table 2.1 Studies on Role of a Tour Guide as a Mediator

Author & theoretical perspective	Mediating role	Guide's impact on tourist experiences
Schmidt (1979) Sociological	Buffer between tourist & social environment, influence what to see, how to get there, how to deal with locals, removing interaction difficulties	Cross-cultural education, facilitate integration
Holloway (1981) Sociological	Information giver, provision of access, catalyst of group interaction, mediating tourist-host interaction	Stimulate interaction, foster unique tourist experiences
Pearce (1982a, 1984) Social-psychological	Shape tourist-local contact, acting as catalyst for group solidarity, influence tourists' perception on host community	Mediating intergroup cultural exchanges, Significant emotional impact on visitors
Cohen (1985) Sociological	Interpretation (translate the unfamiliar), selection (what tourists can see & what they cannot see), mediating encounters between cultures	Facilitating travel experiences, influence tourists' impression and attitudes
Hughes (1991) Psychological	Facilitate communication between cultural groups, provide insights into local way of life, buffer between tour group & the unfamiliar, provide access to non-public places	Interesting & informative commentary makes travel experience meaningful and enhances tourist satisfaction
Weiler, Johnson & Davis (1991) Tourism/tour guiding	Cultural brokering, Interpretation	Provision of quality travel experience, influence visitors' impression, attitudes and enhance their appreciation & understanding
Pond (1993) Tourism/tour guiding	Inform, create memorable interpretations	Enhancing relationship between site and experience
Gurung, Simmons & Devlin (1996) Tourism/tour guiding	Agent between the visited and visitors, interpret host cultural and natural features, point out points of interest, making strange encounter non-threatening	Managing tourist experience
Ap & Wong (2001) Tourism/tour guiding	Interpretive aspect of guiding enhance visitors' understanding of the destination	Transform tourist's visit from a tour into an experience
Bras (2000) Anthropological	Brokers as entrepreneurs, turn social relationship and guiding narratives into a profitable business asset	Connect site visited to wishes and demands of tourists, match interpretation with clients' needs
Smith (2001) Sociological	Mediating between hosts & guests, cultural interpretation, ethnic imaging, cultural trait selection, decision making	Heighten visitor experience
Yu, Weiler & Ham (2001) Intercultural communication Tourism/tour guiding	Facilitate communication, understanding and action between different cultural groups	Enhance visitor experience (enriched tourist experience and minimised interaction difficulties)

These researchers note the significance of the mediating role in shifting the tour guide's function from tour management to experience management (Gurung, Simmons & Devlin, 1996) and how tour guides transform the tourist's visit from a tour into an experience (Ap & Wong, 2001). For examples, Hughes (1991) uses her research findings to demonstrate the importance of the mediating role of tour guides in facilitating communication between different cultural groups. Pearce (1984) recognises the significant impact of a tour guide's presentation on tourists. However, there is a general agreement among these researchers that tour groups travelling abroad largely experience the visited country in a way that is at least partly filtered and structured by a single mediator, their guide (Pearce, 1982a). The guide may influence where tourists go, what they see, what aspects of the host culture they are exposed to, how the host culture is translated and presented as well as the group's interaction with host communities and social settings (Schmidt, 1979).

The mediating activities of tour guides can be categorised into at least three aspects. They are *mediating information, access and encounters*. The interpretation function is seen as a way of *mediating information*, by which tour guides convey the significance of the visited place, and help visitors make intellectual and emotional connections with the visited places for enhanced experiences (Weiler, Johnson & Davis, 1991; Pond, 1993; Gurung, Simmons & Devlin, 1996; Bras, 2000; Ap & Wong, 2001; Smith, 2001, Yu, Weiler & Ham, 2001).

To mediate access, tour guides determine which part of the local culture is shown to tourists and which is kept away from them. Tour guides are expected to provide tourists with an insight into the local life without intruding on the private life of the local people. Tour guides also *mediate encounters* between tourists and the tourist sites, between tour group members, and between tourists and various tourism players such as tour operators and hotels (Schmidt, 1979, Holloway, 1981; Pearce, 1982b; Hughes, 1991, Smith, 2001). Acting as a link in those encounters, tour guides show visitors how to act in a manner that does not run counter to local norms and local ways of thinking, and role model appropriate behaviours. They also reconcile misunderstandings between different cultural groups (Yu, Weiler & Ham, 2001).

In summary, the success of the mediating role can be measured in terms of the mediator's effect on the cultural exchange and negotiation. As a result of the presence or actions of the mediator, members of the cultures should have a greater knowledge of, respect for, and empathy with each other (McLeod, 1981).

2.3.3 Competence of Cultural Mediators

In order to play the role of mediator, an individual has to be flexible in moving between different cultures. In other words, a person who serves as a cultural mediator must possess competencies that are relevant to each culture (Taft, 1981). Consequently, bicultural and bilingual individuals appear to have the knowledge and skills (ability) to play mediating roles. The attributes cultural mediators need to display include their knowledge about society, their motives, as well as communication, technical and social skills, or in other words, their cognitive, conative, affective and habit structures (Bochner, 1981). For example, to be culturally competent, a cultural mediator needs to acquire knowledge of communication rules to anticipate the differences in communication between cultures, and have qualities such as sensitivity to other people's needs and tolerance of differences (Bochner, 1981).

The success of tour guides as cultural mediators depends largely on this intercultural competence (Yu, Weiler & Ham, 2001). They must be able to negotiate cultural meanings and to interact effectively and appropriately with multiple cultures (Chen & Starosta, 1996) and to mediate cultural encounters between different cultural groups. The ideal cultural mediator needs to have the desire and the ability to bring mutual benefits for the parties being mediated (McLeod, 1981). Based on a review of a number of tourism studies (please refer to section 2.4.4 for more detailed discussion), guides' qualities of being a cultural mediator might be considered as cross-cultural understanding, knowledge of the destination, communication and interpretation skills, tolerance, empathy and social and interpersonal skills to bridge the gap between diverse cultural groups.

There is a general agreement among researchers that interpretation is the key function of cultural mediation since "interpretation is an effective means of communicating ideas and feelings", and "helps people enrich their understanding and appreciation of their world and their role within it" (Interpretation Australia Association, 1996:6). It "aims to reveal meanings and relationships through the use of original objects, by firsthand experience, and by illustrative media, rather than simply communicating factual information" (Tilden, 1977:8). The interpretive function of tour guides as cultural mediators might include selecting information, translating cultural idioms to reveal meanings, and connecting visitors with the visited places. More specifically, "the communicative role of a cultural

mediator is to communicate ideas in terms that are meaningful to the members of the target audience" (Taft, 1981:58).

2.3.4 Constraints of Mediating Role

The above literature depicts desirable qualities of tour guides as cultural mediators and positive impacts that effective tour guides could have on tourist experiences. Although the purpose of cultural mediation is to bring mutual benefits to the host culture and the guest culture, Kurin (1997:19) observed that in tourism practice, "cultural mediation could be driven by a variety of interests on behalf of the involved parties". The circumstances under which individuals in interface situations can be expected to behave in a mediating style depend on a set of complex determinants (Bochner, 1981). For example, intervention by government is an external constraint. To serve its own political needs, governments might influence what tourists see and how tour guides present the visited sites (Dahles, 2002). According to Dahles (2002:785), the Indonesian government under Suharto's New Order regime controlled the narratives of tour guides "in order to address issues of national significance".

Another example of failure to bring mutual benefits is related to the purpose of mediation. Unlike engaged cultural mediators such as Peace Corps workers, tour guides, although in interface situations, might not necessarily function as a cultural mediator. They might be driven by their personal motives; thus, they use their knowledge of the local culture, their networks and their intermediary position mainly to make profits for themselves (Bras, 2000). For example, money-driven 'shopping guides' are commercialised 'brokers', totally different from the cultural mediator defined in this thesis. These guides "are not necessarily driven to create a better host-guest relationship, but to improve their own personal situation" (Bras, 2000:47).

2.3.5 Limitations in Tourism Studies on Cultural Mediation

There are several gaps in the literature in previous tourism studies on cultural mediation. First, many studies related to tour guides' cultural mediation to date were either pre-conceptions or descriptive in nature. The evidence as to what constitutes a good cultural mediator is insufficient (Pearce, 1982a). The tourism literature reveals little theoretical and

empirical attention to tour guides' intercultural competence (IC) in relation to effective cultural mediation. No research has been conducted on developing a theoretical framework to identify the key components of tour guides' intercultural competence and factors associated with the IC of tour guides. Moreover, there has been little analysis of the significance of cultural mediators in the tourism literature (Smith, 2001). Few empirical studies have been conducted on assessing tour guides' mediating effectiveness on tourist experiences.

Second, cultural mediation studies often focus on the link established by a middleman between western culture (tourist's culture) and the indigenous culture (host culture). With the growth of international arrivals from Asian countries, nowadays, many Asian tourists travel to western countries on guided tours. Different from the previous situation, Asian tourists are often accompanied by tour guides who are native speakers of the tourist language but not necessarily native to the host country. No research has been conducted regarding cultural mediation in this new market segment, in general, and the Chinese market in particular. Little is known about the background of those tour guides who are native speakers of the language of specific Asian tourist groups, their level of acculturation to the host culture and their contribution to cultural mediation.

Third, most studies on cultural contact have described the unidirectional impact of western tourists on the host community in developing countries. There has been little research on the influence of the destination culture on the visitors even though the purpose of cultural mediation is to bring mutual benefits for the host culture and the guest culture.

The current research addresses these limitations. The study focuses on Chinese-speaking tour guides based in Australia. The IC of tour guides is empirically tested as a theoretical construct. Factors associated with the IC of tour guides, and the impact of the IC of tour guides on guided tour experiences will be assessed. The next section discusses approaches to the study of the IC of tour guides.

2.4 Approaches to the Study

In this section, existing approaches to the study of intercultural competence will be examined; the key components of tour guides' intercultural competence will be proposed, and factors that might affect tour guides' intercultural competence will be analysed.

2.4.1 Approaches to the Study of Intercultural Competence

The study of intercultural competence is influenced by various disciplines such as psychology, social psychology, socio-linguistics and communication. Although the starting points of studying intercultural competence are various, the aim of most of these studies is to identify predictive variables of effective intercultural performance.

A number of researchers focus on the *behavioural assessment* of intercultural competence. Ruben (1976) was the first who attempted to operationalise the concept of intercultural competence using a behavioural approach. Seven dimensions of intercultural competence were identified including display of respect; interaction posture; orientation to knowledge; empathy; role behaviour; interaction management and tolerance for ambiguity. The dimension of self-oriented role behaviour has three independent components (including task roles or behaviours that involve the initiation of ideas related to group problem-solving activities, relational roles or behaviours associated with harmonising and mediation in a group, and individualistic roles which highlight the actions, needs, and behaviours of the individual in a group). Ruben (1976) developed nine single-item scales, one for each dimension as well as the three components of self-oriented role behaviour to assess actual communication behaviours.

Several researchers including Ruben & Kealey (1979) and Hammer (1984) adopted this approach in multiple settings. The results of the findings from these empirical tests appear to support the reliability and validity of the scales. However, each of the nine scales assesses a single dimension of intercultural communication behaviour, and not an assessment of an individual's overall intercultural competence (Koester & Olebe, 1988).

Koester and Olebe (1988) refined Ruben's original nine-separate single-item scales and created the Behavioural Assessment Scale for Intercultural Communication (BASIC). They reduced Ruben's scale to eight items excluding individualistic roles. All eight items load

on one underlying dimension suggesting that the scale is an effective behavioural measurement of intercultural competence. The statistical analysis also reveals that display of respect, interaction management and task roles are the strongest predictors of intercultural effectiveness.

Olebe and Koester (1989) further tested BASIC in order to establish its construct validity. Although the findings lent some support to the validity of the construct of intercultural competence, the eight BASIC items accounted for only 41% of the variability in intercultural effectiveness. This might suggest that the behavioural approach could only partially explain intercultural competence and more variables might need to be included such as cognitive factors.

Hammer and his colleagues (Hammer, Gudykunst & Wiseman, 1978) identified three dimensions of intercultural competence including abilities to deal with psychological stress, to communicate effectively, and to establish interpersonal relationships. These three behavioural abilities are perceived as important in facilitating intercultural effectiveness.

In addition to the behavioural elements of IC, Matsumoto, D., LeRoux, J., Ratzlaff, C., Tatani, H., Uchida, H., Kim, C., and Araki, S. (2001) used *psychological variables* to predict intercultural adjustment. They suggest that emotion regulation, critical thinking and openness/flexibility are the key psychological ingredients to intercultural adaptation. However, Redmond and Bunyi (1993) and Redmond (2000) identified six components of intercultural communication competence: *social decentering* (cultural empathy), *knowledge of the host culture*, *language competence*, *adaptation* (cultural adaptation), *communication effectiveness* (ability to interact and resolve communication problems), and *social integration* (ability to establish and maintain relationships with the host community). Brislin (1981) on the other hand proposed that *sojourner's attitudes, personal traits and social skills* facilitate their intercultural competence while Martin (1987) assessed the impact of *past intercultural experience* on perceived intercultural competence.

Chen and Starosta (1996) conducted an extensive review of the existing approaches to the study of intercultural competence and identified *cognitive, affective and behavioural perspectives* as the three research foci of previous studies. The cognitive perspective of intercultural competence focuses on the changing of personal thinking about the environment through the understanding of one's own and others' cultures (Triandis, 1977).

The development of cognitive competence requires self-awareness (knowledge of own personal identity) and cultural awareness (understanding how cultures vary). Intercultural awareness, that is, the understanding of cultural similarities and differences enables an individual to adjust one's own thinking and behaviour in order to become competent in intercultural communication.

Another approach to IC incorporates affective perspective emphasises the ability to form positive feelings in intercultural interaction. It is argued that four personal attributes, self-concept, open-mindedness, non-judgemental attitudes, and social relaxation, promotes positive feelings. The positive emotional responses enable an individual to recognise and respect cultural differences (Chen & Starosta, 1996). Such behavioural competence corresponds to communication skills that enable individuals to fulfil communication goals in intercultural interaction (Chen & Starosta, 1996).

As summarised by Chen and Starosta (1996), communication skills consist of message skills, appropriate self-disclosure, behavioural flexibility, interaction management and social skills. To be able to communicate with others, one needs to have the ability to understand the other culture's language, recognise non-verbal behaviours and use supportive expressions. Proper self-disclosure and the use of different behavioural strategies can lead to achievement of personal communication goals. The ability to respond accurately to one's counterpart's feelings and thoughts and the ability to maintain the counterpart's identity also facilitate smooth intercultural communication.

Based on the three research perspectives (cognitive, affective and behavioural), Chen and Starosta (1996) built a model of intercultural communication competence. The model explains the interdependence of the cognitive, affective and behavioural competence in transforming an individual into a multi-cultural person. However, no attempt has been made to test the model, empirically.

These approaches to intercultural competence, taken together, offer two suggestions. The first is that intercultural communication is a complex phenomenon, requiring a variety of personal and interpersonal components to be considered. The second suggestion is that most existing models of intercultural competence have been fairly fragmented. Each study produced a list of characteristics, abilities and skills but it is impossible to tell how these skills and abilities relate to each other, and which ones are the most important in which

situations (Taylor, 1994; Spitzberg, 1996). Clearly, there is a need to develop a comprehensive model to integrate the various components at both the conceptual and measurement levels.

2.4.2 An Integrative Approach

Several researchers (Kim, 1988; Spitzberg, 1989; Cui & Berg, 1991; Cui & Awa, 1992; Chen & Starosta, 1996; Spitzberg, 1996; Cui, Berg & Jiang, 1998; Kim, 2001) in intercultural studies have been working toward the integration of the existing approaches. The integrative perspective intends to represent the multidimensional nature of intercultural competence, that is, its cognitive, affective and behavioural dimensions to enhance the predictive and explanatory power of the intercultural competence models.

Using the concept of interactional competence in an intercultural context, Spitzberg (1989, 1996:250) developed an integrative model to provide predictors of intercultural competence. The model illustrates that affective responses (motivation), cognitions (knowledge) and behaviours (skill) are the important components of the dyadic interaction process. According to the model, an increase in self-assessed and other-assessed competence is likely with an increase in interactants' motivation (positive attitude) to communicate, knowledge of the communicative process and context, and skill in implementing motives and knowledge. Spitzberg (1996) argues that motivation, knowledge and skill are interdependent. If a person wants to perform well, that person is more likely to be viewed by others, as competent. However, to be a competent communicator, motivation is not sufficient. To perform well, a well-motivated person also needs to know how to communicate well. In addition to increased motivation and communicative knowledge, an individual also needs to have adequate skills to implement their motivation and knowledge (Spitzberg, 1996).

The strength of Spitzberg's model is that it places the three key components of intercultural competence in one framework and allows a more coherent analysis of interaction competence in an intercultural context. But the conceptualisation and analysis of competence provided by this model has not been empirically tested.

Similar to Spitzberg's three-dimensional notion of intercultural competence (motivation, knowledge and skill), Kim (1988, 2001) conceptualises host communication competence in

terms of three interrelated components: cognitive, affective and operational. The three-component scheme organises various adaptive communication abilities in a coherent framework. According to Kim (2001:100, 116), cognitive competence is the 'mental capabilities' of understanding messages in interaction with the host environment, including knowledge of the host language and culture as well as the capacity of understanding the acquired knowledge. Affective competence is the emotional and motivational capacity to deal with the host environment. Included in affective competence is the willingness to learn the host language and culture and to adapt to the host culture, as well as the ability to appreciate and empathise with the host culture. Operational competence refers to the capacity to display cognitive and affective abilities in interaction with the host environment. The key components of operational competence include technical skills, synchrony and resourcefulness. Technical skills cover those associated with carrying out daily activities such as basic language skills, job skills and problem solving skills. Synchrony is the ability to coordinate one's action and behaviour with those of the locals, while resourcefulness is the ability to reconcile cultural differences and find ways to accomplish goals.

Kim (2001:117) also notes that "the three facets of host communication competence are inseparable" and "shape an individual's overall capacity" to interact with the host environment competently. Individuals with increased knowledge and understanding of the host environment are likely to be more motivated to interact with the host culture, more positive toward themselves and the host culture, and better able to display appropriate behaviours in interaction with the host environment. However, the conceptualisation and analysis of competence provided by Kim (2001) has not been empirically tested.

Cui and his colleagues (Cui & Berg, 1991; Cui & Awa, 1992; Cui, Berg & Jiang, 1998) reviewed previous studies of intercultural competence and pointed out that although considerable effort has been made to identify key components influencing or predicting intercultural competence, few researchers have examined intercultural competence as a theoretical construct and empirically tested the adequacy of the framework. They integrated previous studies of intercultural effectiveness (competence) into one framework and demonstrated the factorability and construct validity of intercultural competence in several empirical studies.

Cui and Berg (1991) tested the construct validity (the degree to which the operational definition taps the full meaning of the theoretical definition) of intercultural effectiveness using confirmatory factor analysis with LISREL VI. Their study proposes that intercultural effectiveness is a theoretical construct involving cognitive, affective and behavioural components. Language and interpersonal skills are considered as the most important elements of cognitive competence, operationalised as communication competence. Cultural empathy, the affective dimension, includes tolerance for uncertainty and ambiguity, empathy for cultural norms, empathy for different working styles and awareness of cultural differences. Appropriateness of social behaviour and display of respect are considered the most important elements in the behavioural component of intercultural effectiveness. In addition to cognitive, affective and behavioural components, Cui and Berg (1991:231) inserted personality traits (patience and flexibility) into the factorial structure model as predictors of intercultural effectiveness. They argued, "certain personality traits such as patience and flexibility have been found to be consistently influential in determining cross-cultural adaptation".

Clearly to Cui and Berg (1991), results of confirmatory factor analysis indicated that all of the factor loadings were significant ranging from 0.34 to 0.75. The communication competence has the highest factor loadings, followed by personality traits, cultural empathy and communication behaviour. However, the four-factor model only achieved moderate fit to support the validity of the construct. The factor of personality was removed from the model, as it is the only factor that lacks theoretical coherence with the cognitive-affective-behavioural framework. The test result of the new three-factor model suggests that "the overall fit of the model is satisfactory, indicated by adequate factor loadings, correlations and goodness of fit" (p.227).

The findings of the study by Cui and Berg (1991) provide some support for the construct validity of intercultural effectiveness. Communication competence, cultural empathy and communication behaviour are considered "basically good indicators of intercultural effectiveness" (p.238). However, the study has some limitations. First, the inclusion of interpersonal skills in the cognitive component lacks justification. Communication competence does not cover cultural knowledge. Only two items were included in the communication behaviour dimension. The selection of items for each component needs to be further justified so that the items included are more reliable and theoretically related to each other. Second, the study was based on a small sample of 70 sojourners residing in

China. This "may cause instability in factor coefficients". "Future studies need to improve measurement scales and use larger samples" (Cui & Berg, 1991:238).

Cui and Awa (1992) propose that five elements (or dimensions) including language and interpersonal skills, social interaction, cultural empathy, personality traits, and managerial ability are the underlying dimensions of intercultural effectiveness. The five elements represent the cognitive (language and interpersonal skills), affective (empathy), and behavioural (social interaction, managerial ability) aspects of intercultural effectiveness and psychological predisposition (personality traits).

A nineteen-item instrument was constructed to measure intercultural effectiveness. Factor analysis was performed to explore the dimensions of intercultural effectiveness. All the factors have adequate eigen-values and healthy loadings. "The results of the study lent some support to the integrative approach of intercultural effectiveness which includes communication ability, behaviour assessment, cultural empathy, and personality traits" (Cui & Awa, 1992:325).

Cui and Awa (1992: 311) also examined the relative importance of specified dimensions of intercultural effectiveness to the two aspects of cross-cultural adaptation (adjustment and job performance). The impact of situational variables such as prior foreign experience, presence of family during the sojourn, on cross-cultural adaptation was also assessed. The findings show that there are significant differences in the factorial structure to the two aspects of cross-cultural adaptation (adjustment and job performance). Personality traits for example patience and flexibility, were found to be the most important factors for cross-cultural adjustment while interpersonal skills were found to be crucial to job performance. Marital status, presence of sojourners' family and occupation were the key situational variables influencing cross-cultural adaptation.

This study was also based on a small sample (74 cases). Generalisations of the results cannot be made due to the small sample size. The use of self-assessment method also constrains any further analysis of the results. The construct validity of intercultural effectiveness defined in this study has not been established. "Structural modeling techniques may be used to validate latent variables and evaluate the causal relations of the key dimensions of intercultural effectiveness" (Cui & Awa, 1992: 326).

Another model, a structural equation model was proposed by Cui, Berg and Jiang (1998). In this model cross-cultural adaptation is predicted by communication competence, cultural empathy and social interaction with the host culture. Following the three-dimension (cognitive, affective and behavioural) framework, communication competence, the cognitive dimension, is measured by language fluency and conversational skills. Cultural empathy, the affective competence, is measured by understanding of the host culture and accuracy in perceiving other people's feelings. Social interaction is measured by the frequency of participation in host activities and having friendly relations with members of the host culture.

The model was empirically tested based on data collected from eighty-four students of Chinese nationalities at an American university. Results support the adequacy of the three-dimension framework (cognitive, affective and behaviour) in explaining cross-cultural adaptation. LISREL procedures indicate that the model has an adequate fit of the data. Communication competence and cultural empathy were significantly correlated with each other, and both facilitated social interaction. The results also indicate that communication competence and social interaction have direct influence on adaptation while cultural empathy has no significant direct effect on cross-cultural adaptation. However, this could be due to measurement error as cultural empathy is measured in rather general terms that might not produce more tangible effects (Cui, Berg and Jiang, 1998).

This review of the integrative approach as applied by several researchers offers the following suggestions. First, researchers have utilised the integrative approach to develop models of intercultural competence, although from different angles (interactional competence, personal communication competence, research perspectives, theoretical construct conceptualisation and operationalisation). All have aimed to investigate intercultural competence in a more systematic and coherent manner.

Second, researchers generally agree that development of one component of IC facilitates development in the others, hence, the interdependence of the three components. Because of the inseparable and interdependent nature of the three components, overlapping can be found in the elements selected for each component. This is particularly obvious for affective and behavioural dimensions. For example, empathy, tolerance for ambiguity, and display of respect are often found in both affective and behavioural categories. As a result, the selection of elements (indicators) for each component is not very consistent among

researchers, even with the same researchers but different studies. Some researchers consider communication competence a behavioural dimension while Cui, Berg and Jiang (1998: 72) consider that "communication competence is cognitive in nature and only has behavioural implications, and does not entail actual behaviour".

Third, most of the researchers conceptualise and analyse intercultural competence at a high order with limited empirical testing. Cui and his colleagues attempted to use an integrative approach to empirically test the underlying dimensions of intercultural competence. They took appropriate steps in pursuing their goals including establishing the construct validity of intercultural effectiveness, developing a theoretical framework, validating latent variables and evaluating the causal relationships of the main components of intercultural competence.

Fourth, the way of operationalising the 'affective component' seems to vary among researchers, for example, operationalised as emotional and motivational capacity (positive attitude) (Spitzberg, 1996; Kim, 2001), cultural sensitivity (Chen & Starosta, 1996); and as cultural empathy (Cui, Berg, 1991; Cui, Berg and Jiang, 1998).

2.4.3 Defining Components of Intercultural Competence

Based on the review of the integrative approach adopted by various researchers, this section defines each component of intercultural competence and the main elements (items) included in each component. This theoretical framework forms the basis for developing an instrument to evaluate the intercultural competence of tour guides.

Cognitive Competence

Cognitive competence refers to the ability to understand one's own culture and others' culture (Triandis, 1977). It includes both language and culture. To be 'cognitive competent,' an individual first needs to acquire knowledge of the host communication system (host language). Knowledge of the host language includes the linguistic knowledge of the target language and verbal and nonverbal codes, that is, the rules of everyday use of the language as language is the primary means of interpersonal and social interactions. Host language proficiency reduces psychological stress, facilitates an individual's

understanding of others' culture and aids engagement in a new culture (Cohn & Wood, 1982; Clement, Noels & Karine, 1994; Noels, Pon & Clement, 1996; Berry, 1997; Kim, 2001). With adequate language knowledge, an individual will be able to use speech and gestures to communicate in a culturally and contextually appropriate way in intercultural interaction (Spitzberg, 1996).

However, knowing the host language is not sufficient. Kim (2001) and several other researchers (Abe & Wiseman, 1983; Martin, 1987; Lustig, 1993) argue that cultural knowledge is another element of cognitive competence. Local cultural knowledge mainly involves its dominant values, beliefs, ideologies, arts, sciences, technologies and institutions (Kim, 2001). Such knowledge provides ways of identifying how communication differs across cultures.

Knowledge of the host language and culture increases cognitive complexity (Kim, 2001), that is, a more systematic and cohesive perception and interpretation of the host culture. Increased cognitive complexity is associated with increased flexibility in interpersonal interaction and less prejudice towards other cultures (Kim, 2001). Thus, cultural knowledge not only enables an individual to interpret and predict the behaviour of people from the other culture and minimises misunderstanding during intercultural interaction, but also promotes positive feelings towards the host culture (Porter & Samovar, 1985; Gudykunst & Hammer, 1988; Chen & Starosta, 1996). However, cultural knowledge is broad and complicated, and cultural learning tends to be on-going, therefore, one's understanding of others' culture can be assessed only in relative terms (Kim, 2001).

Affective Competence

Affective intercultural competence provides an emotional and motivational capacity that enables an individual to develop intercultural sensitivity (Bennett, 1986; Gudykunst, Ting-Toomey & Wiseman, 1991; Ting-Toomey, 1991), and promote a positive feeling during interaction (Chen & Starosta, 1996). In other words, to be affectively competent, people must be interested in other cultures, be sensitive enough to recognise cultural differences, and then also be willing to modify their behaviour as an indication of respect for people of other cultures (Bhawuk & Brislin, 1992).

Feelings involve one's general sensitivity to and attitude towards other cultures (Lustig & Koester, 1998). The positive feelings that an affectively competent individual needs to display during intercultural interaction include being motivated to adapt to other cultures; being empathetic towards people of other cultures (understanding other people's feelings) and being non-judgemental (Bochner & Kelly, 1974; Ruben, 1976; Hammer, 1989).

Several researchers emphasise the need for being motivated to adapt to others' cultures during intercultural interaction. Kim (2001:109) suggests that "the more an individual is motivated to adapt, the more they are likely to make an effort to learn about, and participate in the host environment with enthusiasm and perseverance".

The willing-to-adapt individual tends to be open-minded and is likely to recognise, appreciate and accept cultural differences in intercultural interaction (Chen & Starosta, 1996). Ultimately, this positive attitude will minimise cultural misunderstanding, help to avoid cultural conflict and foster a favourable impression in interaction.

Being non-judgemental refers to the ability to respond to others in a descriptive and nonevaluating way (Ruben, 1976). Non-judgemental attitudes help interactants to avoid defensive reactions from their counterparts (Bochner & Kelly, 1974; Hammer, 1989), while cultural empathy (understanding others' feelings) is the mental capacity to be flexible in dealing with ambiguity and uncertainty (Kim, 1988). A highly empathetic person usually responds accurately to the feelings of others (Ruben, 1976).

Behavioural Competence

Behavioural competence refers to an individual's ability to act appropriately in the other culture (Taft, 1977). It requires individuals to demonstrate their cognitive and affective qualities in interaction with the host people (Cui & Berg, 1991; Kim, 2001). Behavioural competence in intercultural communication includes language skills, interpersonal and social skills (Hammer, Gudykunst & Wiseman, 1978), display of respect, task role behaviour and tolerance for ambiguity and uncertainty (Ruben, 1976; Koester & Olebe, 1988; Lustig & Koester, 1999).

Language skills refer to the ability to apply language knowledge to carry out communication with people from other cultures in ways that are compatible, congruent and

harmonious (Kim, 2001). Ample evidence exists on the importance of the fluency in other cultures' language (Kim, 1988; Martin & Hammer, 1989; Ting-Toomey & Korzenny, 1989).

Interpersonal and social skills, in other words, '*relational competence*,' include the ability to initiate interaction with strangers and establish meaningful relationships (Hammer, Gudykunst & Wiseman, 1978). Relational behaviours may also include harmonising and mediating conflicts between group members (Lustig & Koester, 1999).

Displaying respect refers to the ability to express respect and positive regard for another. This may include verbal and non-verbal cues such as showing verbal expressions of concern and understanding, or using eye contact, or body posture to display attentiveness in the interaction culture (Ruben, 1976; Koester & Olebe, 1988; Lustig & Koester, 1999).

Task role behaviour involves the ability to solve problems related to work activities such as initiating new ideas and keeping a group on task. However, the response to task activity needs to be culturally appropriate in intercultural settings (Lustig & Koester, 1999). Tolerance for ambiguity refers to the ability to cope with new, uncertain and unpredictable intercultural encounters (Lustig & Koester, 1999). A competent intercultural individual is able to react to new and changing environment with little visible discomfort (Ruben, 1976).

2.4.4 Components of a Tour Guide's Intercultural Competence

The three dimensions: cognitive, affective and behavioural factors form the conceptual backdrop for much intercultural research, which has to date, been largely focused on sojourners living abroad. However, the focus of sojourners' intercultural competence is on how they adapt to a new culture but not on how to facilitate intercultural communication between others. Tour guides' intercultural performance is more than adaptation; it requires the extension of IC competence to mediation tasks. Their ability to mediate (facilitate communication, understanding and action between different cultural groups) is an important element of their intercultural competence. The following paragraphs discuss the relevance of each of the dimensions of intercultural competence as theoretical building blocks for understanding and analysing intercultural competence in the context of tour guiding.

A review of the literature suggests that the success of a tour guide's cultural mediation that is, success in facilitating positive interaction between clients and hosts and in brokering an intercultural travel experience that is non-stressful, interesting and rewarding for clients. This depends largely on three factors: the guide's *knowledge*, *attitudes* and *communication skills* (Schmidt, 1979; Swarbrooke, 1999; Wong & Ap, 1999) which are consistent with the three components of intercultural competence.

According to recent research conducted by Ham and Weiler (2002), clients expect that effective tour guides possess extensive *knowledge* of tourist sites and attractions. In addition, they must have a solid grasp of the culture they interpret as well as the culture their clients bring with them (de Kadt, 1979; Holloway, 1981; Cohen, 1985). Their knowledge of culture, which arguably might be regarded as the most important factor, includes cultural values, language, communication styles, customs and artefacts. Armed with such knowledge, tour guides can provide tourists with deep insights into a destination, leading their clients to an understanding of what is 'real' and 'authentic' about the place in a way that is rarely possible without the assistance of a culturally competent insider (Goffman, 1963; MacCannell, 1976; Schmidt, 1979; Holloway, 1981). Such tour guides help tourists to understand and accept local customs without passing value judgments on them, and they are able to show visitors how to act in a manner that does not run counter to local norms and local ways of thinking (Noam, 1999). A guide's knowledge of language is also critical in cultural mediation. A tour guide who is fluent in the languages of both guest and host can, as Bochner (1981) suggests, represent one culture to another, faithfully, and thereby contribute to mutual understanding and accurate cross-cultural knowledge.

A tour guide's knowledge alone, however, is not sufficient in mediation. Guides also need to have *attitudes* conducive to effective mediation, including empathy both for the visitors they lead and for their hosts. As tourists on guided tours may have little direct contact with locals, local tour guides are assumed by overseas clients to represent many of the national characteristics of the host population (Holloway, 1981). The attitude they project will, in the eyes of the visitor, reflect much about the local culture and constitute a lasting impression about the destination that visitors will take home with them. It is perhaps this element of the guide's influence on the psyche of the tourist that is most important when word-of-mouth accounts of the tourist destination are passed on to friends, family and other potential new clients. Tour guides of international guests bear the burden of ambassadorial responsibility, which at a minimum must involve conspicuous displays of

respect and empathy for both cultures. The implication from IC literature is that tour guides as cultural mediators have to be favourable toward communicating between cultures and have a positive attitude toward providing mediation.

Tour guides must also have *social and interpersonal communication skills* to mediate encounters between visitors and the local population, and to role model appropriate behaviours. As Gurung, Simmon and Devlin (1996) explain, cultural misunderstandings may be avoided or reconciled more easily by guides who have intercultural understanding and the ability to communicate effectively between cultures. Effective communication means that guides negotiate shared meanings with dissimilar individuals and display appropriate and effective behaviours to achieve outcomes that both they and their clients desire (Ting-Toomey, 1999).

The effective use of interpretation techniques helps to bridge the cultural differences between tourist and host (Moscardo, 1999). Good interpretation uses a planned effort to create for the visitor an understanding of the history and significance of events, people, and objects with which the site is associated (Alderson & Low, 1985). Effective tour guides, for example, make ample use of examples and comparisons to interpret the unfamiliar world in terms of things their visitors are familiar with (Ham, 1992), and "attempt to emphasise connections and minimise the effects of unfamiliarity" (Dann, 1996:173).

2.4.5 Other Factors Associated with Intercultural Competence

Some background characteristics of an individual such as level of education, past intercultural experience, foreign language skill, situational factors and cultural identity appear to influence intercultural competence to varying degrees.

Level of Education

A number of researchers (Beiser, Barwick, Berry & da Costa, 1988; Jayasuriya, Sang & Fielding, 1992; Berry, 1997) suggest that there appears to be a positive relationship between education and intercultural competence (cultural adaptation). An individual with a higher level of education is likely to be resourceful with better skills for analysing and solving problems (Berry, 1997), and hence experiences lower levels of stress in

intercultural interaction. Thus, level of education might have some degree of influence on intercultural competence.

Host Language Proficiency

Many previous studies (Cohn & Wood, 1982; Clement, Noels & Karine, 1994; Noels, Pon & Clement, 1996; Berry, 1997; Kim, 2001) demonstrate the importance of host language competence in facilitating cultural learning and intercultural contact. With language proficiency, an individual will be able to gain a better understanding of the local culture and to interpret the hidden and unspoken assumptions of the natives. Language is the primary means of interpersonal and social interactions. Language competence appears as a consistent factor associated with higher level of intercultural competence. Host language proficiency is often a predictor of an individual's intercultural competence. It is also considered as a personal background variable influencing level of cultural adaptation.

Previous Intercultural Experience

Previous intercultural experience is identified as another important factor that appears related to intercultural adaptation (Parker & McEvoy, 1993; Ward & Kennedy, 1996; Matsumoto, D., LeRoux, J., Ratzlaff, C., Tatani, H., Uchida, H., Kim, C., and Araki, S., 2001). It has been stated in many intercultural studies (Chen & Starosta, 1996) that knowledge of the host culture and one's own culture is essential for an individual to develop the ability of intercultural awareness, the cognitive quality of intercultural competence. Previous international experiences may generate sources of cultural knowledge that lead to improved cultural adaptation (Parker & McEvoy, 1993) and may enhance an individual's perception of competence. When investigating the relationship between past intercultural experience and perceived intercultural competence, Martin (1987) found that sojourners with the most intercultural experience rated their awareness of self and culture, and their ability to facilitate communication, significantly higher than those with no experience.

Situational Factors

Intercultural interaction occurs in various social, cultural and environmental situations. The literature notes that these situational variables can also account for variations in

inintercultural competence (Neuliep, 2000). For example, the physical environment has a considerable impact on communication such as the types of messages being exchanged and the amount of information contained in these messages. For instance, the messages being exchanged in a classroom may be different from that in students' dorms. The cultural context including an organisation's culture, also has an impact on intercultural competence, therefore, organisations in collectivistic cultures are more likely to promote teamwork.

In a guided tour context, the environment, that is, the destination setting and the cultural context such as the organisational culture of the tour operator might be considered as two important situational factors. Destination settings, such as whether they are natural or cultural, remote or urban, may contribute to the competence of the guide. For example, a visit to an Aboriginal community requires tour guides to have adequate knowledge and appropriate attitudes and behaviour towards Aboriginal culture. If the visited place is a built tourist attraction or theme park, there may be less of a need for this type of intercultural competence. The organisational culture of the companies employing guides might also enable or constrain tour guides' effective intercultural behaviour. For instance, if an organisation employing tour guides believes that the quality of the tourist's intercultural travel experience is important, it will encourage and reward its tour guides' effective intercultural behaviour (Yu, Weiher & Ham, 2001).

