

**AN EXPLORATION OF KOREAN STUDENTS' EXPERIENCES
STUDYING ENGLISH IN CANADA**

By © Cassandra Joan Nykyforak a Thesis submitted
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Abstract

According to the most recent data from Statistics Canada, international student enrollment in Canadian universities is on the rise (Statistics Canada, 2016). International students made up eleven percent of the total student population at Canadian universities in 2014, increasing from seven percent a decade prior. International students contribute significantly to the Canadian economy (OECD, 2013), which is one of the reasons why many post-secondary institutions strive to recruit students from abroad (Fama, 2011). One method of recruiting international students is through offering English language learning programs at the tertiary level in Canada (Chen, 2017). While enrolled in these programs, international students contribute to Canada in a variety of meaningful ways. Upon returning to their home country after their studies in Canada, these students can take on the reverse role as ambassadors of their host country (Jamaludin, Sam, & Sandal, 2018), serving as sources of information about studying in Canada in their peer groups. As much as Canadian schools endeavor to attract and retain international students there is little that can be done to access these students' informal evaluations of their experiences in their host country once they have returned home and are telling their peers about their time spent abroad. Since word-of-mouth referrals factor into the decision to study abroad (Mazzarol & Soutar, 2002), it is important to know what students returning from language programs in Canada have to say about their experiences. At present, much research on international students in Canadian language programs has focused on the experiences of Chinese students whereas little is known about Korean university students participating in language programs in Canada. This study employs a qualitative research approach using a basic interpretive design and took place in Kongju, South Korea. It involved a small, purposive sampling of five university-aged Korean students who had recently returned from studying English in short-term language programs in various regions in Canada. Data were collected through in-depth, semi-structured interviews, guided by this study's research questions. This study found that English language learning programs which include social aspects are more likely to engender a positive word-of-mouth response from their participants.

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매일 매일 고마워요.

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List of Terms and Abbreviations

EAP: English for Academic Purposes

ESL: English as a Second Language

Short-term language program: a language learning program with a duration of less than 6 months

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Chapter 1 Introduction

1.1 Background

According to Statistics Canada, international student enrollment in Canadian universities is on the rise (Statistics Canada, 2016), with international students having made up eleven percent of the total student population at Canadian universities in 2014, a seven percent increase from a decade prior. The increase in international students studying in Canada has led to a shift in the post-secondary landscape, with international students bringing a variety of benefits into the country. International students in Canada contribute to the Canadian economy (Tascón & Viczko, 2016), develop Canada's diversity (Cudmore, 2005), and provide ideal candidates for future immigrants to the country (Fama, 2011). In recent years, international students have provided a significant boost to the Canadian economy (OECD, 2013), which is one of the reasons why Canadian post-secondary institutions strive to recruit students from abroad (Fama, 2011).

There are many pathways for international students who wish to study in Canada: one common method of inviting international students into Canadian post-secondary institutions is through offering English language learning programs at colleges and universities (Chen, 2017). There are over 36 English language learning programs hosted by universities across Canada that teach varieties of English for Academic Purposes (EAP) or English as a Second Language courses (ESL) to international students (Keefe & Shi, 2017). With English being a global language and one of the most widely spoken languages in the world, success in English is often a priority for post-secondary students coming from a non-English speaking background. As one of the country's official languages, Canada is a top destination for overseas students seeking to

improve their English skills.

As much as Canadian institutions endeavor to attract and retain international students there is little that can be done to access what international students who have studied in Canadian language schools have to say about their experiences once they have returned to their home countries. Since word-of-mouth referrals factor into the decision to study abroad (Mazzarol & Soutar, 2002), it is important to know what students returning from studying in Canada have to say about their experiences. Social links have been identified as an important influence on destination choice for students who study abroad (Mazzarol & Soutar, 2002). When alumni of an overseas program return home upon completion of their studies, these returning students have been known to take on the role of unofficial ambassadors of their host country amongst their peers in their home country (Jamaludin et al., 2018). These returning students can contribute positively or negatively to a country's reputation, including the reputation of that country's education system, within their peer group. With study destination choice largely influenced by a host country's reputation for education (Mazzarol & Soutar, 2002), knowing what returning students have to say about Canada and its language schools can help post-secondary institutions mould their programs to better suit the needs of international students.

1.2 Personal Motivation

I am a visiting professor at Kongju National University (KNU), in South Korea. KNU is a medium-sized university in South Chungcheong province, where I am responsible for teaching for-credit freshman English classes. Over my four years of teaching at KNU I find myself consistently impressed by the efforts that Korean university students put forth toward reaching

their academic goals. In particular, I have noticed how Korean university students take studying English very seriously in the hopes of bettering their future.

KNU supports several popular language exchange programs to various countries for the purposes of learning English through its Global Language Clinic, which is a well-known centre on campus that focuses on fostering intercultural awareness in the student body. Although I am unaffiliated with KNU's Global Language Clinic, I am familiar with their programs and am aware of their efforts to help students reach their language learning goals. In addition to supporting campus-wide cultural-exchange events, the Global Language Clinic provides opportunities for students to study English in various countries, such as Canada, Australia, New Zealand, and the Philippines.

The Global Language Clinic is one of the most important centres at KNU because it helps Korean students improve their English and learn more about Western culture. Starting from a young age, Korean students spend a great deal of time learning English. Success in English is considered as a standard to measure Korean students' aptitudes, competencies, and futures. An important factor in understanding the background of Korean students is to be aware of the amount of pressure Korean people face in achieving fluency in English, as success in English language learning in Korea is associated with economic success, greater career opportunities, and a more elite social standing (Lee, 2014). Over the years, I have witnessed many Korean students go abroad through the Global Language Clinic's exchange programs in the hopes of improving their English and I have always wanted to learn more about their experiences. As a Canadian, I am particularly interested in how Korean students experienced studying English in my home country and I would like to know what they tell others about their experiences upon returning home to Korea.

1.3 Statement of Problem

At present, much research on the experiences of international students in Canadian language programs has focused on the experiences of Chinese students while little is known about Korean university students participating in language programs in Canada. Korean students are a culturally distinct group that require their own niche area in research on international students. The purpose of this study is to explore and better understand Korean students' experiences studying English in Canada. To that end, the following four research questions guided the present study:

1.4 Research Questions

- (1) How do English language learning programs in Canada market themselves to Korean university students?
- (2) What factors into a Korean student's decision to study English in Canada?
- (3) What are Korean students' experiences of studying in an English language learning program in Canada?
- (4) What do Korean students tell their peers when they return from studying in an English language learning program in Canada?

1.5 Purpose of this Study

The researcher sought to learn about Korean students' experiences studying English in Canada. International student enrolment in Canadian universities is on the rise and yet very little research has been conducted on the experiences of Korean university students in Canada. Additional objectives for this study include contributing research to the field of international

student studies, in terms of providing data that Canadian institutions could use to adjust their programs to better suit its population of Korean students. Data could be used, as well, to improve language program marketing strategies toward Korean students.

This study aimed to deliver an in-depth exploration of the experiences of Korean students in short-term English language learning programs in Canada: what brought the students to Canada, how they experienced Canada, and what they told others about their experiences in Canada upon returning home to Korea. This study found that all of the participants generally had a positive experience studying English in a short-term language learning program in Canada and they would recommend studying in a Canadian language school to their peers. In particular, it was found that English language learning programs which include social aspects are more likely to engender a positive word-of-mouth response from their participants.

1.6 Research Design and Methods

This study took place in Kongju, South Korea. It undertook a small, purposive participant sampling process which resulted in five university-aged Korean students agreeing to participate in this study and speak about their recent experiences in short-term English language learning programs in Canada. This study's research questions were addressed through employing a qualitative research approach using a basic interpretive design, as this approach was the best fit to explore the perspectives of the Korean students. Data were collected through in-depth, semi-structured interviews, guided by the research questions (see Appendix E). The interview questions included, but were not limited to, the following list:

- (1) Why did you choose to study English in Canada?
- (2) What was your first impression of Canada?

- (3) What was the best thing about studying English in Canada?
- (4) What was the worst thing about studying English in Canada?
- (5) Do you think that your English improved after studying English in Canada?
- (6) What do you tell others about your experience studying English in Canada?
- (7) Would you recommend studying English in Canada to your peers?

In October of 2018, I obtained Memorial University of Newfoundland's Interdisciplinary Committee on Ethics in Human Research (ICEHR) Ethics approval and approval from Kongju National University to perform this study. Sampling occurred the following month, in November, when a letter explaining this study and consent forms were sent to prospective participants on the behalf of the researcher by a Global Language Clinic staff member. In December of 2018, interviews were conducted with willing participants on campus.

All efforts were made to uphold appropriate ethical standards during the course of this research project. Transcriptions were made shortly after the interviews took place and those transcriptions were emailed to the participants to check for accuracy and final consent. To maintain confidentiality, data were stored in a secure desk in a locked office at Kongju National University, participants' names were assignment a code to protect anonymity, and tape-recordings and transcriptions are be destroyed following publication of this thesis.

1.7 Significance of this Study:

Several themes emerged from this study, which were: reputation, kindness, diversity, friendships, environmental observations, negative experiences, English improvements,

recommendations, and immigration. Overall, participants spoke fondly of their positive cross-cultural experiences with their peers in their language programs. Friendships were an important part of the language school experience and were often spoken about by all of this study's participants. Opportunities to practice speaking English outside of the classroom were viewed favorably, as well. After having done this study, recommendations geared toward language course organizers would emphasize that programs which include strong social elements are more likely to garner a positive review from students. As well, language school programs and activities geared toward practical English use and confidence building activities could be ways to improve the experiences of Korean students in language programs in Canada.