Cultural Identity

Cultural identity has been considered a reliable predictor of intercultural competence (Hawes & Kealey, 1981; Ward, 1996; Kim, Laroche & Tomiuk, 2001; Neto, 2002) and having a bicultural identity is considered ideal for cultural mediators. The current study attempts to identify a suitable scale from the literature of intercultural communication to assess cultural identities of Chinese-speaking tour guides, and subsequently to investigate the relationship between tour guides' cultural identities and their intercultural competence.

Identity is our self-concept. Identities are emerged, negotiated and reinforced through cultural communication (cultural contact and interaction). These identities are also impacted by social-cultural influences, which establish the foundation from which the interaction occurs. People who live in different cultures for extended periods of time may develop multiple identities while people who live on the borders of two cultural groups

may have bicultural identities. Therefore, change in cultural identity can occur through frequent contact with two or more culturally different groups.

The term cultural identity is often represented by similar terms such as ethnic identity and acculturation attitudes (Kim, 2001). The term, acculturation has been employed in the intercultural literature to describe the extent to which an individual originating from another culture has integrated in the host culture. It has been conceptualised as culture change that results from continuous first hand contact between individuals of differing cultural origins. Thus, the terms cultural identity, ethnic identity and acculturation are often used interchangeably.

For most acculturating individuals, after a period of time, some long-term positive adaptation to the new cultural context usually takes place (Beiser, Barwick, Berry & da Costa, 1988). Kim (2001) states that intercultural (bicultural) persons are empathetic, non-judgemental, have high proficiency with two or more languages and cultures, and seek active interaction with people from different cultures. However, the acculturation process towards having a bicultural identity is long and can be assessed only in relative terms, as the cultural knowledge of any structurally complex group can never be complete, even for a lifelong member of the group.

Measurements of cultural identity (acculturation) have relied mainly on using bipolar, unidimensional and multidimensional scales. The best known acculturation model was developed by Berry and his associates Kim, Power, Young & Bujaki (1989) proposing four acculturation strategies: assimilation, integration, separation, marginalisation.

To operationalise their quadri-model, Berry and his associates used four subscales with 80 items. Many of the scale items were lengthy and involve multiple concepts placing unnecessary demand on respondents (Ward & Rana-Deuba, 1999). Since the present study is not focused on the acculturation process, it is not appropriate to adopt Berry's lengthy measurement scales for measuring Chinese-speaking tour guides' cultural identity.

Similarly, Ward and her colleagues (Ward & Kennedy, 1994; Ward & Rana-Deuba, 1999) developed an Acculturation Index with 21 items such as food, language and in-group, out-group perceptions to classify sojourners in the four acculturation categories. The current study is concerned with the assessment of cultural identity of Chinese-speaking tour guides, therefore, the Acculturation Index also does not fit the study context.

In the acculturation literature, the term 'ethnicity' is often taken to mean 'culture', thus, changing ethnicity implies the changing of cultural characteristics of a particular ethnic group (Phinney, 1996). Several studies (Cuellar, Hams & Jasso, 1980; Suinn, Rickard-Figueroa, Lew & Vigil, 1987; Suinn, Ahuna & Khoo, 1992) assessed immigrants' ethnic identity based on level of acculturation, using Likert-scale responses to acculturation indicators such as language, ethnic identity, friendship choice, food and cultural heritage. In this assessment process the midpoint was indicative of biculturalism.

A recent study (Chen, 2000) assessed Chinese-American children's ethnic identity based on level of acculturation from a culture and communication perspective. The study argued that ethnic identity or cultural identity was developed and defined through the process of communication. "Culture/ethnic identity was perceived membership based on appropriate and effective use of symbols, cultural narratives, similar interpretations and meanings" (Hecht, Collier & Ribeau, 1993:30). Based on the above considerations, the instrument designed in this study adopts Chen's indicators of acculturation in relation to culture and communication as indicative of cultural identity.

2.5 Review of Research on Guided Tour Experiences

Experience is the inner state of the individual, brought about by something which is personally encountered, undergone or lived through (Cohen, 2000:251). The concept of experience has a broad application in tourism. The tourism industry offers a variety of opportunities for tourist experiences including the guided tour experience (Schmidt, 1979; Geva & Goldman, 1991; Mossberg, 1995; Wang, Hsieh & Huan, 2000; Ham & Weiler, 2002), the backpacker experience (Moran, 2000), the cultural tour experience (Hughes, 1991), the whitewater rafting experience (Arnould & Price, 1993; Fluker & Lindsay, 2000), the wildlife tourism experience (Dawson & Watson, 2000; Cole, Crompton & Willson, 2002) and the international travel experience (Richardson, 1996).

The tourist experience is the core product of the tourism industry (Murphy, 1995; Prentice, Witt & Hamer, 1998) and has a direct influence on the tourist's level of satisfaction with the destination, intention to return and word of mouth advertising of the visited place.

Generally, studies of tourist experiences have been concerned with identifying and interpreting the types of experiences sought by tourists, identifying main variables influencing tourist experiences, and developing ways of assessing tourists' satisfaction with their experiences (for details, please refer to Table 2.2). One of the objectives of the current study is to examine tour guides' intercultural competence and how the IC of tour guides impacts the guided tour experience. Therefore, there is a need to review previous studies on the guided tour experience to identify the key functions of guided tours, and the significance of the guiding role in the guided tour experience in general and the mediating role in particular. The factors associated with the guided experience, methods of assessment, and the gaps in the literature of evaluating the experience also need to be investigated.

Table 2.2 Evaluation of Guided Tour Experiences

Study focus & location	Purpose & theory	Methodology	Key variables	Major findings
Schmidt (1979) The guided tour Location: USA	To show social mechanisms by which a tourist is integrated into the social environment; sociological perspective	Qualitative approach theoretical analysis: based on findings from direct participant observation and interviews in past studies		Key guided tour function: problem solving (integration & insulation) Tour guides' mediating role in dissolving contradictory feature of integration and insulation, and facilitating integration and cross-cultural understanding. Guided tours and guides influence visitors' collection of experiences
Holloway (1981) The guided tour: A sociological approach, Location: Great Britain	To examine occupation of tour guide in context of role theory, to explore ways in which guides defined their roles, sociological perspective	Qualitative approach, data derived from observation and interviews		Guiding role is not yet institutionalised but subject to various interpretation. Tour guides, acting as a catalyst to stimulate social interaction of coach tour, is seen as an essential element in the total touristic experience; tour guides place emphasis on their role as information giver; tour guides are also seen as mediator between hosts and tourists, guides foster unique experience by involving visitors emotionally
Quiroga (1990) Characteristics of package tours in Europe Tours from Latin America to Europe	To examine importance of group dynamics and to analyse variables influencing this process	Mixed methods; information gathered from visitor survey and personal observations, the first questionnaire was handed out 3 days after commencing tour, second one given 2 days before completing tour	First: tourist characteristics, travel motivations, expectations, (including guides' function); Second: group dynamics, guides' function, drawbacks of the trip, level of final satisfaction	Tourists' ages, reasons for going on the trip, group dynamics and size as key variables influencing the formation and development of a tour. Important personal qualities of tour guides include professional experience, intelligence and culture, organisational skills being friendly, kind and good sense of humour. Group dynamics influence visitor satisfaction of the trip. Function of guide is indispensable in developing group dynamics
Geva & Goldman (1991) Satisfaction measurement in guided tours Tours from Israel to Europe and the USA	To investigate whether customers' satisfaction with tour guides' performance leads to a favourable attitude towards tour company; marketing perspective	Quantitative approach: tourist survey and tour guide survey to evaluate satisfaction from the tour and from the guide	Tourists' satisfaction with 15 tour attributes including two attributes related to guides (guide's conduct and guide's expertness), intention to return and recommend tour to friends & relatives	Tour guide's performance has a direct impact on customers' satisfaction with the tour but is not fully converted into a favourable evaluation of the tour company
Hughes (1991) Tourist satisfaction: A guided cultural tour in North Queensland Location: Australia	To determine factors responsible for tourists' satisfaction with 1 day guided cultural tour with an emphasis on effect of guides' performance on tourist evaluation of the entire tour; psychological & marketing perspectives	Quantitative approach: visitor surveys conducted prior to travel and before completing the tour (open-ended and close-ended questions)	The first: motives, images and expectations of the tour, role and behaviour of guides Second: impressions, evaluations and satisfaction with the tour	The degree to which tourists' expectations are met determines tourists' overall satisfaction with the entire tour Tour guides' perceived ability to fulfil tourists' expectations and to facilitate their experience influences or even determines tourist satisfaction with the entire tour. The functions of guides, including effective integration with group, providing interesting commentary and smooth running of the tour, are found to be most important to tourists' cultural tour experiences

Study focus & location	Purpose & Theory	Methodology	Key variables	Major Findings
Wang, Hsieh & Huan (2000) Critical service features in group package tour: An exploratory research Location: Taiwan	To identify critical service features of group package tour (GPT) (focusing on influence of guide on service quality) Marketing & tour guiding perspectives	Critical incident technique (CIT): Focus group and telephone interviews with customers and mail questionnaire survey with employees.	Critical service features: 9 main sectors (pre-tour briefing, airport/plane, hotel, restaurant, coach, scenic spot, shopping, optional tour & others) and 25 sub-sectors	The most critical service features concentrates in three sections including shopping, optional tour and airport/plane, group tourists are more dependent on their guides who are the exclusive point of contact during the entire trip. Tour guides' conduct has direct link with service quality of guided tour
Mossberg (1995) Tour leaders and their importance in charter tours Tours from Sweden to Rhodes, Bulgaria /Turkey/Sri Lanka	To investigate what factors determine tourist satisfaction with service encounter; and how important tour leaders' performance during service encounter is overall perception of the tour Marketing perspective	Mixed methods Tourist questionnaire survey on the way to and from holiday destinations Interviews with tour leaders Observation	First questionnaire: Tourist travel characteristics, expectations of tour leaders Second: importance of holiday activities, perception of tour leaders performance, overall perception of the tour	A number of variables were identified as the determining factors of tourist satisfaction with the service encounters such as tourist demographic characteristics, prior travel experience, expectations and perceptions of the tour leaders performance (service attributes of tour guides), there is a positive relationship between tour leaders' performance and the enhanced perception of the tour
Wong (2001) Satisfaction with local tour guides in Hong Kong Location: HK	To explore international tourists' perceived satisfaction with the quality and service provided by local tour guides in HK Marketing perspective	Tourist survey conducted at the HK airport	Tourist demographics, kind of tours participated, satisfaction with overall service provided by guides, reasons for choosing ratings of evaluation	Respondents were satisfied with three guiding service dimensions (professional skills, customer relationship/empathy and communication), the dissatisfying dimensions consisted of shopping/tipping complaints, poor guide conduct, poor itinerary, bad communication and poor customer relations, certain demographic variables have variations in tourists' perceived satisfaction with guides' services
Ham & Weiler (2002) Towards a theory of quality in cruise-based nature guiding Location: Alaska and Galapagos Islands	To explore passengers' perspectives on role of tour guide in cruise-based nature tourism and factors associated with quality tour guiding and visitor satisfaction Psychological and tour guiding perspectives	Case study approach: Passenger survey before completing the cruise tour, participant observation of both guides and passengers	Passengers' demographics, eight dimensions of guided tour experiences (being knowledgeable, being an enjoyable communicator, being enthusiastic, being personable, having local experience, managing time well, being adaptable, and having effective group management skills	Guides on cruise-based tours make a significant contribution to visitor enjoyment, most common distinguishing characteristics of high quality guides are passionate, insightful, enjoyable, relevant, and easy to follow, five desirable descriptors of high quality guide performance are consistent with the qualities of a satisfactory guide defined by passengers

2.5.1 Key Functions of Guided Tours

According to Schmidt (1979), integrating tourists into and insulating them from the host environment are the two contradictory features of a guided tour. The guided tour integrates

tourists into the host environment, offering easy access to shopping, dining and tourism sites. But the guided tour is also a source of insulation from the host environment for example, tourists stay in the same hotels, take charter buses and live in a 'tourist bubble' (Schmidt, 1979). However, tour guides can play an important role in dissolving the contradictory features of insulation and integration by acting as a buffer and intermediary between the tourist and the unknown and thus making the new environment non-threatening for tourists. Tour guides can also create insulation simply by way of their commentary or interpretation (Schmidt, 1979).

Developing group dynamics is another important function of the guided tour. Tour guides play a key role in developing group dynamics such as by facilitating tour members' acquaintance and social rapport (Quiroga, 1990).

A study by Geva and Goldman (1991) reveals that tourists perceive the guiding attributes such as guide's conduct and expertise as the most important attributes contributing to the success of a tour. Another study (Hughes, 1991) demonstrates that tour guide's ability to fulfil tourists' expectations (including interact effectively with the group, provide interesting commentary, have good organisational skills and ensure the smooth running of the tour) influences or even determines tourist satisfaction with the entire tour. Mossberg (1995) also found that tour leaders' performance during the service encounter is of importance for the tourist's overall satisfaction with the trip, while Wong (2001) indicated that international tourists in Hong Kong were satisfied with three basic tour guiding service attributes: professional skills, customer relationship and communication skill. In a more recent study, Ham and Weiler (2002) identified eight essential elements of quality guiding on cruise-based tours: being knowledgeable, being an enjoyable communicator, being enthusiastic, being personable, having local experience, managing time well, being adaptable, and having effective group management skills.

This overview of past studies suggests that the number of empirical studies focusing on the guided tour experience is limited, but involves multiple disciplines for instance, sociological, socio-psychological, marketing and tourism/tour guiding perspectives. Therefore, the ways of evaluating the guided tour experiences appear to be as varied as the disciplines deployed.

Most studies on guided tours investigate either the functions or attributes of guided tours (Schmidt, 1979; Geva & Goldman, 1991; Mossberg, 1995; Wang, Hsieh & Huan, 2000; Ham & Weiler, 2002) or those of tour guides (Mossberg, 1995; Wong, 2001; Ham & Weiler, 2002), and tourists' perception of the influence of these on their guided tour experience. The studies about functions or attributes of guided tours or those of tour guides are mainly from socio-psychological and service marketing perspectives. It appears that studies with socio-psychological perspectives emphasise the impact of the tour guide's performance on the tourist experience (overall satisfaction) while service marketing oriented studies focus on service attributes of tour guides and their impacts on the service quality of the tour. However, most of the studies included in this review did not themselves make this kind of distinction. Despite this, it is clear that the tour guide's function in relation to service quality of the tour is more tangible while a tour guide's attributes influencing a guided tour experience such as effective interaction with the group and being empathetic are more intangible. No matter which perspective researchers take, there is a general agreement that the tour guide's role is vital in the guided tour experience.

Moreover, it is worth noting that in most of these studies, the study subjects of the guided tours are often western tourists. Only Wang, Hsieh & Huan (2000) extend the research of guided tours into a new context with a focus on Asian group package tourists.

2.5.2 Mediating Role in Guided Tour Experiences

Many past studies on tour guides' functions in relation to guided tours concentrate on how to manage the tour rather than how to manage the tourist experience (Gurung, Simmons & Devlin, 1996). In a case study on tour guiding in Hong Kong, Ap and Wong (2001:544) point out that 'tour guides have the ability to transform the tourist's visit from a tour into an experience' by using their interpretation, communication and service skills. There is evidence from past studies that demonstrates the tour guide's role in facilitating and enhancing tourist experiences. Schmidt (1979) and Holloway (1981) maintain that tour guides can play an important role in dissolving the contradictory features of insulation and integration of charter tours. Hughes (1991) demonstrates how tour guides enrich the cultural tour experience while Quiroga (1990) and Geva and Goldman (1991) note the role of tour guides in mediating tourist and host interaction. Based on their review of literature, Yu, Weiler and Ham (2001) stress the importance of tour guides as cultural mediators in

facilitating the tourist experience. Although there is an increasing interest in the tourism literature regarding the tour guide's cultural mediation role and its contribution to facilitating tourist experience, no empirical study has tested this relationship.

2.5.3 Key Factors Affecting Tourists' Perception of Guided Tour Experiences

In the literature, there is evidence that factors such as perceptions of guides' attribute importance and performance, and tourists' socio-demographic characteristics might be key variables influencing the evaluation of guided tour experiences.

Attribute Importance and Performance

Importance refers to a customer's general assessment of the significance of an attribute for a product (or service) while performance can be defined as a customer's judgments (perceptions) of attribute performance. Both importance and performance have been regarded as important variables explaining customer behaviour (Martilla & James, 1977; Duke & Persia, 1996; Hudson & Shephard, 1998; Hudson, 1999; Ryan & Mo, 2001; Yu & Weiler, 2001). The analysis of importance and performance was first reported by Martilla and James (1977). They consider that there is a subtle difference between attribute importance and expectation. Attribute importance should be measured prior to an actual purchase experience in order to understand its role in a purchase decision (Oh, 2001). In relation to customer satisfaction, however, some evidence suggests that importance should be distinguished from expectation (Oh, 2001). In addition, Ryan (1999) pointed out that importance is a desired outcome while expectation is a tolerated outcome. Consequently, importance, or the desired outcome (aspiration) rather than expectation, is more indicative of satisfaction (Dorfman, 1979; Ryan, 1999).

However, the relationship between importance and performance is not sufficiently addressed in the studies, which use Importance-Performance Analysis. Only recently have researchers begun to investigate the causal relationship between importance and performance (Oh & Parks, 1998; Oh, 2001; Ryan & Huyton, 2001). For example, Ryan and Huyton (2001) note that customers' evaluations of a firm's attribute-specific performance are affected by how important the attribute is to the customer (Ryan &

Huyton, 2001). The more important the attribute is to the customer, the more likely the customer perceives the attribute performance favourably and thus experiences higher satisfaction. According to the theory of generalisability (Oliver, 1980), consumers tend to generalise their experience in the direction of their evaluation of desired outcome (Oh, 2001:622), thus, the relationship between importance and performance tend to be either positively or negatively correlated (Oh, 2001).

Most studies (Geva & Goldman, 1991; Hughes, 1991; Mossberg, 1995; Wong, 2001, Ham & Weiler, 2002) report only consumers' perceptions of product or service attributes. There is a lack of comparisons between the similarities and differences between employees' (self-reported) assessment and consumers' (others') evaluation. Both self-reported assessment and others' evaluation are conducted as the use of both self-report and others' ratings of intercultural competence can reduce the biases inherent in both types of data collection, such as others' bias, self favourable response or interactants' different perceptual definitions of intercultural competence. The use of these two types of measurements may yield better information for reaching stability and consistency.

Background Characteristics

Previous studies have linked tourist satisfaction with their travel experience to their background characteristics such as socio-demographic characteristics and past experiences (Hughes, 1991; Mossberg, 1995). Ryan and Huyton (2001) observed that tourists' socio-demographic variables are important factors influencing their level of interest in, for example, Aboriginal culture. One of the research findings by (Mossberg, 1995) suggests that tourists' previous travel experience and demographics such as age influence the tourists' view of the performance of tour leaders. Past experiences can be used as a basis of comparison when predicting performance (Mazursky, 1989). As the current study emphasises intercultural context, host language fluency is also considered as an important variable affecting tourists' experiences.

2.5.4 Measurement Issues in Evaluating Guided Tour Experiences

There are several measurement issues in relation to the evaluation of guided tour experiences uncovered in the literature. These include what to assess, when to assess and

how to assess. The functions and attributes used for assessing the tour or the guide are often a list of items either informed by previous studies or emerging from interviews and responses to open-ended questions. In some cases, the selection of the list of attributes lacks theoretical justification or evidence of construct validity. In addition to the components of the tour, the concept of satisfaction itself is multifaceted. A number of factors such as tourist background information, trip characteristics, travel motivation, attribute importance and performance might need to be included when satisfaction with a guided tour experience is assessed. Only a limited number of studies (Hughes, 1991; Mossberg, 1995) include a comprehensive list of factors in their analysis.

Research results from this review show that different decisions have been made regarding when to measure tourist satisfaction with their guided tour experience. These include comparing preholiday expectations and postholiday perceptions (Hughes, 1991; Mossberg, 1995; Wang, Hsieh & Huan, 2000), monitoring during the holiday (Schmidt, 1979), data collection after completing the overall tour experience (Wang, Hsieh & Huan, 2000), and just before completing the holiday (Geva & Goldman, 1991; Wong, 2001; Ham & Weiler, 2002). There is no consensus on when to measure tourist satisfaction with their guided tour. A measure taken just before completing the tour might capture the experience when it is still fresh in the tourist's mind.

Furthermore, in relation to whose perspectives are important in evaluating a tour guide's performance, some researchers (Wang, Hsieh & Huan, 2000) argue that a comprehensive view can be obtained if the perceptions of both tourists and tour guides are used.

The review suggests that the evaluation of guided tour experiences has followed a similar path to the measurement of tourist satisfaction. A quantitative approach is adopted by many of the researchers (Geva & Goldman, 1991; Hughes, 1991; Wong, 2001) when studying the guided tour experience. But it is worth noting that a number of researchers use both quantitative and qualitative data (Mossberg, 1995; Wang, Hsieh & Huan, 2000) in their analysis to provide more insight into the guided tour experience.

2.5.5 Gaps in Past Studies on Guided Tour Experiences

The review of literature on the guided tour experience reveals a number of gaps. First, there is a shortage of empirical research on the tour guide's role in facilitating the tourist

experience in general, and in cultural mediation in particular. Second, the selection of tour guide attributes often lacks theoretical rigour. Third, a more comprehensive model is needed for evaluating the guided tour experience. The current research addresses these gaps in four ways. First, it uses an integrative theory to operationalise tour guide's intercultural competence (IC), and to empirically test the perceived importance of IC, actual performance of the IC of tour guides, and the impact of tour guide's IC on the guide tour experience. Second, a number of key variables such as tourist socio-demographic characteristics, perceptions of tour guide's intercultural competence, and overall satisfaction with the guided tour experience (intention to return, intention to recommend the tour to others, and level of overall satisfaction) are included in the study framework and statistical tests are performed to analyse the various relationships among the variables. Third, the selection of tour guide IC items is based both on previous studies and interviews with tourism industry representatives. Fourth, multiple sources of data and multiple methods of collecting data are used, including interviews with tourism industry representative, and surveys with both tour guides and Chinese visitors using both open-ended and close-ended questions, to provide a more rigorous analysis.

2.6 Research Hypotheses

2.6.1 Research Aim Revisited

The aim of the research was to develop and test a framework that conceptualises the intercultural competence (IC) of tour guides, and assesses the impact of the IC of tour guides on the guided tour experience.

2.6.2 Objectives Revisited

To address the research aim, several research objectives are defined as follows:

1. To explore the roles undertaken by tour guides and the competence needed to perform these roles;

2. To identify the underlying dimensions of the IC of tour guides, assess the relative importance and actual performance of the IC of tour guides, and develop and test a model of the IC of tour guides based on these dimensions;
3. To examine the relationship between the background characteristics of tour guides and their perception of IC;
4. To explore tourists' most memorable experiences and their guides' role if any in that experience; and
5. To examine the impact of the IC of tour guides, the background characteristics of tourists and trip characteristics on the evaluation of the guided tour experience.

2.6.3 Research Hypotheses

Based on the research objectives, the following research hypotheses are developed as shown in Table 2.3:

Table 2.3 Research Hypotheses

Research objectives	Hypotheses	Framework
Objective 1	Hypothesis 1	
Objective 2	Hypothesis 2 Hypothesis 3	Box B
Objective 3	Hypothesis 4	Box A & B
Objective 4	Qualitative data	
Objective 5	Hypothesis 5	Box C, D & E

Hypothesis 1 (relates to objective 1): tourists' perceived importance of tour guide's role as a cultural mediator is positively related to their perception of tour guide's IC.

Hypothesis 2 (relates to objective 2) Intercultural competence (IC) of tour guides is a three dimensional construct consisting of cultural awareness (cognitive dimension), cultural sensitivity (affective dimension) and communication skills (behavioural dimension).

Hypothesis 3 (relates to objective 2): There is no significant difference between tour guides' self-assessed IC importance and their IC performance and tourists' perception of IC importance and their evaluation of the actual IC performance of tour guides.

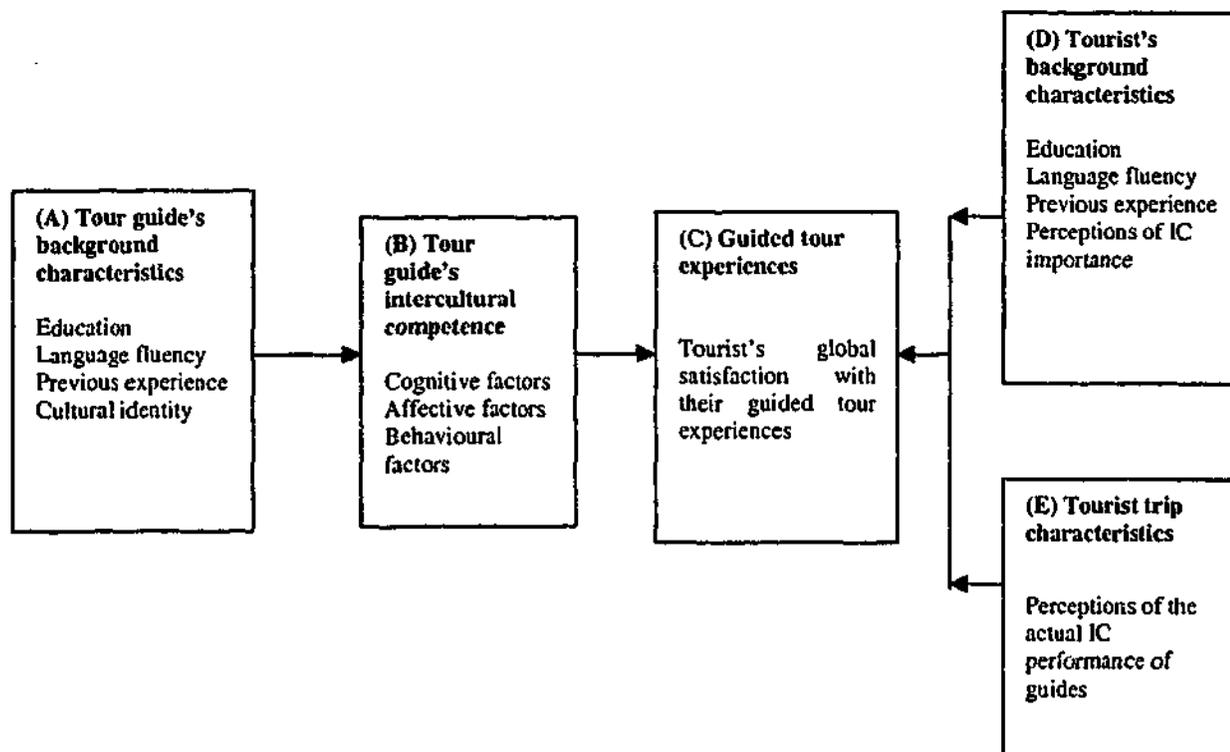
Hypothesis 4 (relates to objective 3): A tour guide's perceived importance of IC and self-assessed IC is positively related to the guide's cultural identity, level of education, language fluency, and previous intercultural experience.

Hypothesis 5 (relates to objective 5): The IC of tour guides and tourists' background characteristics are positively related to tourists' overall satisfaction with their guided tour experiences.

2.7 Conceptual Framework

Based on prior research, a number of theoretical relationships can be proposed and investigated in a study of intercultural competence of tour guides. These relationships are illustrated in Figure 2.1.

Figure 2.1 Conceptual Framework for Analysing Factors Contributing to Guides' IC & Guided Tour Experiences



2.7.1 Factors Influencing Tour Guides' Performance

Past research demonstrates that characteristics of individuals such as language skills, previous intercultural experience and cultural identities are significant factors in a sojourner's adaptation (Taft, 1981; Cui & Berg, 1991; Ward & Kennedy, 1996). These factors are, therefore, also likely to influence the competence of the tour guide as a cultural mediator. It is proposed that a tour guide's educational level, language proficiency, previous intercultural experience and cultural identity (Box A) are associated or correlated with IC (Box B). These characteristics in turn affect the guided tour experience. However, this experience is also affected by the tourist's background factors and tourist trip characteristics.

2.7.2 Factors Affecting Tourists' Evaluation with Their Guided Tour Experience

It is proposed that a tour guide's intercultural competence (Box B) is a three dimensional construct, and the IC of tour guides has a positive effect on visitors' satisfaction with their guided tour experience (Box C). Tour guides' intercultural competence demonstrated in intercultural communication and mediation will affect their performance as a tour guide and a cultural mediator. Their performance in turn will affect tourists' guided tour experiences.

There are, of course, other factors that influence or are associated with tourists' evaluation of their guided tour experiences. Previous studies have linked tourist satisfaction to various socio-demographic characteristics and trip characteristics. Thus, tourists' satisfaction with their guided tour experiences might be expected to vary with a number of key factors such as their education, prior intercultural experience, host language fluency and their perceived importance of tour guides' intercultural competence (Box D). It might also suggest that tourist's perceptions of the actual IC performance of tour guides (Box E), will be related to their evaluation of their overall guided tour experiences.

2.8 Chapter Summary

This chapter provides the rationale for the study of a tour guide's IC and its relationship to the guided tour experience. It also justifies the study's approach to operationalising the IC of tour guides, and evaluating the impact of IC on the guided tour experience.

First, the review of the literature reveals the significance of the mediating role of tour guides in facilitating satisfied guided tour experiences and minimising intercultural difficulties between tourists and hosts. The review reveals that although there are suggestions in the literature that tour guides need to be interculturally competent to be effective cultural mediators, there has been little theoretical and empirical attention given to what constitutes the IC of tour guides and its impact on the guided tour experience.

Secondly, a review of the literature of intercultural competence suggests that most existing models of intercultural competence have been fairly fragmented. There is a need to develop a comprehensive model to integrate the various components at both the conceptual and measurement levels. An integrative model aims to represent the multidimensional nature of intercultural competence, that is, its cognitive, affective and behavioural dimensions to enhance its explanatory and predictive power. Such an approach appears to be relevant to studying the IC of tour guides.

Finally, the review of literature on the guided tour experience reveals there is a shortage of empirical research on the tour guide's role in facilitating tourist experience in general, and in cultural mediation in particular, indicating that a more comprehensive model is needed for evaluating the guided tour experience.

The current research is positioned to address these gaps in the literature. First, it focuses on the tour guide's cultural mediating role and the IC of tour guides as well as the impact of the IC of tour guides on the guided tour experience. Second, the research applies an integrative theory of intercultural competence to identify the underlying dimensions of the IC of tour guides. Third, it develops a conceptual framework of the IC of tour guides to identify factors associated with their IC as well as to assess the perceived importance of IC both to guides and tourists. In addition, the research measures the actual performance of tour guides with respect to various components of IC and assesses its impact on the guided tour experience.

CHAPTER 3: STUDY CONTEXT

3.1 Introduction

Following on from the review of theory and empirical studies on the cultural mediating role of tour guides and the IC of tour guides presented in Chapter Two, Chapter Three provides the context for the empirical study undertaken for this thesis, focusing on the justification of the geographical and cultural area selected: outbound travel from China in general, and travel to Australia in particular. It begins with an analysis of the growth and changing trends in global travel, followed by an overview of outbound travel from China. It explains the main reasons for strong growth in the Chinese travel market, discusses the significance of this market, and examines the travel behaviours of Chinese visitors. Then, the chapter proceeds with a detailed description of Chinese holiday travel to Australia, which includes discussion of ADS tour operators and profiles of Chinese visitors and their trip characteristics, which together underpin the importance of the guiding role in facilitating Chinese visitors' guided tour experiences.

3.2 Growth and Changing Trends in World Outbound Travel Market

International tourism has experienced consistent growth in recent years. In the year 2000, international tourism experienced its highest growth rate (7.4 per cent) in nearly a decade. Through August 2001, the total number of international arrivals reached 699 million. Receipts from international tourism accounted for US\$476 billion, an increase of 4.5 per cent over 1999 (World Tourism Organisation, 2002). In spite of world events such as September 11th 2001, growth in international tourism is expected to continue. International arrivals are expected to reach over 1.6 billion by the year 2020 (World Tourism Organisation, 2001).

In the past, the industrialised Western countries were the main sources of world outbound tourism. Today many Asian countries are emerging as key tourism source markets. In the future, due to Asia's rapid regional economic growth and its large population, the majority

of international departures are forecasted to originate from this region (Smith & Brent, 2001).

3.3 Outbound Travel from China

Among the emerging Asian economies, China is the largest in population and has one of the fastest growth rates as a tourism generating country. Statistics related to these phenomena are presented in Table 3.1.

Table 3.1 Outbound Travel by Chinese Citizens, 1990-2000 (millions)

Year	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000
Official Travel	N/A	1.25	1.74	2.28	2.09	2.74	2.65	2.88	5.24	4.97	4.84
Private Travel	N/A	0.88	1.19	1.46	1.64	2.05	2.41	2.44	3.19	4.27	5.63
No. of Visitors	0.98	2.13	2.93	3.74	3.73	4.52	5.06	5.32	8.43	9.24	10.47

Source: CNTA (1991-2001)

As Table 3.1 indicates, in 2000, about 10.5 million Mainland Chinese travelled overseas, a 13.4% increase over the previous year, and nearly a tenfold increase to destinations outside China from 1990. The growth rate of outbound travel by Chinese citizens to 2020 is predicted to be around 12.5% per annum (China National Tourism Administration, 2001). Thus, it is predicted that by 2020 China will generate 100 million outbound travellers and become the fourth largest country of tourist origin in the world (World Tourism Organisation, 1998).

3.3.1 Main Reasons for Growth of Travel by Chinese Citizens

The growth of travel by Chinese citizens in recent years is mainly due to changing Chinese government policies on economic development, the development of its tourism industry and outbound travel, the Chinese people's financial ability to travel, and their desire for leisure holidays. Each of these factors is discussed in detail in the following paragraphs.

Due to the impacts of communist ideology, China imposed restrictions on private and overseas travel for decades. However, since 1978, the focus of the Chinese Communist Party's political policies has changed from political struggle to economic reform. As a

result of these changes, the developing tourism industry is seen as “an acceptable form of development” (Sofield & Li, 1998:370) and a new growth point of the country’s economy, and restrictions on outbound travel imposed by the government have been slowly relaxed (Zhang & Heung, 2001). However, up until the mid-1980s, travel outside of China was restricted to visiting friends and relatives in Hong Kong and Macao only. It was not until the early 1990s that the Chinese government allowed personal travel to some selected Southeast Asian countries including Singapore, Malaysia and Thailand. These countries are designated ‘approved destinations’ by the Chinese government. By the year 2002, China had approved 22 destinations including Singapore, Malaysia and Thailand, the Philippines, Indonesia, Australia, New Zealand, South Korea, Japan, Vietnam, Laos, Cambodia, Myanmar, Brunei, Nepal, South Africa, Turkey, Egypt, Malta, Germany, Hong Kong and Macao (China National Tourism Administration, 2002). Of the destinations, Australia was the first non-Asian country and Germany the first country of the European Union to be granted ADS by the Chinese government. In the near future, it is likely that Chinese people will be allowed to travel to even more destinations.

To make short and long-haul international travel much more possible, in 1996 the government introduced the two-day weekend, and three long holiday periods: the Chinese Spring Festival, May Day and National Day. In addition, requesting potential overseas travellers to produce numerous documents when applying for passports is no longer practiced. The application procedure as prescribed in new legislation enacted in July 2002 (China National Tourism Administration, 2002) has become much more simplified. Chinese citizens can apply directly for overseas travel at designated travel agents if they hold valid passports. For the first-time, passport applicants need only show their ID cards when applying for a passport at the local Bureau of Public Security.

The sustained growth in outbound tourism from China appears to be due not only to the policy of relaxation of outbound travel restrictions by the Chinese government, but also to China’s economic growth, improved standard of living and the desire of the Chinese people for travel (Cai, O’Leary & Boger, 2000; Yu & Weiler, 2000; Zhang & Heung, 2001). The development of a market-oriented economy removed direct government control over most economic activities and transformed the economy in a fundamental way. It is projected that China’s long-term economic growth will remain strong, with annual growth expected to be at 7.5 percent or higher for the rest of the decade (Tourism Forecasting

Council, 2002). The growth rate in China's GDP between 1993 and 2000 is presented in Table 3.2 as an indication of the growth of China's economy.

Table 3.2 Growth Rate of GDP (percent per year)

1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000
13.4	11.8	10.5	9.6	8.8	7.8	7.1	8

Source: Asian Development Bank Outlook 2001

Growth in per capita GNP between 1981 and 2000 appears in Table 3.3. As the table indicates per capita GNP expressed in US dollars has grown from \$61 in 1981 to \$874 in year 2000. Thus the nation has become one of the economic powerhouses of Asia (Asian Development Bank, 2001).

Table 3.3 Per Capita GNP (US Dollars)

1981	1990	2000
61	205	874

Source: Country Tables of ADB, Key Indicators 1999, 2001

As a consequence of this strong economic growth, living standards of the Chinese population have improved, particularly for people residing in big cities such as Beijing, Shanghai, Tianjin, coastal provinces such as Guangdong, Zhejiang and Jiangsu, or the special economic zones of Shenzhen and Zhuhai. All of these centres have higher earnings and more disposable income than other centres of Chinese population.