1.8 Overview of Chapters

Chapter 1 Introduction has presented the brief context of this study, as well as introduced this study's purpose, rationale, research questions, approach, and significance. It has also provided a general overview of how this document is organized.

Chapter 2 Literature Review presents information collected about Korean university-aged students and relevant findings which provide a background on students participating in short-term English language learning programs in Canada. The chapter begins with a broad overview of internationalization in post-secondary education in Canada, followed by a discussion of the reasons why international students choose to study in Canada. The chapter concludes with a discussion of the short-term language learning programs in Canada and a look at some of the cultural factors that drive Korean students to study English overseas.

Chapter 3 Methodology provides an overview of the methodology used in this study. This chapter outlines this study's research design, paradigm, site and participant selection, data

collection methods, reliability, validity, data analysis, ethics, the role of the researcher, and the limitations of this study.

Chapter 4 Presentation of Data and Results presents the themes and categories that emerged from analyzing the data gathered from this study's semi-structured interviews. This chapter is divided into three sections: first, the participants are presented, their answers to the interview questions are explained, and then the chapter concludes with an exploration of the results of this study's data analysis.

Chapter 5 Discussion and Conclusion answers this study's research questions and discusses each research question in conjunction with an analysis of the study's results, which were informed by the Literature Review. This chapter concludes with thoughts on the implications of this study's findings, an evaluation of this study, and any recommendations for future research.

1.9 Summary

The researcher is grateful to the five participants who took part in this study, which aims to contribute to a growing body of knowledge on Korean post-secondary students' experiences studying in short-term English language learning programs in Canada. At present, little research exists on what Korean university students who have studied in English language learning programs in Canada have to say about their experiences. It is useful to know what these students tell their peers upon returning home from Canada. In the chapter that follows, a review of literature relevant to this study will be presented.

Chapter 2 Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to provide the context of Korean university-aged students participating in short-term English language learning programs in Canada. The chapter begins with a broad overview of internationalization in post-secondary education in Canada, followed by a discussion of the reasons why international students may choose to study in Canada. Several themes have emerged out of the literature and have shaped this study's research questions. Each of these themes will be discussed in turn. The chapter concludes with a discussion of short-term language learning programs in Canada and a look at some of the cultural factors that tend to drive Korean students to study English overseas. Since little research has been conducted on university-aged Korean students in Canadian short-term English-language programs, this review will draw largely upon information pertaining to Korean post-secondary students in both short-term and long-term programs in a broad range of contexts overseas.

2.2 Internationalization and Canadian Post-secondary Education

The purpose of this section is to explore, examine, and discuss what researchers have said about internationalization in post-secondary education in Canada, illustrating how internationalization plays a significant role in the reality of post-secondary education today. Internationalization in post-secondary education can be explained using a widely-used definition, which describes internationalization as “process of integrating an international or intercultural dimension into the teaching, research, and service functions of the institution” (Knight, 2015, p. 03).

2.2.1 International Student Enrolments in Canada are Increasing

Currently, post-secondary institutions host the majority of international students studying in Canada (CBIE, 2016). Canadian post-secondary institutions have seen a dramatic shift in international student enrolments in a short amount of time, in terms of the number of students coming from overseas and their demographics. According to recent data from Statistics Canada, international student enrollment in Canadian colleges and universities is steadily on the rise: students from outside of Canada made up eleven percent of the total student population at Canadian universities in 2014, increasing from seven percent a decade prior (Statistics Canada, 2016).

Starting in the late 1950s and early 1960s, Canada received the majority of its international students from other English-speaking countries, such as the United States of America. The 1970s and early 1980s saw international students from Asian countries, namely Hong Kong and Malaysia, populating Canadian schools (Newby, 2012). While the numbers are not agreed upon, by 2011, there were between approximately 190,000 and 193,000 international students attending Canadian post-secondary institutions, the majority being from India, South Korea, and the United States (Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada, 2011; Institute of International Education, Project Atlas, 2011; Newby, 2012).

The increase in students going abroad for all or a portion of their post-secondary learning experience is a worldwide trend and is not unique to Canada: in 2014, over 5 million students were studying abroad (ICEF Monitor, 2015), and this number is expected to grow in the future (Bohm, Davis, Meares, & Pearce, 2002). According to the 2011 action plan developed by Canada's Provincial and Territorial Ministers, *Bringing Education in Canada to the World, Bringing the World to Canada*, it is estimated that by the year 2025 the number of students

studying outside of their home countries will have grown from 1.8 million students to 7.2 million (Council of Ministers of Education, 2011). This increase provides an opportunity for Canada to compete as a world-leader in delivering top-quality education to international students from a variety of backgrounds (Provincial and Territorial Ministers of Education and of Immigration, 2011).

2.2.2 International Students' Contributions to Post-secondary Institutions

This growing trend of the internationalization of post-secondary education across the world has provided a rich source of funding for Canadian institutions (Lee & Wesche, 2000; Thomson and Esses, 2016). Recent federal policies suggest that the internationalization of higher education is a key component in Canada's future economic prosperity (Tascón & Viczko, 2016). *Bringing Education in Canada to the World, Bringing the World to Canada* found that in 2008 there were 178 227 international students who stayed in Canada for at least six months in tertiary education programs, which generated more than 6.5 billion dollars for the Canadian economy (Council of Ministers of Education, 2011). In Canada, international students typically pay significantly higher tuition fees than domestic students. An example from a public university in Manitoba illustrates this difference, with a six-credit arts course costing an international student 3.5 times more than what a domestic resident would normally pay (Simon, 2014). In 2010, it was also found that international students contributed more than 8 billion dollars to the Canadian economy through their combined spending on tuition fees, accommodation, and living expenses (OECD, 2013). Additionally, it is estimated that in 2012, education services targeted at international students contributed to the creation of roughly 65,000 jobs in the Canadian labour

market (Simon, 2014). International students are increasing in number in Canada, bringing with them significant economic benefits to the country.

The benefits of having international students studying in Canada, however, are not solely financial: international students contribute to Canada's diversity, fostering a more global environment wherein intercultural exchange can create greater pathways toward a better understanding of different ways of life (Cudmore, 2005). The presence of international students in Canada promotes a cross-cultural exchange of thinking and encourages the development of domestic and international talent. Additionally, in terms of research and development, internationalization helps Canada contribute more to scientific collaborative networks across the globe, which strengthens Canada's position as a global leader in the sciences (Tascón & Viczko, 2006). International students also bring new ideas, cultures, and customs, not only extra revenue, into the Canadian economy and these students promote global citizenship skills by providing domestic students exposure to new cross-cultural experiences, languages, and cultures. Using a human capital and commercial framework, we can see how the internationalization of post-secondary education benefits host countries however scholars such as Beck (2012), Garson (2016), and Desroches (2011) are wary of associating a market-oriented approach to analyses of post-secondary education studies, which will be explained further near the end of this section.

2.2.3 International Students as Future Immigrants

International students may also act as prime candidates for future immigrants to the country (Fama, 2011; Statistics Canada, 2017), which makes attracting international students to Canada a lucrative endeavour for the Canadian government. The Government of Canada has created pathways for international students to become permanent residents of the country

through a special application process should they want to make Canada their home upon graduation through the Post-Graduation Work Permit (Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada, 2018). These international students who decide to become permanent residents of Canada will then join the Canadian labor market upon completion of their studies and contribute to Canadian life and the economy in a variety of ways.

According to recent data from the Canadian Citizenship & Immigration Resource Center (2018), there has been an increase in the number of international students who become permanent residents of the country – from 2016 to 2017, there was an increase of 1000 former study permit holders who made the transition to permanent residency and this trend is expected to continue. More than 400,000 study permits are issued each year to international students and these recipients are given priority when applying to permanent residency: these applicants are viewed as desirable candidates due to their Canadian education, knowledge of an official language, and ability to adapt to Canadian culture (Canadian Citizenship & Immigration Resource Center, 2018).

Indeed, international students contribute to Canada in a variety of meaningful ways which makes their increased enrollment in Canadian tertiary education a welcomed trend. Governmental policy in Canadian post-secondary education in recent years has focused on attracting and retaining more international students. Fama (2011) discussed how the Government of Canada has made attracting international students a priority since these students tend to bring academic, financial, and diplomatic benefits to their destination country during their stay. Federal publications suggest that the Canadian government has aimed to double the number of international students in Canadian tertiary institutions by 2022, expecting to attract more than 450,000 students from across the globe (Council of Ministers of Education, 2011). This would be

the anticipated result of promoting Canada's educational brand as a front-runner destination for top-quality education and research experience (Choudaha & Ortiz, 2014).

2.3 Attracting International Students to Canada and Branding the Canadian Experience

In Canada's *International Education Strategy: Time for a Fresh Curriculum*, Simon (2014) points out that studying abroad in developed countries became a worldwide trend beginning in the 1980s, as part of aid programs geared toward assisting developing nations (Chen, 2008; Simon, 2014). However, it has only been in recent years that Canada has followed in the footsteps of other top study-abroad destinations, namely the United States, the United Kingdom, and Australia, to become active in employing international marketing strategies in order to attract more international students into their institutions (Mazzarol & Hosie, 1996). In particular, Australia is known for having profited from the presence of international students, in terms of cultural exchange, enriched population and funding, global impact, and long-term business development opportunities (Meares, 2004). Climate, quality of life, and political stability draw students to Australia, while the UK is known for law and medicine, and the US is advantageous for students in business, computer science, and engineering majors (Meares, 2004). Since Canada has only started to market itself in recent years it can be said that Canada lags behind other countries with well-established reputations for studying abroad (Simon, 2014).

Study destination choice is largely influenced by the quality of the international reputation of the host country (Mazzarol & Soutar, 2002). Western countries spend a great deal of effort ensuring the quality of their education and promoting their schools overseas. Canada is in a unique position amongst top studying abroad destinations: its lack of a national education minister with a coordinated post-secondary strategy means that there is no unified and coherent

voice abroad promoting the Canadian educational experience (Simon, 2014).

Nevertheless, the federal Edu-Canada pilot program, which was conducted from 2007-2012, helped increase the number of international students in Canada by 51% through education-promotion events held in 60 countries using the slogan, “Imagine Education au/in Canada” (Global Affairs Canada, 2015). Although the campaign had been criticized for its lack of coherency and inability to reach its maximum potential in attracting international students (Simon, 2014), the campaign was a step toward presenting a unified image of Canada’s world-class education system to attract students into the country for study (Global Affairs Canada, 2015).

According to Global Affairs Canada’s *International Education Strategy* from 2015, the federal government seeks to brand Canada to the country’s maximum potential in order to attract prospective international students into the Canadian education system in the years to come. A more long-term strategy has been encouraged to ensure that Canada maintains its current position as a popular study abroad destination and to increase its international student population in the years ahead.

2.3.1 Appealing to Asian Markets

Canada falls behind Australia in fulfilling its potential to attract international students from the growing Chinese market (Simon, 2014). In Canada during 2004 and 2005, the number of university students from China rose by 60%, to 17,600 students (Statistics Canada, 2006), although more could have been done to increase those numbers (Simon, 2014). As of 2016, there were nearly 132,000 study-permit holders from mainland China in Canada (ICEF Monitor, 2017). According to Zeng (2010), in recent years Chinese students have been growing in number

in Canadian tertiary institutions because Chinese public universities and colleges lack adequate space to accommodate the high number of high school graduates requiring advanced study in such a large population. Overpopulation and high levels of competition to enter universities in their home country are cited as some of the reasons why some international students may choose to study abroad (Bodycott & Lai, 2012). In addition, there are oftentimes benefits to having a degree obtained from outside of one's country of origin: Australia's well-known reputation for helping Chinese students secure employment upon returning home to China has helped attract even more Chinese students into the Australian post-secondary system (Mazzarol & Hosie, 1996). Students from mainland China are the biggest source of international students in Australian universities: around 173 000 were enrolled in 2018, making a 18% increase from 2017 and contributing significantly to the Australian economy (The Standard, 2018). Canada could follow in the footsteps of Australia by better marketing themselves to the growing population of Chinese students seeking foreign credentials abroad.

The decision to study abroad is usually a family decision but even more so in Confucian societies, such as mainland China, Japan, and South Korea, where education is highly regarded (Brown et al., 2015; Shin, 2012). In Confucian households, a top-down hierarchical social structure based on age tends to govern the family unit, wherein university-aged and adult children are expected to follow their parents' wishes (Bodycott, 2009). Under Confucianism, there is a strong push toward educating children to compete in an exam-based culture with the desire to gain access to top ranked universities as a way to improve a family's social status (Shin, 2012).

Given the unique cultures of Asian countries, branding measures could be adapted considering how homogeneous cultural values toward the importance of education play a significant societal

role (Gray et al., 2003). Ideally, promotional materials in Asian markets would display how favorable social and career opportunities arose from attaining the foreign credential (Gray et al., 2003). Overall, universities in Western countries can profit economically from Asian countries, especially those undergoing development (Gray et al., 2003). Gray et al. suggest that further research in branding and media used to promote educational services would help Western universities attract more students from Asian markets.

2.4 Deciding to Study Abroad

There are many reasons why post-secondary students decide to study abroad. Educational investment is well-known to improve the lives of graduates in a variety of meaningful ways. International students are making the choice to study in Canada and invest their time, money, and expertise into the Canadian post-secondary system in order to achieve their goals. In the following section, important issues that play a part in the decision-making process to study abroad will be discussed.

2.4.1 Push and Pull Factors

Mazzarol and Soutar (2002) outline a push-pull model to help explain factors that influence students' decisions to study abroad: push factors can be seen as elements in a subject's home country that push them to move abroad to study and pull factors are the factors that attract students to a particular country. As Mazzarol and Soutar (2002) found, domestic economic and social factors are the main push factors for students who choose to study overseas: a key push factor in many countries in Africa and Asia, over the latter half of the twentieth century, is the lack of access to higher education in their home countries. Pull factors can be varied, according

to Mazzarol and Soutar, and include the host country's reputation as well as the reputation of that country's particular schools, as well personal recommendations and referrals by word-of-mouth. Institutional pull factors include course offerings, alliances or coalitions, degree of innovation, reputation, market profile, offshore course opportunities, staff expertise, reputation for innovation, IT, resources, size, and promotional efforts (Mazzarol, 1998).

The decision-making process that prospective international students undergo before they decide to study overseas consists of at least three stages, according to Mazzarol and Soutar (2002). First, the student decides to pursue education outside of their country. Once they have made the choice to study abroad, they decide on a host country. In this part, potential pull factors from each country are weighed against one another. In stage three, the student selects an institution.

The decision to study abroad can be influenced by the three stages of a prospective student's information gathering process when they are searching for an institution (Bainbridge, 2001). According to Bainbridge (2001), when students are looking into an institution for future study, first, basic information is collected, such as course offerings, admission requirements, tuition fees, teaching and assessment methods, destination and location information, as well as English test requirements. In the second phase, deeper information is sought, and soft factors can enter into the equation, such as confidence in a particular institution, including that school's lifestyle, reputation, and culture (Bainbridge, 2001). In the third phase, before the final decision is made, psychological uncertainty can creep in as the student has narrowed their choices to a few schools and will decide between them. Stages 2 and 3 are largely susceptible to word-of-mouth influence from peers as these stages consider factors that intangible, experiential, and difficult to measure, such as a school's academic culture (Bainbridge, 2001).

According to Mazzarol et al. (1997), the host country selection process can involve six factors, the first being awareness of the host country in a student's home country (access to information), which includes the country's reputation and recognition of its qualifications domestically. A second factor in the selection process is the word-of-mouth referrals and recommendations given about a host destination. The third relates to costs associated with studying in that country, both financial (living expenses, tuition, transportation, availability of part-time work, etc.) and social (safety, racial profiling, lack of access to community, etc.). Fourth is environment, lifestyle, weather, air quality, etc. Fifth was geographical proximity, which could explain in part why so many Canadian students choose to study in America or Indonesian students in Australia (González et al., 2011). The sixth and final was social links, if friends or family are living or studying there or had lived or studied there previously (Mazzarol et al., 1997).

According to Massey and Burrow (2012), short-term students tend to choose to go abroad with the goal of having a new cross-cultural learning experience in mind, followed by the desire to pursue academic and social objectives. Long-term students also cited that having a cross-cultural learning experience was their primary reason for deciding to study abroad, followed by academic and language learning endeavours.

As post-secondary education grows more market-oriented (Beck, 2012), branding and word-of-mouth play an important role in attracting overseas students to Canadian tertiary institutions. Word-of-mouth conveyances by peers of their positive experiences while studying abroad can contribute to enhancing a particular country or institution's reputation or brand inside of a social circle. Choudaha and Ortiz (2014) explored how Canadian institutions could improve their marketing appeal to international students: strong brand positioning is essential considering

the competition between institutions and countries in the international education market. A university's brand can be viewed as consisting of tangible factors, like tuition fees and teaching quality, in addition to more intangible perceptions, like the amount of fun, excitement, and passion surrounding that institution's brand (Rauschnabel et al, 2016). Choudaha and Ortiz (2014) argued that branding the Canadian study-abroad experience played an integral role in "building trust for an intangible, experiential service" (p. 3). Since many international students take an "investment" approach to studying in Canada, they then look to "measure their experiences and outcomes in terms of tangible and intangible payoffs" (Choudaha and Ortiz, 2014, p. 4). Whether for a short-term program or a long-term sojourn, Canada is one of the top picks for international students. While Canada could do more to market itself, the country is still known across the globe as a provider of world-class education at a reasonable cost, in a social environment described as "tolerant, diverse, safe and welcoming" (Global Affairs Canada, 2015).

2.5 Word-of-Mouth

Studies on the influence of word-of-mouth in relationship to its effect on deciding on educational services is becoming a popular trend in research (Teo & Soutar, 2012). According to Harrison-Walker (2001), word-of-mouth can be defined as an informal, person-to-person utterance about a brand, product, service, or organization between non-commercial parties. Word-of-mouth conveys dimensions felt and experienced, either positive or negative (Dedy, et al., 2018). It is important to consider how word-of-mouth referrals and recommendations contribute to destination and institution choice.