China's new middle class appears to be emerging from these urbanised areas of China. The members of this social group appear to have higher levels of education, and they tend to possess highly sought after technical skills. They earn above-average income and enjoy high cultural lifestyles. The monthly income of this social group measured in 1997 was around 5,000 to 6,000 RMB (US\$603-US\$724), almost equivalent to the country's average annual GNP per capita, 5,634 RMB (US\$680) (Goodman, 1999). This is indicative of a higher standard of living and new patterns of expenditure. According to a newspaper report ("Middle Class," 2001), in the next ten years, more Chinese people will become middle-class. This middle class is likely to comprise senior managers of stock markets, Chinese representatives in foreign companies, specialised brokers and agents, professional entrepreneurs, private business people and shareholders with their assets and income

exceeding millions of yuan³. The number of this new middle class in China is anticipated to reach 200 million in the next five years (Xie, 2001). In addition to spending on new houses, apartments, cars, clothing, entertainment and children's education, frequent overseas travel is one of the most popular consumer items of this new Chinese middle class (Wu, 2000).

However, the desire for travel by Chinese people is not a recent phenomenon. It can be traced back to ancient times. In ancient China, travel was always related to cultivation of the mind. Ancient essays and poems about travel often depicted how Chinese scholars and poets attained happiness from experiencing openness and the tranquillity of nature. And historically, because of Chinese long history and rich culture resources (Lou, 2000), Chinese people also have strong interests in the cultural features of tourist attractions. A study on the potential of Chinese outbound travel to the United States (Chen, 1998) also suggests that Chinese people love to travel in order to increase their knowledge, which is supported by an old Chinese proverb: to be wise, a man should read ten thousand books and travel ten thousand miles. In addition, in contemporary China, travel is considered a social behaviour. Conferences and meetings are arranged close to tourism attractions while public-funded study tours and technical visits are very popular (Lou, 2000). Today, overseas travel is considered by Chinese people to be symbols of a successful career, of being knowledgeable, and of being wealthy (Cai, 2000).

Given its huge population base, continued economic growth, more leisure time and more disposable income, China is becoming a new tourism source market for many destination countries. The China National Tourism Administration (2001) forecasts that due to its steady growth, private travel will become the dominant type of travel in the Chinese outbound market in the next few years. According to 1997 data (Liu, 1999), the ten major regional sources of China outbound travel, for private purpose, are either comparatively wealthy municipalities, rich coastal provinces or provinces sharing borders with other countries. Guangdong province is on the top of the list, accounting for one third of the total international departures from China, followed by Beijing, Shanghai, Fujian and Zhejiang. The rest, including Yunnan, Heilongjiang, Guangxi, Inner Mongolia and Liaoning are known as the major source markets of border travel.

³ The exchange rate between US\$ and Chinese Yuan is 1:8

3.3.2 Travel Behaviours of Chinese Visitors

According to studies conducted by several destination countries including Hong Kong, Australia, the United States and New Zealand (Zhang & Lam, 1999; Cai, O'Leary & Boger, 2000; Yu & Weiler, 2000; Ryan & Mo, 2001; Yu & Weiler, 2001), the majority of Chinese outbound visitors appear to be middle-aged, married, male, highly educated, and hold professional or managerial positions with high levels of income⁴. Chinese travellers also have very strong purchasing power. In 2000, China was placed seventh in the world ranking of international tourism expenditure (World Tourism Organisation, 2002).

Regarding travel motivation, a survey conducted in Hong Kong (Zhang & Lam, 1999: 589) reveals that 'seeing something different' and 'increasing knowledge about a foreign destination' were ranked high among all motivation factors. This illustrates that Chinese visitors are keen to learn something from their Hong Kong trip. A further study on Chinese visitors to New Zealand (Ryan & Mo, 2001) suggests that sightseeing and having a relaxing holiday are the main trip motivations of Chinese visitors to that destination. This New Zealand survey (Ryan & Mo, 2001) also identifies that activities such as city tours, visiting farms and sites of Maori importance, visiting museums and local historic sites as both important and satisfactory by Chinese respondents. Overall, respondents expressed a high level of satisfaction with their New Zealand experience, particularly with 'tour operations, attractions and activities' except 'quality of food and shopping activities'.

Findings from a survey conducted contemporaneously in Australia by Yu and Weiler (2001:86) show that Chinese respondents ranked 'scenic beauty, safety, famous attractions, different culture and good climate' as the most important factors when choosing Australia as their destination. When asked about the importance of activities during their visit to Australia, Chinese respondents ranked the following activities as the most important: going to the beach, visiting national parks, visiting historical sites, Aboriginal communities and city parks and gardens (Yu & Weiler, 2001).

For Chinese visitors to the United States, shops are the most popular place to visit, followed by historical sites, places of worship, museums, theatres and theme parks (Cai, O'Leary & Boger, 2000).

⁴ This pattern of income distribution was only obvious for the USA and New Zealand studies.

3.4 Inbound Chinese Market in Australia

3.4.1 Chinese Visitors to Australia

Travel by Chinese citizens to Australia has grown rapidly in recent years. Visitor arrivals from China to Australia between 1991 and 2001 are presented in Table 3.4.

Table 3.4 Visitor Arrivals from China to Australia (thousand)

Year	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001
No. of Visitors (Base: all visitors)	16	19	22	30	43	54	66	77	93	124	172

Source: TFC, ABS

The data for the years typed in italics are not real figures but forecasts.

The increase in visitor arrivals is largely a result of the ADS agreement made with China. The growth is set to continue for at least the next ten years at an average rate of 20.8%, which is beyond the growth of any market⁵. The latest forecasts of the number of Chinese visitors to Australia between years 2002 to 2012 are shown in Table 3.5.

Table 3.5 Arrival Forecast (2002-2012)

Year	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
No. of Visitors (thousand)	222	285	356	436	525	629	749	884	1033	1195	1368
Growth Rate (%)											

Source: TFC, 2002

As shown in Table 3.6, the main purposes of Chinese tourists visiting Australia include a holiday, visiting friends and relatives, business and other purposes, where prior to 1996, and business visitors used to dominate the Chinese inbound market. However, the composition of the Chinese visitor market has changed in recent years, within the period from 1996 to 2001, seeing a growth in the segments of holiday visitors and a decline in business visitors.

⁵ South Korea ranks second in terms of growth at the rate of 13% annually. The average annual growth for international visitor arrivals to Australia is 7.3%.

Table 3.6 Main Purpose of Journey (1996-2001)

Main Purposes of Journey ('000/%)	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001
Holiday	13 (24)	14 (21)	18 (24)	31 (33)	39 (32)	66 (38)
VFR	11(20)	12 (19)	13 (18)	16 (17)	20 (16)	28 (16)
Business	24 (44)	30 (46)	29 (37)	29 (32)	41 (33)	51 (29)
Other	7 (13)	9 (14)	16 (21)	16 (18)	24 (19)	27 (16)

Source: ATC, 2002

In addition to numbers of Chinese visitor arrivals into Australia, it is important to consider length of stay and spending levels. The average stay of Chinese visitors in Australia in 1999 was 53 nights, compared to 21 nights for all international visitors⁶ (Bureau of Tourism Research, 2000). Moreover, Chinese tourists have relatively strong purchasing power. In 1999, the average expenditure of Chinese visitors in Australia was A\$3,951 per person nearly double the average expenditure by all international visitors: A\$2,152 (Bureau of Tourism Research, 2000). This high level of expenditure is related to the common practice of gift giving in China. So, Chinese tourists going overseas often "buy gifts or souvenirs for their friends, relatives, and colleagues and even for their neighbours". "They might also shop on behalf of their relatives or friends as the majority of Chinese still do not have the opportunity to travel overseas" (Yu & Weiler, 2001: 82).

3.4.2 ADS Tour Operators

Under the ADS scheme, in 1997, sixty-seven Chinese travel agencies were approved to operate outbound travel business (He, 1999). Among these were twenty-one Chinese travel agents, all located in Beijing, Shanghai and Guangdong and thirty Australian tour operators mainly located in New South Wales and Victoria. These agents and tour operators were nominated by the China National Tourism Administration (CNTA) and the Department of Immigration and Multicultural Affairs (DIMA, Australia) to handle ADS groups to Australia. The selection criteria included market experience, source market presence and participation in trade events.

⁶ This includes visitors aged 15 years and over for all purposes such as VFR, business and conference travel.

Initially, only residents of Beijing, Shanghai and Guangdong could apply for ADS visas through the 21 approved Chinese travel agencies. In July 2002, to meet the increasing demand for outbound travel by Chinese citizens, CNTA extended the number of designated travel agencies operating outbound business in China from 67 to 528 (China National Tourism Administration, 2002). Accordingly, the Chinese government and its Australian counterpart have also agreed to expand the ADS arrangement (outbound travel to Australia) into other Chinese regions (Department of Industry, Tourism and Resources, 2002a). Out of the 528 CNTA authorised travel agents, additional ADS travel agents will be nominated and approved to handle ADS business to Australia in the near future (Australian Tourism Commission, 2002).

To advance the integrity and ethical conduct of all Australian ADS tour operators, the Australian Tourism Export Council (ATEC) provides an ADS code of ethics. ATEC also sets out minimum standards that Australian ADS inbound tour operators must meet in order to comply with the Code of Ethics (for details, please refer to Appendix 10). Australian ADS inbound tour operators are required to hire Chinese speaking guides with a minimum of one year's experience in guiding in Australia. These tour guides are expected to provide adequate service to their clients and at the same time, they must monitor the tour group and report any concern that a client is intending to abscond. These standards are designed to be a useful resource in recruiting and training staff and setting standards for delivering quality. However, they are of a fairly general nature, and are difficult to enforce. Therefore the roles and standards of the guide may vary considerably from those recommendations by ATEC.

3.4.3 Tour Guiding Standards

More specific skills and knowledge that tour guides need in order to perform their jobs to the required industry standards can often be found in competency standards such as 'Competency Standards for the Tourism and Hospitality Training Packages: Guiding' developed by national tourism training organisations such as Tourism Training Australia (TTA). Tour guiding standards developed by TTA exist as a tool for raising standards but they are mainly used by the Technical and Further Education (TAFE) sector and, more recently have informed programs such as the Eco Guide certification scheme. The ADS tour sector appears to be largely unaware of these standards. Consequently, not many tour

guides employed under the ADS scheme would have any knowledge of these standards, and, for a range of reasons, have not completed any competency-based training.

According to information gathered by the researcher during a teleconference with staff from the Department of Industry, Tourism and Resources, generally speaking, within the inbound market of Australia, tour guiding is one of the quality related issues that is being addressed by an Australian national tourism task force. This task force consists of representatives of the Australian Standing Committee on Tourism, the Tourism Administrative Council, and the industry group, ATEC. When looking at the China inbound market in particular, the task force discovered that many of the issues were directly related to tour guiding.

In the tour-guiding field in Australia, currently, training, qualifications and performance standards are all non-compulsory. The Inbound Tourism Organisation of Australia (ITOA), now known as ATEC, once operated a tour guide qualification scheme. Guides were assessed based on their previous working experience and referrals from their employers. Tour guides also had to pass a written examination in order to obtain certification. ATEC has ceased this kind of assessment due to lack of financial resources.

An exception is Savannah Guides, a non-profit tour company based in North Australia. Savannah Guides draws tour guides from the tropical savannahs of northern Australia, a region including Queensland, Northern Territory and Western Australia. This organisation promotes high standards of nature based guiding and conservation. Savannah Guides recruits applicants with formal accreditation and qualifications, and requires their guides to undertake regular training, all of which is supported by the company's By-Laws (Savannah Guides, 2004).

Currently, the Australian government is working with the States, Territories and the industry to introduce a national system of registration and accreditation for the tour guiding industry (Department of Industry, Tourism and Resources, 2002b).

Closely paralleling these developments is the formation of a national federation of Tour Guide Associations, known as Guiding Organisations Australia (GOA), "representing the needs of the Tour Guiding Sector of the Australian Tourism Industry" (Professional Tour Guide Association of Australia, 2002:2). According to Ms. Bottomley, the President of the Professional Tour Guide Association of Australia (PTGAA), the combination of a national

registration system and the setting of minimum standards through certification will assist to resolve problems related to Tour Guide ethics and standards and the concerns of both State and Federal Governments in relation to these issues (Professional Tour Guide Association of Australia, 2002).

3.4.4 Chinese Visitor Profile and Trip Characteristics

The Australian Tourist Commission (ATC) has recently undertaken research in an attempt to profile ADS visitors from China. Visitors from Beijing and Shanghai were found to be mainly white-collar workers with high or middle education levels. They are inexperienced international travellers and are interested in learning about Western culture. Visitors from Guangdong have a basic level of education and are well travelled in Asian countries. They enjoy eating, drinking, playing and having fun (Australian Tourist Commission, 2002).

Shanghai China Travel Service is one of the key ADS group tour organisers in China. According to a presentation made by its deputy general manager, Mr Yu (2002) in Melbourne, the main reason for Chinese visitors to come to Australia is that Australia is totally different to Asian tourism destinations and is rich in tourism resources. Their purpose in coming to Australia is

- to encounter foreigners with blond hair and blue eyes;
- to learn about Australian culture, its civilisation and traditions;
- to practice English;
- to experience the friendliness of Australian people and the environment; and
- to investigate the Australian educational system as many Chinese families would like to send their children to Australia for high school or university studies.

Although Chinese visitors are motivated by experiencing exotic culture or something totally unique, at the same time, many do not want to go too far from their comfort zone. For example, during their stay in Australia, most Chinese visitors prefer to have Chinese meals; many want service directories and signage written in Chinese, cable TV with Chinese subtitles and Karaoke full of Chinese songs. Most also wants to be escorted by Chinese-speaking tour guides (Yu, 2002).

3.5 Chapter Summary

It is evident that China has emerged as a major tourism generating country, and in the coming years, it has the potential to become a main source market for the Australian tourism industry. When visiting Australia, Chinese tourists have a desire to experience exotic culture but, at the same time, they want to have a balance between strangeness and familiarity. According to Guidelines for Australian Inbound Tour Operators, ADS group tours are required to be escorted by a local (Australia-based) Chinese-speaking tour guide, who serves as the main point of contact for their Chinese clients. Clearly, how these Chinese-speaking tour guides conduct their tours has direct impact on a Chinese visitor's Australian experience.

CHAPTER 4: METHODOLOGY

4.1 Introduction

Based on Chapters Two and Three, Chapter Four develops an appropriate research design for conceptualising and assessing the IC of tour guides. A review of research paradigms provides a foundation for presenting the purpose of the research, its theoretical perspectives and methodological approach, justification of the research design and methods for the current study. The remainder of the chapter discusses operationalisation of key variables, sampling methods, data collection procedures, and methods of data analysis. Data sources and reliability and validity evidence of the instrumentation employed are presented as are ethical issues, translation of questionnaires, and results of the pilot test.

4.2 The Research Paradigm

Social researchers approach their studies with certain philosophical assumptions, or a paradigm, which is a basic orientation to theory and research (Kuhn, 1970). The key issues confronting paradigms are mainly related to the nature of reality (the ontology issue), the relationship of the researcher to that being researched (the epistemological issue) and the process of research (the methodological issues) (Guba, 1990). Positivism and interpretive social science are the two dominant paradigms that inform most social research including tourism research (Henderson, 1991, Jennings, 2001).

According to Denzin and Lincoln (1994), the positivistic and interpretive paradigms differ in the beliefs and philosophical assumptions that guide them. Positivism perceives reality as external, objective and singular to the individual. It seeks facts or causes of social phenomena. Thus, a positivist approach strives to develop theories that explain reality and which attempt to predict human behaviour. The interpretive paradigm, on the other hand, assumes that reality is constructed by individuals involved in the research situation. Multiple realities exist to explain a phenomenon such as the realities of the researcher and those of the subjects or objects being investigated. Interpretive social scientists assume that theory is grounded in the context of a situation.

In terms of its epistemological basis, the positivist paradigm holds that the relationship of the researcher to the phenomenon being researched is objective and value-free (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994). As a consequence, researchers are assumed to “detach themselves from the subjects or objective” and “follow strict research procedures to ensure objectivity and value-free interpretations” (Jennings, 2001:35). In contrast, the interpretive perspective sees people rather than questionnaires or other tools of measurement as the primary data-gathering instruments. The relationship of the investigator and the informant is interactive, subjective and inherently value-laden (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994).

Methodologically, researchers with a positivist orientation address research questions and find answers by way of deduction. This involves testing of hypotheses that are derived and based on empirically validated facts. Data are gathered by using methods such as observation, questionnaires and interviews and analysed by using statistical techniques (Jennings, 2001). In contrast, researchers employing the interpretive paradigm rely primarily on methods such as participant observation and in-depth interviews to gather data. In the absence of theoretical guidance, they work inductively to develop response categories from informants rather than specifying them in advance of the research. Content analysis and grounded theory analysis are two main methods used by these researchers to analyse data.

It is evident that a paradigm provides the rationale for selecting a research approach. Researchers should choose the most appropriate research paradigm and methods in accordance with their research purpose (Henderson, 1991, Jennings, 2001). The quantitative and qualitative paradigms are not, however, mutually exclusive, and mixed methods studies employing both paradigms are common. The current research mainly follows the positivistic paradigm. The following three sections describe how this research is conducted and provides justification for this choice of the research paradigm.

4.3 Purposes of the Research

Babbie (2001) stresses that the selection of research design and methods should be driven by the purpose(s) of the research. As outlined in Chapter One, the aim of the research is to develop and test a framework that conceptualises the intercultural competence (IC) of tour guides, and assesses the impact of the IC of tour guides on the guided tour experience. This

research thus has several purposes: exploratory, descriptive and explanatory. First, the study *explores* the issue of the tour guide's intercultural competence and its relationship to the tourist experience with a focus on Chinese-speaking tour guides in Australia. It is expected that the research will provide a starting point for continued research on guiding Chinese group tours in Australia. Second, it provides detailed *descriptions* of how tourism stakeholders perceive the tour guide's roles, what the key components of a tour guide's intercultural competence are and how tourists and tour guides perceive the importance of tour guide's IC and performance. Third, the research attempts to *analyse* the ratings of the desired importance and actual performance of the IC of tour guides from two perspectives, that of the tour guide and of the tourist. These ratings are analysed in further detail by identifying factors associated with these evaluations and examining the relationship between a tour guide's IC and the tourist guided tour experience. Consequently, this research provides *explanations* of the relationship between several key variables.

The purpose of this research is threefold. To meet the key information requirements, the researcher considers the positivist paradigm the dominant research philosophy to direct this research. However, while the exploratory nature of the first research stage follows a more inductive approach, much of the study follows a hypothetico-deductive approach. The following two sections provide further justifications of this mixed-methods research orientation and the limitations are discussed in Chapter Six.

4.4 Theoretical Perspectives of the Research

In addition to their philosophical assumptions, researchers often use an ideological perspective that is a theory, to guide their studies (Creswell, 1998). Several researchers (Neuman, 1997; Babbie, 1998; de Vaus, 2002) recommend that research be underpinned by theories that can provide concepts, assumptions and explanations for the research, offer predictions for research outcomes and suggest ways to make sense of the data. The tour guide's intercultural competence is the key construct addressed in the current research, and its conceptualisation was informed by the *integrative theory of intercultural competence*.

An important task of this research is to decide the main components of a tour guide's intercultural competence and find ways of assessing a tour guide's intercultural performance. As discussed in Chapter Two, there are various perspectives in modelling

and explaining intercultural effectiveness/competence such as psychological/personality characteristics (cultural empathy), communication patterns/skills (competence) (Kim, 2001) and behavioural patterns (Ruben & Kealey, 1979). Each of these consists of divergent concepts, assumptions and research outcomes (Koester, Wiseman & Sanders, 1993; Kim, 2001). Several researchers in intercultural studies have been working toward the integration of the existing approaches (Kim, 1988; Cui & Awa, 1992; Chen & Starosta, 1996; Kim, 2001:26) 'to link them into a coherent system of description and explanation'. The integrative perspective intends to represent the multidimensional nature of intercultural competence, that is, its cognitive, affective and behavioural components (Cui & Awa, 1992; Chen & Starosta, 1996; Kim, 2001) to enhance the predictive and explanatory power of the theoretical models. Mainly operating from the positivist paradigm, this research employed the integrative approach to the study of tour guides' intercultural competence.

4.5 Methodological Approach

The philosophical and theoretical perspectives mentioned in the previous sections (theoretical perspectives were also discussed in detail in Chapter Two) provide a methodological basis for the current research. A methodology translates the principles of a philosophical and theoretical perspective into a research language, shows how the research will proceed, and guides selection of research techniques to be used and the nature of the research outcome (Blaikie, 2000). The broadest categories of research methodologies in the social sciences are quantitative and qualitative approaches (Creswell, 1994; Sarantakos, 1996). These approaches rely on different ways to observe, measure, and understand social reality. This study uses both qualitative and quantitative approaches, and employs a questionnaire survey and semi-structured interviews as the methods of data collection.

4.5.1 Quantitative Approach

A quantitative study is usually based on assumptions from the positivist approach to science, assuming that reality is objective and governed by strict, natural and unchangeable laws. Consequently, it requires the use of a systematic method for combining deductive logic with precise empirical observations of individual behaviour in order to discover and

confirm the extent to which predictive generalisations of a theory can be made (Neuman, 1997). Therefore, quantitative research employs structural designs to test hypotheses or corroborate theory, often with a focus on statistical inferences (Henderson, 1991; Creswell, 1994; Sarantakos, 1996). The quantitative approach usually makes use of systematic procedures so that generalisations can be made with a determinable degree of confidence.

The questionnaire-based survey in particular, the closed-ended questions in a questionnaire involving testing hypotheses (a theory composed of variables) through the development of multi-item scales of the variables (Creswell, 1994), is a common method of quantitative research. It is considered to be less biased than other methods such as in-depth interviews and participant-observation, offering a more objective view on the research question from a wider range of respondents more easily than other methods. A self-completed questionnaire is convenient, as it can be completed at the respondent's own pace. In addition, the use of a questionnaire is considered less intrusive since it can facilitate the anonymity of the respondents. Depending on the kinds of questions they ask, questionnaires also allow the use of statistical techniques to produce consistent and uniform measures, often more quickly and inexpensively than other methods allow. The strengths of questionnaires make them one of the most popular methods used in social science, including leisure and tourism research (Brunt, 1997; Veal, 1998).

However, questionnaire surveys are often considered to have several limitations. The closed response sets in questionnaires do not allow for the probing of questions in order to gain additional information, or to ascertain about how well the respondents understand and are motivated to answer the questions (Sarantakos, 1996).

4.5.2 Qualitative Approach

Qualitative methodology is mainly based on interpretive philosophy, as discussed earlier, which postulates that reality is in the minds of people, including researchers, and is based on the definitions they attach to it. According to this approach, understandings and interpretations of how people create and maintain their social worlds can be achieved only through direct detailed observation of people in natural settings (Neuman, 1997). Therefore, qualitative research is carried out in natural settings without preconceived ideas and pre-structured models and patterns, and generally utilises a small number of

respondents. Its purpose is to build a complex picture, interpret meaningful human actions that people give of themselves or others, form categories, look for patterns and, by definition, subjectively explain not only what happens but also how and why it happens (Creswell, 1994; Sarantakos, 1996). Because it allows researchers to get close to the informants to grasp their point of view and vision of the world, the qualitative approach can provide rich data albeit from a limited number of individuals. As opposed to testing theory, qualitative research allows theory to emerge (Brunt, 1997; Veal, 1998; Henderson, 1991). However, due to the small number of respondents, qualitative research is often criticised for lacking generalisability to the population at large, "being incapable of replication by subsequent researchers and being too reliant on the subjective interpretations of researchers" (de Vaus, 2002:5), "hence questions of objectivity arise" (Brunt, 1997:18).

According to Miller & Crabtree (1994), the semi-structured interview is one of the most popular techniques of qualitative research because it includes in-depth and focused interviews that intensively explore a particular topic. Because it is atheoretical, this type of interview does not use predetermined questions to constrain participants but rather provides opportunity for probing. It often leads to gaining considerable amounts of detailed information about the issue under investigation. The close interaction between the researcher and respondents allows researchers to ask complex questions, and at the same time, also allows respondents to seek clarification of questions being asked from researchers, thus facilitating depth of discussion.

However, semi-structured interviews also have certain limitations. They may require the researcher to invest time in establishing rapport with participants in order to gather rich data, therefore, causing interviews to be more costly and time consuming than other methods. And they require extensive note taking, record keeping, and crosschecking in order to establish trustworthiness and confidence as conclusions are reached and revisited during the dynamic research process. Another issue is that the role of the researcher in the interview may introduce possible bias (Sarantakos, 1996).

4.5.3 Combined Methods

The research approach should fit its philosophical assumptions. As previously explained, however, at a methodological level, researchers operating within one paradigm can

combine qualitative and quantitative methods for conducting their research (Henderson, 1991; Guba & Lincoln, 1994). Several researchers (Babbie, 2001; de Vaus, 2002) argue that both qualitative and quantitative approaches can use multiple data sources and both can report quantitative and qualitative measures of the findings. Denzin (1970:308) suggests that, "the flaws of one method are often the strengths of another, and by combining methods, observers can achieve the best of each, while overcoming their unique deficiencies". A great deal of research involves the use of both qualitative and quantitative methods (often called 'mixed methods studies') in a complementary way, which for several reasons, generates better research results (Henderson, 1991; Creswell, 1994; Neuman, 1997; Veal, 1998).

First, the information gathered by using one method can be helpful with the design of the next stage of the study involving the use of the second method. For example, in order to design a good questionnaire survey, in the exploratory stage, in-depth qualitative interviews can be used to assess respondents' level of knowledge about or awareness of the issue being investigated. The results of the interviews can then be used to develop the survey instrument and identify suitable potential respondents.

Second, the combined methods approach allows examination of the same phenomenon from multiple perspectives. One method may provide the magnitude of a relationship, and the other method may give depth to the explanation of what that relationship means (Creswell, 1994). Therefore, the weaknesses in each single method can be compensated by the strengths of another method (Richins, 1999).

Third, combined methods use a variety of data sources, investigators, theories and methodologies that enable triangulation of methods to look for convergence of results (Creswell, 1994; Blaikie; 2000). If the use of dissimilar methods, for example, diverse kinds of data, to measure the same unit or concept, leads to the same conclusion, the combined design can generate greater confidence that the research findings reflect reality rather than methodological error (Brewer & Hunter, 1989). When the results of qualitative and quantitative approaches do not converge, the use of mixed methods reveals the different aspects of the multifaceted nature of the reality under study.

While the use of multiple data sources and methods strengthens the current study, the analysis and interpretation of the data are driven by the hypothetico-deductive (positivist) paradigm. The limitations of this approach are revisited in Chapter Six.

4.5.4 The Research Design of This Study

Most intercultural competence research uses a quantitative approach and focuses on conducting controlled studies informed by theoretical models to identify variables that could be used as predictors of effective intercultural performance (Dinges & Baldwin, 1996). The current research follows this tradition, using hypothesis testing, systematic explanation and statistical analysis in order to identify the multiple dimensions of a tour guide's intercultural competence, and to explain what influences tour guides' intercultural competence, and what variables are associated with tourists' perceptions of the IC of tour guides importance and performance. The ultimate goal of the research is to test existing theory in a new context, in order to build a model of a tour guide's intercultural competence. At the same time, due to its exploratory nature, qualitative data were used in the first stage of the study to provide insights into the context of Chinese tour guiding in Australia. Qualitative data were also used to uncover perceptions that tourism industry representatives have about the research topic. In particular, respondents were asked both to describe the roles a Chinese-speaking tour guide need to play, and to rate the importance of each indicator of intercultural competence. These results were used to inform the design of questionnaires for the surveys of visitors and tour guides in the later stage.

Thus, qualitative and quantitative methods are intertwined in the design of this research, the data collected, and the analysis and reporting of the data. The use of this combined methods approach within a positivist paradigm aimed to reduce the limitations inherent in adopting one specific paradigm, providing greater depth and breadth of understanding of the research topic.

4.6 Operationalisation of Key Variables

The purpose of this section is to clarify key concepts, specify key indicators for each concept, explain how the indicators are to be measured and give reliable and valid evidence related to the measurements.

4.6.1 Components of Tour Guides' Intercultural Competence

One of the objectives of the current study (*Research Objective Two*) was to investigate empirically the underlying dimensions of the IC of tour guides. As noted previously several researchers suggest that cognitive, affective and behavioural components are the three key aspects of intercultural competence (Kim, 1988; Spitzberg, 1989; Cui & Berg, 1991; Cui & Awa, 1992; Chen & Starosta, 1996; Spitzberg, 1996; Cui, Berg & Jiang, 1998; Kim, 2001).

Previous studies have suggested that the cognitive component (cultural awareness) consists of an individual's knowledge and understanding of their own culture including the norms and communication rules of one's own and that of others' cultures. Understanding cultural variability is considered essential to communicating across cultures. Thus, the cognitive competence of Chinese-speaking tour guides in Australia can be defined as their understanding of the host (Australian) culture, their knowledge of Australian society and their awareness of cultural differences between China and Australia.

The affective component (cultural sensitivity) enables an individual to be sensitive enough during intercultural interactions to acknowledge and respect cultural differences. Therefore, an interculturally sensitive person must be empathetic, non-judgemental and sensitive to others' needs.

The behavioural component is the individual's ability to perform the required roles in the host society. It requires the ability to use the language of a culture other than one's own, the ability to initiate conversation with others, behavioural flexibility, interpersonal interaction management and social skills.

Besides the cognitive, affective and behavioural components, and despite disagreement on this issue among some scholars (Cui & Berg, 1991), many researchers agree that

personality traits such as flexibility and patience are crucial to effective intercultural competence (Church, 1982; Cui & Awa, 1992; Ward & Kennedy, 1993).

Only a limited attempts have been made to determine empirically the dimensions of intercultural competence. Cui and his colleagues (Cui & Berg, 1991; Cui & Awa, 1992; Cui, Berg & Jiang, 1998) integrated previous studies of intercultural effectiveness into one framework and demonstrated the factorability and construct validity of intercultural effectiveness in several empirical studies. According to the findings of the three studies, intercultural effectiveness is considered as a theoretical construct that has cognitive, affective and behavioural aspects. A factorial structure model was constructed by Cui and his colleagues (Cui & Berg, 1991; Cui, Berg & Jiang, 1998), in which intercultural effectiveness was a second-order factor indicated by three first-order factors: communication competence, cultural empathy and communication behaviour (social interaction). They tested the construct validity of their model using confirmatory factor analysis with LISREL VI. The overall fit of their model indicated by adequate factor loadings, correlations and goodness of fit was satisfactory.

In all three of the studies carried out by Cui and his colleagues (Cui & Berg, 1991; Cui, Berg & Jiang, 1998), although intercultural effectiveness was examined in relation to various issues such as job performance and ethnic communication, the main indicators of intercultural effectiveness (competence) in the measurement scale remained the same. The cognitive dimension (communication competence) of IC included knowledge of language and communication rules. Affective quality was the ability to acknowledge cultural differences, to show empathy for different cultural norms and to deal with uncertainty and ambiguity, and behavioural competence referred to social interaction and display of respect.

The researcher adopted the instrument developed by Cui and his colleagues because it appeared to cover many indicators of tour guides' intercultural competence. However, the focus of Cui's model was on sojourners' intercultural effectiveness (capacity to adapt to a new culture) using communication as an agent, but not on how to facilitate intercultural communication between others. Tour guides' intercultural performance is more than adaptation; it requires the extension of IC competence to *mediation* tasks. The ability of tour guide to mediate (facilitate communication, understanding and action between different cultural groups) is an important element of their intercultural competence. Thus, it

became necessary to modify Cui's instrument to reflect the tour guide's role as a cultural mediator.

Sixteen indicators were selected for the measurement scale of tour guides' intercultural competence. These indicators are listed in Table 4.1.

Table 4.1 Indicators of Intercultural Competence

1	Ability to speak & understand English
2	Ability to speak & understand Chinese
3	Understanding Australian culture & society
4	Awareness of cultural differences between China & Australia
5	Display respect for culture of visitors & host culture
6	Ability to initiate interaction between visitors & host population
7	Language interpretation skills
8	Cultural interpretation skills
9	Ability to solve problems
10	Ability to cope with unexpected
11	Being non-judgemental
12	Being flexible
13	Being patient
14	Understanding others' feelings
15	Motivation to be a cultural mediator
16	Ability to establish rapport with group

The selection of these sixteen indicators, particularly the three new items (language translation and interpretation skills, cultural interpretation skills and motivation to be a cultural mediator), which reflect the nature of a tour guide's work, was also based on the literature of tour guiding. Of particular relevance were the schematic representation of the tour guide's function developed by Cohen (1985) and the notion of culture broker developed by McKean (1976) and Smith (2001).

In this study, respondents were asked to respond to a series of scale items of intercultural competence using a 7-point scale ranging from 1= 'Not at all important' to 7= 'Extremely important'. The results of the reliability test of the scale items are displayed in Table 4.2.

Table 4.2 Reliability of Scale (N=461)

Item No.		Item-to-total correlation	Cronbach's Alpha
	Social & Interpersonal Competence		.94
13	Being patient	.780	
12	Being flexible	.790	
14	Understanding others' feelings	.770	
10	Ability to cope with unexpected	.690	
9	Ability to solve problems	.750	
16	Ability to establish rapport with group	.750	
11	Being non-judgmental	.730	
15	Motivated to be a cultural mediator	.700	
8	Cultural interpretation skills	.740	
	Cultural Competence		.82
4	Awareness of cultural differences between China & Australia	.610	
5	Displaying respect for culture of visitors & host culture	.680	
6	Ability to initiate interaction between visitors & host culture	.620	
3	Understanding Australian culture & society	.690	
	Language Competence		.74
1	Ability to speak & understand English	.510	
7	Language interpretation skills	.710	
2	Ability to speak & understand Chinese	.670	

Alpha for scale (0.94)

An analysis of the item-to-total correlation suggests that each item has a significant contribution to the measurement of the relevant construct. By the same token, the scale items display good internal consistency (correlation coefficients ranging from 0.332 to 0.962). The obtained Cronbach's alpha scores show acceptable reliability (Churchill, 1979) both of the overall scale (0.94), and of each of the three sub-scale: social and interpersonal competence (0.94), cultural competence (0.82), and language competence (0.74).

Face validity, concurrent validity and construct validity were assessed to see if the indicators were measuring what they were intended to measure. As shown in Table 4.3, prior to the development of the questionnaire, tourism industry representatives rated the importance of the sixteen IC items and ascertained the face validity of the IC scale. The concurrent validity was acceptable as most tour guide's IC items were associated with pre-existing indicators. The construct validity of the IC scale was supported by factor analysis yielding a three-dimensional structure. The test result suggests that the individual factor

performed well in measuring the IC construct (the alpha coefficients for the three factors are 0.95, 0.82 and 0.74).

Table 4.3 Validity of Scale (N=461)

Type of validity	Validity criteria
Face validity	Ascertained by tourism industry representatives
Concurrent validity	Most IC items associated with pre-existing indicators
Construct validity	Supported by factor analysis which yielded a three-dimensional structure

4.6.2 Tourists' Perceptions of Tour Guides' IC (performance)

Importance refers to a customer's general assessment of the significance of an attribute for a product (or service) while performance can be defined as a customer's judgments (perceptions) of attribute performance. In this study, importance refers to the visitor's assessment of the significance of each of the 16 indicators of tour guides' intercultural competence as described in the previous section. Performance refers to visitors' assessment of tour guides' intercultural performance on each of the 16 indicators, on a scale from '1' (not at all adequate) to '7' (extremely adequate).

4.6.3 Global Satisfaction

This study assesses tourist satisfaction at a global level (addressing *hypothesis 5*), that is, visitors' levels of satisfaction towards their total experience with the guided tour. The visitors' overall satisfaction is operationalised by the rating given by each individual respondent on a semantic differential scale item ranging from 1 'extremely dissatisfied' to 7 'extremely satisfied'. This scale item is simple, flexible and easily understood by respondents and also fits well into the restricted length of the questionnaire.

Previous studies (Hughes, 1991, Geva & Goldman, 1991, Wong, 2001, Ham & Weiler, 2002) suggest that the level of overall satisfaction is likely to influence or be closely related to visitors' future behavioural intention. By choosing answers of 'yes', 'no' or 'not sure', respondents were requested to indicate how likely they were to return to Australia for a repeat visit and to recommend the tour to their friends and relatives.

4.6.4 Impact of IC of Tour Guides on the Guided Tour Experience

Research Objective Five was to investigate the impact of tour guides' intercultural performance on tourists' overall satisfaction with their guided tour experience. The tourist experience is multidimensional comprising a number of aspects such as quality of facilities, social relationships and customer services, each of which may affect tourists' overall satisfaction with the tour. Therefore, the overall satisfaction should be assessed by referring to separate aspects of the holiday experience (Hughes, 1991). However, several studies indicate that in a guided tour, the tour guide is the key determinant of satisfaction (Hughes, 1991; Geva & Goldman, 1991; Schmidt, 1979; Wang, Hsieh & Huan, 2000). In the current study it is argued that the intercultural competence of tour guides is a key element of the Chinese visitors' experience. How Chinese visitors perceive their tour guides' performance will influence the judgment of their overall satisfaction with the tour. Therefore, it is important to assess the impact of Chinese visitors' perception of their guides' IC performance on their overall satisfaction with their guided tour experience. The operationalisation of these two variables was discussed in the previous section.

4.6.5 Role of Tour Guides

One of the objectives of the study (*Research Objective One*) is to look at how visitors and tour guides perceive the importance of each role of the tour guide to the visitor's overall guided tour experience; how visitors' perceptions differ from those of the tour guides themselves; how visitors rate the role of cultural mediator in relation to the other four roles of tour guides and how visitors' perceived importance of the tour guide's role as a cultural mediator compares to their perceived importance of the IC of tour guides. The roles of tour guides: providing information, providing good customer service, being a good cultural mediator, caring for health and safety of group, managing group itinerary, were operationalised by developing a scale based on a list of roles derived from expert opinions and previous studies (Schmidt, 1979; Holloway, 1981; Cohen, 1985; Hughes, 1991; Pond, 1993; Gurung, Simmons & Devlin, 1996; Wong, 2001; Ham & Weiler, 2002). Therefore, the face validity of the resulting scale was ascertained by experts. A 7-point scale was employed in measuring respondents' perceived importance of tour guides' roles, with 1 being 'not at all important' and 7 being 'extremely important'. The Cronbach's alpha

reliability score for the scale was 0.80, indicated reasonable internal consistency of the 5 role items.

4.6.6 Tourists' Background Characteristics

Addressing *hypothesis five*, tourists' background characteristics include gender, age, level of education, previous guided tour experience and English language skill, perceived importance of the IC of tour guides. These background factors were identified as potentially important factors (independent variables) which influence tourists' perceptions of tour guides' actual intercultural competence as well as their overall satisfaction with their guided tour experience (dependent variables).

Respondents were asked to indicate whether they have been on a guided tour outside of China prior to this trip. They were also asked to rate their proficiency level in English on a four-point scale (fluent, conversational, less than conversational and none). They were then asked to identify their level of education: high school or less; vocation school; university, postgraduate and other. These variables were used as predictors of respondents' perceptions of the IC of tour guides performance as well as their overall satisfaction with their guided tour experience.

4.6.7 Predictors of Tour Guides' Intercultural Competence

A number of researchers (Beiser, Barwick, Berry & de Costa, 1988; Jayasuriya, Sang & Fielding, 1992) (cited by Berry 1997) suggest that there is a positive relationship between an individual's level of education and his or her cultural adaptation. An individual with a higher level of education is likely to be resourceful with better skills of analysing and solving problems (Berry, 1997). Thus, a guide's level of education might be a good predictor of his or her intercultural competence.

Language is the primary means of interpersonal and social interactions. It is no surprise, then, that language competence appears to be important in facilitating an individual's cultural adaptation. Many previous studies (Cohn & Wood, 1982; Clement, Noels & Karine, 1994; Noels, Pon & Clement, 1996; Berry, 1997; Kim, 2001; Neto, 2002) demonstrated the importance of host language competence in facilitating new cultural learning and intercultural contact. With language proficiency, an acculturating individual is

able to gain a better understanding of the local culture and to interpret the hidden and unspoken assumptions of the locals.

Previous intercultural experience is identified as another important factor that appears related to cross-cultural adaptation (Parker & McEvoy, 1993; Ward & Kennedy, 1996; Matsumoto, D., LeRoux, J., Ratzlaff, C., Tatani, H., Uchida, H., Kim, C., and Araki, S., 2001). It has been stated in many intercultural studies (Chen & Starosta, 1996) that knowledge of the host culture and one's own culture is essential for an individual to develop intercultural awareness, the cognitive aspect of intercultural competence. Previous international experiences may generate sources of cultural knowledge that lead to improved cultural adaptation in a new intercultural environment (Parker & McEvoy, 1993).

In the present study, intercultural experience is measured as a dichotomous variable with two categories (with experience/without experience). Level of education, an ordinal variable, is operationalised using five categories (high school or less; vocation school; university; postgraduate; and other). Language fluency was originally presented by two indicators (Chinese and English language speaking skill, Chinese and English language reading skill) in five categories: 1= 'Only Chinese', 2= 'Mostly Chinese', 3= Both Chinese and English, 4= English better than Chinese and 5= Only 'English'. Together these variables were used as predictors of how respondents perceived the importance of intercultural competence and self-assessment of intercultural performance.

4.6.8 Tour Guides' Cultural Identity

Cultural identity is considered as the most appropriate term describing the construct of identity in the current study and as a predictor of Chinese-speaking tour guides' intercultural competence. A recent study (Chen, 2000) assessed Chinese-American children's ethnic identity (EI) based on level of acculturation from a culture and communication perspective. The instrument contains five multiple cultural dimensions: connection to ethnic origins and communities (ethnic loyalty), food preferences, interactions to the larger society, cultural appreciation and communication skills represented by 20 cultural indicators. The results of the reliability test and the results of the tests of the construct and concurrent validity are shown in the second row of Table 4.4.

Table 4.4 Validity & Reliability of Ethnic Identity Scale

	Construct validity	Concurrent validity	Reliability
American study (N=152)	EI scores correlated with 20 cultural indicators, r from 0.33 to 0.7, $p < 0.001$	EI scores correlated with demographic variables, r from 0.50 to 0.59, $p < 0.001$	0.89
Australian study (N=140)	EI scores correlated with 20 cultural indicators, r from 0.41 to 0.45, $p < 0.01$	EI scores correlated with demographic variables, r from 0.26 to 0.7, $p < 0.01$	0.88

The instrument was also tested in Australia with a group of Chinese-Australian students. The results of reliability test (Cronbach's alpha) of the measurement for the Chinese-Australian respondents, and results of the construct and concurrent validity of the measurement are presented in the second row of Table 4.4. Results of the reliability and validity tests carried out in the two studies suggest that the EI scale is a valid measurement.

In both studies, exploratory factor analysis with varimax rotation was employed to examine any underlying dimensions among the 20 cultural indicators of EI. The common factors identified in both studies such as cultural appreciation, communication skills, food preference and self-reported ethnic identity, were very similar. In summary, the measurement of ethnic identity proved to be reliable and valid in the Australian context.

As a result of constraints due to the length of the questionnaire, self-reported ethnic identity was limited to two items, 'Chinese and English speaking skills', and 'Chinese and English reading skills'. The two language items were selected because in both Chen's study and the present study, they were loaded on a single factor with good internal consistency.

Self-assessed ethnic identity, Chinese and English language speaking and reading skills were operationalised as ordinal variables in five categories: for cultural identity, 1=Very Chinese, 2=Mostly Chinese, 3=Bicultural, 4: Mostly Australianised, 5=Very Australianised; for language speaking and reading skills, 1= Only Chinese, 2= Mostly Chinese, 3= Both Chinese and English, 4= English better than Chinese and 5= Only English. Based on these items, a respondent's cultural identity could be categorised such as mostly Chinese or bicultural.

4.7 The Samples

4.7.1 Tourism Industry Representatives

Except for recruiting the approved Australian inbound tour operators, which was an attempted census, the 20 informants were recruited for the study using purposive and snowball sampling (Patton, 1990). The researcher contacted all thirty approved Australian inbound tour operators, seven of which granted time for an in-depth interview. About two-thirds of tour operators participated in the study but at different levels. About one third refused to participate either using 'too busy' as a reason or simply choosing not to participate. In general, the participants who were recruited earlier 'led the researcher to the later recruits' (Kurasaki, 2000). At the same time, the selection of participants was also based on the judgment of the researcher and her supervisors. In the end, respondents represented five approved Chinese travel agencies, at the time of the interviews, there were 21 so called wholesalers in China, of which ten were located in Beijing, one inbound tour operator association and one tour guide association, one tourism training institution, five tour guides and seven approved ADS Australian inbound tour operators. Although the sampling methods used were not random, the researcher is confident that the methods used were systematic, unbiased and resulted in a sample that was appropriate for reaching the objectives of this part of the research. Because they are non-random, inferential statistics have not been applied to these data.

4.7.2 Chinese Visitors

For the visitor survey, the sample population consisted of Mainland Chinese visitors to Australia in ADS groups. For the following reasons, the sample unit was an individual Chinese visitor 15 years of age and over. The ADS segment, private travel for holidays by Chinese citizens, of the Chinese outbound travel market enjoys the fastest growth of all segments of the Chinese market and has great potential of growth in the years to come. It is bilateral policy, made by the Chinese government and its Australian counterpart, that every ADS tour group in Australia must be accompanied by a local (Australia-based) Chinese-speaking tour guide. Therefore, Chinese visitors in ADS groups are in a good position to comment on issues related to their local Chinese tour guides' intercultural competence.

A list of approved ADS Australian tour operators (30) and a list of approved ADS Chinese travel agencies (21) were obtained. A random sample of tour operators on the list was approached for help in distributing questionnaires to Chinese visitors in ADS groups. In order to ensure an adequate sample size, the researcher also obtained permission from two hotels in Melbourne to access respondents. These two hotels accommodate most of the Chinese ADS groups that stay in Melbourne. More details about the procedures used to select respondents from this latter sample using a systematic random procedure are provided in section 4.7.

The following information was used to determine the confidence limits of the sample. Australia started to receive Chinese ADS groups in August 1999. The total number of Chinese visitor arrivals on ADS visas to Australia was 5,855 between August 1999 and March 2000, 12,180 for the year 2000 and 31,363 in 2001 (Department of Immigration and Multicultural Affairs, 2002). Following the formula provided by Krejcie and Mongan (1970) for determining sample sizes and guidelines offered by Salant and Dillman (1994), a sample size of 381 would produce data falling within the 95 per cent confidence interval with a sampling error plus or minus 2.5 per cent for a population of 50,000. Therefore, the final sample size of 461, drawn using probability-sampling methods, was considered adequate for this study. The profile of visitor survey is presented in Table 4.5.

Table 4.5 Sociodemographic Profile of Respondents (Visitors)

Items (N=461)	Number	%	Items (N=461)	Number	%
Gender			Occupation		
Male	266	59	Government official	56	12
Female	186	41	Administrator	134	30
Age			Private business people	38	8
15-24	39	9	Technician/engineer	49	11
25-34	92	20	Teacher/researcher	52	11
35-44	153	33	Office worker	55	12
45-54	125	28	Factory worker	2	1
55-64	42	9	Student	5	1
65+	4	1	Others	64	14
Education			Prior guided tour experience (N=453)		
High school or less	86	20	Have	342	75
Vocation school	305	66	No	111	25
University/Diploma	55	12	First visit to Australia		
Postgraduate	8	2	Yes	441	96
Others	(N=397)*		No	20	4
Have travelled to	345	87	Places of origin in China		
Asia	163	41	Beijing	155	35
Europe	107	27	Shanghai	46	10
USA	30	8	Guangdong	87	20
Others			Other places	154	35

* Multiple responses

As shown in Table 4.5, the gender distribution of the sample population is well balanced; 59 per cent male and 41 per cent female. Sixty one per cent of respondents are middle aged (between 35-54 years old). Their educational qualifications are high, with 74 per cent of them having a university degree or postgraduate degree. About 84 per cent of the respondents could be classified as white-collar workers, of which 30 per cent reported being administrators, 12 per cent government officials and 8 per cent private business people. This implies that they have good jobs, high incomes and strong purchasing power. The latter is confirmed by their previous travel experience. The table shows that 84 per cent of respondents have been overseas before, of which 87 per cent had travelled to Asia, 41 per cent to Europe and 27 per cent to the USA. Even though the majority of respondents (96 per cent) were visiting Australia on a guided tour for the first time, 76 per cent have had prior experiences on guided tours overseas. Sixty-five per cent are from Beijing, Shanghai and Guangdong, which are often considered the three prime places of origin for outbound travel in China.

The extent to which non-response bias influences the results is unknown. However, the gender and age distributions demonstrate a close match between this sample and the population. Based on the last four year-statistics, the gender distribution for the population is 53 per cent male and 47 per cent female. The age group of 35-44 years old has the highest proportion among all age groups for both the sample (33%) and the population (26%) (Department of Immigration and Multicultural Affairs, 2002). The evidence of general consistency in profile between the sample and the population together with the probability sampling procedures provides justification for generalising the findings of this study to the population of Chinese visitors in ADS groups in Australia.

4.7.3 Chinese-Speaking Tour Guides

For the guide survey, the sample population consisted of Chinese-speaking tour guides based in Australia. The sample unit is an individual Chinese-speaking guide. It is almost impossible to identify the population of Chinese speaking tour guides in Australia as there is no official registration (sampling frame) for these guides. The population size is estimated to be between twenty and a few hundred. Therefore, the sample size was planned in the range of 20 to 50 guides. Non-probability sampling methods, purposive and snowball sampling (Blaikie, 2000) were employed to identify potential respondents. The researcher contacted two tour guide associations, five approved Chinese travel agencies and all ADS tour operators as well as several tour guides and eventually obtained responses from a total of 31 guides. The profile of the respondents of the guide's survey is presented in Table 4.6.

Table 4.6 Sociodemographic Profile of Respondents (Guides)

Item	Frequency	%	Item	Frequency	%
Place of birth (N=31)			Previous intercultural experience (N=30)		
China (including Hong Kong)	24	78	Yes	7	23
Taiwan	5	16	No	23	77
Malaysia	1	3	Residency status (N=31)		
Thailand	1	3	Australian citizen	23	74
Years living in Australia (N=31)			Permanent resident	7	23
One year to six years	8	26	International student	1	3
Seven years to ten years	8	26	Gender (N=30)		
Eleven years to twelve years	7	22	Male	19	63
Thirteen years and above	8	26	Female	11	37
Education (N=30)			Age (N=31)		
High school or less	1	3	25-34	8	26
Vocation school	6	20	35-44	16	52
University/Diploma	18	60	45-54	6	19
Postgraduate	4	14	55-64	1	3
Others	1	3	Nature of guiding job (N=30)		
Place of highest education obtained (N=24)			Full time	15	51
Australia	14	58	Casual	8	26
China	8	33	Seasonal	7	23
Taiwan	2	9	Attended guide training or not (N=31)		
Years working as a guide			Yes	13	42
One year	5	17	No	18	58
Two to three years	9	30			
Four to five years	9	30			
Six years and above	7	23			

According to the table, the majority of respondents to the tour guide survey (71 per cent) are 35-54 years of age. Male respondents (63 per cent) outnumbered female ones (37 per cent). All of the respondents were born overseas, 78 per cent in Mainland China. Their average length of residence in Australia is ten years. The respondents are highly educated as 60 per cent of them (N=30) hold university degrees and 14 per cent have postgraduate qualifications, and 58 per cent of them (N=24) completed their highest degrees in Australia. Regarding their residency status, 97 per cent of respondents are either Australian citizens or permanent residents. Their average length of working time as a tour guide is four years. Fifty one percent of them are full-time tour guides and 26 per cent are doing tour guiding as a casual job. With respect to guide training, only 42 per cent have had attended tour guide training, and most of this was on-the-job training.

An opportunity for sampling bias exists because of the non-probability sampling methods used, that is, the sample may not represent the population. However, findings from semi-

structured interviews with five Chinese-speaking tour guides and tourism industry representatives as well as the research results of the visitor survey help verify the guide survey results. Since there are almost no documented studies on Chinese-speaking tour guides in Australia, this part of the research is exploratory in nature, providing an opportunity to test methods, and instruments, identify variables and explore relationships for further research.

4.8 Data Collection Procedures

The following discussion of data collection procedures covers both the pilot survey and the two phases of the data collection process. The pilot survey was conducted from 18 September to 7 October in 2001. The in-depth interviews lasted four months and were completed prior to the commencement of the visitor and tour guide surveys. The questionnaire survey period was three months, from the beginning of December 2001 to the end of February 2002.

4.8.1 Ethical Issues

Ethical consideration was taken into account by using the following procedures. All respondents were informed about the research and given clear instructions, either in writing or orally, regarding the voluntary nature of the investigation. Participants had the right to withdraw at any stage of the research project. For the visitor survey, respondents were asked questions regarding sociodemographic characteristics, their perceptions of the importance and performance of tour guides' intercultural competence as well as their overall satisfaction with their guided tour experience. For the tour guide survey, respondents were asked questions regarding their sociodemographic characteristics, their perceptions of the importance of tour guides' intercultural competence and their self-assessment of their own intercultural performance. The employers of tour guides had no means of identifying responses regarding individual tours or guides; the anonymity and confidentiality of respondents was guaranteed by using a coding system. Only the researcher and her supervisors can access the original data. In the field, for visitors, the survey was conducted with the consent of tour leaders, tour guides and the management of accommodation venues; for tour guides, consent was sought from each individual

respondent before commencing the survey. A written consent form was sent to each tourism industry representative before his or her interview was conducted.

4.8.2 Translation of the Questionnaire

Since its subjects were Chinese visitors to Australia and the research was conducted in an intercultural setting by a researcher who is a native Chinese speaker, there were several additional challenges due to cultural and language differences. The following procedures ensured the adequacy of question formulation and faithfulness in translation.

First, considering that 'caring about face' is part of the Chinese culture, and thus that Chinese people might tend to give answers with courtesy producing social desirability bias, the questionnaire was designed with extra attention to the wording of questions. The cover letter and the introduction to the questionnaire survey (please refer to Appendix 3 and Appendix 4) were carefully written to communicate the confidentiality of the study and the value of honesty and critical response.

Secondly, since the interview questions and the questionnaires were originally written in English and then translated into Chinese (please refer to Appendix 3 and Appendix 4), the researcher used several techniques to achieve faithfulness in translation. To write translatable English, the researcher made the wording of questions as clear as possible such as writing questions in simple sentences, and employing the active rather than the passive voice. Two different translators were used for translation and back-translation to avoid bias that could result from the same translator doing both translations. Bilingual experts were invited to assess the accuracy and readability of the questionnaires. As a result some minor changes were made. For example, the meaning of 'interpretation' in English is different for 'cultural interpretation' and 'language interpretation'. The term 'cultural interpretation' is not a common expression in Chinese language. A more readable and comprehensible Chinese expression was recommended by a bilingual interpretation expert (please refer to Appendix 4).

4.8.3 Pilot Tests

In order to discover possible weaknesses and inadequacies of the research design in general and the survey instruments, in particular the pilot test was conducted with colleagues,

potential users of the research findings such as tour operators and people from the population to be interviewed and surveyed. This included five industry representatives, two Chinese travel agents, one PhD candidate whose research is also related to intercultural competence, five tour guides, and ten Chinese visitors.

Several changes were made to the design of the interview questions and questionnaires according to the results of the pilot tests. First, the number of interview questions was reduced to focus more on the five main areas of the investigation. Secondly, the attributes of importance and performance of tour guides' intercultural competence were put in one single question using two separate columns, instead of two separate questions. Thirdly, the term 'cultural mediator' was translated into Chinese more suitable to the study context. Finally, to give respondents more background information about the research, assure them of anonymity and confidentiality, and motivate them to participate in the study, a cover letter was added to the visitor survey questionnaire.

4.8.4 In-depth Interviews with Tourism Industry Representatives

In-depth interviews with tourism industry representatives were conducted in the first phase of the study over a period of four months. The purpose of the interview was to provide insights into the context of Chinese tour guiding in Australia, and to uncover perceptions that tourism industry representatives have about the relative importance of a Chinese-speaking tour guide's roles, and their ratings of the importance of the IC indicators. The representatives were also asked to describe the areas in which the Chinese-speaking tour guides need to be competent in order to fulfil their roles. These responses were used to inform the design of questionnaires for the surveys of visitors and tour guides in the later stage. The data collection in this stage mainly addressed *Research Objectives One*.

Semistructured interviews were conducted with twenty informants, fourteen in Chinese and six in English. The open-ended interview format facilitated a free flow of ideas from respondents and generated information-rich data. The interview covered six main areas: roles of tour guides escorting ADS Chinese groups; what attributes tour guides need to have to fulfil their roles, for example, knowledge, skills, personal traits; strengths and weaknesses of current tour guides; main problems with Chinese tour guiding in Australia; opinions on training, certification and licensing; and ratings of the importance of 16 indicators of tour guides' intercultural competence (A list of interview questions is

attached as Appendix 1). On average, interviews lasted about sixty minutes. Field notes were taken during the interviews with representatives of Chinese travel agencies, the tour guide association, the inbound tour operator association and the tourism training institution. The interviews with tour operators and tour guides were audio recorded. Two interviewers conducted five of the interviews together and the field notes from the interviews were crosschecked by the two interviewers. The audio-recorded interviews were transcribed verbatim either in Chinese or in English, depending on the language used for conducting the interview. A summary of each interview was sent back to the informant for verification.

4.8.5 Visitor Survey

The Chinese visitor survey was conducted over the period December 2001 through to February 2002, covering both the flat season and one of the peak seasons of Chinese outbound travel, the Chinese Spring Festival, in an attempt to minimise sampling bias. The Festival may fall either in January or February depending on the Chinese Lunar Calendar. The other two peak seasons for this market segment are the May Day and October National Day holiday periods. Based on the last three year-data set (2000-2002) from DIMA (2002), presented in Table 4.7, the number of Chinese visitor arrivals on ADS visas reaches its highest level during the Chinese Spring Festival period compared with other months of the year.

Table 4.7 ADS visas: Arrivals by month - August 1999 to 30 November 2002

Month	Persons	Month	Persons	Month	Persons	Month	Persons
		Jan-00	756	Jan-01	8593	Jan-02	2067
		Feb-00	2748	Feb-01	1560	Feb-02	7263
		Mar-00	549	Mar-01	1714	Mar-02	1897
		Apr-00	726	Apr-01	2786	Apr-02	3530
		May-00	478	May-01	2242	May-02	2181
		Jun-00	352	Jun-01	1180	Jun-02	1007
		Jul-00	673	Jul-01	2279	Jul-02	1992
Aug-99	42	Aug-00	568	Aug-01	2315	Aug-02	2804
Sep-99	95	Sep-00	352	Sep-01	2448	Sep-02	2957
Oct-99	213	Oct-00	1657	Oct-01	2582	Oct-02	2998
Nov-99	403	Nov-00	1189	Nov-01	1903	Nov-02	2599
Dec-99	598	Dec-00	2132	Dec-01	1761		
Total 1999	1351	Total 2000	12180	Total 2001	31363	Total 2002	31295

Source: DIMA (2002)

Grand Total as at 30 November 2002 76189

Prior to distributing questionnaires to respondents, the researcher asked the tour operators, tour leaders and/or tour guides whether the tour groups were at the end of their tour. This ensured that the data collection was conducted toward the end of the tourists' guided tour experience in order to obtain valid measures of respondents' perceptions of tour guides' intercultural performance, their own overall satisfaction with the guided tour experience, and the impact of tour guides' intercultural competence on their experience.

The researcher also administered the questionnaire survey in hotel lobbies where tour groups were waiting to check out or depart for attractions. Questionnaires were distributed to Chinese visitors using a systematic random sampling process. Upon entering the hotel, the researcher approached the first Chinese visitor who was near the entrance. If the person the researcher approached refused to participate in the survey, the researcher went on to the closest available person.

In total, 495 questionnaires were collected, producing a useable response set of 461. Of the total number of questionnaires returned, 381 (82 per cent) were collected at hotels, representing a response rate of 70 per cent. Only 80 (18 per cent) were collected through the randomly selected tour operators, tour coach companies and tour guides, a 10 per cent response rate. The researcher made several follow-up calls to the various tour operators but most indicated that they 'did not have the time to distribute the questionnaires'. Thus, it appears that the low response rate of this sub-sample is mainly due to the non-delivery of the questionnaires by the tour operators rather than respondent refusal to participate. How this might have influenced results cannot be precisely determined.

However, to explore the potential for bias caused by the operators' selective distribution of questionnaires, the researcher compared several key variables between the 80 questionnaires collected through tour operators and the ones collected at hotels by the researcher herself. These included respondents' reported intention to recommend the tour to friends and relatives, their intention to visit Australia again, their overall satisfaction with the guided tour experience, gender, age group and level of education. Results of these comparisons (Table 4.8) reveal no significant differences between the two groups on any of the variables, suggesting that the bias caused by the operators' distribution of questionnaires may be minimal.

Table 4.8 Mann-Whitney U Test

Variables*	Recommend Tour	Repeat Visit	Overall Satisfaction	Gender	Age Group	Education
Z	-0.42	-1.59	-0.67	-1.58	-1.40	-0.27
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	0.67	0.11	0.50	0.11	0.16	0.79

* Operator Sample vs. Hotel Sample

Additionally, the researcher attempted to explore the potential for bias caused by non-response, even though a direct comparison of respondents and non-respondents is not possible. The researcher compared responses to two questions (previous travel experience and English language proficiency) between those drawn from unusable questionnaires (N=32) and from usable questionnaires (N=461). As shown in Table 4.9, the two samples produced similar results in these variables, again suggesting that non-response bias may not be a serious concern.

Table 4.9 Mann-Whitney U Test

Variables*	Travel to Asia	Travel to Europe	Travel to USA	Travel to Other Places	English Skills
Z	-1.28	-0.03	-1.50	-0.13	-1.63
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	0.20	0.98	0.13	0.90	0.10

*Unusable questionnaires vs. usable questionnaires

The visitor survey was conducted in order to address *research objectives one, two, four and five*. The Chinese visitor survey questionnaire (see Appendix 3) comprised five sections. The first section contained questions about respondents' previous travel experience and current trip characteristics. In addition, respondents were also asked to rate the importance to them of benefits sought when choosing to come to Australia for a holiday. Questions in section two were about roles and intercultural competence of tour guides. Respondents were asked to rate the importance of five tour guides' roles to their overall guided tour experience in Australia. For intercultural competence, a further 16 variables were identified for respondents to rate the importance to their guided experience and the actual performance of their guides. Section three investigated respondents' overall satisfaction with their guided tour experience in Australia, their intention to visit again and their willingness to recommend this tour to others. Information on demographic

characteristics of respondents was obtained in section four. Section five contained three open-ended questions asking respondents about their most memorable experience during their visit to Australia, what role, if any, their tour guides played in such experience and any other comments they would like to make.

4.8.6 Tour Guide Survey

The tour guide survey was also conducted over the period December 2001 through to February 2002. The researcher distributed approximately 100 questionnaires to tour operators and tour guides either in person or by mail. The researcher used follow up reminders to prompt many guides as possible to respond to the survey. In the end, 31 completed questionnaires were returned from tour guides.

The data collected from this guide survey was used to address *research objectives one, two and three*. The tour guide survey questionnaire (see Appendix 5) comprised four sections. The first section contained questions about respondents' places of birth, length of residence in Australia, tour guide training attended, training needs and the nature of the guide's employment. Questions in section two were about roles and intercultural competence of tour guides. Respondents were asked to rate the importance of five tour guides' roles. For intercultural competence, a further 16 variables were identified. Respondents were asked to rate the importance of each variable to their guiding job and their actual performance. In addition, respondents were asked to indicate their ethnic identity, newspaper preferences, Chinese dialect proficiency as well as their Chinese and English language reading, writing and speaking skills. Section three investigated respondents' sociodemographic characteristics including gender, age, level of education, previous intercultural experience and residency status. Section four contained four open-ended questions asking respondents to describe a typical Chinese tour group on ADS visas, their reference group, their level of awareness of professional associations of tour guides, opinions of tour guiding certification and licensing, and assessment of their own intercultural competence.

4.9 Methods of Data Analysis

Quantitative and qualitative data (open-ended questions and semi-structured interviews) were analysed in order to address the five research objectives:

- To investigate how tourism stakeholders (mainly tourism industry representatives, Chinese visitors on ADS groups and Chinese-speaking tour guides) perceive the tour guide's roles, in what areas tour guides need to be competent to fulfil their roles, with a focus on the role of cultural mediator, and to examine the relationship between cultural mediation and intercultural competence;
- To identify the underlying dimensions of the IC of tour guides, to assess the importance and actual performance of the IC of tour guides on these dimensions as perceived by both tourists and tour guides themselves, and to develop a model of the IC of tour guides based on tourists' perceived importance of the various IC dimensions;
- To examine the relationship between tour guides' background characteristics (including their level of education, language proficiency, previous intercultural experience, and cultural identity) and tour guides' perception of IC (perceived importance and self-assessed performance);
- To explore tourists' self-defined most memorable experiences and their guides' role in that experience; and
- To examine the impact of the IC of tour guides and tourists' background characteristics on the guided tour experience.

4.9.1 Analysis of Quantitative Data

The survey data were entered into an SPSS data file. To facilitate analysis, most of the items in the questionnaire were numerically coded according to the responses given. Analysis was principally conducted using the SPSS version 10.0 (Statistical Package for Social Science, 1999) statistical package. Amos 4.0 (Arbuckle, 1999) was employed to conduct Confirmatory factor analysis to assess the adequacy of the factorial structure model of tour guides' intercultural competence.

The researcher checked the invalid codes using the frequencies command of the SPSS program. The frequency distributions, means, minimum and maximum values were checked to identify any errors. Standard descriptive statistics were employed to assess normality of data distributions, and all proved to be normally distributed. Collapsing categories was conducted with several variables to highlight patterns in the data and

eliminate categories with few cases. Missing values were replaced by the mode of that variable to reduce missing data bias and to provide a more appropriate indication of the typical score (Foddy, 1988). In all the inferential tests conducted as part of the analyses, a significance level (α) of 0.05 was used.

The measurement of the perceived importance of tour guides' roles is at an ordinal level. Both mean and median were calculated to measure the central tendency of respondents' perceived importance of tour guides' roles. Mean is the more powerful measure of central tendency (de Vaus, 2002). Median is also used in conjunction with the means because median provides a useful aggregated measure of the data, and is more appropriate for ordinal data. An independent-samples t-test was performed to compare the relative importance of the tour guides' roles rated by the visitors and by the tour guides.

Factor analysis was known to have a function in identifying underlying trends among items (Sheridan & Lyndall, 2001). To determine the underlying dimensions of tour guides' intercultural competence, the method of principal component analysis was employed. Furthermore, because of its usefulness in the validation of scales for the measurement of specific constructs (Hair, Anderson, Tatham & Black, 1998), confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was employed in this study to assess the adequacy of the factorial structure model of tour guides' intercultural competence.

The relationship between the perceived importance of the role of cultural mediation and tourists' perception of IC importance was examined by using a simple linear regression model. The dependent variable for the regression model is the perceived importance of IC. The independent variable is the perceived importance of tour guides' role of cultural mediation. The simple bivariate regression model is an appropriate statistical analysis because the model can estimate "how much impact an independent variable has on the dependent variable" (de Vaus, 2002: 320).

Multiple regression models were used to explore the impact of tour guides' background factors on their perceived importance of IC and their self-assessed IC performance; and the impact of tourists' perceived guides' IC and tourists' background characteristics, including previous travel experiences, education and English language proficiency on tourists' overall satisfaction with their guided tour experiences (dependent variable). The multiple regression model is an appropriate statistical analysis because it "provides a way of

examining the joint impact of a set of independent variables on a dependent variable" (de Vaus, 2002:324).

Following the advice of de Vaus (2002), several steps were taken to evaluate the explanatory power of the regression model and to assess the accuracy of the predictions it produced. The first step was to examine beta coefficients to determine the effect of the independent variables on the dependent variable. That is, the beta coefficients are used to pinpoint which variables have the greatest effect on the dependent variable. The next step was to use an F-test to assess the accuracy of the regression predictions from the model. This test involves determining whether the R^2 is greater than zero because of sampling error. The third step was to test the statistical significance of each independent variable by looking at the results of the t-test and its significance level. The final step is to examine the adjusted R^2 . The R^2 indicates the overall fit of the model. The criteria explained above were applied to all regression analyses in this thesis.

Correlation analysis (r) was performed to investigate the relationship between tourists' perceived importance of IC and tour guides' perceived importance of IC; between tourists' perceptions of guides' intercultural performance and tour guides' assessment of their own IC. Correlation is an appropriate statistical technique for describing the strength and direction of the relationship between two variables. As a non-random sample was used for the tour guides' survey, Spearman's Rank Order Correlation was performed for analysing the data since non-parametric statistics do not make assumptions about the underlying population distribution.

4.9.2 Analysis of Qualitative Data

Before commencing data analysis, the researcher translated the answers to the open-ended questions from Chinese into English, in order to transcribe the in-depth interviews from the tape onto paper. If the in-depth interviews were conducted in Chinese language, the researcher translated the transcription into English. Responses to each open-ended question and to the semi-structured questions in the in-depth interviews were carefully processed by using inductive data analysis. Inductive data analysis is a process aimed at uncovering embedded information and making it explicit (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). The three steps involved in the data analysis of this study were coding, data display and conclusion drawing and verification (Huberman & Miles, 1994).

The first step, coding, was to discover units and break down the data into categories: data reduction and complication. "A unit may be a simple sentence or an extended paragraph" (Lincoln & Guba, 1985:203). Discovering units involves defining units, separating them along their boundaries, and identifying them for subsequent analysis (Krippendorff, 1980). For example, regarding roles of tour guides, the researcher looked at words, sentences and even paragraphs that carried similar meanings regarding different roles of tour guides, then sorted units into categories according to their common property or element. Five main roles (categories) were finally identified. According to Huberman & Miles (1994), data display, the second step, describes the ways in which reduced or linked data are displayed in visual forms such as tables in order to identify meaningful concepts. The responses to the open ended questions in visitor surveys were tabulated. The frequencies and percentage of cases reflected strong tendencies and were shown in tables. The third analytical step is to interpret the displayed data and draw conclusions. The interpretation and conclusions drawn from the findings are presented in the results and discussion chapter.

Several steps were taken to achieve the validity of the findings. First, the researcher inspected and compared all the data fragments (Glaser & Strauss, 1967) so that the full variation of the issues under investigation such as informants' opinions on modes of training, could be observed (Perakyla, 1997). Secondly, the researcher sought to 'overcome the temptation to jump to easy conclusions', and consequently to think critically in order to achieve objectivity (Silverman, 2000:178). Thirdly, data were treated comprehensively to achieve integrated and precise results (Mehan, 1979). For example, the perceptions of roles of tour guides given by Chinese visitors, and tour guides, were compared, and integrated concepts were identified. Finally, the majority of responses to open-ended questions were tabulated to show strong tendency (Silverman, 2000).

4.10 Chapter Summary

This chapter identifies a mixed method approach as appropriate for meeting the research objectives and addressing the hypotheses. This is justified through the provision of reliability and validity evidence of the instrumentation employed. A description of the sampling methods used, and specific techniques of data collection and analysis are given.

CHAPTER 5: RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

5.1 Introduction

Chapter Five provides a three-factor theoretical model of the IC of tour guides as well as empirical evidence of the importance of the IC of tour guides on the guided tour experience. Each section of this chapter presents research findings and discussion of the results, which addresses part or all of one of the five research objectives of this study. Related to *Objective One*, Section 5.2 identifies how different tourism stakeholders (tourism industry representatives, Chinese visitors on ADS groups and Chinese-speaking tour guides) perceive Chinese-speaking tour guides' roles. Comparisons are made between the ratings of tourists and tour guides on the importance of tour guides' roles. Respondents' definitions of each role and their evaluations of the tour guide's role performance are also presented.

Section 5.3, also linked with *Objective One*, reveals the areas in which Chinese-speaking tour guides need to be competent in order to fulfil their roles. The relationship between cultural mediation and intercultural competence is examined in this section.

Section 5.4 presents the underlying dimensions of the tour guide's intercultural competence. Detailed analysis and justification is provided regarding each component of the tour guide's IC. Furthermore, the construct validity of the IC of tour guides is tested, and a new model of tour guide's IC is developed. The findings of this section address *Objective Two*.

Section 5.5 investigates whether tour guides assess tour guide's IC importance and their own IC differently from tourists' evaluation of the IC of tour guides importance and performance. This is also related to *Objective Two*.

Factors affecting tour guides' perceived importance of IC and their self-assessed intercultural competence are examined in Section 5.6, followed by a discussion in Section 5.7 of the relationship between tour guides' perceptions of IC importance and their cultural identity. These two sections are related to research *Objective Three*.

Related to *Objective Four*, Section 5.8 explores respondents' defined most memorable experience and tour guides' role in that experience. Furthermore, addressing *Objective Five*, Section 5.9 assesses the impact of the perceived tour guide's IC and tourists' background factors on the guided tour experience.

Section 5.10 explores the influence of situational factors (e.g., tour operator factors and industry practice) on the IC of tour guides. Situational factors were not part of the conceptual framework and, therefore, were neither tested statistically nor included in the formal interview questions. The findings emerged from the data collection.

5.2 Roles of Tour Guides

In this section, the roles of Australia-based Chinese-speaking tour guides for ADS groups are identified. The importance of the roles as perceived by different tourism stakeholders is compared. Respondents' definitions of each role and their evaluation of the tour guide's role performance are also presented. The findings of this section address research *Objective One*.

5.2.1 Roles of Tour Guides Defined by Tourism Industry Representatives

One of the objectives of the interviews in phase one was to define the roles of Chinese-speaking tour guides from the perspective of 'industry representatives.' The rationale for this was that expert opinions together with findings from previous studies could be used to develop a measurement scale of the importance of tour guides' roles for the visitor and guide surveys in phase two.

The informants were asked to describe the most important roles played by a Chinese group tour guide plays. The transcripts and field notes of the researcher were carefully examined. Words, sentences paragraphs that carried similar meanings regarding different roles of tour guides were identified into categories. Five main roles (categories) were finally identified: 'provide information', 'be a cultural mediator', 'manage group itinerary', 'care for health and safety of group', and 'provide good customer service' (Yu, 2003). Some examples from the interview transcripts are presented in Table 5.1.

Table 5.1 Roles of Tour Guides (examples from interview transcripts)

Roles of tour guides	Transcripts
Provide information	"The role of tour guides is to provide information" (<i>Interview 1, transcript 71</i>) and "to reveal things so that visitors could draw inspirations from their experience". "Visitors could bring home new ideas and new concepts" (<i>Interview 5, transcript 18-20</i>).
Be a cultural mediator	"A qualified tour guide should be able to act as a bridge between two cultures and as a people-to-people ambassador" (<i>Interview 2, transcript 147-149</i>).
Manage tour itinerary	An important role of tour guides is to finish all activities in the itinerary (<i>Interview 8, transcript 4-5</i>).
Care for health and safety	"Tour guides need to make visitors feel secure in a non-Chinese speaking country" (<i>Interview 3, transcript 5-6</i>).
Provide good customer service	"Tour guides need to know how to help their clients in their best interest" (<i>Interview 1, transcript 75-76</i>) and "look after the welfare of their clients including meal, accommodation, sightseeing and travel" (<i>Interview 5, transcript 13-14</i>).

The five roles of Chinese-speaking tour guides suggested by the tourism industry representatives are generally consistent with the findings from several previous studies on tour guides' roles. These previous findings are presented in Table 5.2.