Social links have an important influence on destination choice for students who study abroad (Mazzarol & Soutar, 2002). Awareness that someone they knew studied in a particular country or institution is a way for prospective students to feel a sense of connection to an overseas education provider. Particularly, immediate or extended family members who studied at a particular institution in a country and who enjoyed the experience are likely to suggest that to their own family members and friends: “word-of-mouth referral is one of the most powerful forms of promotion that international education institutions can use” (Mazzarol & Soutar, 2002, p. 85).

Strong alumni can be a valuable social link that influences a student’s decision to study abroad (Mazzarol et al., 1997). When alumni of an overseas program opt to return home upon completion of their studies, these returning students have been known to take on the role of unofficial ambassadors of their host country amongst their peers in their home country (Jamaludin et al., 2018). After studying in Canada, for example, these returning students can become sources of information for their peers about Canada, effectively taking on the role of a reverse ambassador, which can impact whether or not their peers decide to choose to study overseas in Canada (Jamaludin et al., 2018). These returnees can either support or discourage their peers to choose a certain country as their study abroad destination (Jamaludin et al., 2018).

Key word-of-mouth sources include personal recommendations and endorsements as well as positive and negative influences on decision confirmation (Gray et al., 2003; Harris, 2002, Mazzarol & Soutar, 2002; Pimpa, 2003). Word-of-mouth can be shaped by different factors, and it must be noted that cultural differences might play a role in determining word-of-mouth influence (Warring, 2013). For instance, “findings indicate that there [are] grounds for future research investigating cultural differences in decision making ...[and] how to harness the

potential of word-of-mouth amongst the different nationalities” (Warring, 2013, p. 335). A possible area for further research would be how word-of-mouth functions in Confucian societies, specifically with regard to its power to influence students and their parents in the decision-making process to study abroad.

The decision to undertake international study can be looked at from a consumer purchase cycle (Chen, 2006), where word-of-mouth referrals factor into the information-gathering stage of a decision. Word-of-mouth is influential because it is personal: word-of-mouth referrals can shape prospective students’ opinions in the early stages of a purchase cycle, which can give a sense of confidence to prospective students (Chen, 2006). Positive word-of-mouth can have a large influence. In some cases, when suitable information from impersonal sources are missing or hard to find (ex: university communications are lacking or difficult to access), students will increase their tendency to rely on word-of-mouth (Mortimer, 1997). It was found that students have a high level of dependence on word-of-mouth compared to impersonal information sources such as commercial and public information (Mazzarol & Soutar, 2002).

Word-of-mouth serves as a sort of free advertising that has a significant effect on destination promotion. Destination-loyalty (Jamaludin et al., 2018) is term used to explain the sense of loyalty a student has toward a destination and their willingness to recommend it to others or to revisit it. Having a positive or negative experience in a host country largely determines destination-loyalty and the willingness to recommend studying in a particular country to peers. Destination-loyalty includes the desire to revisit and/or recommend the destination to peers, and it can be affected by duration: Dwyer (2004) found that long-term international students had more time to experience cultural gains from their experience abroad, leading to a more significant and enduring experience compared to their short-term program counterparts.

This enduring experience made them more likely to display destination-loyalty. However, Jamaludin et al. (2019) found that students who studied in short-term programs are still likely to revisit and recommend their destination to others if they had had positive experiences in their host country (Jamaludin et al., 2019). The greater the degree of destination loyalty, the greater the likelihood of that destination's brand image being positively promoted in a word-of-mouth communication cycle (Rahman, 2017).

2.6 Why Do International Students Choose to Study in Canada?

Massey and Burrow (2012) state that many students study abroad in Canada in order to experience a new cross-cultural learning environment, and this is the main motivating factor for students studying abroad in both a short-term and long-term context. Laughlin (2014) outlines some reasons why international study in Canada is popular for students seeking long-term programs. Although international study in Canada is still a relatively new industry, the Canadian post-secondary system is known worldwide for its advantages: Canadian universities are relatively well-funded, which keeps tuition affordable for most students compared to the fees facing international and domestic students in other English-speaking countries (Laughlin, 2014). As well, in Canada there is a high availability of part-time student jobs. However, most students in language programs, which are short-term, are prohibited from taking on part-time work (Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada, 2019). According to the ICEF Monitor (2016), students who require part-time employment during their language studies are likely to select Australia or New Zealand, where part-time work can be secured during their studies.

Yet, studying abroad in Canada, especially for longer-term programs, is still a viable choice. According to Laughlin (2014), international students' reasons for coming to Canada also

include the country's reasonable cost of living, a model health-care system, and high degree of safety, natural beauty, quality of life, and quality of education. Students coming from non-English or French speaking backgrounds may also have the added desire to study in a language program in Canada (Laughlin, 2014).

According to *Canada First: The 2009 Survey of International Students in Canada* by the Canada Bureau for International Education, nearly 3 out of 4 international students claimed that they chose to study in Canada because of the quality of education in Canada. The second commonly cited reason for choosing Canada was Canada's reputation for being a safe country (CBIE, 2009). Newby (2012) found that international students at Humber College Institute of Technology & Advanced Learning chose Canada to complete their degrees because of Canada's reputation – specifically, that Canadian universities are known worldwide for quality education and also because their peers referred them to Canada.

Other incentives for going abroad can be found by studying the home countries of international students. For the past decade, for example, Asian students have accounted for a large number of students in Canada and many of these students come to Canada to improve their English language skills, as English is linked with economic success in many of their home countries (Lee, 2007). Lee and Wesche (2000), in their case study which focused on how well a group of Korean students adapted to the Canadian post-secondary system, found that Korean students viewed Canada as a safe place to study, where post-secondary education was affordable compared to studies in other Western, English-speaking countries.

Multilingualism, the ability to engage in society with others and in daily life operations in more than one language (Franceschini, 2009), is an asset in today's globalized world. The increased popularity and use of English is a facet of modern life, with English being regarded as

the lingua franca or default tongue for international communications (Graddol, 2006). There is significant growth in non-native speakers of English who desire to improve their language skills in a university setting. The rise in international students seeking to improve their English at universities and colleges, either in short or long-term programs, is occurring at the same time as Canadian tertiary institutions are losing their federal funding – decreases in funding through transfer agreements to Canadian universities has led to institutions relying on tuition to secure funding, which has encouraged most institutions to raise their tuition fees (Chen, 2017; Godard, 2010; Magnusson, 2000). Offering language programs at the university level are a popular method to help attract international students, who contribute significantly to tuition spending in Canadian tertiary education (Chen, 2017; Oplatka & Hemsley-Brown, 2010).

2.7 Problems with Internationalization in Post-secondary Education

Some scholars in internationalization literature have cautioned against taking an entrepreneurial or market-oriented approach to post-secondary education because it can take the elements of humanism out of education. Beck (2012), for instance, cautions that the internationalization of higher education can come with commercial interests and ideologies that dominate over education as a value itself. Garson (2016) supports Beck and warns against institutions that synonymize internationalization with only increasing international student enrolment, effectively treating international students as cash-cows while ignoring their unique needs as new temporary residents in the country. As well, Desroches (2011) argues that globalization is pushing post-secondary education toward largely economic ends, ignoring the human side of higher education. These authors suggest that universities propel globalization and encourage students to view their post-secondary education as professional training above

anything else, effectively treating education as an investment or commodity over humanistic and philosophical inquiry and values, where future employment and monetary gain are considered to be leading factors in post-secondary engagement.

Another problem area is that, in some cases, international students come to Canada and find themselves lacking adequate institutional support. For both short-term and long-term students, loneliness and lack of friendships with domestic students were found to be major problems faced by international students in Canada (Thomson and Esses, 2016). A study by the Canadian Bureau of International Education (CBIE) found that over half of 3,000 international students surveyed in Canada reported having no Canadian friends (CBIE, 2016). Another study found that while Canadian post-secondary institutions appear ambitious to admit more international students, high levels of both social and academic integration were needed to retain these students (Zhang & Zhou, 2014). As well, Burns et al. (2016) found that international students risked inadequate access to housing resources, with more than fifty percent of international students in a Canadian city not knowing where to find housing assistance.

International students bring a unique set of needs to be addressed by Canadian post-secondary institutions when they study abroad in a new environment. International students may have trouble adjusting to Canadian university life (Singh, 2015): an example being how North American students may speak directly in the classroom and use casual language which could be considered rude in other students' home countries, making classroom discussion a challenge for some international students (Parsons, 2000; Tompson & Tompson, 1996). The student-teacher relationship is known to vary across cultures. Additionally, students from non-Western academic backgrounds may knowingly or unknowingly plagiarize or fail to use citations properly for a

variety of reasons (Adhikari, 2018), resulting in difficulties for international students as well as their instructors.

Another issue is the dispersion of international students across Canada. While Canadian post-secondary institutions welcome over 100,000 international students each year (Statistics Canada, 2006), their distribution across Canada lacks balance. According to a study from 2014, 44% of international students chose Ontario, 24 % chose British Columbia, and 13% chose Quebec (CBIE, 2014). With Atlantic Canada and Northern regions of Canada experiencing a much slower growth in international students, institutions and economies in these regions cannot take part in the financial, social, and diplomatic benefits that international students bring when entering the country. It is possible to assume that students coming to Canada may also feel limited in their choices of institutions, as many would want to choose schools and cities already known for their ability to meet the needs of large volumes of international students, especially those from their own country.

The internationalization of post-secondary brings complexity that challenges institutions to adapt to the meet the needs of a diverse student body. Perhaps the internationalization of universities and colleges across Canada is reflective of Canadian society as a whole: a 2011 Statistics Canada study, which showcases Canada's diversity, anticipates that by 2031 almost half of Canadians over the age of 15 will have been born outside of Canada or have parents born outside of the country (Garson, 2016). The entire makeup of Canadian society is changing, becoming more multicultural than in the past, which provides an opportunity for diverse residents of Canada to work, study, and live together.

International student enrolments in Canada are increasing, with Canada serving as a top study-abroad destination for students from foreign countries. In particular, students from Asia are

deciding more than ever before to study in Canadian post-secondary institutions.

The section that follows sets the backdrop for an exploration of why international students from Korea may choose to study in Canada, beginning with a cultural and historical overview of Korean perspectives on English education.

2.8 Korean Students in Canada

Historically, little research attention has been paid to the increasing number of international post-secondary students from Korea studying in non-formal and short-term courses (for example: language programs) (Cho, 1990). Studies about international students tend to focus on Chinese students, as students from mainland China comprise a large proportion of the international student body in Canadian post-secondary institutions as well as in tertiary institutions in other developed countries. Despite some cultural and geographical similarities between Korean and Chinese students, such as a close historical relationship and shared cultural values under Confucianism, it should not be assumed that the experiences of Korean students can be accounted for in studies focusing on Chinese participants. Korean students are a culturally distinct group that require their own niche area in research on international students. However, while Korea can be set apart from neighbouring countries in East Asia, Korean students themselves who have the opportunity to study in a Western country tend to be relatively homogeneous in terms of socio-economic and cultural background (Lee, 2007; Lee & Wesche, 2000). These Korean students who have the opportunity to study abroad are unique in part because of their homogeneity: as a group they have distinctive educational needs and when they are abroad, they tend encounter problems which can relate to their social, cultural, and prior schooling experiences in Korea (Cho, 1991). The relative homogeneity of the backgrounds of

South Korean students studying abroad can be explained in large part due to the unique history and cultural circumstances of South Korea which this section intends to explore.

2.8.1 Educational Profile of South Korea

South Korea is one of the most highly educated countries in the world, with a large majority of its citizens holding a higher education credential: currently, around 68 percent of South Koreans between the ages of 25 and 34 have at least a bachelor's degree (OECD, 2016). The education market in Korea is one of the largest in the world, typically categorized by a zeal for learning and high participation rates in after-school tutoring in cram schools (CIA Country Studies, 1990). Cram schools, referred to in Korean as *hagwons*, are private after-school institutions that many students attend in order to help their chances of entering a good university. Students can begin *hagwon* study as early as primary school to prepare them for the eight-hour multiple choice test called the *suneung*, or College Scholastic Ability Test, which is written in the third year of secondary school. In 2014, over 15 billion US dollars (more than one tenth of an average household's overall spending) were poured into the *hagwon* industry by parents attempting to give their children a better chance of entering a good secondary school, which could provide better study opportunities for students wishing to excel on the fiercely competitive *suneung* (The Economist, 2015). Top-scoring students writing the *suneung* are eligible to enter the prestigious "SKY" universities, which stand for Seoul National University, Korea University, and Yonsei University. SKY-university graduates dominate top professional careers and fill the majority of the positions in Korean government (Jooang Daily, 2003).

Competition amongst students and eventual job seekers is high in Korean society. Educational success in South Korea is top priority, with it providing a cultural status as well as a

way of improving one's socio-economic standing (Lee, 2016). In Korea, the desire to study abroad has been historically linked to a common perception in Korea that the country is too small and lacking an adequate educational system (Abelmann et al., 2015), which heightens the value of a degree obtained outside of Korea. Many Korean students go abroad to Western countries to improve their educational credentials in order to establish themselves in the Korean job market upon return home. Korean students had the highest enrollment in colleges in Ontario in 2005 (Cudmore, 2005), with overall Korean student enrollment being on the rise in Canada (Lee & Wesche, 2000). A Western education can be proof of fluency in English, which is an essential prerequisite for success in Korean society.

Korea's focus on English education has often been described in academic literature as an 'English Fever,' which is a term first coined by Krashen (2003) to describe an almost feverish obsession that Korean students undertake while studying English as a foreign language. English Fever can be found in people of all ages in Korea. Park (2009) found that Korean parents generally spend 20 billion US dollars a year on the English schooling of their children. This is a part of the great importance placed upon education by Korean people. Seth (2010) comments that Koreans are highly preoccupied with obtaining academic credentials, and English plays a significant part in that endeavour. For instance, there is a unique phenomenon in South Korea called the *gireogi appa*, which translates to 'goose father,' a term for men who are geographically separated from their nuclear family while they work and reside in Korea alone in order to financially support their family abroad – usually a wife who moves abroad to enrol their children in a Western school (Lee, 2011). An important factor in understanding the background of Korean students in Canada is to be aware of the amount of pressure people face in achieving

fluency in English, as success in English language learning in Korea is associated with economic success, including greater career opportunities and a more elite social standing (Lee, 2014).

2.8.2 High-stakes Testing

Success in English is considered as a standard to measure Korean students' aptitudes, competencies, and futures. Today, many students must write English tests in order to secure employment for Korean jobs – a high score on TOEIC (Test of English for International Communication) is essential in Korea to obtain any white-collar job in the country, regardless if English will be used in their workplace or not (Jeon, 2009). Beginning in 1995, large Korean companies began using TOEIC to assess job candidates' English. While a government-issued test served this purpose in the past, the TOEIC was adopted as it was believed to help Korea take part in globalization strategies, of which mastery of English was believed to be a part of (Cho, 2017). According to the Educational Testing Service (ETS), which created the TOEIC test in 1979, around two million candidates write the TOEIC yearly and billions of dollars are spent on TOEIC preparatory courses worldwide (ETS, 2016). In particular, TOEIC has become one of the most important tools in hiring employees in Asian countries such as Korea and Japan (Booth, 2012). Among the 5 million TOEIC test-takers across the globe in dozens of countries, test-takers in Korea composed more than 40% of the total number of participants as of 2011 (Choi & Hwang, 2016), a statistic that illustrates the pervasiveness and importance of this English test in Korea. Koreans are expected to obtain an acceptable score on the TOEIC test in order to secure employment (in a variety of fields) and to start their lives after graduating university.

The downside of having a high-stakes test-taking culture are well documented in literature. Kim's (2002) study of Korean English learners found that students viewed studying

English as a means of educational and career success, rather than a humanistic pursuit. Furthermore, speaking English is seen as a social marker of being affluent and intellectual with elitist training (Roh, 2001), rather than being perceived and utilized as a communicative tool. Lee (2007) highlights the concern that viewing English as a socio-economic tool contributes to a market-oriented approach to education which reduces the human value of language learning, where self-interest and wealth accumulation trump notions of self-development or cultivation. A good TOEIC score is important to the future job prospects of post-secondary students in Korea because in part it helps separate oneself from other candidates when applying for professional and educational opportunities, promoting a climate of fierce competition amongst job seekers.

In addition, English language education in Korea has faced a troubling trend where an over-emphasis on test-taking skills has led to a lack in oral fluency in English for many students (Hyun, Finch, & Hyun, 1997). Traditionally, test-taking skills have been over-emphasized to receive a high score on the TOEIC at the cost of practical English skills. Conversational English abilities are known to be underdeveloped in the typical Korean school setting, representing a need for Korean learners to improve their speaking skills to become successful users of the English language (Hyun, Finch, & Hyun, 1997).

2.8.3 A Historical Look at Korea's Educational Beliefs

Korea has a long history of glorifying those who perform well in high-stakes testing, as part of its Confucian tradition. Since the Chosun Dynasty (1392-1910), examination results have been used for categorizing people for the purpose of advancement in Korean society (Choi, I., 2008). During the later years of the Chosun Dynasty, it is believed that English first arrived in the Korean peninsula. The introduction of English to Korea occurred amidst a period of political

turbulence, when the peninsula found itself under the threat of imperialism from neighbouring superpower countries, predominantly China, Japan, and Russia (Cho, 2017). To help protect itself from Japan's colonial ambitions, the 1882 Korean-American Treaty, Korea's first 'international' treaty in the country's nearly 5000-year history, was signed (Cho, 2017).

In 1883, Korea's first public English education centre was established and a year later a group of Korean politicians travelled to America for the first time and were impressed by American civilization (Cho, 2017). Upon returning home to Korea, they urged the King of Chosun, King Gojong, about the need to provide more English language education in order to learn from the advancements of the Western world (Cho, 2017). Starting in 1885, mission schools that taught English by religious groups began to pop up across the country. Korea-Canada relations began at that time as well as American and Canadian missionaries were allowed into the country near the end of Chosun (Cho, 2017).

Soon after its introduction to the country, Korean citizens began to see English as a "language of opportunities" (Kim, 2011, p. 276). According to Kim (2011) and Cho (2017), stories spread by word-of-mouth about regular citizens who became interpreters or other high-ranking officers for the royal court due to their English ability, establishing English-knowledge as a way of upward mobility in Korean society. Everyday citizens subject to the power of the upper class suddenly had the potential to obtain upwards social mobility through mastery of English. Even under the Japanese colonization (1910-1945), tales of pro-America, and its modernization, flourished and English study continued (Cho, 2017). During the Japanese occupation of Korea, study abroad was linked to national development as Koreans educated in the United States and even Japan were able to contribute to Korean political life and promote the liberation movement at home and abroad (Abelmann et al., 2015).