Table 5.2 Roles of Tour Guides Suggested by Past Studies

Roles of tour guides	Schmidt (1979)	Holloway (1981)	Cohen (1985)	Hughes (1991)	Pond (1993)	Gurung, Simmons & Devlin (1996)	Wong (2001)	Ham & Weiler (2002)
Provide information	Guide's presentation could make or break a tour	Information giver, fount of knowledge	Disseminate correct & precise information	Providing interesting commentary	Disseminating information	Provide quality of information	Communication	Communication
Be a cultural mediator	Buffer Intermediary	Cultural mediator	Mediating Encounters between cultures	Cultural brokers between group & the unfamiliar	Mediator, facilitate connections between people	Cultural broker, mediating encounters		
Manage tour itinerary	Condense itinerary to cover highlights	Organise programs	Control of itinerary	Provide detailed itinerary	Control of group	Smooth accomplishment of the tour	Control of itinerary	Managing time
Care for health & safety	Safety & security		Offer security & comfort		Caretaker of details	Ensuring security & safety		
Provide good customer service		Caring for passengers' needs	Provision of services, to ensure hospitality		Serving travellers' needs	Provision of services	Customer relationship	Being personable & adaptable

5.2.2 Importance of Tour Guide Roles Perceived by Tourists and Tour Guides

Based on the important roles identified by tourism industry representatives and previous studies, five roles of Chinese-speaking tour guides were finally defined. These roles are: to manage the tour itinerary, to care for the health and safety of the group, to provide good customer service, to provide information and to be a good cultural mediator. In both the visitor survey and the tour guide survey, respondents were asked to rate the relative importance of these five roles by circling the number that best represented their view, from 1=Not at all important to 7=Extremely important.

An independent-samples t-test was performed to compare the relative importance of the tour guides' roles rated by the visitors and by the tour guides. The results are presented in Table 5.3.

Table 5.3 Perceived Importance of Tour Guides' Roles

Roles	(Independent Samples Test: tourist vs. guides)						Sig.
	Mean scores		SD		DF	T-values	
	Tourist	Guide	Tourist	Guide			
Provide information	6.32	5.97	1.09	1.02	480	1.81	0.07
Be a good cultural mediator	5.81	5.81	1.41	0.87	40.7	0.02	0.99
Provide good customer service	6.40	6.26	0.98	0.77	478	0.66	0.51
Manage group itinerary	6.12	6.00	1.18	1.10	466	0.20	0.84
Care for health & safety of group	6.40	6.32	1.01	0.75	475	0.27	0.79

N=461 (tourist), N=31 (guide)

The result is not statistically significant, suggesting that tourists and tour guides have similar perceptions of the five roles. Both tourists and tour guides perceive all five roles as either important (5=important) or very important (6=very important). It is interesting to note that the three parties: tourism industry representatives, Chinese tourists and tour guides hold similar views on the relative importance of the roles Chinese-speaking tour guides need to play. All acknowledge the role of cultural mediation as important even though some tourism industry representatives note that being a cultural mediator is desirable but not easy to achieve.

5.2.3 Respondents Defined Meanings of Tour Guides' Roles

Results from the three data sources (interviews, tourist survey and tour guide survey) revealed not only the perceived importance of tour guide roles but also insights into the meanings of some of the roles. For example, visitors see the role of *managing group itinerary* as ranging from providing a variety of programs or activities, following a logical route, to providing detailed information on and advanced notice of changes to the itinerary.

In reference to being a good *cultural mediator*, both visitors and tourism industry representatives report that a tour guide needs to enhance visitors' understanding of the host society, cultural values and lifestyles, provide language interpretation, facilitate communication, and initiate interaction between the locals and visitors. Furthermore, according to industry representatives, the job of a cultural mediator is to help visitors understand and accept local customs and to show visitors how to act in a manner that does not run counter to local norms, local ways of thinking. However, the tourism industry representatives also assert that some Chinese visitors act contrary to local norms. They

may smoke in places where smoking is forbidden, spit and talk loudly. Nevertheless, respondents noted that as cultural mediators, tour guides cannot tell their clients directly not to do this and not to do that, they have to tell them in a non-offensive and indirect way. Some respondents stated that a qualified tour guide should be able to act as a bridge between two cultures and as a people-to-people ambassador. But, it was also emphasised that a good tour guide should not be a propagandist of the Australian government; they should facilitate Chinese visitors to see things from different angles and enable Chinese visitors to observe and experience cultural differences.

To provide information, tourism industry representatives feel that a tour guide should be able to reveal things and make their audiences feel inspired. Visitors, on the other hand, mention the importance of *providing good customer service* by being caring, warm, helpful and patient.

5.2.4 Respondents' Evaluation of Tour Guides' Role Performance

Findings from the interviews with tourism industry representatives indicate that tour guides on ADS tours are performing well by knowing their clients' language, having a good understanding of the culture of Mainland China, knowing how to help their clients in their best interest, and dealing with clients' problems. Some guides are bilingual and bicultural, and can thus more readily facilitate cultural understanding.

The findings from the open-ended questions on the visitor survey describe the role performance of Chinese-speaking tour guides in more detail but are consistent with the opinions expressed by tourism industry representatives. The roles most frequently mentioned by respondents to the visitor survey as being performed at a satisfactory level are being a good *tour manager*, being a *cultural mediator* and *being personable*. With respect to *tour managing*, these roles include informing, giving directions, delivering commentary, arranging the itinerary, and solving problems. As a *cultural mediator*, some tour guides were seen to further visitors' understanding of Chinese and Australian cultures through their knowledge and explanations of Australia's folklore, people and life styles. This enabled them to broaden visitors' views to forge a link between eastern and western cultures, and to facilitate communication between visitors and the locals. When

respondents see their guides as *being personable*, they mean that their guides are caring, warm, helpful, patient, and love their guiding job.

Both tourism industry representatives and visitors perceive the main weaknesses in the current performance of Chinese-speaking tour guides to be inadequate knowledge about Australia resulting in a lack of depth in guides' commentary. According to tourism industry representatives, this limited knowledge of Australia pertained especially to tourism sites and general knowledge of Australian culture. Tourism industry representatives also found that Chinese speaking guides to be lacking in English language proficiency and guiding skills. Some also mentioned lack of experience and professional training. The visitor survey respondents also acknowledged that guides should know their job better and make more of an effort to provide information on Australia's history, geography, culture and economic development and the country's position in the world.

5.2.5 Summary of Section 5.2

There are several key findings from section 5.2. First, Chinese-speaking tour guides need to perform multiple roles, which were all perceived as important by tourism industry representatives, visitors and tour guides. Chinese tour guides have roles that extend beyond the original pathfinding role described by Cohen (1985) and also beyond the IATA/EPTGA definition (EPTGA, 1998). Cultural mediation is identified as an important guiding role in the context of guiding ADS groups. The various aspects of group and tour management are usually more in keeping with a tour manager's role but in this case are expected of the tour guide. Indeed, the ADS regulations particularly specify that the tour guide plays a guardian role, i.e. is responsible for ensuring their clients do not overstay.

Second, when comparing the relative importance of the tour guides' roles rated by the visitors and by the tour guides, results indicate that tourists and tour guides have similar perceptions of the five roles Chinese-speaking tour guides should play. Both tourists and tour guides perceived the five roles as either important or very important. It is interesting to note that the three parties: tourism industry representatives, Chinese tourists and tour guides hold similar views on the relative importance of the roles Chinese-speaking tour guides need to play. All of them acknowledge the role of cultural mediation as important

even though some tourism industry representatives note that being a cultural mediator is desirable but not easy to achieve.

Third, results from the three data sources reveal not only the perceived importance of tour guide roles but also insights into the meanings of the roles. For example, the role of managing the tour itinerary ranges from providing a variety of programs or activities, to following a logical route, and providing detailed information on and advanced notice of changes to the itinerary.

Fourth, most tour guides of ADS tours are native Chinese speakers who have migrated to Australia from China and other Asian countries. They are perceived to be performing well in many aspects of their roles: knowing their clients' language, having a good understanding of the culture of Mainland China, knowing how to help their clients in their best interest and dealing with clients' problems. Some have lived in Australia for many years and are bilingual and bicultural, and can thus facilitate cultural understanding. However, not all comments were positive. Responses from both the tourism industry representatives and the visitors reveal a weakness in the current performance of the tour guides with respect to the adequacy of their knowledge about Australia, resulting in a lack of depth in guides' commentary.

5.3 Areas in Which Tour Guides Need to be Competent

This section, also related to Objective One, begins with a discussion of the general knowledge, skills and attitudes Chinese-speaking tour guides need when guiding Chinese ADS groups. This is followed by ratings by respondents of the surveys of tourist and tour guide, of the perceived importance of intercultural competence, the link between the tour guide's role of cultural mediation and intercultural competence, and interpretation of the findings of section 5.3.

5.3.1 General Guiding Knowledge, Skills and Attitude

Another important issue explored in the interviews with tourism industry representatives was those areas in which Chinese-tour guides need to be competent to fulfil their roles. Views expressed by the respondents regarding this matter focused on three aspects, that is, *skills, knowledge and attitude*. The most frequently mentioned *skills* were people skills, problem solving skills and communication skills. *People skills* refer to guides' ability to get to know their clients, to establish rapport with them (often in a very short time), and to develop an understanding of their background, including their expectations, interests and special requests. *Problem solving* refers to their ability to cope with the unexpected and to deal with emergencies. *Communication* includes the ability to understand and speak both Chinese and English, to present interesting commentary, and to show respect for different cultures.

Respondents acknowledged that a tour guide needs to have *knowledge* of a number of areas including Australian history, geography, culture, people, places of interests, clients' culture, basic guiding procedures and non-verbal communication. This is the so-called 'broad knowledge' referred to by Ap & Wong (2001). Tour guides also need the right *attitude* meaning a passion for tour guiding, a commitment to work and resistance to unethical practices such as getting commissions from tourists' shopping. Important personal traits of tour guides were identified as patience, flexibility and empathy.

5.3.2 Tour Guides' Intercultural Competence (IC)

The competencies needed for tour guides to perform as a cultural mediator were discussed in more detail during the interviews with tourism industry representatives. Sixteen intercultural competence (IC) items were identified by a review of the literature (Kealey & Ruben, 1983; Kim, 1988; Cui & Berg, 1991; Cui & Awa, 1992; Chen & Starosta, 1996; Cui, Berg & Jiang, 1998; Kim, Laroche & Tomiuk, 2001; Kim, 2001). The respondents were invited to comment on the importance of each of the items. The following items were rated as either very important or extremely important:

- Ability to speak and understand English,
- Ability to speak and understand Chinese,
- Understanding Australian culture and society,

- Awareness of cultural differences between China & Australia,
- Displaying respect for culture of visitors and host culture,
- Ability to solve problems,
- Ability to cope with the unexpected,
- Being non-judgemental,
- Being flexible,
- Being patient,
- Understanding others' feelings and
- Ability to establish rapport with tour group.

The following statements are justifications of the ratings as provided by the respondents: a tour guide needs to have a good command of both the Chinese and English languages. Insufficient command of English might be a barrier for guides to get their message across to other tourism suppliers and to gather and disseminate accurate tour guiding information, while insufficient command of Chinese is also unacceptable.

The ability to solve problems and deal with the unexpected is extremely important. Good tour guides must be able to solve problems on the spot. The Chinese market is new and immature, and Chinese visitors are less experienced in overseas travelling. Therefore, they expect tour guides to look after them and as a consequence, Chinese tour guides need to be able to deal with various kinds of issues including cultural mediation and communication.

It is essential then that an interculturally competent tour guide must be flexible and have a pleasant personality. Being flexible, that is, able and willing to adapt to a wide range of situations, is extremely important. Being patient and understanding of others' feelings are also considered important characteristics for guides enabling them to establish rapport with a tour group.

It is primarily through their tour guides that visitors learn about local people's life, customs and culture. Therefore, with a good understanding of Australian culture and society, and awareness of cultural differences between China and Australia, tour guides are able to reveal facts and point out cultural differences to inspire Chinese visitors and broaden their views. However, respecting the cultures of the guest and the host is very important. Only by showing respect for different cultures and being non-judgemental can the tour guide give an objective introduction to Australia without bias. Respondents indicated that tour

guides should give visitors an impression that Australia is a melting pot of different nationalities, a free country, and easy to live in.

According to the research findings, the following IC items appear to be less important than those discussed above:

- Ability to initiate interaction between visitors and the host population,
- Language interpretation skills,
- Cultural interpretation skills, and
- Motivation to be a cultural mediator.

According to some informants, initiating interaction between visitors and the host population is desirable but not important, as, due to the restrictions of the itinerary, the opportunities for direct contact between tourists and the local people are very few. Language interpretation is not important since tour companies often hire a professional interpreter if there is a need and while cultural interpretation is desirable, only experienced tour guides are doing it well. Industry representatives indicated that motivation to be a cultural mediator is desirable but not always easy to achieve.

What tourism industry representatives acknowledged as important for tour guides in terms of intercultural competence is also supported by the findings from the visitor survey and guide survey. All *sixteen* IC items were rated by visitors and tour guides as either 'important' or 'very important'. The relationship between *tourists'* perceptions of the guides' IC importance and *guides'* perceptions of IC importance was examined by computing correlations between the two variables. As non-random sampling was used for the tour guides' survey, and since non-parametric statistics do not make assumptions about the underlying population distribution, Spearman's Rank Order Correlation was selected as the appropriate technique for analysing the data.

The correlation between tourists' perceived IC importance and tour guides' perceived IC importance was found to be statistically significant (Spearman's $\rho = +0.78$, $n = 16^7$, $p < 0.05$) indicating a positive correlation between the two variables. The result suggests that what visitors think is important in guides' IC is consistent with what the guides think

⁷ The number of cases here refers to the 16 IC data points, not related to the survey population.

is important. The IC importance mean scores of visitors and those of the guides' are presented in Table 5.4.

Table 5.4: Mean Scores of IC Importance (Visitors vs. Guides)

IC Items	ICI Mean		ICI Mean	
	Score*	Rank	Score**	Rank
	Visitors		Guides	
IC9 Ability to solve problems	6.43	1	6.16	3
IC14 Understanding others' feelings	6.31	2	6.10	5
IC10 Ability to cope with unexpected	6.29	3	6.35	1
IC16 Ability to establish rapport with tour group	6.29	3	6.13	4
IC8 Cultural interpretation skills	6.28	4	5.97	7
IC13 Being patient	6.25	5	6.32	2
IC3 Understanding Australian culture & society	6.24	6	5.97	7
IC7 Language interpretation skills	6.21	7	5.58	9
IC2 Ability to speak & understand Chinese	6.20	8	6.16	3
IC12 Being flexible	6.18	9	6.06	6
IC5 Displaying respect for culture of visitors & host culture	6.15	10	5.71	8
IC11 Being non-judgemental	6.13	11	6.06	6
IC1 Ability to speak & understand English	6.10	12	5.58	9
IC4 Awareness of cultural differences between China & Australia	5.99	13	5.52	10
IC15 Motivation to be a cultural mediator	5.89	14	5.48	11
IC6 Ability to initiate interaction between visitors & host population	5.70	15	5.16	12

*Visitors' ICI mean scores are in descending order; ** Guides' ICI mean scores are not in descending order
The difference of mean scores between two ranks is small.

5.3.3 Relationship between Cultural Mediation and Intercultural Competence

This section addresses *Objective One* and *Hypothesis One*, that is, it investigates the relationship between the tour guide's role as a cultural mediator and the tour guide's IC. It was predicted that there would be a positive linear relationship between the perceived importance of tour guide's role as a cultural mediator and their perceptions of IC importance. In other words, if cultural mediation is important to a visitor, then they expect their guide to have the knowledge, skills and attitudes to be interculturally competent.

The relationship between the perceived importance of the role of cultural mediation and tourists' perceptions of IC importance was examined by using a simple linear regression model. The dependent variable for the regression model is the perceived importance of IC. The independent variable is the perceived importance of tour guides' role of cultural mediation. The independent variable is entered as a metric variable.

The relationship between the two variables is statistically significant, therefore, there appears to be a positive relationship between the perceived importance of the tour guide's role as a cultural mediator and the perceived importance of the tour guide's IC (Beta=0.36, adjusted $R^2=0.13$, $p<0.05$). The result indicates that as the degree of tourists' perceived importance of the tour guide's role as a cultural mediator increases, so does their perceived importance of tour guide's IC even though the predictive power of the adjusted R^2 coefficient is not strong. The low R^2 value indicates there is more to the story than just the perceived importance of the tour guide's role as a cultural mediator such as variation in tourists' desire for exotic culture.

5.3.4 Summary of Section 5.3

The findings reported in Section 5.3 regarding the areas in which tour guides need to be competent to fulfil their roles are generally consistent with the National Competency Standards for Tour Guiding developed by Tourism Training Australia (Tourism Training Australia, 2002). Moreover, this study provides empirical evidence of the positive relationship between the perceived importance of the tour guide's role as a cultural mediator and the perceived importance of the IC of tour guides. This is an important contribution to the literature of both tourism and intercultural communication.

5.4 Components of the IC of Tour Guides

Related to *Objective Two, Hypothesis 2*, this section contains two major subsections. The first subsection identifies the underlying dimensions of tour guides' intercultural competence (IC). The next presents a new model of tour guide's IC and its significance, supported by previous studies and the statistical results of confirmatory factor analysis (CFA).

5.4.1 Underlying Dimensions of the IC of Tour Guides

It was predicted that intercultural competence of tour guides was a three dimensional construct consisting of cultural awareness (cognitive), cultural sensitivity (affective) and communication skills (behavioural). To determine the underlying dimensions of tour guides' intercultural competence, the method of principal component analysis was

employed. A correlation coefficient of 0.3 was applied as the cut-off point for the loading of items onto factors. The 16 indicators of intercultural competence were subjected to a factor analysis using both Varimax (orthogonal) and Promax (oblique) rotations. For clarity, however, only the results of Promax rotation are reported in this thesis. The resulting correlation matrix proved to be factorable as evidenced by (1) relatively high and significant bivariate correlation coefficients (r) ranging from .332 to .962 ($p < .05$), and (2) a Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) measure of sampling adequacy of .952. Usually, a KMO measure exceeding 0.6 is considered an adequate indication of factorability. A KMO measure approaching 1.0 is considered exceptional (Fidell & Tabachnick, 1986). The factor analysis is presented in Table 5.5.

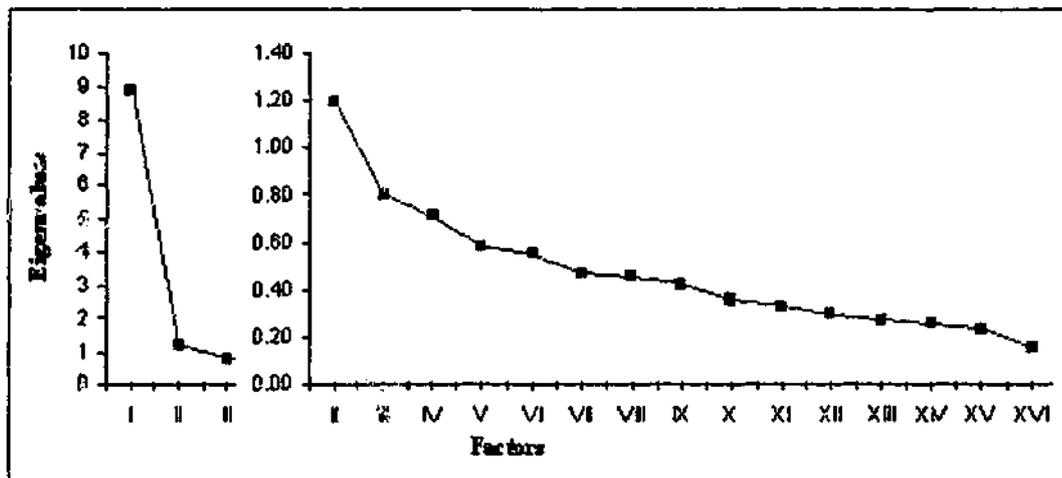
Results of the factor analysis revealed three underlying dimensions of the IC of tour guides, which cumulatively explained 68% of the variance. Factor I (social and interpersonal competence, including being patient, being flexible, understanding others' feelings, ability to cope with unexpected, ability to solve problems, ability to establish rapport with group, being non-judgmental, motivation to be a cultural mediator and cultural interpretation skills) accounted for 55.6% of the variance. Factor II (cultural competence, including awareness of cultural differences between China and Australia, displaying respect for culture of visitors and host culture, ability to initiate interaction between visitors and host culture and understanding Australia culture) accounted for 7.5% of the variance. Factor III (language competence, which included ability to speak and understand English, language translation and interpretation skills, and ability to speak and understand Chinese) explained 5% of the variance.

Table 5.5 Factor Analysis of the IC Components of Tour Guides (N=461)

Items	Factor loading		
	Factor I	Factor II	Factor III
Factor I: Social & Interpersonal Competence			
Being patient	.962		
Being flexible	.915		
Understanding others' feelings	.896		
Ability to cope with unexpected	.805		
Ability to solve problems	.755		
Ability to establish rapport with group	.755		
Being non-judgemental	.743		
Motivated to be a cultural mediator	.702	.332	
Cultural interpretation skills	.544		
Factor II: Cultural Competence			
Awareness of cultural differences between China & Australia		.978	
Displaying respect for culture of visitors & host culture		.786	
Ability to initiate interaction between visitors & host culture		.669	
Understanding Australian culture & society		.565	.343
Factor III: Language Competence			
Ability to speak & understand English			.944
Language interpretation skills			.634
Ability to speak & understand Chinese			.341
Eigenvalue	8.89	1.2	0.8
Cumulative % of explained variance	55.60%	63.0%	68.0%

Eigenvalue of 1.00 or higher is usually considered as appropriate cut-off point. However, although the Eigenvalue of Factor III is lower than 1, the third factor still makes intuitive sense by looking at how the curve flattens in the scree plot which is presented in Figure 5.1. The three factors above the elbow are considered the factors that contribute the most to the explanation of the variance in the data set (Catell, 1966). Therefore, both eigenvalues and factor loadings resulting from this factor analysis were considered adequate.

Figure 5.1 Scree Plot of Factor Eigenvalues



Note: Factor numbers correspond to those in Table 5.5.

From a theoretical point of view, the composition of the factors supports the multidimensionality of intercultural competence. Although the same three dimensions did not neatly emerge from the present analysis (a few items did not load on the hypothesised factors), many of the items in the IC typology (cognitive, affective and behavioural) of sojourners reported in previous studies were found to be important in the factors emerging from this analysis. The differences in the factorial structures of sojourners' IC and the IC of tour guides suggest that intercultural competence has different dimensions for sojourners and tour guides.

The results of the factor analysis illustrate that the three predictors of tour guides' intercultural competence are social and interpersonal competence (behavioural/affective/traits), cultural competence (cognitive/behavioural quality) and language competence (behavioural competence). However, the first factor, *social and interpersonal competence*, has the highest factor loading. Results of interviews with tourism industry representatives and answers to open-ended questions by visitors corroborated this finding and found that social and interpersonal skills were also perceived as important. This is consistent with the argument that the role a tour guide plays as an interface between visitors and the host, that is the people, culture, sites and environment, and as a link among tour group members, requires a high level of social and interpersonal skills.

IC items in the first factor include personal attributes, being patient and being flexible. These inherent abilities are important in establishing good interpersonal relationships, while understanding others' feelings, the ability to empathise, and being non-judgmental are affective abilities conducive to tour guides' social and interpersonal interaction. The ability to cope with the unexpected, which requires tolerance for ambiguity and uncertainty, and the ability to solve problems are two behavioural abilities that enable a tour guide to accomplish tasks. The items that describe tour guides' task performance are the ability to establish rapport with the group and cultural interpretation skills. Finally, a tour guide needs to be motivated to perform as a cultural mediator. A bilingual and interculturally competent person might not become a cultural mediator unless he or she is motivated to do so.

The second factor is labelled *cultural competence*. The cognitive complexity of cultural competence is reflected in the items of awareness of cultural differences between China and Australia, understanding Australian culture and society, providing an individual the knowledge and understanding of his/her own culture and the culture of others. These cognitive assets enable tour guides to act as culturally competent insiders, to provide their clients with insights into a destination and, at the same time, help tourists to understand and accept local customs. Displaying respect for the culture of visitors and the host culture and the ability to initiate interaction between visitors and the host culture are behavioural abilities that enable tour guides to act as cultural mediators.

Language competence is the label for the third factor. An understanding of English and Chinese is a cognitive skill necessary for social and interpersonal interaction. The ability of Chinese-speaking tour guides to speak the English and Chinese languages, to translate English into Chinese, and vice versa, facilitates communication between Chinese visitors and the Australian host community. For Chinese-speaking tour guides, the function of cultural mediators as interpreters or translators is to represent one culture to another faithfully and contribute to mutual understanding and accurate intercultural knowledge. A key element of bicultural tour guiding, distinct from the more general communication items, is the guide's ability in language translation and interpretation.

Although the 'language competence' factor explains the least variance, it appears to be the most basic dimension of bilingual guiding. Many previous studies (Cohn & Wood, 1982; Clement, Noels & Karine, 1994; Noels, Pon & Clement, 1996; Berry, 1997; Kim, 2001;

Neto, 2002) have demonstrated the importance of host language competence in facilitating an individual's cultural learning and intercultural contact. This seems especially applicable to intercultural guiding. With language proficiency, a tour guide is able to better understand the local culture and make rational comparisons among different cultural systems, and therefore able to interpret to tourists the underlying assumptions of the locals (Kim, 2001). Thus, language competence is a key element of bicultural tour guiding.

The new items included in the IC of tour guides scale such as cultural interpretation and motivation to be a cultural mediator are supported by the existing literature on tour guiding. Cohen (1985) describes leadership and mediation as the two main functions of tour guides. Cohen's mediatory function includes two spheres, social mediation and cultural brokerage, both of which are relevant to the current study. According to Cohen (1985), part of a guide's job is to facilitate social interaction within the tour group, requiring a number of the skills, attitudes and traits that loaded onto the first factor. Social mediating also involves being a go-between, linking visitors to the local population, tourist sites and facilities and making the host environment non-threatening to the tourist. Ham and Weiler (2002) also suggest that brokering a positive experience between members of a tour group and the host community requires social and interpersonal knowledge, skills and attitudes. Many of the items within the 'social and interpersonal competence factor,' such as the ability to initiate interaction between visitors and the host, displaying respect, understanding others' feelings, establishing rapport with the group, coping with the unexpected and being flexible and patient, seem to relate to the social mediator sphere of Cohen's model.

Cultural brokerage is the second sphere of the guide's mediatory role (Cohen, 1985; Smith, 2001; Yu, Weiler & Ham, 2001). Key responsibilities of culture brokers include mediating different points of view and intercultural conflict, selecting and presenting culture, and managing the intercultural differences between different cultural groups. Cultural mediation is conducted by using communication such as culturally sensitive commentary and interpretation, role modelling and intervention as an agent. Cultural interpretation may indeed be the most important function of culture brokering. According to Pond (1993), it can convey the magnificence of a place and ideally develops understanding, appreciation and protection of the visited area. Ultimately, interpretation inspires visitors and facilitates the visitor's intercultural experience (Pond, 1993; Smith, 2001).

5.4.2 Building a New Model of Tour Guide's IC

This section critically evaluates the new model of tour guide's IC. Structural equation modelling using AMOS is often considered appropriate to test theoretically developed models. Therefore, confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) with maximum likelihood, using Amos 4.0 (Arbuckle, 1999), was employed to assess the adequacy (goodness of fit) of the factorial structure model of a tour guide's intercultural competence.

To make sense of the output of the model, a number of criteria are used. According to Hair, Anderson, Tatham and Black (1998:654), 'a large value of χ^2 relative to the degrees of freedom signifies that the observed and estimated matrices differ considerably'. 'Statistical significance levels indicate the probability that these differences are due solely to sampling variations'. Thus, the significance level must be greater than 0.05 for a correct model. Also important is the value of the goodness-of-fit index (GFI). GFI 'is a non-statistical measure ranging in value from 0 (poor fit) to 1.0 (perfect fit)' and 'represents the overall degree of fit'. There are no absolute threshold levels for acceptability; the higher the GFI value, the better the fit.

The values of the root mean square residual (RMSR), and root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA) are also indicative of the goodness of fit. Normally, an acceptable value of RMSEA ranges from .05 to .08 (0.05 very close fit; 0.08 acceptable fit).

The final step is to consider the incremental fit indices including Adjusted Goodness-of-Fit Index, Normed Fit Index (NFI), the Comparative Fit Index (CFI) and Tucker-Lewis Index (TLI). These measures compare the proposed model to some baseline model often referred to as the null model. The adjusted goodness-of-fit index is an extension of the GFI. Its recommended acceptance level is a value greater than or equal to .90. The values of NFI, CFI and TLI range from 0 (no fit at all) to 1.0 (perfect fit), the larger values, the higher level of goodness-of-fit (Hair, Anderson, Tatham & Black, 1998).

The χ^2 was significant in the model ($\chi^2=430.92$, $df=101$, $p<.001$). Goodness-of-Fit Index was appropriate (GFI=0.9), as was the adjusted goodness-of-fit (AGFI=0.9). The root mean square residual and root mean square error of approximation also suggested a good fit to the data (RMSR=0.04, RMSEA=0.08). Incremental fit indices (Normed Fit Index, the Comparative Fit Index and Tucker-Lewis Index) confirmed these good fits (NFI=0.92,

CFI=0.93, TLI=0.92). Thus, the three-factor model appears to provide the best fit to the data and supports the hypothesised multidimensionality of intercultural competence.

Moreover, the proposed model of the IC of tour guides contains both inherent abilities (personal traits) and learned abilities. Whether trait competence and learned competence can be considered together has been argued in the literature for some time (Chen & Starosta, 1995). Although few studies have empirically documented the influence of personality traits such as flexibility and patience on intercultural competence (Ward & Kennedy, 1996), it seems to make sense to incorporate such traits in measuring guides' IC, as it is often argued that personality traits are important aspects of effective tour guiding (Pond 1993). In addition, the fact that items of patience and flexibility had the highest factor loadings among all items of the IC of tour guides indicates the importance of personality traits in IC.

Chen and Starosta (1996:370-371) suggest that 'the existing definition of intercultural competence suffered from a degree of incompleteness as both knowledge and performance were not always included as elements of IC'. In the present study, the new model includes attitude, knowledge and behaviours (skills) as elements of intercultural competence. This seems to address the issue of incompleteness of previous IC measures and also fits into the general competency standards of tour guides (Tourism Training Australia, 2002) and at least one definition of tour guides' professionalism (Ap & Wong, 2001).

In summary, results of Section 5.4 suggest that from a theoretical point of view, the composition of the factors of the IC of tour guides supports the multidimensionality of intercultural competence. Although the same three dimensions did not neatly emerge from the present analysis as some items did not load on the hypothesised factors, many of the items in the IC typology (cognitive, affective and behavioural) of sojourners reported in previous studies were found to be important in the factors emerging from this analysis. The differences in the factorial structures of sojourners' IC and the IC of tour guides indicate that intercultural competence has different dimensions for sojourners and tour guides. Furthermore, the results of CFA provide the basis for supporting the theoretical model, that is, the three-factor model (social-interpersonal competence, culture competence and language competence), and indicate the suitability of this model as a framework for analysing tour guides' intercultural competence.

5.5 Guides' Self-Assessed & Tourists' Assessed IC

Section 5.5 addresses *Objective Two, Hypothesis Three*. It was predicted that tour guides' self-assessed IC importance and performance would not differ from tourists' perception of IC importance and their evaluation of the IC of tour guides. Seven-point scale items were employed in measuring respondents' perceived importance and performance of the IC of tour guides, with 1 being 'not at all important' or 'not at all adequate' and 7 being 'extremely important' or 'extremely adequate'.

The relationship between *tourists'* perceived *importance* of IC and *tour guides'* perceived *importance* of IC was investigated and the statistical results were reported in *Section 5.3.2*. The relationship between *tourists'* perceptions of the guides' IC *performance* and guides' assessment of *their own IC performance* was examined by computing correlations between the two variables, using Spearman's Rank Order Correlation. The mean scores of visitors' perceived tour guides' IC performance and the mean scores of guides' self-assessed IC performance are presented in Table 5.6.

Table 5.6 Mean Scores of IC Performance (Visitors vs. Guides)

IC Items	ICP Mean		ICP Mean	
	Score*	Rank	Score**	Rank
	Visitors		Guides	
IC9 Ability to solve problems	5.66	1	6.00	3
IC14 Understanding others' feelings	5.66	1	6.06	2
IC10 Ability to cope with unexpected	5.65	2	6.06	2
IC16 Ability to establish rapport with tour group	5.64	3	5.52	9
IC8 Cultural interpretation skills	5.59	4	5.97	4
IC13 Being patient	5.57	5	5.16	12
IC3 Understanding Australian culture & society	5.57	5	5.87	6
IC7 Language interpretation skills	5.54	6	5.77	7
IC2 Ability to speak & understand Chinese	5.54	6	5.94	5
IC12 Being flexible	5.52	7	5.94	5
IC5 Displaying respect for culture of visitors & host culture	5.51	8	5.71	8
IC11 Being non-judgemental	5.51	8	5.94	5
IC1 Ability to speak & understand English	5.51	9	6.29	1
IC4 Awareness of cultural differences between China & Australia	5.47	10	5.48	10
IC15 Motivation to be a cultural mediator	5.39	11	5.71	8
IC6 Ability to initiate interaction between visitors & host population	5.04	12	5.45	11

*Visitors' ICP mean scores are in descending order; ** Guides' ICP mean scores are not in descending order
The difference of mean scores between two ranks is small.

The correlation is not statistically significant (Spearman's $\rho=+0.45$, $n=16$, $p>0.05$, two tailed) suggesting that tourists' evaluation of guides' performance is different from tour guides' self-assessment. This could be because tourists and guides apply different standards, lending some support to previous studies. For example, a comparison of interpreters' and visitors' assessments of interpretive activities (Ham & Shew, 1979) revealed that interpreters' and visitors' evaluations of interpretive activities were not correlated and that they used different standards in assessing the activities.

Similarly, another study on critical service features in a group package tour (Wang, Hsieh & Huan, 2000) revealed that when both tourists and tour guides were asked to evaluate the importance and performance of critical service features, tourists' and tour guides' ranking of the importance of service features were similar and consistent, but they had different views on the assessment of services. In the evaluation by tourists, features of dissatisfaction outnumbered features of satisfaction while in the self-assessment, the tour guides mentioned fewer features of dissatisfaction than of satisfaction. The results might imply that not all tour guides are necessarily performing well according to their clients' criteria. Therefore, training might need to be conducted to enable tour guides to perform well and meet the expectations of their clients.

In addition, the correlation between tourists' perceived IC importance and performance was also computed using Pearson's r , indicating that the correlation is statistically significant ($r=+0.80$, $n=16$ $p<0.05$, two tailed) between the two variables. That is, tourists' perceived IC importance is correlated with their perceived performance of tour guides. This is consistent with the findings from past studies. For example, Ryan and Huyton (2001) note that customers' evaluations of a firm's attribute-specific performance are affected by how important the attribute is to the customer (Ryan & Huyton, 2001). The more important the attribute is to the customer, the more likely is the customer to perceive the attribute performance favourably. According to the theory of generalisability (Oliver, 1980), "consumers tend to generalise their experience in the direction of their evaluation of desired outcomes" (Oh, 2001:622). Thus, the relationship between importance and performance tends to be either positively or negatively correlated (Oh, 2001). The IC importance and performance measures (scores) are presented in Table 5.7.

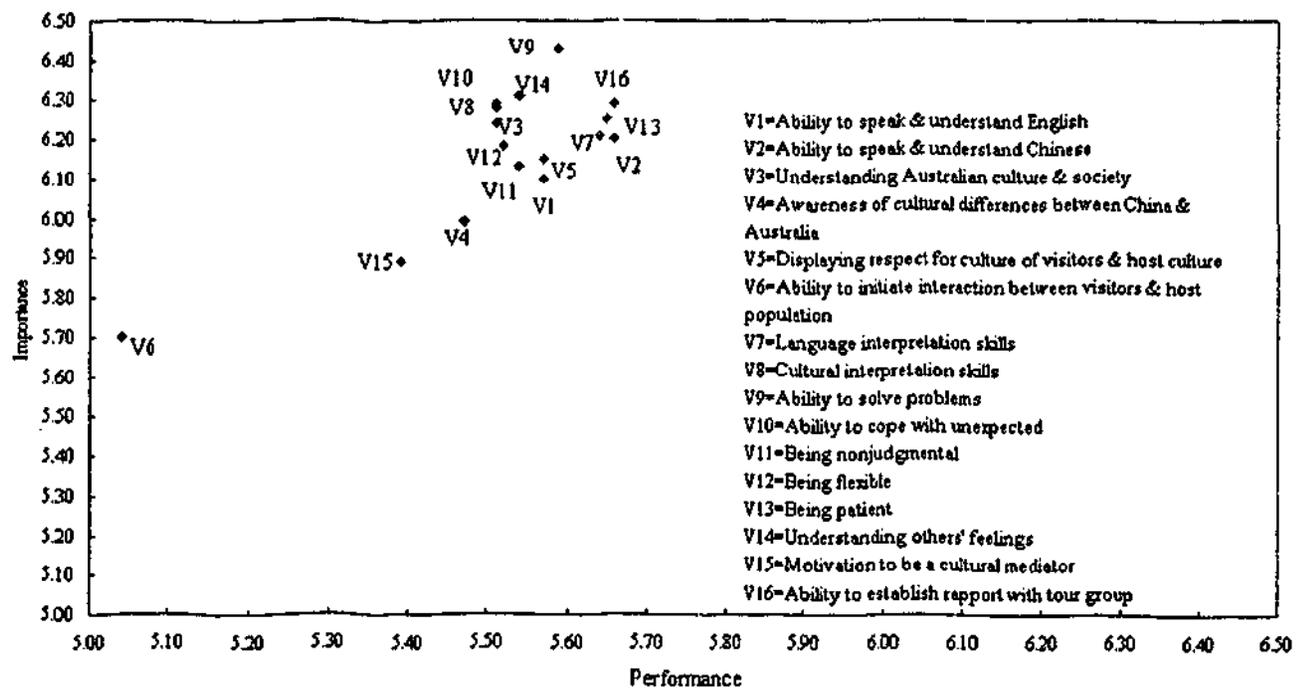
Table 5.7 Mean Scores of Tourists' Perceived IC Importance & Performance

IC Items	ICI Mean		ICP Mean	
	Score*	Rank	Score**	Rank
IC9 Ability to solve problems	6.43	1	5.59	4
IC14 Understanding others' feelings	6.31	2	5.54	6
IC10 Ability to cope with unexpected	6.29	3	5.51	8
IC16 Ability to establish rapport with tour group	6.29	3	5.66	1
IC8 Cultural interpretation skills	6.28	4	5.51	8
IC13 Being patient	6.25	5	5.65	2
IC3 Understanding Australian culture & society	6.24	6	5.51	8
IC7 Language interpretation skills	6.21	7	5.64	3
IC2 Ability to speak & understand Chinese	6.20	8	5.66	1
IC12 Being flexible	6.18	9	5.52	7
IC5 Displaying respect for culture of visitors & host culture	6.15	10	5.57	5
IC11 Being non-judgemental	6.13	11	5.54	6
IC1 Ability to speak & understand English	6.10	12	5.57	5
IC4 Awareness of cultural differences between China & Australia	5.99	13	5.47	9
IC15 Motivation to be a cultural mediator	5.89	14	5.39	10
IC6 Ability to initiate interaction between visitors & host population	5.70	15	5.04	11

*ICI mean scores are in descending order. ** ICP mean scores are not in descending order
The difference of mean scores between two ranks is small.

The IC importance and performance measures (scores) were also plotted in an XY scatter chart, as presented in Figure 5.2, to allow a straightforward interpretation without using sophisticated statistics skills.

Figure 5.2 Tourists' Assessment of Guides' IC (importance & performance)



Fifteen out of sixteen IC importance and performance measures fall in the area indicating perceived adequate performance with mean scores between 5.4 to 5.8 and high importance with mean scores between 5.9 to 6.5. Only one IC item: 'ability to initiate interaction between tourists and the host population' stands out with a relatively low performance score, indicating that attention needs to be paid to this particular IC element.

Then, the relationship between *tour guides'* perceived IC importance and their self-assessment of their own performance was tested by using correlation analysis. The correlation between the two variables is statistically significant (Spearman's $\rho=0.92$, $n=16$, $p<0.05$, two tailed). This is consistent with the findings from past studies. The IC importance and performance measures (scores) are presented in Table 5.8.

Table 5.8: Mean Scores of Guides' Perceived IC Importance & Performance

IC Items	ICI Mean Scores*	Rank	ICP Mean Scores**	Rank
IC10 Ability to cope with unexpected	6.35	1	6.29	1
IC13 Being patient	6.32	2	6.06	2
IC2 Ability to speak & understand Chinese	6.16	3	6.00	3
IC9 Ability to solve problems	6.16	3	5.97	4
IC16 Ability to establish rapport with tour group	6.13	4	6.06	2
IC14 Understanding others' feelings	6.10	5	5.94	5
IC11 Being non-judgemental	6.06	6	5.77	7
IC12 Being flexible	6.06	6	5.94	5
IC3 Understanding Australian culture & society	5.97	7	5.71	8
IC8 cultural interpretation skills	5.97	7	5.94	5
IC5 Displaying respect for culture of visitors & host culture	5.71	8	5.87	6
IC1 Ability to speak & understand English	5.58	9	5.16	12
IC7 Language interpretation skills	5.58	9	5.52	9
IC4 Awareness of cultural differences between China & Australia	5.52	10	5.48	10
IC15 Motivation to be a cultural mediator	5.48	11	5.71	8
IC6 Ability to initiate interaction between visitors & host population	5.16	12	5.45	11

*ICI mean scores are in descending order; ** ICP mean scores are not in descending order
The difference of mean scores between two ranks is small.

In summary, the results presented in Section 5.5 suggest that the ratings of the importance of the IC of tour guides given by tourists and tour guides were very similar and consistent but each group had different views on the assessment of the IC of tour guides' performance. Moreover, tourists' perceived IC importance is strongly correlated with their perceived performance of tour guides. Tour guides' perceived IC importance is also strongly correlated with their self-assessed IC performance.

5.6 Factors Associated with the IC of Tour Guides

This section addresses research *Objective Three, Hypothesis Four*, identifying the factors that are associated with tour guides' perceived IC importance and self-assessed IC performance. It is predicted that tour guides' perceived importance of IC and their actual IC performance are positively related to their level of education, language fluency and previous intercultural experience. As these data are based on a small sample (N=31), the interpretation of the results needs to be made with caution.

Two regression models were generated. The dependent variables for the regression models were tour guides' perceived importance of IC and self-assessed IC. In each case, non-weighted summing of the 16 individual IC items generated a single score. Higher scores reflect a higher level of perceived importance of intercultural competence and a higher level of intercultural competence, respectively.

The independent (dummy) variables are the guide's 'level of education', 'language fluency' (Chinese and English language reading and speaking skills) and 'previous intercultural experience'. The independent variables are presented in Table 5.9.

Table 5.9 Operational Definitions of Independent Variables (H₄)

Variable	Definition	Coding	
Level of education	High school or less/vocation school	1	
	University/Diploma	2	
	Postgraduate	3	
Language fluency (Reading skill)	Mostly Chinese	1	
	Bilingual	2	
	(Speaking skill)	Mostly Chinese	1
		Bilingual	2
Previous experience	With experience	1	
	Without experience	2	

The original response categories for level of education were 'high school or less', 'vocation school', 'university degree or diploma', 'postgraduate' and 'others'. As all responses fell into the first four categories with a high percentage in the category of 'university', the researcher took 'others' out and collapsed the first two categories. After recoding, the three categories were 'high school or less/vocation school', 'university' and 'postgraduate', of which two dummy variables were created. 'Postgraduate' was used as reference category.

Language fluency was originally represented by two indicators (Chinese and English language speaking and reading skills) in five categories (1= 'Only Chinese', 2= 'Mostly Chinese', 3= 'Both Chinese and English', 4= 'English better than Chinese' and 5= 'Only English'). However, only the two categories 'Mostly Chinese' and 'Both Chinese and English' emerged from responses. As a result, the researcher recoded 'Chinese and English language speaking and reading skills' into two categories as 1= 'Mostly Chinese', and 2= 'Bilingual'. One dummy variable was created from the category of 'Mostly Chinese'. The baseline was 'Bilingual'. One dummy variable was created from the dichotomous variable 'previous experience'. 'Without experience' was used as the reference category.

The results demonstrate that none of the three independent variables (previous experience, language fluency and educational level) was significantly related to respondents' self-assessed IC performance. This could be due to a combination of the small sample size and measurement error (a common weakness of dummy variable analysis). The hypothesis needs further testing with a larger sample size.

The correlation matrix for hypothesis four variables (the dependent variable is guides' perceived IC importance) is presented in Table 5.10. Results indicate that the relationship between guides' perceived IC importance and both their previous experience and Chinese and English reading skill was statistically significant. The results of the multiple regression analysis are presented in Table 5.11.

Table 5.10 Correlation Matrix for Hypothesis 4 Variables

	ICSUM	PIE	CESS	CERS	HSVS	UD
IC importance composite score (ICSUM)	1.000					
Previous intercultural experience (PIE)	-0.411*	1.000				
Chinese & English speaking skill (CESS)	0.045	0.077	1.000			
Chinese & English reading skill (CERS)	0.431*	-0.183	-0.602*	1.000		
High school & vocation school (HSVS)	-0.135	-0.292	-0.107	0.027	1.000	
University degree (UD)	0.195	0.146	-0.166	0.161	-0.635*	1.000

N=31; *p<.05;

Table 5.11 Impact of Guides' Background Factors on IC Importance (H₁)

<u>Dependent Variable: perceived importance of IC</u>	
<u>Standardised coefficients</u>	
Independent Variables	Beta
Previous experience	-0.39*
Chinese & English speaking skill	0.46*
Chinese & English reading skill	0.61*
High school & vocation school	-0.12
University degree	0.16
Multiple R	0.49
Adjusted R²	0.39
F sign.	0.00

N=31; *p<0.05

Results of the multiple regression analysis (Table 5.11) indicate that the guide's previous experience and language fluency explain 39% of the variation in the perceived importance of intercultural competence data, although there was an inverse relationship between previous experience and perceived importance of IC. Table 5.11 shows the relative contribution of independent variables (previous intercultural experience, Chinese and English speaking skill, and Chinese and English reading skill) to explaining variation in the dependent variable (perceived importance of IC). Chinese and English reading skill appears to have a relatively stronger effect (Beta=0.61) on perceived importance of IC, followed by Chinese and English speaking skill (Beta=0.46) and previous experience (Beta=-0.39).

The multiple regression model indicates that the better the guide's Chinese and English speaking and reading skills, the higher the level of perceived importance of tour guide's IC, that is, guides with better language skills tended to rate IC as more important than guides with poor language skills. The more the guide's previous intercultural experience, the lower the level of perceived importance of IC. Guides with more intercultural experience tended to rate IC as less important than guides with less intercultural experience. The latter finding is unexpected and inconsistent with previous research. Further research is needed as the current data do not provide clues as to why a guide with

more intercultural experience would rate the importance of IC lower than a less experienced guide. There may be several limitations in the statistical tests due to measurement error. First, although non-random sampling and the small sample size do not preclude the use of regression, they affect the generalisability of the findings. Thus, the hypothesis needs further testing with a larger sample size and random sampling methods.

Second, the use of dummy variables may mask real variation due to measurement error. Cross-tabulations were undertaken as an alternative test to address this concern but the conclusions remained statistically the same.

Finally, the homogeneity of the respondents (74% of the respondents rated their Chinese language as better than English, 74% of them have a university degree or above; and 77% of them did not have previous intercultural experience) may also explain why some results are not statistically significant. A large random sample stratified on these variables might produce greater single-variable variation and lead to a clearer understanding of the multivariate relationships obtained.

5.7 The IC of Tour Guides and Their Cultural Identity

This section relates to *Objective Three*, *Hypothesis Four*, and explores whether tour guides' perceived importance of IC and their self-assessed IC are associated with their cultural identity. It was predicted that guides' perceived importance of IC and self-assessed IC are positively related to their cultural identity: a guide who is bicultural is more likely to be interculturally competent than a monocultural guide. Regression analysis was performed to test this hypothesis. The dependent variables for the regression models were tour guides' perceived importance of IC and self-assessed IC respectively. In each case, non-weighted summing of the 16 individual IC items generated a single score. Higher scores reflect a higher level of perceived importance of intercultural competence or a higher level of intercultural competence.

For the independent variables, as discussed earlier, only self-assessed ethnic identity and the section of communication skills (Chinese and English reading, speaking, writing skills,

and newspaper preferences) in Chen's (2000) ethnic identity measurement were included in the current study as indicators of measuring cultural identity. To strengthen reliability, two of these items were removed and only 'Chinese and English speaking skill' and 'Chinese and English reading skill' was included in the communication skill scale.

The independent variables are 'self-assessed ethnic identity', Chinese and English language speaking and reading skills in five categories: for 'self-assessed ethnic identity', 1=Very Chinese, 2=Mostly Chinese, 3=Bicultural, 4: Mostly Australianised, 5=Very Australianised; for language speaking and reading skills, 1= Only Chinese, 2= Mostly Chinese, 3= Both Chinese and English, 4= English better than Chinese and 5= Only English. As only two categories, 'Mostly Chinese' and 'Bicultural' or 'Both Chinese and English' emerged from responses, the researcher recoded 'self-assessed ethnic identity' and 'Chinese and English language speaking and reading skills' into two categories as 1= 'Mostly Chinese', and 2= 'Bicultural' or 'Both Chinese and English'. For each variable, one dummy variable was created from the category of 'Mostly Chinese'. The reference category was 'Bicultural' for self-reported ethnic identity and 'Bilingual' for language fluency. Altogether, three dummy variables were entered in the regression model as independent variables that are presented in Table 5.12.

Table 5.12 Operational Definitions of Independent Variables

Variable*	Definition	Coding
Self-assessed ethnic identity	Mostly Chinese	1
	Bicultural	2
Language fluency (Reading skill)	Mostly Chinese	1
	Bilingual	2
(Speaking skill)	Mostly Chinese	1
	Bilingual	2

N=31; dependent variable is guides' perceived importance of IC

*Cultural identity (H₄)

In this study, the two independent variables of language fluency had impact on the dependent variable (guides' perceived importance of IC) but the effect of self-assessed ethnic identity was not significant. None of the three independent variables were found

significant on the dependent variable of self-assessed performance of IC. Therefore, the hypothesis is partially rejected. The correlation matrix for hypothesis four (cultural identity) with dependent variable, perceived IC importance is presented in Table 5.13.

Table 5.13 Correlation Matrix for Hypothesis 4 (cultural identity) Variables

	ICSUM)	CESS	CERS	SREI
IC importance composite score (ICSUM)	1.000			
Chinese & English speaking skill (CESS)	0.045	1.000		
Chinese & English reading skill (CERS)	0.431*	-0.602*	1.000	
Self-reported ethnic identity (SREI)	-0.089	-0.479*	0.161	1.000

*N=31; *p<.05; dependent variable is guides' perceived importance of IC.*

Table 5.14 Impact of cultural identity on perception of IC (H₄)

<u>Dependent Variable: perceived importance of IC</u>	
<u>Standardised coefficients</u>	
<u>Independent Variables</u>	<u>Beta</u>
Chinese & English speaking skill	0.50*
Chinese & English reading skill	0.73*
Self-reported ethnic identity	0.03
Multiple R	0.58
Adjusted R²	0.26
F sign	0.01

*N=31, *p<0.05*

As shown in Table 5.14, regarding the relative effect of the independent variables (Chinese and English speaking skill, and Chinese and English reading skill) on the dependent variable (perceived importance of IC), Chinese and English reading skill has the highest Beta (0.73), thus a relatively stronger impact on perceived importance of IC, followed by Chinese and English speaking skill (Beta=0.50). The multiple regression model indicates that 26 percent of the variation in the perceived importance of IC in the sample is due to differences in 'cultural identity' (accounted for mainly by language fluency).

There are several limitations to this analysis: small sample size, non-random sampling, limited number of indicators of cultural identity used, and the different scale ranges of intercultural competence and cultural identity. First, the small sample size (31 cases) and non-random sampling may result in sampling error (Salant & Dillman, 1994). Second, even though the two-item language fluency scale has good internal consistency, the scale is still only a small portion of the measurement of ethnic identity and would possibly yield more conclusive results if measured using a full scale. Third, all items of tour guides' self-assessed intercultural competence were measured on a 7-point scale ranging from 1 (not at all adequate) to 7 (extremely adequate) but the three items of level of cultural identity were categorised by using a scale from 1 to 5 with the mid-point 3, representing bicultural or bilingual. However, the degree of statistical inaccuracy due to this difference cannot be determined.

In summary, findings from Section 5.7 suggest that tour guides' language skills are good predictors of Chinese-speaking tour guides' cultural identity. This is consistent with previous studies on immigrants' acculturation, cultural identity and intercultural effectiveness.

5.8 The Guide's Role in Visitor's Most Memorable Experience

Related to *Objective Four*, this section explores tourists' self-defined most memorable experience and their guides' role in that experience. In an open-ended question, respondents to the visitor survey were asked to describe their most memorable experiences during their visit to Australia. Two hundred and twenty respondents provided 339 responses to this question. Visitors' most memorable experiences can be grouped into five main categories from the highest frequency to the lowest, as shown in Table 5.15.

Table 5.15 Most Memorable Experience

Most Memorable Experience (Multiple responses)	No. of responses*
Learning about Australia society, cultural values & lifestyles	113
Cities & sites	88
Scenery, nature & climate	67
Friendly people & interaction with locals	24
Others	27
Total	339

**220 people provided 339 responses to Q19, of which 8 answers are not relevant to the question.*

Learning about Australia is on the top of the list. Many respondents express that their guided tour provided them a deeper understanding of Australia including their understanding of Australian people, Australia as a nation and as a tourism destination. For example, many respondents mentioned the harmonious relationship between the Australian people and their natural environment, the way Australia protects wildlife, the way local people obey rules and regulations, and the national interest in sport.

The second most frequently mentioned memorable experience by respondents is their visit to Australian major cities and tourism attractions. The Gold Coast appears to be the most memorable place for respondents, followed by Melbourne and Sydney. Furthermore, respondents speak highly about Australia's beautiful scenery, good environment and favourable climate. 'Fresh air', 'blue sky', 'sunshine', 'beautiful seashore' and 'greenness' are the popular expressions respondents use to describe Australia. The friendliness of Australian people (their friendly smiles, hospitality and politeness) is also remembered by Chinese visitors.

When respondents were asked to describe their most memorable experiences in Australia, they were also asked to describe what role, if any, their tour guides played in that experience. The researcher received 232 responses. When coding the data, the researcher used the five important roles of tour guides, suggested by previous studies and findings of the interviews with tourism industry representatives, as a benchmark. As a result, four categories emerged from the responses that are similar to the roles illustrated in Table 5.1. These categories are presented in Table 5.16.

Table 5.16 Roles Tour Guides Played in Visitors' Most Memorable Experience

Tour Guides' Roles	No. of Responses*
Acted as cultural mediator (e.g. help us further understand Australian people and customs, to enhance understanding of the place, broaden our views, being a bridge, a link & a mediator, interpret exotic culture, language interpretation, initiate interaction between locals & visitors)	64
Provided information (e.g. provide comprehensive commentary, disseminate detailed information, provide clear presentation of each site, being a teacher)	45
Managed the tour (e.g. provide travel arrangement or arrange itinerary, give directions, solve problems, remove risks, give safety and protection)	33
Provided good customer service (e.g. being caring, warm, helpful, patient, considerate, lively and capable, love guiding job)	21
Ratings of relative importance of tour guide's roles **	51
Negative comments	18
Total	232

192 respondents answered Q20, of which answers given by 3 respondents are not relevant to tour guide.

* Multiple responses

** Some respondents interpreted this question in a different way, i.e. they rate the importance of the guides' roles.

As shown in Table 5.16, the role of cultural mediator was the most frequently mentioned role of the guide in respondents' most memorable experiences. The following sample quotations from respondents describe how tour guides, acting as cultural mediators, can facilitate tourists' most memorable experience (a full transcript of responses to this question is in Appendix 8):

- 'The guides furthered our understanding of Chinese & Australian cultures';
- 'The guides broadened our views, acted as a link between eastern and western cultures';
- 'The guides enhanced our understanding and facilitated communication between visitors and the locals'.

In short, the findings from Section 5.8 provide empirical evidence that suggests tour guides play an important role in facilitating and delivering Chinese visitors' most memorable experiences.

5.9 Factors Influencing Guided Tour Experiences

This section addresses *Objective Five, Hypothesis Five* to examine the impact of the IC of tour guides and tourists' background characteristics on the guided tour experience. It was predicted that tour guides' intercultural competence is positively related to visitors' global (overall) satisfaction with their guided tour experience. The tour guide's intercultural competence and its impact on the tourist experience were examined in the current study in three steps. The first step was to investigate the Chinese visitors' perceptions of the performance of the IC of tour guides. The next step required an assessment of Chinese visitors' guided tour experience. Finally, the relationship between the tourist's evaluation of their guides' IC and the overall evaluation (global satisfaction) of the guided tour experience was examined.

Tourists' guided tour experiences are shaped by a combination of factors. In the context of this study, the researcher assessed only the impact of the IC of tour guide and the impacts of tourists' background characteristics on the guided tour experience.

The relationship between tourists' perceptions of the IC of tour guides, tourists' background characteristics and their guided tour experience was examined by using a multiple regression model. The dependent variable is the overall evaluation of the guided tour experience (measured on a 7-point scale) while the independent variables are the tourist's perceptions of the performance of the IC of tour guides, their perceptions of the importance of the IC of tour guides, the tourist's previous guided tour experience, the tourist's English language skills, and the tourist's level of education. Tourists' perceptions of the IC of tour guides were measured by a series of 7-point scale items. Non-weighted summing of the 16 individual IC performance items then generated a single score. A higher score reflects a higher level of perceived IC of tour guides. Since the other three independent variables, education level, previous guided tour experience, and English speaking skill, are categorical, dummy variables were created. The number of categories of each variable and the definition of each category are shown in Table 5.17.

Table 5.17 Operational Definitions of Independent Variables (H₆)

Variable	Definition	Coding	
<i>Tourist's gender</i>	Male	1	
	Female	2	
<i>Tourist's age group</i>	Age 1	15-24	1
	Age 2	25-34	2
	Age 3	35-44	3
	Age 4	45-54	4
	Age 5	55+	5
Tourist's level of education	High/vocation school/others	1	
	University/Diploma	2	
	Postgraduate	3	
Tourist's previous G\guided tour experience	With experience	1	
	Without experience	2	
Tourist's English speaking skill	Fluent	1	
	Conversational	2	
	Less than conversational	3	
	None	4	
Tourist's perceptions of importance of guides' IC (metric: 1 to 7)	1=not at all important		
	7= extremely important		
Tourist's perceptions of the performance of guides' IC (metric: 1 to 7)	1=Not at all adequate		
	7=Extremely adequate		

The correlation matrix for hypothesis five with dependent variable, the guided tour experience shown in Table 5.19 is attached as Appendix 12.

Table 5.18 Impact of IC/Visitors' Background Characteristics on Global Satisfaction

Independent Variables	Standardised Coefficients
Perceived performance of IC	0.44*
Perceived importance of IC	0.06
Previous guided tour experiences	0.002
<i>Education level</i>	
High school or less/vocation school/others	0.16*
University	0.03
<i>English proficiency</i>	
Fluent	-0.03
Conversational	-0.06
Broken	-0.10
Gender	0.03
<i>Age group</i>	
Age 1 (15-24)	-0.10
Age 2 (25-34)	-0.10
Age 3 (35-44)	-0.07
Age 4 (45-54)	-0.08
Multiple R	0.52
Adj. R²	0.25
F sign.	.000

N=461; *P<.05

As shown in Table 5.18, the regression model is significant in tourists' evaluation of the IC of tour guides (Beta 0.44; adjusted R² 0.25) indicating that tour guides' intercultural competence is positively related to tourists' overall evaluation of their guided tour experience. However, among all the predictors, only two variables had a significant effect on respondents' global satisfaction with their guided tour experiences. These items were the tourist's perception of the guides' IC performance (Beta=0.44) and the tourist's age (15-24 year group) (Beta=0.16). The guide's IC performance variable was the most important independent variable in the model, followed by one of the age group variables (15-24 year group). The combined influence of these two variables explained 25% of the variation in the guided tour experience.

The significant impact of the IC of tour guides on Chinese visitors' guided tour experiences is an important finding of the current study. This is the first study in the tourism literature that provides empirical evidence on the importance of tour guides' intercultural competence in tourists' experiences. This result is consistent with past studies

(Holloway, 1981; Cohen, 1985; Pond, 1993; Dahles, 2002; Ham & Weiler, 2002) on the role of tour guides' in tourist experiences. These studies suggest that guides facilitate and enhance tourist experiences by acting as a 'mentor,' 'link,' 'mediator,' 'information giver,' 'translator' and 'interpreter.' However, as only twenty five per cent of the variation in the guided tour experience is due to the different level of the perceived IC of tour guides and English language skills, other factors such as other areas of the guides' competence and the quality of tourism facilities and services are also contributing to the tourists' assessment of their satisfaction with their guided tour experience and investigation of these factors is beyond the scope of the current study.

Past studies (Hughes, 1991, Geva & Goldman, 1991, Wong, 2001, Ham & Weiler, 2002) suggest that there is a significant relationship between 'intention to recommend the tour to others', 'intention to return' and overall satisfaction with the guided tour experience. The current study tested this relationship using correlation analysis (r). The correlation between 'intention to recommend the tour to others' and overall satisfaction with the guided tour experience was found to be statistically significant (the magnitude of Pearson $r=+0.36$, $n=461$, $p<0.05$, two tailed) indicating a positive correlation between the two variables. Although there is a positive relationship between 'intention to return' and overall satisfaction with the guided tour experience, the relationship is weaker (the magnitude of Pearson $r=+0.13$, $n=461$, $p<0.05$, two tailed). "It is logical that tourists who are satisfied will probably recommend the tour to friends, yet may seek different tours for their next overseas trip" (Crossley & Xu, 1996:7).

In summary, findings from Section 5.9 provide empirical evidence showing that tour guides' intercultural competence has a significant positive effect on visitors' guided tour experiences. This is an important finding of the current study, and appears to be the first report in the tourism literature of such empirical evidence. Tourists' background characteristics including previous guided tour experiences, education level, English language skill, gender, age and the perceived importance of the IC of tour guides have no significant effect on visitors' assessment of their guided tour experiences except that those at the age between 15 to 24 years old had higher levels of satisfaction with the guided tour experience.

5.10 Effect of Situational Factors on the IC of Tour Guides

The literature notes that situational variables can also account for variations in intercultural effectiveness (Ward & Kennedy, 1996). In a guided tour context, tourism industry practice and the tour operator's organisational culture might be considered as two important situational variables, in that these factors might facilitate or constrain tour guides' effective intercultural behaviour.

Due to limited resources (mainly time and funding), this study was not designed to collect data on situational factors, nevertheless, some relevant data on these variables were collected, emerging largely from the interviews with tourism industry representatives. For example, a number of problems in guiding ADS tour groups emerged. These include uncertain workloads for guides, low status, low wages, lack of experience, lack of a minimum entry requirement, uneven levels of professionalism, a lack of commitment, and inappropriate industry practices (Yu, 2003).

Low Wages

According to the information collected from the interviews, the income of tour guides escorting Chinese tour groups is only about one third of the earnings of English and Japanese-speaking tour guides. Low pay might be related to inappropriate industry practices, notably price discounting. Slow profits but quick turnover is standard practice for this market. Although Chinese visitors pay approximately A\$4,000 for about a seven day-trip to Australia, the inbound tour operators and tour guides complain that they make little money from this market. Moreover, tour guides' pay is not in direct proportion to the work they do. There are no protected minimum standards for a tour guide's salary and as a result, some tour guides take tourists shopping in order to get commissions to supplement their income, consequently, other aspects of the tours and the quality of guiding suffers.

Seasonal Employment

Compounding the problem of low wages is the fact that the tour guide's job is seasonal in nature. During Christmas, Chinese New Year and Easter, Chinese-speaking tour guides are in high demand but during the non-peak season, they go without work for several weeks.

Both these factors may explain in part why it is hard to get professionalism and commitment from guides.

Lack of Job Entry Requirements

Various levels of professionalism among Chinese-speaking tour guides might also be a result of the absence of strict entry requirements and standards. In Australia, tour guides are required neither to undertake training nor to have a license. At present, there are no unified standards and regulations in selecting and training tour guides among Chinese travel agencies in Australia. Hence, there are different views on the definitions of competent and experienced tour guides. According to the views expressed by some respondents, experienced tour guides might be considered by tour operators as those who are good at observing their clients, know what their clients' want, say what their clients like to hear, and are able to solve problems. A competent tour guide is perceived as someone who is experienced, has a nice personality, receives no complaints and can make clients happy.

These situational factors suggest that good guiding, particularly with respect to the cultural mediation role is not only the responsibility of individual guides but is also influenced by situational factors such as the tour operator and the tourism industry, both of which have direct impact on the quality of guiding and the intercultural effectiveness of tour guides. There appears to be an urgent need for supporting professional development, and providing on-the-job training, better remuneration and greater rewards for good practice for Australian based Chinese-speaking tour guides. Excellence in cultural interpretation and mediation seems likely to be achieved only with commitment and support from all parties: government, the tourism industry, employers and the guides themselves. The incorporation of such situational factors in future studies is highly recommended.

CHAPTER 6: CONCLUSION

The conclusions drawn from this thesis address the research aim of the current study. It is evident that the research findings contribute to theory, methodology, practice and policy. The study also identifies its limitations and avenues for further research.

6.1 Significance of the Research Findings

6.1.1 Theoretical Contribution

The review of literature revealed insufficient evidence as to what constitutes a good cultural mediator (Pearce, 1982a). Although some researchers suggest that to perform well as a cultural mediator, an individual needs to be intercultural competent (Taft, 1981; Bochner, 1981), there has been a lack of theoretical and empirical attention regarding the construct of intercultural competence, and none at all in the context of tourism (Yu, Weiler & Ham, 2001). An important contribution of the current study is the application of this theoretical construct to tourism and tour guiding.

Several researchers in intercultural studies (Kim, 1988; Spitzberg, 1989; Cui & Berg, 1991; Cui & Awa, 1992; Chen & Starosta, 1996; Spitzberg, 1996; Cui, Berg & Jiang, 1998; Kim, 2001) have been working toward the integration of the various dimensions of IC. However, attempts to understand IC as an integrated and multidimensional construct have thus far met with only partial success. Much research has conceptualised and analysed IC but without empirical research testing or confirming the dimensions of the IC construct. The current study fills this gap at both the conceptual and measurement levels, finding that the IC of tour guides is a three-dimensional construct consisting of social-interpersonal competence, cultural competence and language competence. These three components of the IC model are also consistent with the basic competencies required for tour guiding as suggested by the literature. The adequacy (goodness of fit) of the three-factorial structure model is further assessed using confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) with maximum likelihood. The results of CFA demonstrate the validity of the IC construct as a basis for

assessing a tour guide's competence as a cultural mediator, thus contributing to our understanding of intercultural communication in the context of tour guiding.

Although this is the first study to establish the link between intercultural competence and cultural mediation, the relationship is not trivial. The concept of IC has been researched under many different labels such as cross-cultural adjustment (Benson, 1978), cross-cultural adaptation (Kim, 1995; Cui, Berg & Jiang, 1998) and intercultural effectiveness (Hammer, Gudykunst & Wiseman, 1978; Cui & Awa, 1992). But to date, much intercultural research has been largely focused on sojourners living abroad, that is, how foreigners adapt to a new culture.

A tour guide, however, is required to do more than just 'adapt' to a culture. Working at the interface of two cultures, a tour guide seeks to "create understanding, make connections between hosts and tourists" (Moscardo, 1995:5) and minimise interaction difficulties between different cultural groups. The current study thus considers that a tour guide's intercultural performance requires more than adaptation; it requires the extension of IC competence to mediation tasks. This realisation adds a new dimension to the intercultural communication literature (cultural mediation as opposed to cultural adaptation). Accordingly, the current study also empirically tests the relationship between perceived importance of a tour guide's role as a cultural mediator and the perceived importance of the IC of a tour guide. The research result shows a positive relationship between the two variables, providing an empirical foundation for enriching the theory of IC applied to intercultural tour guiding.

In addition to conceptualising the IC of tour guides, the current research provides a framework including a methodology and instruments for assessing the perceived importance and actual performance of the IC of tour guides as well as the impact of the IC of tour guides on the guided tour experience. The framework includes factors influencing the IC of tour guides and variables associated with tourists' evaluation of their guided tour experiences. This study provides empirical evidence that, in the context of Chinese visitors to Australia, the tourist's perception of the IC of tour guides appears to be a good predictor of his/her global satisfaction with the guided tour experience. The most memorable experiences recalled by Chinese visitors also suggest that their tour guides have helped them gain a better understanding of Australia including their understanding of Australian

people, Australia as a nation and Australia as a tourism destination. This is considered an important finding of the current study.

Furthermore, there is a shortage of empirical research on the tour guide's role in facilitating the tourist experience in general, and in cultural mediation in particular (Yu, 2003). This study addresses this limitation in the literature. It investigates the perception of cultural mediator held by representatives of the tourism industry, tour guides and Chinese visitors and provided respondents' defined meanings of the cultural mediating role of tour guides. The research findings reveal that Chinese-speaking tour guides need to perform multiple roles, which were all perceived as important by tourism industry representatives, visitors and tour guides. Cultural mediation is identified as a particularly important role in the context of guiding ADS groups. Thus, this research provides empirical evidence of the importance of the cultural mediating role in the context of Chinese-speaking tour guides in Australia.

Cultural mediation studies often focus on the role of intermediaries in facilitating positive interaction between western culture (the tourist's culture) and the indigenous culture (the host culture) (Smith, 2001), with little research targeting tour groups from developing countries such as China to developed countries such as Australia. The current study highlights the need to pay more attention to tour guides, particularly those leading tour groups from non-Western countries to tourism destinations in the developed world, and the particular competencies needed to perform their role in bridging the socio-cultural gap between the host and tourist (Cohen, 2003). The current study recognises the importance of the cultural mediating role of tour guides in the experiences of Chinese visitors and extends this kind of study into this new context.

6.1.2 Methodological Contribution

The current research adopted a qualitative approach, interviews with tourism representatives, for the first stage of the research. The interviews with tourism representatives provides a better understanding of tour guiding issues related to the Chinese inbound market. Tourism representatives' judgments of the importance of intercultural competence (IC) items were used to develop the questionnaire for the surveys

of both visitors and the guides. Thus, this study provides a methodology that helps achieve face validity of the IC construct.

In addition, the current research conducted questionnaire surveys with tourists and tour guides, that is, both self-reported assessment and others' evaluation were deployed to assess tour guides' intercultural competence. It compares what visitors and guides perceive to be the relative importance and actual performance of particular aspects of their tour guides' intercultural competence. The results suggest that visitors and guides tend to rate the importance of individual IC items in a similar way, but that visitors tend to rate the performance of guides at lower levels than the guides' self-assessment of their own performance. It is apparent that the use of both self-report and others' ratings of intercultural competence can reduce the biases inherent in both types of data collection and can offer a richer and more comprehensive view of IC than either method, applied alone, could achieve.

6.1.3 Implications for the Tourism Industry

The results of this study provide several implications for the tourism industry. First, the tourism industry representatives suggest that little is known about Chinese-speaking tour guides in Australia regarding who they are, where they are from, their qualifications and other relevant figures and facts related to these guides. Based on the data collected from the tour guides' survey, this research develops a profile of a sample of Chinese-speaking tour guides with detailed background information on age, gender, place of birth, years living in Australia, education level, residency status, years working as a guide, nature of the guiding job, guiding training attended as well as their training needs. Although not necessarily representative of the current population of ADS guides, this profile fills a vacuum with respect to tour guide profiles.

The results from the multiple data sources, interviews with tourism industry representatives, and surveys with both Chinese visitors and the tour guides, reveal not only the perceived importance of tour guides' roles but also provide insights into the meanings of those roles. For example, the role of the tour guide in guiding ADS groups is in some ways typical of other tour guide roles, that is, it is multifaceted and dynamic. But in other ways, it is broader and more demanding. For example, the role to some extent, also

includes the role of tour manager. The expectations of the tour guides' role identified by tourism stakeholders can assist travel companies with drafting guiding job descriptions and with specifying organisational expectations and performance requirements for tour guides.

It is an important finding that the *language competence* factor explains the least variance in a guide's intercultural competence, given that it is often used as the basis for recruiting suitable employees. Many previous studies (Cohn & Wood, 1982; Clement, Noels & Karine, 1994; Noels, Pon & Clement, 1996; Berry, 1997; Kim, 2001; Neto, 2002) have demonstrated the importance of host language competence in facilitating an individual's cultural learning and intercultural contact. This is certainly applicable to intercultural guiding. A tour guide needs language proficiency to be able to understand the local culture and make rational comparisons among different cultural systems, and therefore interpret to tourists the underlying assumptions of the locals (Kim, 2001). However, while language competence is a key element of bicultural tour guiding, by itself it is a poor indicator of IC, at least in the context of guiding Chinese tour groups to Australia. As suggested by the other two factors (social-interpersonal and cultural competence), other skills and aptitudes better explain and account for a guide's competence. Beyond a minimum threshold of fluency in the two languages, a guide's social skills and cultural competence emerge from the data as being more important in the guide's overall IC. This clearly has implications for guide recruitment, selection, training, and performance management.

In addition, the proposed model of the IC of tour guides contains both inherent abilities (personal traits) and learned abilities. Whether trait competence and learned competence can be considered together has been argued in the literature for some time (Chen & Starosta, 1995). Although only a few studies (e.g., Ward & Kennedy, 1996) have empirically documented the influence of personality traits such as flexibility and patience on IC, it seems important to incorporate such traits in measuring guides' IC, as it is often argued that personality traits are important aspects of effective tour guiding (Pond 1993). In addition, the fact that items of patience and flexibility have the highest factor loadings among all items of the IC of tour guides further corroborates the importance of at least some personality traits in IC, and may have implications for recruitment and selection of guides.

The model of IC emanating from the present study is consistent with the multi-dimensional nature of competency standards proposed for Australian tour guides (TTA, 2002) and at

least one definition of tour guides' professionalism ("to be a professional tour guide, one needs to have good product knowledge, good communication skills, and the right attitude") (Ap & Wong, 2001:555). However, because tour guiding competency standards must address all aspects of tour guiding such as safety, group management, customer service and presentation techniques, tour guide recruitment, training and accreditation often pay little attention to the range of knowledge, attitude and skill required for intercultural competence. This is certainly the case in Australia, and what the results of the present study provide is a basis for revisiting these standards to ensure that the full range of cognitive, affective, behavioural and trait items associated with intercultural competence underpin the recruitment selection, training and performance management of tour guides who work in an intercultural context. In particular, social-interpersonal competence appears to be an important element for the training of Chinese-speaking tour guides as it is perceived as a key component of the IC of guides by Chinese visitors.

In the visitor survey, respondents were asked to describe their most memorable experiences during their visit to Australia. The most memorable experiences drawn from this study relate to learning about Australian society, cultural values and life styles; cities and tourism sites; scenery, nature and climate; and friendly local people and interaction with them. Furthermore, respondents were also invited to give suggestions regarding their trip to Australia. There were over one hundred individual suggestions ranging from a more rational and logical itinerary to service improvements in hotels/restaurants, better quality tour guiding, more use of Chinese language and opportunities to interact with locals. Thus, these findings can be used as important information for the Australian tourism industry on how to promote Australia in China, how to improve the itineraries for Chinese tour groups, the training needs for tour guides and service quality improvements in hotels and restaurants.