In 1945, Korea was liberated from Japan after America dropped atomic bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki, which entrenched the idea of America being Korea's liberator. It also suggested that the English language, which was spoken by Americans, was powerful (Cho, 2017). Additionally, English was used as an official language of the peninsula during the occupation of the United States Army Military Government (1945–1948) (Cummings, 1981) as well as by the first Korean government, established on August 15, 1948 (backed by America and headed by Rhee Syngman (1948-1960), the first president of South Korea). President Rhee led South Korea through the Korean War, which was tied closely to America as an ally: previously, Rhee lived in the USA during the Japanese occupation and was regarded as a freedom fighter who spoke English well and came back to Korea at liberation after promoting the Korean cause overseas and fighting for independence in America (Cho, 2017). Rhee also exemplified the benefits of studying abroad, having himself studied at George Washington University, Harvard, and Princeton in America prior to his presidency (Abelmann et al., 2015). It is said that during Rhee's presidency, where English was viewed as a language of power and dominance, English-Korean dictionaries became best-selling books (Kang, 2007). With regards to Canada's relationship with Korea during this period, Canada participated in the Korean War as well and assisted the UN with supervising free elections at the end of the Japanese colonial rule in 1947.

In the decades that followed, throughout Korea's modernization and globalization, English and a proximity to Western, mostly American, culture remained a facet of Korean life. Sojourning and studying in the United States was associated with class distinction, creating a sort of "English divide" in Korea (Cho, 2017): "local degrees were regarded as less privileged compared with those received in the United States and those who sojourned in the United States were highly regarded due to their presumably excellent English" (Cho, 2017, p. 70). Such ideas

continue to permeate Korean society today, with Korea's globalization further encouraging its citizens to speak English for a wide variety of purposes. Since its introduction to South Korea, "English has served as multiple forms of valued capital – cultural, economic, social, and symbolic – in the local context, and has thus been feverishly pursued by upwardly mobile Koreans" (Cho, 2017, p. 43).

2.8.4 Korean Students in English Language Programs in Canada

At present, little research has been conducted on modern-day Korean students in English language learning programs in Canada. However, it is known that one of the reasons why Korean students come to Canada to participate in our post-secondary system is to better their English, given the pressure that Korean students are under to become fluent in English for future success. A popular method of recruiting international students to Canadian universities is through offering English language learning programs (Chen, 2017). However, research on such programs has demonstrated a lack of consistency (Berman, 2002) and failed to display enough evidence of their effectiveness in terms of improving the academic performance of the students who partake in these programs (Fox, Cheng, & Zumbo, 2014). There are over 36 English language programs hosted by universities across Canada that aim to teach English for Academic Purposes (EAP) or English as a Second Language (ESL), in addition to overall fluency skills and the appropriate social use of English (Keefe & Shi, 2017). ESL programs tend to focus on overall language development and conversational English, promoting acquisition of idioms, grammar, vocabulary, metaphor, and so forth, across a range of different communicative or practical and less academic situations. EAP language programs focus on fostering the tools needed to succeed in an English academic environment, such as essay writing skills and guidance on plagiarism, to support

international students in their academic life (Keefe & Shi, 2017). Whether for EAP or ESL, Korean students participate in English language programs in order to improve their English.

2.9 Conclusion

This chapter discussed the broad themes in the literature surrounding internationalization in post-secondary education, Canada's role in attracting international students into the country, how and why international students make their decision to study abroad, and an inquiry into the unique cultural background that may belong to Korean students studying abroad in Canada. The themes of this chapter will provide the backdrop to further study of Korean university-aged students participating in short-term English language learning programs in Canada.

Literature notes that international student enrolments are on the rise in Canada (Statistics Canada, 2016). Fama (2011) discussed how the Government of Canada has made attracting international students a priority for their academic, financial, and diplomatic benefits to the country. However, Beck (2012), Garson (2016), and Desroches (2011) cautioned against taking a market-oriented approach to post-secondary education, in reference to the desire of some Canadian schools to bring in international students to help financially support underfunded institutions (Chen, 2017; Oplatka & Hemsley-Brown, 2010).

A popular method of recruiting international students to Canadian universities is through offering English language learning programs (Chen, 2017). However, research on such programs has demonstrated a lack of consistency (Berman, 2002) and fail to display enough evidence of their effectiveness in terms of improving the academic performance of the students who partake in these programs (Fox, Cheng, & Zumbo, 2014). Asian students have accounted for a large number of international students in Canada and many of these students come to Canada to

improve their English language, as English is linked with economic success in many of their home countries (Lee, 2007). In Canada during 2004 and 2005, the number of university students from China rose by 60%, to 17,600 students (Statistics Canada, 2006). Much research has focused on students from mainland China in Canada, given their growth in the Canadian post-secondary sector. Although sharing geographical and cultural similarities with Chinese students, Korean students studying in Canada have distinctive educational needs based on their unique history that warrant further consideration (Cho, 1991). Historically in South Korea, educational success, which includes a mastery of English, has been a fiercely competitive and highly sought-after method of improving one's socio-economic standing and social status (Lee, 2016). Today, Korea remains engulfed in a frenzy for education and many Koreans students study abroad in English-speaking nations in order to improve their chances of success in the Korean job market.

Mazzarol and Soutar's (2002) push-pull model helped frame the discussion of how students make their decision to study abroad. Mazzarol et al. (1997) found that a student's decision to study abroad can be influenced by social links. In particular, students returning from studying abroad can become unofficial ambassadors of their host country in their social circle (Jamaludin et al., 2018). Positive word-of-mouth recommendations have an impact on a prospective international students' decision-making process (Gray et al., 2003; Harris, 2002, Mazzarol & Soutar, 2002; Pimpa, 2003). Since word-of-mouth referrals factor into the decision to study abroad (Mazzarol & Soutar, 2002), it is important to know what Korean students returning from language programs in Canada have to say about their experiences. At present, much research on international students in Canada has focused on the experiences of Chinese students whereas little is known about Korean university students participating in language programs in Canada. Studying the perceptions of Korean students in language programs in

Canada could have the potential to identify areas of improvement for Canadian language schools as well as provide insight into ways to better promote Canadian language programs to Koreans.

In the following chapter, the methodological process of this study will be outlined.

Chapter 3 Methodology

3.1 Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to provide an overview of the methodology used in this study. This chapter will discuss the design and paradigm, site and participant selection, data collection methods, reliability and validity, data analysis, ethics, the role of the researcher, and limitations of this study. This study aims to contribute to a body of knowledge regarding Korean post-secondary students' experiences studying in short-term English language learning programs in Canada. International student enrolment in Canadian universities is on the rise and yet very little research has been conducted on the experiences of Korean university students studying in English language learning programs in Canada.

The following research questions guided the data collection process:

- (1) What factors into a Korean student's decision to study English in Canada?
- (2) What are Korean students' experiences of studying in an English language learning program learning in Canada?
- (3) What do Korean students tell their peers when they return home from studying in an English language learning program in Canada?

3.2 Research Design and Paradigm

This study's research questions were addressed through employing a qualitative research approach. Qualitative research has been defined as a method of inquiry "interested in how meaning is constructed, how people make sense of their lives and their worlds" (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016, p. 25). Since this project focused on the experiences of Korean students studying English in Canada and what they tell their peers about Canada after returning home, using a

qualitative design was the most appropriate way to access these participants' viewpoints in depth. In particular, Hoepfl (1997) claimed that qualitative research is a phenomenological inquiry that tries to understand a phenomenon in a specific context. This study is limited to a particular context, Korean university students who participated in a language learning program in Canadian post-secondary institutions, and this context provided the parameters for the scope of this study. Since the goal of this research project is to understand how the participants made sense of their experiences studying in Canada through what they have to say about those experiences, this study is best suited to a qualitative design.

There are many qualitative research frameworks to guide one's study, but a basic interpretive design was deemed best suited to this project. A basic interpretive qualitative study is used when a researcher's goal is "to discover and understand a phenomenon, a process, the perspectives and worldviews of the people involved, or a combination of these" (Merriam, 2002, p. 06). According to Merriam (2002), a basic interpretive design involves an examination of how the participants made meaning of their experiences through an evaluation of common themes and patterns obtained through interviews, observations, and document analysis. The researcher decided to focus on what the participants had to say about their experiences in Canada and a basic interpretive design allowed for the exploration of common themes and patterns through the interview process.

Qualitative research methods are known to explore and develop a detailed understanding of a topic or problem through collecting, analyzing, and interpreting words (Creswell, 2015). When it comes to studying students' accounts of their experiences in a particular context, other approaches would have failed to provide the rich data that the qualitative approach provided. For instance, a quantitative approach to this study would struggle to deliver the "deeper

understanding of social phenomena” that qualitative designs are known to facilitate (Silverman, 2000, p. 56). Furthermore, the focus of this study is exploration and is therefore best suited to a qualitative design. Creswell (2015) notes that a good qualitative research study does not begin with a comparison, as would occur in quantitative research; rather, a single focus or central phenomenon typically serves as the jumping off point or basis for exploration in qualitative research. Therefore, a qualitative approach was chosen since this research project centers itself upon the Korean students’ perspectives as described by them and there are no bases for comparison at the start of this study.