A number of problems in guiding ADS tour groups emerged during the interviews with the tourism industry representatives. These include uncertain workload, low status, low wages, lack of experience, lack of a minimum entry requirement, various level of professionalism, lack of commitment and unhealthy industry practices. These results suggest that good guiding, particularly with respect to the cultural mediation role, is the responsibility of not just individual guides. There appears to be a need for tour operators and the tourism industry to support professional development, on-the-job training, better remuneration and

rewards for good practice for Australian-based Chinese-speaking tour guides. If excellence in cultural interpretation and mediation is to be achieved, commitment and support from all parties: government, the tourism industry, employers and the guides themselves, is essential.

6.1.4 Implications for Policy

The IC of tour guides and the cultural mediating role of guides would benefit from a stronger government role directed at enhancing the benefits of tour guiding as a career choice. For example, government tourism organisations and industry members could legislate a minimum price for Chinese tour groups and minimum wages for Chinese tour guides, thereby ensuring a reasonable income for tour guides.

A formal tour guide certification or licensing system that recognises and rewards quality guiding *including intercultural competence* would help to attract and retain skilled Chinese tour guides, and provide more incentives to improve their performance as professional guides in general and as cultural mediators in particular. Tour guides could acquire the knowledge and skills required to be a professional guide through formal or informal study, on the job training, work experience or through general life experience.

To facilitate training, adequate funding should be allocated to tourism and tour guide associations and tourism training authorities, to improve access to basic entry-level as well as advanced guide training for Chinese-speaking tour guides. Intercultural competence should be central to the training agenda. Training could incorporate both an apprenticeship system and study tours so that new tour guides could observe and learn from experienced guides. Overall, stronger support should be given to tour guides, especially newcomers to guiding, to obtain intercultural training.

6.2 Limitations of the Study

The positivist (hypothetico-deductive) approach tends to be reductionist with respect to variable relationships and therefore cannot provide as holistic a perspective of tour guiding or the visitor's experience as could an interpretive approach. It is good for explaining what happens but does not always reveal how and why it happens (Creswell, 1994; Sarantakos,

1996). For example, the closed response sets in the visitor and guide questionnaires do not allow for the probing of questions in order to gain additional information.

The size of the population of Chinese-speaking ADS tour guides in Australia is not known, and thus in the absence of a sampling frame, a probability sample is not possible. Consequently, the non-random sampling procedures together with the modest number of respondents for the tour guides' survey may have resulted in sampling error (Salant & Dillman, 1994), affecting the generalisability of the findings. However, multiple data sources were used to improve the trustworthiness of the results.

The manner in which visitor data were collected was also constrained by a number of factors. First, due to limited access to Chinese ADS tour groups, the visitor survey was mainly conducted in Melbourne, resulting in limited opportunities to triangulate visitor data. Second, the guided tour experience was only assessed just before respondents completed the tour, therefore, comparisons between pre-tour expectation and post-tour perception could not be made. Third, the researcher's assessment of the IC of tour guides based on her participant observation was not performed because of limited time and resources. Validation of the IC of tour guides and the guided tour experience could be gained if participant-observation was conducted.

6.3 Avenues for Further Research

Further research should consider research focused on other cultural groups and other destinations, and on particular sites and attractions, using experimental manipulation of tour guiding variables based on the research findings from this study. For example, research might focus on the impact of the IC of tour guides on mediating information, access and encounters relating to a particular destination or a site. Another suggestion is that the level of the cultural mediating role might need to be explored further in terms of the mediator's effect on tourists' learning and intercultural interaction. More specifically, how tour guides as cultural mediators communicate ideas (cultural interpretation) that are meaningful to the members of the target audience needs further research.

Essentially, the guided tour experience is complex and multidimensional. It comprises a number of aspects such as quality of facilities, social relationships and quality of tour

guides. This study focuses on one area of tour guides' competence: intercultural competence. However, other factors also contribute to tourists' satisfaction with their guided tour experience. Further research might explore how these other factors contribute to the quality of the guided tour experience. The factors could include other areas of the guides' competence for example, tour guides' logistical skills in managing the tour and non-guiding tour elements including itinerary, accommodation, meals, and customer service.

It is clear from the findings of the current study that good guiding, particularly with respect to the cultural mediation role, is the responsibility of not just individual guides. There appears to be a need for the tourism industry and the government to support professional development, on-the-job training, better remuneration and rewards for good practice for Australian-based Chinese-speaking tour guides. Thus, the impact of these situational factors on the variation of guides' IC would be a fruitful avenue for further research.

In several studies on tourist experiences (Richardson, 1996; Ryan, 2000; Vitterso, Vorkinn, Vistad & Vaadland, 2000), researchers argue that an interpretive paradigm-based, qualitative approach should be used when studying the tourist experience due to the complexity and subjective nature of the tourist experience. Although this issue has not been widely discussed in the studies included in this review, this should be explored in future research. For example, participant observation might be used for evaluating the guided tour experience in addition to visitor surveys. The guided tour experience involves a range of tourists with varying needs and wants, interacting with various kinds of service contacts. "No two services will be precisely alike. No two customers are precisely alike. Each customer will have unique demands or experience the service in a unique way" (Zeithaml & Bitner, 1996:20). Participant observation would provide a natural, unforced, and detailed evaluation of the tourist experience, rather than an evaluation of isolated attributes. This technique can generate an immense amount of descriptive and analytical data, and provide a considerably richer source of detail (Bowen, 2002). This particularly relates to how the guide's role varies in different contexts, and its importance and impact in relation to other aspects of the guided tour experience. Through participant observation, researchers can more thoroughly investigate what visitors think, feel, and do rather than what they say they think and do. Moreover, participant observation also allows the development of conceptualisation based within a real situation (Bowen, 2002:13).

There is mounting evidence to suggest that the demands of tour guiding generally are much greater now than in the past. In conjunction with this evidence, further research is needed to examine the impact on tour guides' roles of changing visitor expectations such as a wider range of guiding services and a wider range of tourist experiences, industry trends related to increased travel from new and emerging markets, and increased threats linked to litigation, terrorism and diseases.

I would like to conclude this thesis with some personal reflections. I have found this study of intercultural competence of tour guides to be a challenging and deeply rewarding experience. My experience of being a tour guide of English-speaking tourists in China and being an immigrant to Australia made me recognise the value of a cultural mediator and the importance of having the right knowledge, skills and attitudes to act as a 'go-between'. My PhD fieldwork made me feel even more passionate about this area of study since many of my respondents showed profound interest in it and told me that this study was very timely and invaluable. Indeed, I am excited by the empirical evidence that this research provides regarding the positive impact of the intercultural competence of tour guides on the guided tour experience. It is my hope that this study benefits the sustainable development of the emerging Chinese market, and leads to further research in this area.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Interview Questions with Tourism Industry Representatives

Interview questions with tourism industry representatives 与旅游专家会谈的问题

1. What are the important skills a tour guide needs to have when escorting a Chinese tour group?

您认为陪同中国旅游团的导游员应具备哪些最重要的技能?

2. What kind of knowledge do you think a Chinese group tour guide should have?

您认为当中国旅游团的导游应掌握哪些知识?

3. What do you feel are the most important roles that a Chinese group tour guide plays?

您认为中国旅游团的导游应起的最重要的职责是什么?

4. What do you feel tour guides of Chinese tour groups are generally good at?

您认为中国旅游团的导游最擅长什么?

5. What do you feel Chinese tour guides are generally not good at?

您认为中国旅游团的导游最不擅长什么?

6. How could Chinese tour guides improve?

中文导游需要从哪些方面改进?

7. What training do Chinese tour guides need?

中文导游需要哪些方面的培训?

8. What are the selection criteria you use when employing Chinese tour guides?

您雇佣导游员时, 使用什么选拔标准?

9. Please kindly advise us on how important you think the following items are to tour guides escorting Mainland Chinese visitors, by marking a number between 1 and 7.

	根本不 重要	非常不 重要	不 重要	既非重要亦 非不重要	重要	非常 重要	极为 重要
英文理解, 表达能力	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
汉语理解, 表达能力	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
对澳洲文化与社会的认识	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
能意识中澳文化差异	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
表现出对中澳文化的尊重	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
能为游客与当地居民建立友好的联系	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
语言翻译能力	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
解说文化的能力	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
解决问题的能力	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
应变能力	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
不持偏见	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
处事灵活	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
耐心	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
理解客人的感受	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
愿意做沟通中澳文化的媒介	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
与旅游团建立融洽关系的能力	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

.....

10. Do you have any other comments about guides of ADS group tours?

您对陪同ADS中国旅游团的导游还有何评论?

Appendix 2: Interview Questions with Tour Guides

Interview questions with tour guides 与导游员会谈的问题

Purpose of the interview: to identify what competencies a Chinese tour guide as a cultural mediator need to have.

1. How long have you been in Australia (in Sydney, Melbourne...)?

您来澳洲多久了？（在悉尼住多久了？在墨尔本住多久了？）

2. Do you feel settled now in Australia?

您是否在澳有安定感了？

3. How do you find to adapt to a new living environment?

您在适应新的生活环境方面有何感受？

4. What is your ethnic identity?

什么是您的民族身份？

5. How long have you been a tour guide? How long have you been a tour guide in Australia?

您当导游多久了？您在澳洲当导游多久了？

6. Have you undertaken any tour guide training? If yes, what kind of training have you obtained? Who provided it? How long was it? When did you do it?

您参加过导游培训吗？如果参加过，是哪一种类型的培训？谁提供的培训？培训的时间有多久？您何时参加的培训？

7. What is your level of awareness of various professional associations of tour guides?

您对各种专业导游协会有何了解？

8. How do you think of tour guiding certification and licensing?

您对导游证书和导游执照的看法如何?

9. What are the most important things that a Chinese group tour guide has to do?

中国旅游团的导游的最重要的职责是什么?

10. What are the important skills you use when guiding a Chinese tour group?

您认为为中国旅游团导游, 您应具备哪些最重要的技能?

11. What are the important characteristics you need to have to lead a Chinese tour group in Australia?

带中国团, 您最需要具备哪些特有的性格?

12. What kind of knowledge do you think a Chinese group tour guide should have?

您认为当中国旅游团的导游应掌握哪些知识?

13. What do you feel are the most important roles that a Chinese group tour guide plays?

您认为中国旅游团的导游应起的最重要的角色是什么?

14. What do you feel tour guides of Chinese tour groups in Australia are generally good at?

您认为澳洲的中国旅游团的导游最擅长什么?

15. What do you feel Chinese tour guides are generally not good at?

您认为澳洲的中国旅游团的导游最不擅长什么?

16. How could Chinese tour guides improve?

中文导游需要从哪些方面改进?

17. What training do Chinese tour guides need?

中文导游需要哪些方面的培训？

18. What are the barriers to training?

参加培训的障碍是什么？

19. Do you think that training is compulsory?

您认为培训是必须的吗？

20. How do you describe a typical Chinese tour group on ADS visa?

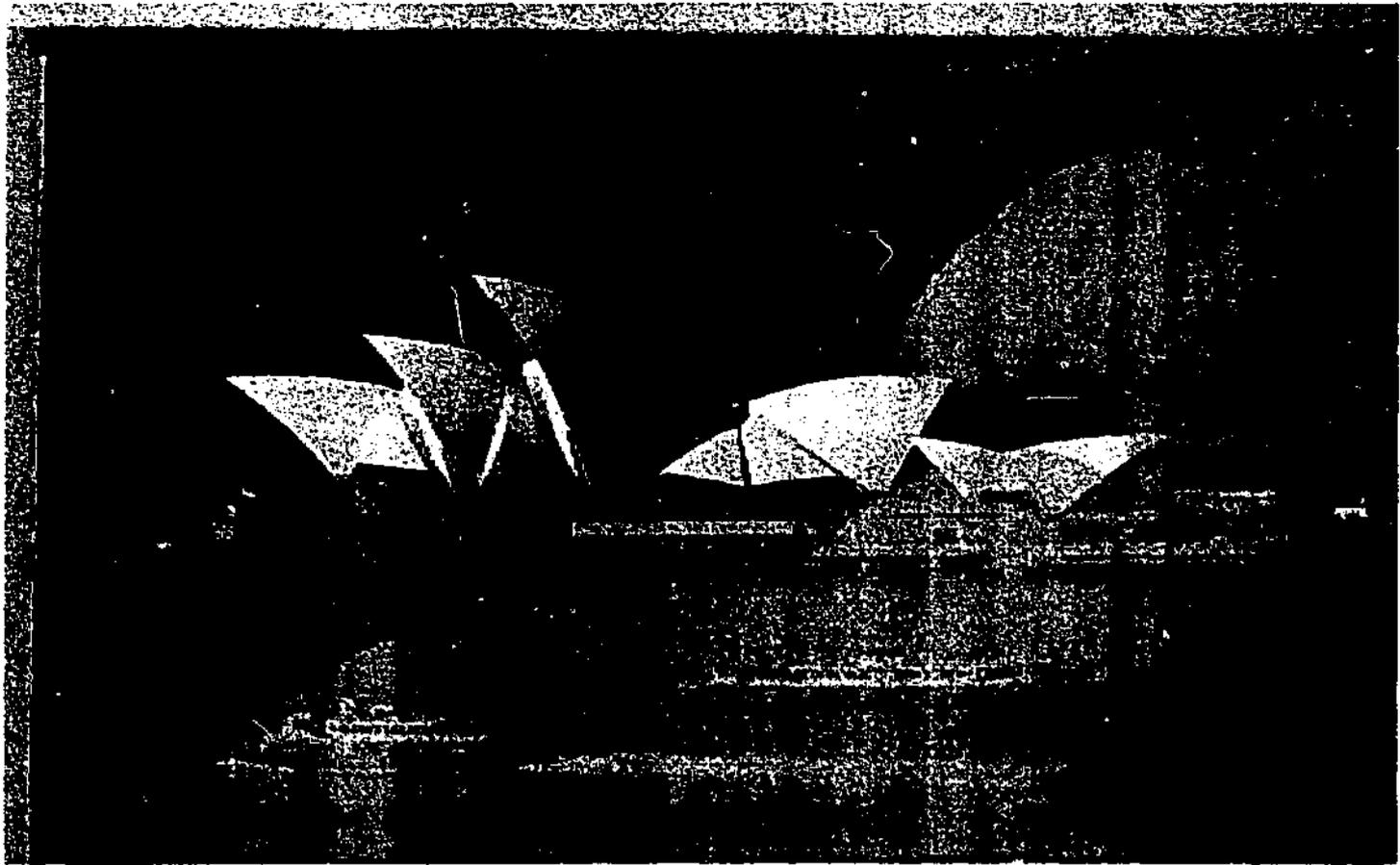
您怎样形容一个典型的中国旅游团队？（持ADS签证的旅游团）

21. Please kindly advise us on how important you think the following items are to tour guides escorting Mainland Chinese visitors, by marking a number between 1 and 7.

	根本不 重要	非常不 重要	不重要	既非重要亦 非不重要	重要	非常 重要	极为 重要
英文理解, 表达能力	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
汉语理解, 表达能力	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
对澳洲文化与 社会的认识	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
能意识中澳文化 差异	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
表现出对中澳文化 的尊重	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
能为游客与当地居民 建立友好的联系	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
语言翻译能力	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
解说文化的能力	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
解决问题的能力	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
应变能力	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
不持偏见	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
处事灵活	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
耐心	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
理解客人的感受	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
愿意做沟通中澳文化的 媒介	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
与旅游团建立融洽关系 的能力	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

22. What else do you want to tell us besides the above questions?

除了以上问题, 您还有何补充的?

Appendix 3: Visitor Survey Questionnaire (English Version)

Dear Chinese visitors,

Thank you for participating in this important study. Our purpose is to learn your opinions about tour guide intercultural competence. The information you provide will be vital to the improvement of Chinese tour guide professionalism and Chinese visitors' experience in Australia.

This questionnaire is being given to only a selected number of visitors. Your participation is very important since your opinions will represent those of thousands of other Chinese visitors! It should take you only a few minutes to complete this questionnaire. Be assured that your responses will be treated in the strictest of confidence, and your completed questionnaire will be identifiable only by a number. No one will see your questionnaire except the researcher.

If you have any questions, please contact Xin Yu, a PhD student, Department of Management, Monash University, Berwick Campus, P O Box 1071, Narre Warren, Victoria 3805, Australia. Xin can be contacted via Email at xin.yu@buseco.monash.edu.au or you may leave a message for her at (613) 99047107.

Thank you very much for your assistance.

Sincerely,

Betty Weiler, PhD, Associate Professor of Tourism

MONASH

Chinese Visitor Survey

First, we would like to know your previous travel experience, your current trip and factors affecting your desire to travel to Australia. Please tick the appropriate box.

1. Have you ever travelled outside of China prior to this trip?

Yes No (if no, please go to Q.3)

2. Have you ever travelled to the countries or regions below? (Do not include this trip and place a '0' if you have never visited the region or country)

Asia (outside China) Australia Other (Please specify) _____

3. How many times have you been on a guided tour outside of China prior to this trip as a tourist?

_____ Times

4. How would you rate your English language proficiency?

Fluent Conversational Less than conversational None

5. Who are you travelling with? (tick ALL that apply)

Alone Spouse Children _____ Others, specify

6. How many people are there in your tour group? (counting yourself)

_____ number of people

7. How important to you were each of the following features when you chose to come to Australia for a holiday? (please rate the following features from 1 to 5 according to their importance and circle one number only, e.g. if 'safety' was not an important fact when you chose Australia as a destination, you would circle 1 or 2)

	Very unimportant	Un-important	Neutral	Important	Very Important
Reasonable price	1	2	3	4	5
Experience exotic culture	1	2	3	4	5
View scenic beauty	1	2	3	4	5
Encounter local people	1	2	3	4	5
Visit famous attractions	1	2	3	4	5
Visit friends or relatives	1	2	3	4	5
Good climate	1	2	3	4	5
Safety	1	2	3	4	5

The following questions are about the roles and intercultural competence of tour guides. We would like to hear your honest opinions. Please tick the appropriate answer to the questions related to both importance and performance.

8. How important are the following roles of a tour guide to your overall travel experience in Australia? (please circle the number that best represents your answer from 1=Not at all important to 7=Extremely important)

A guide should.....

	Not at all important				Extremely important			
Give accurate & enjoyable commentary	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Be a good cultural mediator	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Provide good customer service	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Manage group itinerary	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Care for health & safety of group	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	

9. How important (left side), are the following items of intercultural competence (IC) to your guided experience in Australia and how well (right side) do you think the following intercultural competence (IC) items describe your current tour guide? (please indicate your answer to each item by circling only one number on each scale of 1 to 7 from low to high, e.g. if understanding Australian culture is not at all important, you should circle 1. If the guide's level of understanding of Australian culture is not all adequate, please circle 1) 1=Not at all important (adequate) 2=Very unimportant (inadequate) 3=Unimportant (Inadequate) 4=Neither important nor unimportant (neither adequate nor inadequate) 5=Important (Adequate) 6=Very important (Very adequate) 7=Extremely important (Extremely Adequate)

How important it is to your guided experience							Tour Guide's Intercultural competence	How well you think your guide performed						
Not at all important			Extremely important					Not at all adequate			Extremely Adequate			
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Ability to speak & understand English	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Ability to speak & understand Chinese	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Understanding Australian culture & society	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Awareness of cultural differences between China & Australia	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Displaying respect for culture of visitors & host culture	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Ability to initiate interaction between visitors & host population	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Language interpretation skills	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Cultural interpretation skills	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Ability to solve problems	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Ability to cope with unexpected	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Being nonjudgmental	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Being flexible	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Being patient	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Understanding others' feelings	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Motivation to be a cultural mediator	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Ability to establish rapport with group	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

The following questions are related to your overall satisfaction with your visit to Australia.

10. Will you recommend this tour to friends/relatives?

- Yes No
 Not Sure

11. Do you plan to come back for a repeat visit in the future?

- Yes No
 Not Sure

12. What is your overall level of satisfaction with this guided tour?

Extremely dissatisfied

Extremely satisfied

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

We need to know a little more about yourself in order to compare your results with others. Please tick one box for each of the following questions.

13. Your gender:

- Male Female

14. Your age:

- 18-24 25-34 35-44 45-54
 55-64 65+

15. Highest level of education completed

- High school or less Vocation school University
(Degree or Diploma)
 Postgraduate Other

16. Your occupation:

- Government official Administrator Technician/engineer
 Teacher/researcher Office clerk Factory worker
 Private businessman/woman Other

17. Which part of China are you from?

- Beijing Shanghai Guangdong _____ Others, specify

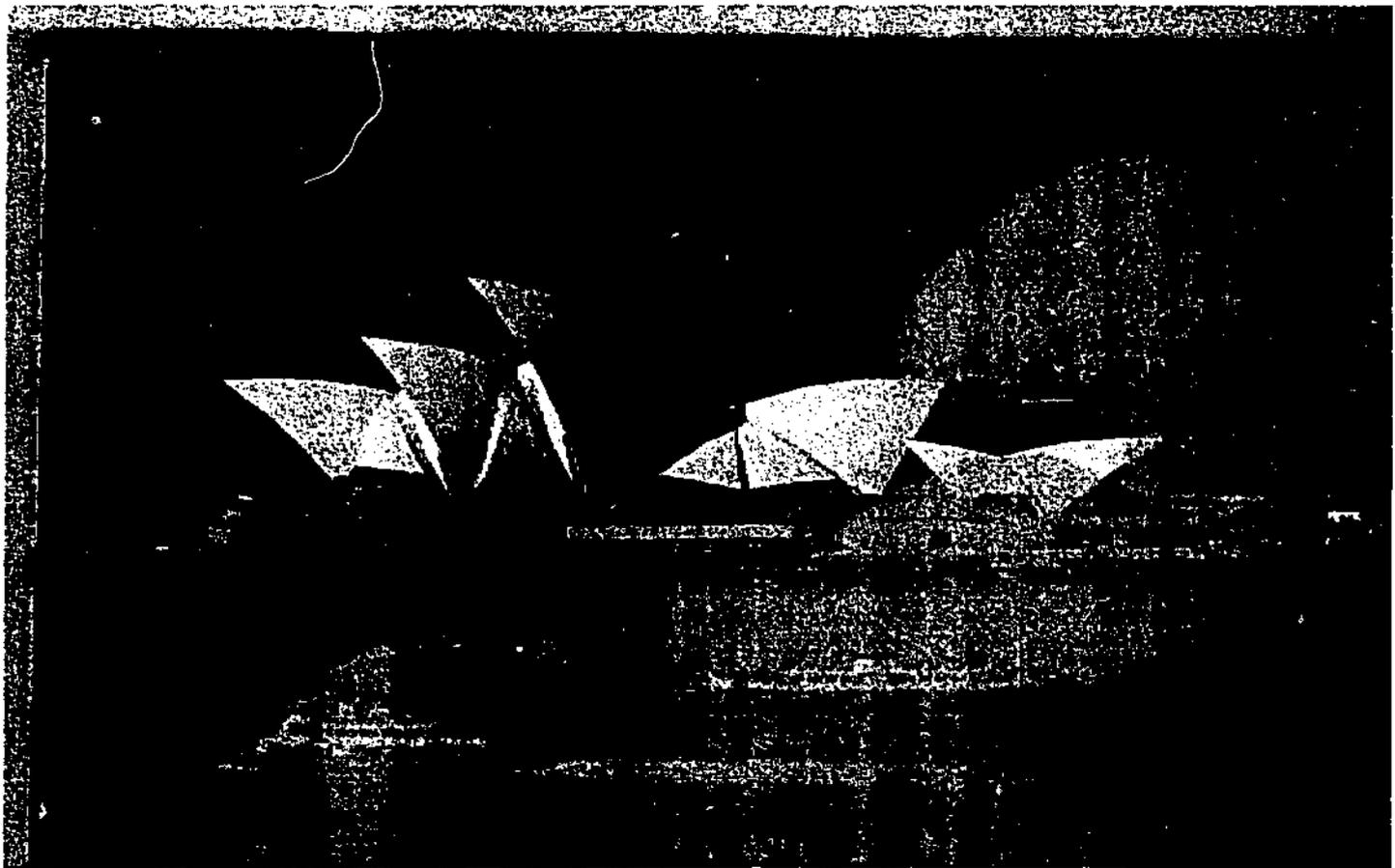
Please feel free to answer the following questions:

18. What was your most memorable experience during your visit to Australia?

19. What role, if any, did your tour guide play in this?

20. If there is anything else you want to tell us regarding your experience besides the above listed questions, please feel free to comment:

You may either return the completed questionnaire to us in person or complete it at a later time. Once you have completed your questionnaire simply put it in the reply paid envelope we gave to you and drop it in any Australian post box. If you would like more information about this study, please do not hesitate to contact the following address: **The Secretary, the Standing Committee on Ethics in Research Involving Humans, PO Box No 3A, Monash University, Vic. 3800.** Thank you very much for your cooperation. **Thank you very much** for your participation in this research.

Appendix 4: Visitor Survey Questionnaire (Chinese Version)

亲爱的中国客人，

首先，对您参加这项重要的研究表示衷心地感谢！此项调研的目的是了解您对导游员跨文化交际能力的看法。仅占用您几分钟时间，请您协助填写此问卷。您代表着成千上万名在澳的中国游客。您的宝贵意见将用于一项有关导游员跨文化交际能力及其与游客在澳旅游经历的关系的研究。这项研究将有助于丰富中国游客在澳的旅游经历同时也有助于提高导游员的专业化程度。您不必在问卷上留姓名与地址。调研人员对您的回复绝对保密。除了调研人员，任何人都无权阅读您的问卷。

如果您有任何疑问，请与蒙纳什大学管理系博士研究生俞新联系。联系地址如下：Xin Yu, Department of Management, Monash University, Berwick Campus, P O Box 1071, Narre Warren, Victoria 3805, Australia。电子邮件地址：xin.yu@buseco.monash.edu.au 电话：(613) 99047107。

我本人对您给予的大力合作表示衷心地感谢！

Betty Weiler 博士, 旅游学付教授

MONASH

中国游客调查

首先, 我们想了解您以往的旅游经历, 此次旅行的一些情况以及影响您选择来澳旅游的因素。请在合适的答案上打勾。

1. 您是第一次访澳吗?

是 否

2. 您曾到下列国家或地区旅行过吗?(请在所有合适的答案上打勾)

亚洲 欧洲 美国

其他 (请注明何处) _____

3. 到国外旅游, 您曾参加过几次有导游陪同的旅行团? (不包括此行)

_____ 次数

4. 您的英语水平:

流利 一般会话 只言片语 不懂

5. 您与谁一道旅游?

配偶 子女 同事

朋友 独自 其他 (请注明何人) _____

6. 此次旅游, 您在澳一共住了几夜? _____ 夜

7. 您的旅行团一共有多少人? _____ 人 (包括您本人)

8. 当您选择来澳旅游时, 下列各因素对您有何重要性? (请根据每一项的重要性进行评估, 从1至5, 选择一个答案。例如: 您认为安全不是选择来澳的重要因素, 应选2为答案)

	非常不重要	不重要	一般	重要	非常重要
价格合理	1	2	3	4	5
体验异国文化	1	2	3	4	5
观赏美丽的自然风光	1	2	3	4	5
接触当地居民	1	2	3	4	5
参观著名胜地	1	2	3	4	5
有机会探亲或访友	1	2	3	4	5
气候宜人	1	2	3	4	5
安全	1	2	3	4	5

下列问题涉及导游员的职责和跨文化交际能力。我们愿意听取您的宝贵意见。请就每一项打勾。

9. 您如何评估下列导游员职能的重要性? (请按1=根本不重要至7=极为重要的顺序, 在最能代表您意见的答案上画圈)

导游员应该。。。。	根本不重要							极为重要
提供准确并有乐趣的导游	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
做沟通中澳文化的媒介	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
为顾客提供良好的服务	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
掌握旅游团的行程	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
关心旅游团的健康与安全	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	

10. 您认为下列跨文化交际能力对您在澳的旅游经历有何重要性(左边一栏)? 您认为您的导游从何种程度上具备下列跨文化交际能力(右边一栏)? (请您就重要性和表现的每一项, 在1-7的范围内选择一个答案。例如: 您认为了解澳洲文化对导游员非常重要, 在重要一栏您应选择6。您认为您的导游非常了解澳洲文化, 在表现一栏您应选择6)。1=根本不重要(根本不适当) 2=非常不重要(非常不适当) 3=不重要(不适当) 4=既非重要亦非不重要(既非适当亦非不适当) 5=重要(适当) 6=非常重要(非常适当) 7=极为重要(极为适当)

导游员跨文化交际能力对您在澳旅游经历有何重要性							导游员跨文化交际能力							导游员的实际表现							
根本不重要				极为重要										根本不适当				极为适当			
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	英理解, 表达能力	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	汉语理解, 表达能力	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	对澳洲文化与社会的认识	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	能意识中澳文化差异	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	表现出对中澳文化的尊重	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	能为游客与当地居民建立友好的联系	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	语言翻译能力	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	解说文化的能力	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	解决问题的能力	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	应变能力	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	不持偏见	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	处事灵活	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	耐心	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	理解客人的感受	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	愿意做沟通中澳文化的媒介	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	与旅游团建立和睦关系的能力	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

通过下列问题(9-11), 我们想了解您对澳洲之行的满意程度。

11. 您是否愿意向亲戚朋友推荐这次旅行?

是 否

不肯定

12. 您将来是否打算重访澳洲?

是 否

不肯定

Appendix 5: Tour Guide Survey Questionnaire (English Version)

Tour Guide Survey

Please take a few moments to answer these questions. Your responses are being used as part of a postgraduate research project about what tour guides do when guiding ADS groups from China, and how they contribute to the quality of the tourist experience. Your voluntary participation in this research will assist in improving the profile and professionalism of Chinese tour guides and Chinese visitors' experience in Australia and also with identifying training needs for Chinese tour guides. You do not need to leave your name and address. All answers will be treated confidentially. If you would like more information about this study, please do not hesitate to contact the following address: **The Secretary, the Standing Committee on Ethics in Research Involving Humans, PO Box No 3A, Monash University, Vic. 3800. The telephone number is (03) 99052052.** Thank you very much for your cooperation.

First, we would like to learn about your experience as a tour guide and your participation in and your opinion on guide training. Please tick the appropriate box.

1. Where were you born?

- Mainland China Hong Kong Taiwan
 Australia Other (please specify) _____

2. How many years have you lived in Australia? _____ Years

3. How many years have you been a tour guide in Australia? _____ Years

4. Have you received any tour guide training? (If not applicable, please go to Q6)

- Yes No

5. Please indicate the type of training you have received.

(For example, TAFE tour guide training course) _____

6. What are your training needs? (please specify e.g. knowledge of attractions, group organisational skills) _____

7. How would you like to receive the training? (Please tick any of the choices that suit you)

- Apprentice Evening school Self-study Internet
 Short course Other (please specify) _____

8. The guiding job you currently have is (tick all that apply)

- Full time Part time Casual Seasonal

9. Do you belong to any tour guiding association?

- Yes (please specify) _____ No

The following questions are about the roles and intercultural competence of tour guides. We sincerely would like to hear your opinions. Please tick the appropriate answer to the questions related to both importance and performance.

10. How would you rate the importance of the following roles of a tour guide (please circle the number that best represents your answer from 1=Not at all important to 7=Extremely important)? A guide should....

	Not at all important				Extremely important		
Give accurate & enjoyable commentary	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Be a good cultural mediator	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Provide good customer service	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Manage group itinerary	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Care for health & safety of group	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

11. How important do you think the following items of intercultural competence (IC) are to a tour guide escorting Mainland Chinese tour groups, and how would you describe your own intercultural competence (IC) in your job guiding Chinese tour groups? (please indicate your answer to each item by circling only one number on each scale of 1 to 7 from low to high, e.g. if understanding Australian culture is not at all important, you should circle 1) 1=Not at all important (adequate) 2=Very unimportant (inadequate) 3=Unimportant (Inadequate) 4=Neither important nor unimportant (neither adequate nor inadequate) 5=Important (Adequate) 6=Very important (Very adequate) 7=Extremely important (Extremely Adequate)

Importance							Intercultural competence	Performance						
Not at all important			Extremely important					Not at all adequate			Extremely Adequate			
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Ability to speak & understand English	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Ability to speak & understand Chinese	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Understanding Australian culture & society	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Awareness of cultural differences between China & Australia	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Displaying respect for culture of visitors & host culture	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Ability to initiate interaction between visitors & host population	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Language interpretation skills	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Cultural interpretation skills	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Ability to solve problems	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Ability to cope with unexpected	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Being nonjudgmental	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Being flexible	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Being patient	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Understanding others' feelings	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Motivation to be a cultural mediator	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Ability to establish rapport with group	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

12. What is your newspaper preference?

- Only Chinese newspapers Mostly Chinese Equally Chinese and Australian
 Mostly Australian Australian newspapers only

13. How do you think of yourself?

- Very Chinese *Mostly Chinese* Bicultural
 Mostly Australianised Very Australianised

14. How do you evaluate your Chinese and English speaking skills?

- Only Chinese Chinese better than English Both Chinese & English
 English better than Chinese Only English

15. If your clients speak a Chinese dialect, how would you rate your dialect proficiency?

- Fluent Conversational Less than conversational None

16. How do you evaluate your Chinese and English reading skills?

- Only Chinese Chinese better than English Both Chinese & English
 English better than Chinese Only English

17. How do you evaluate your Chinese and English writing skills?

- Only Chinese Chinese better than English Both Chinese & English
 English better than Chinese Only English

We need to know a little more about yourself in order to compare your results with others. Please tick one box for each of the following questions.

18. Your gender:

- Male Female

19. Your age:

- 18-24 25-34 35-44 45-54
 55-64 65+

20. Highest level of education completed

- High school or less Vocation school University
(Degree or Diploma)
 Postgraduate Other

21. Where did you obtain your highest education qualification?

_____ (please indicate the place e.g. Melbourne, Australia)

22. Have you had any previous living (working/travel) experience in another culture other than Chinese or Australian culture?

Yes No Other (Please specify)

23. Are you

Australian citizen Permanent or temporary resident International student
 On working holiday Other (please specify) _____

24. How do you describe a typical Chinese tour group on ADS visa?

25. Where do you go, who do you talk to, and what information sources do you use most when planning your tour (itinerary & commentary)?

26. What is your level of awareness of professional associations of tour guides?

27. How do you think of tour guiding certification and licensing?

28. How do you assess your intercultural competence?

You may either return the completed questionnaire to us in person or complete it at a later time. Once you have completed your questionnaire simply put it in the reply paid envelope we gave to you and drop it in any Australian post box. **Thank you very much** for your participation in this research.

Appendix 6: Tour Guide Survey Questionnaire (Chinese Version)

导游员调查

仅占用您几分钟请您协助回答下列问题。您的宝贵意见将用于一项有关导游员跨文化交际能力及其与游客在澳旅游经历的关系的研究。这项研究将有助于提高导游员的专业化程度同时也有助于丰富中国游客在澳的旅游经历。您不必在问卷上留姓名与地址。调研人员对您的回复绝对保密。如果您想进一步了解此项研究，可以与蒙纳什大学联系。联系地址如下：The Secretary, the Standing Committee on Ethics in Research Involving Humans, PO Box No 3A, Monash University, Vic. 3800. 调研人员对您的大力合作表示衷心地感谢！

首先，我们想了解您从事导游工作的经历以及参加培训的情况。请您在合适的答案上打勾。

1. 您在何处出生？

中国大陆 香港 台湾 澳洲 其他（请注明）_____

2. 您在澳洲居住多久了？_____年

3. 您在澳洲从事导游工作多久了？_____年

4. 您是否参加过导游培训？（如果没参加过，请直接回答第六个问题）

是 否

5. 您参加过何种导游培训？（请注明，例如：TAFE 导游培训班）

6. 您需要什么方面的培训？（请注明，例如：景点讲解技巧，团队组织技巧）_____

7. 您愿意接收哪种方式的培训？（请选择任何合适的方式）

在职培训 夜校 自学 互联网 其他（请注明）_____

8. 您现任的导游工作属于（在所有合适的答案上打勾）

全日制 半日制 临时性 季节性

下列问题涉及导游员的职责和跨文化交际能力。我们肯切听取您的宝贵意见。请就每一项打勾。

9. 您如何评估下列导游员的职责？（请按1=根本不重要至7=极为重要的顺序，在最能代表您意见的答案上画圈）导游员应该。。。。。

	根本不重要						极为重要
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
提供准确并有乐趣的导游	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
做一个沟通中澳文化的媒介	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
为顾客提供良好的服务	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
掌握旅游团的行程	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
关心旅游团的健康与安全	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

10. 您认为下列跨文化交际能力对陪同中国大陆旅游团的导游有何等重要性（左边一栏）？您认为您在何种程度上具备下列跨文化交际能力（右边一栏）？（请您就重要性和表现的每一项，在 1-7 的范围内选择一个答案。例如：您认为了解澳洲文化对导游员非常重要，在重要一栏您应选择 6。您非常了解澳洲文化，在表现一栏您应选择 6）1=根本不重要（根本不适当）2=非常重要（非常不适当）3=不重要（不适当）4=既非重要亦非不重要（既非适当亦非不适当）5=重要（适当）6=非常重要（非常适当）7=极为重要（极为适当）

您认为下列跨文化交际能力有何重要性							导游员跨文化交际能力	您认为您在何种程度上具备下列跨文化交际能力						
根本不重要			极为重要					根本不适当			极为适当			
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	英理解，表达能力	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	汉语理解，表达能力	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	对澳洲文化与社会的认识	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	能意识中澳文化差异	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	表现出对中澳文化的尊重	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	能为游客与当地居民建立友好的联系	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	语言翻译能力	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	解说文化的能力	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	解决问题的能力	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	应变能力	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	不持偏见	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	处事灵活	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	耐心	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	理解客人的感受	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	愿意做沟通中澳文化的媒介	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	与旅游团建立和睦关系的能力	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

11. 您喜欢读什么报纸？

- 只读中文报 以中文报为主 中，英文报都读
 以英文报为主 只读英文报

12. 您认为您

- 非常中国化 大部分中国化 双重文化
 大部分澳洲化 非常澳洲化

13. 您如何评估您的中文，英文口语技能？

- 只会中文 中文比英文好 中文，英文相当
 英文比中文好 只讲英文

14. 您如何评估您的中文, 英文阅读技能?

- 只懂中文 中文比英文好 中文, 英文相当
- 英文比中文好 只懂英文

15. 如果您的客人讲方言, 您如何评估您的方言留利程度?

- 流利 一般会话 只言片语 不懂

16. 您如何评估您的中文, 英文写作技能?

- 只会写中文 中文比英文好 中文, 英文相当
- 英文比中文好 只会写英文

我们需要对您有更多地了解以便将您的意见与其他导游的意见进行比较:
(请您在下列最合适的答案上打勾)

17. 您的性别

- 男 女

18. 您的年龄

- 18-24 25-34 35-44 45-54
- 55-64 65+

19. 受教育程度

- 高中以下及高中 中等专业学校、
职业学校 高等学校
(本科及大专)
- 研究生 其他

20. 您在何处获得您的最高学位?

_____ (请注明, 例如 in Melbourne, Australia)

21. 除了中国和澳洲, 您是否还在其他不同文化背景的地方生活或工作过?

- 是 (请注明何处) _____ 否

22. 您是

- 澳洲公民 澳洲长期居民 临时居住
- 在澳工作度假 国际留学生 其他

23. 您怎样形容一个典型的中国旅游团队? (持ADS签证的旅游团)

24. 您经常到何处, 与何人交谈并使用何种信息以便制定接待旅游团的计划和准备景点导游词?

25. 您隶属哪些旅游或导游协会? _____ (请注明协会名称)

26. 您如何看待导游证书和导游执照?

27. 您如何评估您的跨文化交际能力?

您可以将填好的问卷直接交给调研人员,也可以用我们给您的邮资已付的信封把问卷寄给我们。调研人员对您的大力合作再次表示衷心地感谢!

Appendix 7: Responses to Q19

Q 19. What was your most memorable experience during your visit to Australia?
(translation from Chinese into English)

One group member disappeared
Natural scenery along expressways and smiles of Australian people.
Scenery of the pastureland
Greens of cities
Natural environment
Penguin parade at Phillip Island
Visit to Sovereign Hill, the old gold mine at Ballarat
Sydney Bay cruise tour, Penguin parade at Phillip Island
Beautiful environment, forest, pasture, seashore and cities; the friendliness of Australian people
The beautiful environment, spacious space with few people
Clean environment, honest and unsophisticated people
Scenery
Environment, infrastructure
Environment, climate
Beautiful scenery, comfortable living environment
History, environment
Natural scenery
Beautiful natural scenery, friendly and amiable Australian people
Environment and natural scenery
Gold coast, surfing paradise
Gold coast
Gold Coast
Gold Coast, surfing paradise; penguins parade
Beautiful scenery, strong awareness of environment protection and safe
Beautiful scenery, friendly smile, awareness of environment protection
Beautiful natural scenery
Beautiful Australian continent
Sunshine, beach, warm and friendly people
Money
Stroll in Sydney, surfing and swimming in the sea
Beautiful natural environment
Penguins Parade, Gold Coast
High quality environment
Penguin Parade
Penguins marching to the land at Phillip Island in Melbourne, Australian's awareness of environment protection
Viewing penguin parade left me a deep impression
Staff at Movie World, Gold Coast did a very good job in directing audience before movie started
Sydney Opera House
Natural environment, the beauty of the greens left me a very deep impression
Swimming at Gold Coast
Service personnel are warm to visitors
Australia did very well in environment protection
Old gold mine

Australia did very well in environment protection
Climate, scenery, culture, the best loved country
Australia's environment protection and its sustainable development
People here including many visitors are well educated (civilized??), friendly and calm
Visit Great Barrier Reef, Penguin Parade
Industrialised animal husbandry
Natural scenery
Night Melbourne tour
Environment
Business, culture and scenery
The social welfare system makes its people feel no worries, strong awareness of environment protection, feel safe, high efficiency of enterprises, and strong competitiveness of products in the market
Beach, sunshine, scenery, cultural features
Environment, climate, people and culture
Gold Coast
Good environment, high commodity price, people of good quality
Environment protection and social morality
Penguin Parade
Awareness of environment protection and rule by law
Visit to universities and research institutions
Ecology and urban development in Gold Coast and Brisbane; Sydney Opera House; the development of China Town
Rich natural resources, attach importance to environment protection, civilised and hygiene
Exotic scenery
Environment protection
Tree planting
Beautiful natural scenery, clean and tidy, civilised, exotic culture, observe law
The most memorable thing is Australian beautiful natural scenery; Australian public hygiene is admirable; well protected environment
Natural scenery, environment protection and culture
Penguin Parade
Beautiful scenery
Understanding of exotic culture
The most memorable experience is Australian's beautiful natural scenery and how Australian people observe rules and particularly, we should make an effort in learn the Australian's good management.
Australian culture
Nature conditions
Australian culture
Sleep and rest
China becomes more important to Australia
Penguin Parade
Good climate and environment, few people, good traffic order, good humanitarian environment, people of good quality, good environment protection.
People of high quality, humanitarian attitude of the government
Country of garden
Penguins returning to their nests
Exotic scenery, environment protection, beach
Sydney, Canberra, Brisbane and Melbourne
Not enough sleep, the harmonious relationship between people and nature

Fly from place to place
Sea, blue sky, beautiful living environment, modern city and nation
Get to know local people's lifestyles, the layout of a city and the successful management of a city, environment and sanitation
Good scenery and welfare system
It is very tiring to take the nine-hour flight from Hong Kong to Australia
Beautiful environment
Australia's natural scenery
Beautiful natural scenery
Spacious land and small population density
Australia has beautiful scenery, high degree of civilisation, awareness of observing laws
Linking Asian and Australian cultures, play an important role of presenting information on local people and culture.
Awareness of environment protection, including tourists. How wonderful it would be if all Chinese visitors could bring this concept (awareness) back to China!
Australia's environment protection and its public sanitation
Education, particularly, high school and vocation school
Local people and customs
Great Barrier Reef
Melbourne's people and customs, Penguins returning to their nests at Phillip Island
Australia's environment protection, municipal administration
Sydney, weather
Good environment protection
People and customs
Natural scenery
Penguin Parade at Phillip Island, Viewing sea and night sky at Gold Coast
Not many memorable experiences
Gold Coast
Environment
Beautiful environment, quality of Australian people, courtesy, heritage protection
Penguin Parade, Gold Coast
Gold Coast
The east coast of Australia is relatively original, simple and unsophisticated, beautiful environment, high quality air, the warm and friendly hospitality of the locals
Beautiful exotic scenery
Environment
Program at Gold Coast, visit to Parliament House
A lot of Chinese visitors in Australia but few signs and instructions are in Chinese language. Should pay attention to Chinese language signs and instructions.
Brisbane, New Zealand
Mountains, rivers and sceneries here are charming; a country with high degree (intensive) of environment protection; and lifestyles are admirable
Climate and forestation
Beautiful scenery, quiet environment
Excellent environment protection, beautiful scenery, excellent culture of human interest
Spacious, garden-style city structure
Natural scenery, environment protection
Green strips, blue sky, sunshine and beach
Air, sea, well maintained natural environment and national interests in sports
Gained a deeper understanding of Australia and New Zealand
Beautiful environment, pleasant climate

City sightseeing
Haven't had much experience yet
Australia is beautiful
The harmonious relationship between human being and the nature
Waiting for penguins returning to land in the rain
Haven't had much experience yet
Environment protection
No racial discrimination
Friendly to China
Gold Coast, Zoo
Brisbane, Gold Coast, Canberra's historical display, Melbourne's gold rush tour and penguin parade (the best)
One hour flying in the hot balloon
My suitcase was damaged. After negotiation, the suitcase was repaired and returned to my hotel. This showed that Australian people are responsible. It would be better if they could do it a little bit faster.
Go Great Ocean Road to see the twelve apostles, Penguin Parade
Penguin Parade, the Twelve Apostles, London Bridge
Gold coast tour
Fresh air, rich soil, good place for living
Rich land resources and good city planning left us good impression.
Strong awareness of environment protection, the harmonious unity of human being and the nature
Beautiful Sydney Opera House, the Harbour Bridge
Visit to Sydney Opera House
Scenery
Beautiful environment
Penguin Parade, Sydney Opera House, Gold Coast, Movie World,
Penguin Parade, Sydney Opera House, Gold Coast, Movie World, Dragon Cypress Park
Penguin Parade, Sydney Opera House, Gold Coast, Movie World, Dragon Cypress Park
Penguin Parade, Sydney Opera House, Gold Coast, Movie World, Dragon Cypress Park
Penguins
Natural scenery, safety
Tour just started. Feel that Melbourne's natural scenery is well protected
Fresh air, beautiful environment
Gold Coast
Strong awareness of environment protection, people of quality, beautiful scenery
Strong awareness of environment protection, people of quality, well educated, beautiful scenery
Gold Coast
Harmonious relationship between group members and the guide, beautiful natural scenery
Harmonious relationship between people and nature
Sightseeing
Environment, picturesque scenery
Natural scenery, climate
Environment protection, sanitary
Natural environment, people and culture
Long and tiring journey
Canberra, trees, greens, beautiful environment
Casino, Gold Coast
Environment, scenery
Gold Coast

Casino, Gold Coast
Culture
Natural scenery
Full of views of greens, Sydney is better than Melbourne, natural,
Australia's scenery, culture and water treatment
Good forestation, good environment protection
Beautiful Gold Coast
Brisbane movie world
Sydney bridge, Sydney harbour cruise tour
Beautiful scenery, good environment protection, sanitary rules are clear and detailed
Every tour memorable and unforgettable
Beautiful environment, good ecology protection, clean and tidy cities
Environment protection, traffic order, safety and appearance of cities
Appreciate Australian natural scenery and municipal architectures
Penguin Parade, Gold Coast
Environment protection
Penguin Parade
Movie World
Natural scenery
All activities at Gold Coast
All tourism sites worth memorable
Beautiful, and primitive natural scenery
Good natural environment, good social order
Live in local people's home; scenery
Live in local people's home
Sydney Opera House
Sydney Opera House, Water Pole, Parliament House
Sydney Opera House
Architecture styles, environment and culture
Birthday celebration
Gold Coast is a good place for holidays.
Gold Coast is a good resort
Not bad scenery
More than one guide. Some good but some are just ok.
Australia's welfare system is good. Tour buses are good. Hotels are good.
Relaxed travel program, fresh air and beautiful seashore
Good scenery
Lovers Harbour
Long flight
Flight delayed
Too hot

Appendix 8: Responses to Q20

Q20. What role, if any, your tour guides play in your most memorable experiences?
(translation from Chinese into English)

Tour guide is very cooperative and is able to solve problems very quickly.
Guide visitors to discover the most important things
Tour guides have 50% impact on visitors' satisfaction
The quality of tour guides is different from places to places, some are good, and some are not good.
Commentary
Provide information on how to improve ecological development in China
Guiding skills
Tour guides play an important role
The conscientious attitude of our guide eliminated our disappointment with the hotel
Love their job
Don't mislead visitors
The disgraceful feature of the Chinese still can be seen
Important
Relatively important
Important
Neutral
Sometimes tour guide mislead the group
Neutral
It is not good for guides if they are only fond of recommending shopping
Important
Play relatively important role
At Gold Coast, tour guide is good at compromise. The guide for viewing penguins is not good
Take us to shops where we don't want to buy, waste our time and drop the tour standards.
Inform about Australian customs and lifestyles
Provide travel arrangement
Neutral
Help me get to know more about Australia
Good
None
Just so so
Some tour guides are greedy.
None
The guide in Melbourne is a very qualified to his job. His commentary is unforgettable.
The guide is very knowledgeable. The information he provided is right to the point.
Learn about Australia cultures
Comprehensive commentary
Guiding
They provide good understanding of the visited places
None
Media of disseminating culture
Play a role in presenting foreign culture
Language interpretation
None
Did good job in arranging tourism activities and safety
Very considerate, just like a family member, excellent

Australian people are well educated. It is good example for Chinese people
Help us learn about various aspects of Australia's history, culture and society.
Good guiding service
Guide us to scenery and famous sites
Help us get to know about Australian culture and history
Warm
Patient
Helpful
Remove risks
Language mediation between Chinese and English
Solve complicated problems
Important
Mediator
Present cultural differences,
Present local life and customs
Provide information
Arrange itinerary only
Neutral
Very good
Tour guides are ambassadors between cultures.
Some are of high quality, eloquent and knowledgeable. Few only cares for money, very Disappointing.
Should inform visitor more on the differences between Chinese and Australian cultures; local features, advanced technology and management
Just so so
Mediator
Commentary
Commentary
Tour guides' warm service made our trip very successful and reached what we expected
Present Australian history and culture
Go between
Provide service
Inform
Facilitating communication
Commentary delivered by tour guides in Sydney is not bad.
Interpretation
Link
Description
Very important, act as a link, particularly in terms of language and cultural communication.
Mediator between Chinese culture and Australian culture
Mediator between two cultures (Chinese and Australian)
Provide good understanding
Communication
Mediator
Adjust mood of travel
Very efficient, know his job well and good attitude in attending to customers.
Tour guides have good quality and play an active role
Neutral
Present local life, custom
Present sceneries
Guiding in general

Help us get to know these cities in a short time
Instruct,
Help and serve
General
Act as a bridge to facilitate deep understanding of Australia
Amicable
Giving directions
Mediator
Not much
Important roles in facilitating communication
Providing information and interpretation
Too much time spending on the road (travelling between places). 12 day tour but 4-5 days on the road
Besides planned sightseeing, tour guides also provided information on Australian society and politics. It is very good for visitors with professional background of journalism
Major role; facilitate our learning and understanding of the local life and custom.
Communication and Interpretation
Guiding
Good
Neutral
Not sure
Interpretation
Commentary
Link
Guiding
Commentary
Provide knowledge
Guiding
Inform on local people and customs, cultural features
Interpret exotic culture
Neutral
Tour guide at Gold Coast is patient and self restraint
Present exotic life and culture
Role of tour guides is not too important for me. What attracted me more is what Australia has.
Inform on local life and customs
Mediator
Hope to be able to interact with the locals (to learn sth about Aboriginal culture)
Giving directions
Know Australia
Arrange eating, accommodation and travel
Recall the past, face realistic and look into the pleasant future
It is a pity that the tour guide was not capable
Guiding
Commentary
Help
Guiding
Disseminate information on Australia's history, culture and development
Neutral
Neutral
We have learnt a lot about Australia's folklore, people and life styles
Inform on Australia's people's life and culture

The tour guide in Brisbane is very flexible. WE are willing to spend more money on shopping and pay for optional tours (he is a Taiwanese).
The guide is capable
None. We found the hot balloon flying by ourselves
The quality of tour guides is not high, could not answer many questions, and sleep on the bus. Another tour guide cares only for shopping commission. We feel dissatisfied.
Guiding
Commentary
Inform on Australian culture and society
To enhance understanding
Extremely important
Mediator, accurate translation
Good commentary
Bridge
Link between Chinese and Australian culture
Makes us feel that everything is convenient and like at home.
Very important.
Enhance understanding
Very important
Enhance understanding
Very Important
Very Important
Very Important
Neutral
None
Neutral
Provide detailed information
Tour guides' commentary is very important.
Through tour guides' interpretation, I gained further understanding of Australia
Tour guides' commentary is very important
Helps me further understand Australian people and customs
Language mediator
Extremely important
Giving directions
Guiding
Not important
Not too important
Lively
Generally satisfied. A few tour guides are not very responsible
Facilitate the understanding of differences between Chinese culture and Australian culture
No
Have done what they could
Each tour guide has his or her special features
Nothing special
Different guides perform differently. There is a big gap.
Help find lost properties
Commentary
Help find lost properties
Understand English
Help visitors solve problems
Instruct and add value

Interpret
Tour guides have done their best to make visitors visit enjoyable.
Mediator
Guide
Facilitate communication with the locals
Give instruction on itinerary,
Teacher
Link between Chinese and Australian culture
Not sure
Providing information
Provide interpretation
Provide help and leadership
Don't know
Clear presentation of the regulations of environment protection, and each tourism site.
Clear presentation of each tourism site.
Mediate culture
Reduce language barrier
Give safety and protection
Not biased
Honest commentary
Guide
Unbiased
Honest description
Provide comparisons between Chinese and Australian cultures
Present special features
Some
There are gaps between Chinese visitors and locals regarding environment protection (such as Smoking and eating habit). Many things are taken as routines or habits for Australian people but Chinese visitors need to be reminded from time to time. Tour guide
Guide, inspire
Link, contact
Not much
Facilitate our understanding of Australian culture and society
Further our understanding of Australian culture
Further our understanding of Chinese and Australian cultures
Guiding
Commentary
Broaden views
Link between Eastern and Western cultures
Add the atmosphere, prepare gifts by surprise
Every tour guide has his or her advantages and disadvantages. Some have better qualities. Some are just so so. Some are more economic oriented.
Guiding
General
Service at restaurants is too bad. Noisy, same food, no special features of the place
Meals are not good, no change, not suit visitors' taste
Awareness of service is bad in restaurants. Dining environment is not good; work efficiency is Too low in hotels.
Provide information on Australia and further our understanding of the country

Appendix 9: Responses to Q21

Q21. If there is anything else you want to tell us regarding your experience besides the above listed questions, please feel free to comment: (translation from Chinese into English)

Suggestions of Itinerary:
When design itineraries, not all Australian excellent natural sceneries were taken into account;
'Sleeping on the bus and spending most of the time on the way to places' is the way of travelling in Australia. This should be changed. Instead, more programs should be provided and visitors could experience more about local lifestyle.
Arrange more activities for visitors to embrace nature and more free time for shopping and walking around
Besides sightseeing, more information on Australia's politics, economy and culture should be provided. In addition, tours to big factories should be organised. Should give visitors more free time on their own activities
Better take visitors to local department stores before taking them to designated shops so that they could compare prices; avoid repeat same routes. For example, from HK to Australia's three big cities, the best route is HK to Brisbane, to Sydney, Canberra, and Melbourne. Not Brisbane, Sydney, Brisbane, Sydney, Canberra, Sydney and Melbourne
Better not organise tours to public parks, should develop tours to western regions, to Aboriginal communities and develop tourism sites with strong local flavour.
Cannot eat well, sleep well; taken to parks and expensive places everyday; very dissatisfied with the tour.
Develop cultural resources
Develop tourism resources in the western and northern regions.
Extend itinerary at Gold Coast
Extend swimming activities at Gold Coast
Food and standardise itinerary, pay attention to the potential of the Chinese market
Give visitors some freedom in selecting activities
It is always in a hurry
Itinerary should be a bit relaxed
Many tour arrangement just for making money such as shopping and extra fee paying programs. Itinerary should be announced in advance and listen to tour group members' opinions.
More information in Chinese language, more rationalised arrangement
More rationalised itinerary, night flight should not arrange. For example, the whole night was on the airplane without any sleep, the following day we were running out energy for sightseeing. It is better for tourists to be on the plane during the day and arrive at destination in the evening, then going for sightseeing after a good night sleep.
More tourism sites
No time for shopping. Unhappy about shopping.
Not many tourism attractions
Please stop the arrangement of shopping
Provide more detailed itinerary in advance
Provide proper guiding to shops, design more rationalised and feasible itinerary
Rationalise time arrangement so that visitors from afar could see the best of the visited places.
Reduce shopping in designated shops and give visitors more free time on their own activities
Self-arranged Shopping activities, experience country life and customs, don't waste time on the road affecting quality of the tour
Should arrange more time in Melbourne
Should arrange some study programs, tailored to each group's needs, not repeat the same itinerary
Should avoid go shopping in the designated shops
Should have specialised tourism program such as Sydney Seven Day Tour so that visitors could have deeper understanding of that place.
Should promote self-catering tourism program and encourage visitors to explore

Show more special objects, sceneries and things that are different from what China and other countries have.
Stay at seashore is too short, the design of the itinerary need improvement
The itinerary is not rationalised.
The pace of the tour should be slowed down. Lack of rest on the first day upon arrival.
The schedule is too tight without considering the need of individual visitors
The schedule is too tight, very tiring
The special feature of Australia is natural scenery and fresh air. Visitors should take good rest in the natural environment
Too little free time,
Too much time on shopping. Got a feeling that we spent more times in shops than in tourism attractions. Some activities should be part of the itinerary but became optional requiring additional charges. The arrangement of time is loose.
Tour guides should honestly tell visitors about optional activities that require additional expenses during stay in Australia so that visitors could tell whether worth doing them or not.
Travel agencies are only concerned about making money. The itinerary is tighter than the schedule for work. Some activities are not meaningful such as continued shopping
Suggestions of TV programs, Signs and Directions in Chinese Language:
During this visit, we have seen overseas Chinese have gained better status in Australia, various state parliaments have Chinese Australian members. At the airport, there are Chinese language guide booklets. However, few bus stop signs and road signs are written in Chinese. To ease Chinese people travel in Australia, more signs in Chinese language should be provided.
Few instructions written in Chinese language. If without tour guides or interpreters, it is hard to travel in Australia. It is hard to communicate with the locals.
Few signs and instructions in hotels written in Chinese. No Chinese TV channels. Few Chinese newspapers. Chinese visitors could be kept updated with what is happening around the world during their stay in Australia if they don't understand English.
Few signs in Chinese language,
Few signs in Chinese language,
Few Signs in Chinese language, no Chinese TV program
Generally Chinese visitors feel language barrier is a big problem. Please provide guiding instructions in Chinese language in more tourism sites and Chinese TV channels or Chinese subtitle; Chinese food in Australia is not really that good.
Hotels accommodating Chinese tourists should provide Chinese radio and TV programs
In places visited most by Chinese visitors, more signs in Chinese language should be provided
Increase signs and instructions in Chinese language
Increase signs and instructions in Chinese language,
More bilingual signs,
Multicultural left me a very deep impression. Few instructions written in Chinese language. Promotion of China Western region should be enhanced.
Should provide Multilanguage directories of tourism sites, dinning, accommodation, and transportation and their prices.
Signs and directions in Chinese language, Chinese TV programs and Newspaper should be provided in hotels.
There should be more guiding directories and booklets written in Chinese and English languages in Tourism sites so that tourism provides more convenient for their clients and makes communication more easier
Suggestions of Interaction with Locals:
Increase visits to national art museums and theatres, visit local people's houses and learn about their eating habits, visit schools, watch sport competitions. Against going designated factories and shops, relevantly arrange programs according to visitors' educational level. Better make such arrangement before departure, should not design the same itinerary from every group.

Arrange swimming in the sea or activities in water; include visits to local school and households into itinerary so that visitors not only view sceneries but also experience local life and customs, leave deeper impressions.
Be a guest of an Australian family, attend Australian weddings, more natural scenery tours, and Australian art exhibitions
Could not have a good understanding of the exotic culture due to language barriers. Suggest that provide opportunities to learn about family life of the locals
Interaction with the locals
More sightseeing's (natural sceneries), better arrange some visits to local households, have some interactions with the locals.
Provide more opportunities to interact with the locals
Reduce visits to shops, increase entertainments and interaction with the local people
Should arrange programs to further understand the life of the locals
Should provide more opportunities to interact with the locals and to be informed on Australia's society, culture and economy.
Time is too short; hope to have home visit to the locals, more opportunities to interact with the locals, tour guides should not monopolise everything
To enhance interaction
We want to be closer to the locals such as shopping in the local shops not the shops selling Lamb wool quilt and medicines running mainly by the Chinese. We want to visit an Australian family and see what their life looks like.
Suggest that more interactions with the locals, more opportunities to experience local life and customs such as have western meals, interact with visitors from all over the world. Chinese visitors should not be restrained in Chinese culture bubble. Wherever we went in this trip was full of Chinese, we didn't feel we were overseas.
Suggestions of Food:
The quality of Chinese food is not good
Coming to Australia is to enjoy what the locals could offer. However, what we have are all Chinese meals. We are unhappy about it.
I am very satisfied with the service provided by tour guides and tour bus drivers. They work very hard. Hope that in the future, the arrangement of meals can be improved. Don't always give cabbage, radish, cabbage and radish. More varieties. Breakfast buffet is good.
Improve food. It is very boring to have same food for dinners
Improve food. It is very boring to have same food for dinners
Improve food. It is very boring to have same food for dinners
Lunch and dinner are not good.
More reasonable guiding for shopping. Optional tour such as family visit should be arranged during daytime. More variety of food should be provided. It is not comfortable to having Chinese food all the time.
More varieties of food
Need to adjust meal arrangement according to the differences between North Chinese and South Chinese Cuisines, respect customers' choices.
Quality of food and service of the local Chinese restaurants need to be improved, service quality in particular.
Restaurants are too crowded, shops closed too early
Service of Chinese restaurants is too bad (including variety of food, quantity and attitude)
The Chinese meals were not satisfactory. Improvement is needed.
The quality of Chinese food is not good
The taste of food should meet the needs of customers.
The tastes and quantity of food should meet the needs of different nationalities.
Transportation: flight route is not rationalised; tour bus we used to Canberra to Sydney is too crowded. Meals: Chinese meals are provided all the time. This is not much difference from home. We could not experience Australian eating culture, don't know about foreigner's food habit. Therefore, our experience is superficial. Hope that meals with Australian family styles can be provided to visitors and know about

Australians' life. Generally, it is good but wish to be better.
We don't want to have Chinese meals everyday. Instead we want to taste Kangaroo meat or the local delicacy.
Suggestions of Hotels:
Hotel guest rooms should be as clean as the country's outdoor environment with fresh air. There are bad smells in guest rooms in two hotels.
Hotel service is not good
Is it true that guests cannot check in the morning?
Some hotel facilities are old and should be upgraded. Hotel service staff should understand some simple Chinese.
The dining facility and service quality for group tours in one hotel is poor. We waited for about 30 to 60 minutes to get our room keys when checking in. We are unhappy about it.
The hotel arranged by travel agencies either located in suburbs or far away from city centre, very inconvenient.
The hotel staff did not show respect to their Chinese clients. Dining room is messy only one waiter serving guests. Breakfast food lack of varieties, quality is also poor. Guests waited for a hour to check in.
Tourism hospitality in Sydney is the worst
Suggestions of Tour Guides:
A tour guide gave bad service when his clients did not shop in his recommended shops.
Care given by tour guides is limited due to too many people in a group.
Doubts in shopping
For Chinese tour groups, tour guides' ability to express in Chinese language is very important.
Hope that improve tour guides' quality. Tour guides should know their job better and become more knowledgeable.
Hope that tour guides become more knowledgeable.
Hope to have a deeper understanding of Australia's natural resources, people and customs
Hope to learn more about Australia and tour guides could provide more detailed commentary
Improve quality of tour guides
Improve tour guides' quality
Keen on learning about the achievement of early Chinese immigrants in Australia, their status in the Australian society and their involvement in politics.
Lack of commentary on people and history
No matter how good a foreign land is, it could not be better than my own country. Tour guides should not always encourage us to immigrate. No doubt, China will be stronger and beautiful in the future. It will attract foreigners to migrate to China.
Professional standards among Chinese-speaking tourism and hospitality staff are various, the gap is big.
Proper guiding to shops; when arranging activities, should get opinions of the group in advance, during the tour and at the end; provide more information on tourism attractions and local customs and lifestyles of the cities visited; features and rules of entertainment venues to cater needs of different visitors.
Provide more detailed information on investment and immigration
Provide more insights, don't stay superficial, should provide more tours and tourism sites.
Should give visitors a basic understanding of Australia's politics, culture, economy, and history and then followed by more detailed commentary (including tourism attractions) of places or events that offer their own features. This visit gave me pieces of information; don't know what Australia's special features are.
Should improve tour guides' professionalism and their attitude towards their job. Have contacts with four tour guides. The first two are satisfactory. The one in New Zealand is bad. The one in Melbourne has good attitude but don't know much about guiding.
Should provide comparative studies between Chinese culture and Australian culture so the visitors could learn the good parts of each culture.
Some are good and some are not good. Good climate and scenery is good at Gold Coast but the amusement park is not good.

The depth of the general information on the locals presented by guides is various. Some guides do not know much about local natural resources and economy.
The quality of tour guide is low, only know how to make money
The quality of tour guides is different, not good enough in linking up group members and in understanding the mood of visitors, not required to be licensed, don't know how to lodge complain,
The role of tour guides is very important. Tour guides should be well trained.
To keep tourists informed, tour guides should first give an introduction of Australia, then what need to be careful during the trip, tourism sites commentary, rationalised itinerary.
Tour guide and the operators should not only care about making money. The dishonest prices at designated shopping venues are very disappointing.
Tour guides should provide more information on Australian culture. Tour guides lack of humour and vividness.
Tour guiding should be standardised
Train tour guides to be more fluent in Chinese language speaking so that visitors could gain better understanding of Australia, more visitors will be attracted to Australia.
Travel expense is very high, should reduce agent fee, quality of tour guides is low, only limited to arrange itinerary
We have tour guide at each place. The guide I evaluated is a good one. The levels of tour guides are various. One is good and the other is not that good.
Wish that tour guides made more effort in providing more information on Australia's history, geography, culture and economic development and the country's position in the world.
Tour guides should provide commentaries in both English and Chinese and include the most popular topics such as how to apply for study in Australia; Fees and expenses should be separated. Making money is ok but don't go too far.
Wish to learn more about Australian people and culture, customs and language rules
Other Suggestions:
Australia is a good place to live but not much creativity, not very lively. In other words, not good for doing pioneering work
Business hours of shops are too short. Not much night life
Chinese people like travelling but the cost is too high.
Customers did not treat Chinese visitors equally to other customers. All luggages have to be opened for inspection.
Enhance the cultural exchange between China and Australia
Hope that one-day people in the world could speak one single language.
Hope that prices are reduced and provide night services in accommodation and dinning
Hope that prices can be further reduced such as use of budget accommodation; use different prices to attract different customers. For ordinary tourists, there is no need to stay in luxury hotels.
Hope that shops open in the evenings
I should learn English well to have better communication with the locals
It is not convenient to exchange foreign currency and purchase phone cards
It would be better if we could visit universities
Language barrier: most Chinese people's language is not good enough to communicate with Australians. These Chinese often have the financial ability to travel overseas. Should have more free time not rushing to tourism sites by tour buses
Luggage inspection too complicated, too long, too strict and cautious
Make things easy for individual visitor holidaying in Australia
More favourable commodity prices for Chinese visitors; special shops for tourists open in the evenings; and more Australian people should learn Chinese to enhance cultural and trade exchange between China and Australia.
More goods available, cheaper commodity prices, longer business hours for shops
Nine-day tour but only stay in Australia for 7 days but we were asked to pay tips for 9 days. This is not reasonable. The tour bus we took to Canberra from Sydney is not good.
No complain, no suggestions due to our short stay

No complain. Wish our next visit more pleasant
On and off the bus, inconvenient
Organising more Chinese people to travel to Australia might be helpful with protecting China's environment and improving Chinese citizens' quality.
Price
Promote Australia in more places in China. The Chinese market has great potential and could provide a large amount of visitors.
Service of tourism transportation (including flight service)
Shopping is not as convenient as at home, high commodity price and limited free time
Shops closed too early
Should continue widely promoting Australia in China
Should enhance administration and make visitors feel the value of the money they spent.
The Australian government should have a more positive attitude towards tourists, which should be reflected in every segment.
Travel agencies should respect visitors' suggestions
Australian government should tell its people to respect Asians without discrimination. It should tell its people more about China. This can enhance understanding.
Better
Could not accept the 'after 2 pm hotel check in' rule.
Improve food. It is very boring to have same food for dinners
Relaxed travel program, fresh air, beautiful seashore
See many Chinese in Australia. Don't know why.
Very satisfied

Appendix 10: China ADS Code of Ethics (1999) (ISR, 2001)**China ADS Code of Ethics (1999) (ISR, 2001)**

In China, the China National Tourism Administration (CNTA) will only approve appropriately qualified agents to handle outbound ADS group leisure travel to Australia. Chinese nationals are able to obtain visas for travel to and entry into Australia for group leisure travel only through the approved Chinese travel agents. These agents will be required to deal with Australian inbound operators who meet basic statutory and fiduciary requirements and who can show experience of and commitment to the Chinese inbound market.

1 Our obligations

As your organisation has applied for, and has been accepted for listing, we now seek your agreement to the following operating standards.

1.1 Requirements

During the time you are listed to act as an ADS group leisure inbound operator in Australia from the China market, your organisation agrees to comply with the following requirements:

1.1.1 China market commitment: That it will be active in dealing with the China market and will demonstrate a commitment to maintaining and developing the market via sales calls to the market.

1.1.2 Experienced, professional & qualified staff: That it will have in its employment:

- a full-time staff member with a minimum of one year's experience handling tour operations in Australia, who can pass a test for written and oral Chinese⁸ language skills;
- experienced sales staff with written and oral Chinese language skills;
- appropriate 'meet and greet' staff or contractors who speak Chinese;
- experienced Chinese speaking guides, ensuring that every tour party which arrives in Australia from China, is adequately serviced by Chinese speaking tour guides who must have a minimum of one year's experience in guiding in Australia.

⁸ 'Chinese' incorporates Mandarin, Cantonese, Hokkien and provincial dialects.

1.1.3 China approved agents only: That you will deal only with agents in China approved by CNTA for the handling of ADS group leisure tourism to Australia.

1.1.4 Sub-agency: Organisations that are not approved ADS ITOs are not to be appointed as sub-agencies for sourcing further business or any other purpose, unless the approved operator is unable to meet the requirements of the visiting group. In this situation, the ADS ITO may sub-contract another ITO to handle business on its behalf. The approved operator is liable for any breach of the Code of Ethics by the sub-agency.

1.2 Importance of industry professionalism

Maintaining a professional standard when dealing in the China market is important, therefore it is agreed that:

- your organisation works in harmony with other inbound operators on the ADS approved inbound tour operators list and relevant industry suppliers to help achieve the best results for the Australian tourism industry;
- you demonstrate professional standards of service and accountability;
- you accept and discharge a commitment to help educate and train key industry suppliers in the proper and professional handling of visitors from China;
- you become an active member of an appropriate industry association.

1.3 Advance payment/no credit

Your organisation agrees that for all new business with all CNTA-approved agents, it will receive payment in advance for the costs of the services and will not advance credit under any circumstances.

2 Pricing and quality control

As an ADS approved inbound tour operator in the group leisure travel market, you agree to the following terms on pricing and quality control:

2.1 to provide a fully inclusive package price quotation and that the use of shopping commissions does not negatively impact upon the quality of the itinerary and the visitor experience;

2.2 to provide a quality holiday experience tailored to the needs of the client; and

2.3 to commit to deliver itineraries agreed upon prior to departure and should any amendments to the itinerary be required following agreement, the substitutions must deliver comparable value and experiences.

3 Your opportunity

3.1 Provision of approved list of Chinese agents ATEC agrees to provide your organisation with a list of China-based tour operators approved by CNTA to handle

outbound tourism from China. It is up to you to make the contacts and establish the appropriate business relationships with any of these agents.

4 Signing of agreement

This document is to be recognised as an agreement to adhere to quality standards in the formal agreement between ATEC and the ADS approved inbound tour operators for the group leisure travel market listed below and will take effect from the time it is duly signed by authorised representatives of each of the parties and witnessed.

Signed by:

Peter Shelley, Managing Director, ATEC

Witnessed (in the presence of)

Name

Organisation

Date

and

List of ADS ITOs

Date

Appendix 11 List of Abbreviations & Acronyms

ABS	Australian Bureau of Statistics
ADB	Asian Development Bank
ADS	Approved Destination Status
ATC	Australian Tourism Commission
ATEC	Australian Tourism Export Council
BTR	Bureau of Tourism Research
CNTA	China National Tourism Administration
DIMA	Department of Immigration and Multicultural Affairs
EFTGA	European Federation of Tour Guides Association
EI	Ethnic Identity
GOA	Guiding Organisations Australia
IAA	Interpretation Australia Association
IATM	International Association of Tour Managers
IC	Intercultural Competence
ITOA	Inbound Tourism Organisation of Australia
ITR	Department of Industry, Tourism and Resources
PTGAA	Professional Tour Guide Association
SPSS	Statistical Package for Social Science
TAFE	Technical and Further Education
TFC	Tourism Forecasting Council
TTA	Tourism Training Australia
WTO	World Tourism Organisation

Appendix 12 Table 5.19 Correlation Matrix

Table 5.19 Correlation Matrix for Hypothesis 5 Variables

	GS	ICP	ICI	FE	CE	BE	HVO	UD	GD	A1	A2	A3	A4	GTE
Global satisfaction (GS)	1.000													
ICP composite score (ICP)	.490*	1.000												
ICI composite score (ICI)	.245*	.419*	1.000											
Fluent English (FE)	-.049	-.065	-.039	1.000										
Conversational English (CE)	-.017	-.010	-.023	-.130*	1.000									
Broken English (BE)	-.083	-.023	.024	-.203*	-.552*	1.000								
High/vocation school/other (HVO)	.190*	.152*	.138*	-.058	.071	-.109*	1.000							
University degree (UD)	-.094*	-.046	-.107*	-.079	-.140*	.138*	-.730*	1.000						
Gender (GD)	-.026	-.091	-.128*	-.016	-.015	.021	-.147*	.034	1.000					
Age 1 (A1)	.004	.022	.024	-.028	.298*	-.110*	.393*	-.275*	-.111*	1.000				
Age2 (A2)	-.063	-.020	-.007	.205*	.115*	-.034	-.102*	.023	-.130*	-.154*	1.000			
Age 3 (A3)	-.038	-.050	-.030	-.022	-.062	.177*	-.136*	.085	-.004	-.218*	-.352*	1.000		
Age 4 (A4)	.051	.069	.059	-.134*	-.151*	-.018	.034	.029	.091	-.188*	-.305*	-.430*	1.000	
Guided tour experiences (GTE)	.018	.009	.040	-.070	.029	-.006	.063	-.085	-.023	-.053	-.030	.039	.025	1.000

N=461; *p<.05