The findings of this study are intended to provide a rich, descriptive account of what it was like to study English in Canada and what these students told their peers about Canada once they returned home. These findings will be reflective of the views of its participants in the context of a short-term stay in three destinations in Canada, although some transferability may be possible to similar contexts. This project intends to serve the greater purpose of sparking more research in Korean students’ experiences studying English in Canada and what they tell their peers, and therefore this research project will use a basic interpretive qualitative design to learn about Korean students’ experiences studying English in Canada.

3.3 Participant and Site Selection

This study took place in Kongju, South Korea, at Kongju National University (KNU), a medium-sized public university in South Chungcheong province. KNU was founded in 1948 as a provincial teacher’s college and became a public university spanning three campuses in 1991. The three campuses of KNU share 94 departments and around 19,000 undergraduate and 3000 graduate students (Kongju National University, 2012). For the past 4 years I have worked as a

visiting professor at KNU, where I teach credit English classes to first-year students through the university's Freshman English Program under the Department of Liberal Arts. I work at Kongju campus, which is the university's main campus and has the largest student body. Over the years I have gotten to know several Korean students who have studied in various Western countries, including Canada, and I have always been fascinated by their accounts of studying abroad. Herein lies my personal interest in this topic. Additionally, I have great respect for Korean university students, and I wish that their voices can be heard through this study.

The interview site selected was KNU's Global Language Clinic. KNU has a Department of International Affairs (DOIS), of which I am unaffiliated and have no personal connections to. The DOIS seemed to be the obvious choice for this study since it supports an international language education center as well as exchange programs through their Global Language Clinic. The goal of the Global Language Clinic is to help Korean students foster international awareness through exchange programs and to provide support to incoming international students at KNU. The researcher selected the Global Language Clinic because it seemed well-known to students, easy to access, and has many bright, clean, and quiet meeting rooms where interviews could be held comfortably and without interruption. It provided the right atmosphere for conversations about studying abroad, and the participants had initially used that center to help them register for their exchange in Canada. Additionally, the Global Language Clinic is located adjacent to a popular coffee shop on campus, which served as an alternative meeting place if the Global Language Clinic were closed on holidays or weekends. This campus coffee shop, Café Rêve, was also well-known, clean, bright, spacious, and easily accessible to the students.

Participant selection involved a small, purposive sampling of university-aged Korean students. Purposive sampling can also be referred to as criterion-based selection because it

involves finding people or sites that meet the criteria deemed necessary to one's study (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). It is a pre-meditated sampling method that does not rely on probability or randomness. According to Suri (2011), "the logic and power [...] lie in selecting information-rich cases for study in depth [, ...] from which one can learn a great deal about issues of central importance to the purpose of the inquiry, thus the term purposeful sampling" (p. 65). This sampling method was the best fit for this study because only a select group of participants could be eligible for this study.

The participants sought after for this study were Korean university-aged students who participated in a short-term English language learning program in Canada. This study's prospective participants were identified with the cooperation of Kongju National University's Global Language Clinic and were contacted via email by a staff member of the Global Language Clinic on behalf of the researcher (see Appendices A and B). The students contacted to participate in the study were all at least 19 years of age or older (likely in their early to mid 20s) because only upper-year students (3rd and 4th year) at KNU are allowed to participate language exchange programs abroad through the Global Language Clinic. Participants were asked by email if they were interested in participating in a 15- to 20-minute-long interview about their experiences studying English in Canada (see Appendix C). The recruitment email stressed that participation in this study was completely voluntary and solely for the purpose of the researcher's master's thesis. It was also emphasized that participation/lack of participation in the interview would have no effect on the students' academic or personal lives. The researcher's information letter and informed consent form (see Appendix D) attached in the recruitment email outlined the project and reiterated that participation was completely voluntary. As well, it was

stated that consent could be withdrawn up until a certain point in the project (until before data analysis had begun).

It was not deemed necessary by the Global Language Clinic for the researcher to provide any Korean translations of the research tools provided to the students in the recruitment email, as the students in the sampling group were all fluent in English and of sound mind to make the decision whether or not to participate. The researcher deemed it safe to assume that the participants would have the capability to provide free and informed consent in English, on the basis that in order to participate in an English language exchange program in Canada through the university certain cognitive and linguistic abilities must be met.

3.4 Data Collection Methods

Individuals interested in participating in the study were asked to contact the researcher via e-mail. Five participants agreed to meet the researcher in December of 2018 and interviews were arranged at the participants' convenience.

Data collection occurred through one-on-one interviews which took place either in a Global Language Clinic classroom or in a nearby campus coffee shop. Both locations were easily accessible to the students. The interviewer strived to ensure a safe and supportive atmosphere through the interview process. Prior to each interview, each participant was given a short verbal introduction to the study and participants were informed that a follow-up interview or e-mail might be necessary after the initial interview. As well, the content of the consent form and information email were discussed and opportunities to ask questions were given prior to signing the consent form. Participants were informed that transcriptions of the interviews would be made shortly after the interviews took place and those transcriptions would be emailed to them to

check for accuracy and to obtain their final consent. Participants were told that their confidentiality would be maintained: interview data were to be stored in a locked desk in a locked office at Kongju National University, participants' names would be assigned a code to protect their anonymity, and the audio-recordings and transcriptions of the interviews would be destroyed following publication of this thesis. Participants were told that they could access this published master's thesis through Memorial's QEII library or by emailing the researcher. The participants signed the informed consent forms and agreed to being audio-recorded in the interview. Each interview lasted no longer than 20 minutes and the participations were thanked for their time.

3.5 Interviews

Data were collected through in-depth, semi-structured interviews, guided by this study's research questions. The semi-structured interview is "a mix of more and less structured interview questions" that allow the researcher the flexibility to pursue emergent themes in depth (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016, p. 110). This interview format was chosen because the semi-structured interview "allows the researcher to respond to the situation at hand, to the emerging worldview of the respondent, and to new ideas on the topic" (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016, p 111). The semi-structured format was well-suited to this study and afforded the researcher enough flexibility to delve deeper into ideas generated during the interview. Too great or too little structure in the interviews would have failed to address this study's research questions; for instance, "a completely un-structured interview has the risk of not eliciting from the [participants] the topics or themes more closely related to the research questions under consideration" (Rabionet, 2009, p. 564). On the other hand, a fully-structured interview would have left little room to explore

themes as they emerged in the interview. The semi-structured format allowed the interviewer to delve into “the psychological and social world of the respondents” (Smith & Osborn, 2003, p. 59), which was the appropriate medium for a study that centers on understanding the lived experiences of its participants.

Interviews were considered to be the most appropriate data collection tool for this project because the interview format allows participants to express themselves in their own way and at their own pace. While the participants were fluent in English it was still important to be aware that English is their second language: being able to adjust the speed of the interview, reword questions to help participant understanding, or provide translation help is quite important given that English was not the mother-tongue of the participants of this study, and the semi-structured interviewed format allowed for flexibility for the researcher and the participants alike.

Furthermore, interviews were selected in lieu of other research tools, such as questionnaires, because interviews allow for clarification in the case of language difficulties (clarification can be sought spontaneously in interviews whereas questionnaires lack this flexibility). Additionally, in-depth interviews were chosen as they are “conducted to explore issues, personal biographies, and what is meaningful to, or valued by, participants, how they feel about particular issues, how they look at particular issues, their attitudes, opinions and emotions” (Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2011). Since the focus of this study is to capture the students’ interpretations and perspectives of their experiences in an English language learning program in Canada and how they relay their thoughts to others, in-depth, semi-structured interviews allowed for the most suitable data collection method. The interview questions were generated to probe a variety of topics – both positive and negative – regarding the students’ experiences in Canada. While the participants of this study were unknown to me, as a KNU staff member I have had informal conversations over

the years with students who had participated in exchange programs so I used my general knowledge of what studying abroad entails for a Korean student to generate relevant interview questions for this study, in addition to information gathered from searching relevant literature.

Following the interviews, participants' names were assigned a code. Data were transcribed and saved in word files for analysis. The participants were contacted via a follow-up email to thank them for their time and to request them to review their individual transcripts to check for accuracy. They were also given the opportunity to add to or alter their responses if they felt that they were not properly represented. This process is called member-checking and will be expounded upon in the following section. In total, five interviews were conducted in December which lead to rich data for analysis for this study.

3.6 Reliability and Validity

Following the interviews, member-checking was used to explore the trustworthiness of this study's data. According to Given (2008) in *The SAGE Encyclopedia of Qualitative Research Methods*, member-checking "is a strategy most often used to optimize the validity of qualitative research findings" where participants are asked to evaluate if the researcher accurately captured their experiences in the data collection process. In this study, the transcripts were returned to the participants by email to check for accuracy and correct representation. In total: two participants requested alterations to their original transcriptions. One participant decided to add additional information to one of their answers to a question, which they had remembered following the interview, and another student elected to make minor language changes to their transcription. Three of the other participants did not opt to change their original data.

Freebody (2003) highlights the importance of research integrity: “there are many ways to tell the ‘truth’ about something, and the ways that are chosen and mutually built up over the course of an interview have far-reaching consequences for what can be reliably concluded about speakers” (Freebody, 2003, p. 162). The consequences of the researcher’s actions at every stage in this project were taken into consideration. For instance, while helping a participant who was searching for words during an interview, the researcher did their best to give unbiased suggestions based on her training as a language teacher and not as the researcher of this project.

To uphold the reliability and validity of a study’s findings, qualitative researchers require a “diligent focus on the empirical details of an interview” (Freebody, 2003, p. 162). Throughout the transcription process, great care was given to accurately transcribe and in some instances, interpret, the participant’s words. Interpretations were made sparingly and with great care to improve the readability of the transcriptions in some minor cases (for example, removing verbal stutters or false starts) without altering the participants’ answers in any significant way.

A researcher must consider many factors when honestly assessing the reliability and validity of a study. Throughout the data collection and analysis process, I believed that the participants were inclined to share their honest answers with the researcher. However, the researcher was also cognizant that the students could have been shy during the interviews as it was their first time meeting the researcher. The Role of the Researcher section will address how, I, the researcher did my best to control my own bias within this study.

3.7 Data Analysis

Through the data analysis process the nature of the data obtained from the interviews were sought: “qualitative data analysis is all about identifying themes, categories, patterns, or

answers to your research questions” (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016, p. 216). Before any in-depth data analysis began, the researcher had to organize each interview, as a system for organizing and managing a study’s data should be implemented in order to move forward to the analysis and write up (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016).

First, each participant was assigned a code to protect their anonymity. Additionally, the researcher wrote a short note about each participant following their interview to provide a basic profile of that participant and the events of their interview. After changing the participants’ names and documenting their brief profiles, the audiotapes of each interview were transcribed in the researcher’s private office using a word processing program. The researcher decided to transcribe the data by hand because it allowed for an early opportunity to study the research data:

Transcribing your own interviews is another means of generating insights and hunches about what is going on in your data. This information, which ideally you capture in your field notes or in the margins of your interview transcript or in a separate memo, is actually rudimentary analysis. (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016, p. 200)

Notes were made on an ongoing basis as to not forget identifying characteristics of the participants and of their interviews, including the researcher’s own thoughts, speculations, impressions, and so forth.

After the interviews were transcribed, the researcher sent each participant their own transcript to check for accuracy (accurate transcription as well as accurate representation). Once the accuracy of the transcripts had been verified by the participants, the researcher read through the texts several times, coding and highlighting relevant statements that emerged from the text. According to Merriam & Tisdell (2016), “coding is nothing more than assigning some sort of shorthand designation to various aspects of your data so that you can easily retrieve specific

pieces of the data” (p. 199). It also involved making notes next to relevant pieces of data which helped to organize and label key information. Through coding the transcripts, the researcher noted the emergence of themes and patterns from participant responses which related to the study’s research questions, as “coding is the process of identifying and labeling themes within your data that correspond with the evaluation questions you want to answer” (Department of Health and Human Services, 2009). In particular, the data coding process began as open coding, which allowed the researcher to identify initial key segments and recurrent themes (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). Repeated coding lead to the generation of categories, which lead to a synthesis of more comprehensive categories (axial coding), where categories are described as “conceptual elements that ‘cover’ or span many individual examples” (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016, p. 216). Sets of comments, terms, and notations from each interview were compared and merged into a master list, which created a rudimentary classification system for the recurring themes in the data (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). Participant responses were grouped into themes, resulting in the development of a table that summarized those themes. Overall descriptions for each participant were documented as a composite of shared experiences as reported by the participants. By this point, saturation had occurred.

According to Merriam & Tisdell (2016), “one of the hardest parts about data analysis is knowing when to stop. When you are unable to produce new information or insights into your topic, saturation has occurred” (p. 198). Data saturation relies on the nature of the data source and a study’s research questions (Suri, 2011). In this study, data saturation occurred when the researcher was able to fully address this study’s research question through the themes, information, and perceptions collected by a thorough data analysis process.

3.8 Ethics

Ethics are an important consideration in any research project: as Tracy (2012) suggests, “ethical researchers carefully consider the way their research will be read, understood, and used by outside audiences” (p. 301). All reasonable efforts were made to uphold appropriate ethical standards during the course of this research project. Contact with participants began after clearance was obtained through Memorial University (MUN)’s Interdisciplinary Committee on Ethics in Human Research (ICEHR). Interviews were conducted with great care to encourage the participants’ honest self-expression in English. Interviews can give us naturally occurring data and the researcher aimed to create a space where the participants could speak freely and in safety. According to Cohen, Manion, & Morrison (2011), during an interview “it is important for the respondent to feel safe, secure, supported, close to the interviewer, and to know that he/she has the undivided attention of the interviewer” (p. 435).

The researcher aimed to ensure that the likelihood and magnitude of any harms that participants risked experiencing in this project were as low as possible. Potential psychological/emotional risks of this study included the possibility that some students could have felt embarrassed or anxious if they had had a traumatic experience in Canada. If a participant had appeared to suffer from emotional or psychological distress triggered by the researcher’s questions, the researcher would have stopped the interview and referred the participants to the KNU Health and Counselling Centre on campus. However, no such instances arose. While the interview format was semi-structured and allowed room for exploration, the interviewer refrained from asking questions related to intimate, sensitive, or provocative subject matter. The participants did not appear to endure any harm from the questions asked and the overall mood of the interviews could be described as conversational and non-intrusive.

Prior to the interviews, the participants' informed consent was documented in writing. The recruitment email instructed participants to carefully read the informed consent form and to only sign it if they understood what it meant and were in agreement with it. Participants were told that they could contact the researcher if they needed any help understanding the project, the consent form, or any other aspect of this research project at any time. If a participant agreed to participate in the study, they were instructed to print off the informed consent form as per instructions in the recruitment email and to bring it to their interview. Before the interview started, the researcher explained the informed consent form in detail to the participants. Both in the recruitment email and in discussion with the researcher prior to the interview, it was stressed that participation was voluntary and is not expected of them. Additionally, they were informed that there would be no negative consequences nor penalties for refusing to participate in the study or from withdrawing from the project at any point.

The letter of informed consent and the recruitment email (in writing) and the researcher (verbally) informed each participant of their right to withdraw from this study. The researcher told each participant that they could withdraw at any point during the interview process and the researcher would stop the interview immediately. The recording device would be stopped, and the recording of their interview would be deleted. If the participant wished to discontinue their involvement in this study at any other point up until data analysis had begun, they were told to contact the researcher by email. No participants indicated the intention to withdraw from this study.

In any research project, participants' privacy and anonymity cannot be 100% guaranteed however every reasonable effort was made to protect sensitive information throughout this study. Prospective participants were emailed one-by-one by to ask if they were interested in

joining the project to protect their anonymity. The only personally identifiable information collected in this project involved the names of the participants, which were assigned a code to mask their identity following the interviews. During the interview the participants' first names only were used and when the interviews were transcribed their first names were replaced by a new code name only known to the researcher.

This project's data were mostly electronic and stored on a secure hard drive. Paperwork, including notes, have been filed safely as well in a locked cabinet only accessible to the researcher in her office. Electronic data, in the form of word and mp3 files, were encrypted and saved on a password-protected hard drive. Following 5 years, as per MUN's ICEHR policy, the hard drive will be erased clean and any paperwork pertaining to this study will be destroyed.

3.8.1 Role of the Researcher

It is important to address the role of the researcher in this study: as the researcher, I was responsible for data collection and analysis (Creswell, 2012). As I am affiliated with Kongju National University, where this study took place, I must explain how my research did not interfere with my work at the university and vice versa. For the past 4 years I have been an instructor in Kongju National University's Freshman English program. The participants in this study, however, were all at least upper-year undergraduate students because freshman students are unable to participate in language programs abroad. Therefore, it was impossible that any of the participants were my current students, which allowed me to confirm that I was in no direct position of power to any of the participants. It was also extremely unlikely that any participant would have been my former freshman student given the large size of the university, which is spread across three campuses, the number of courses available to students in their freshman year,

and the size of our foreign faculty. I experienced no pre-existing instructor-student relationship between myself and the participants of this study. Nevertheless, participants were made aware of my employment as an instructor at KNU and that this research was solely for the purpose of completing my master's thesis. I stressed that their participation in this project was completely voluntary and would have no bearing on their status as students at KNU nor on my employment.

As an interviewer, I did my utmost to remain neutral and not indicate any bias or preference toward Canada, which is my home country, while conducting the interviews. However, I cannot confirm with exact certainty that unconscious bias did not drive my conduct during the interviews. My skills in conducting qualitative interviews are undeveloped, as this is my first time conducting this type of research. Therefore, my lack of experience may have had an influence on this study unbeknownst to me. Indeed, the human element may have played a role in altering this study's results however as an interviewer I tried to remain aware of my potential preference for Canada and my lack of prior experience in conducting interviews, and I tried my best to maintain a neutral, professional, and encouraging composure throughout my conversations with the participants.

As noted by Kothari (2004), "the presence of the interviewer on the spot may over stimulate the respondent, sometimes even to the extent that he may give imaginary information just to make it interesting. He may tell things about which he may not himself be very sure" (p. 99). In order to prevent this situation from arising I tried to maintain a positive and supportive rapport with the students: "if the interviewer does his job well [...] and if the respondent is sincere and well-motivated, accurate data may be obtained. Of course, all kinds of bias are liable to creep in, but with skill these can largely be eliminated" (Kitwood, 1977, in Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2007, p. 349). The establishment of rapport is advantageous in most instances of

qualitative research (O'Donoghue & Punch, 2003), especially so in the timeframe of a single interview: as an interviewer, I strived to maintain a friendly and encouraging atmosphere in order to encourage free and honest expression. Based on their verbal and physical cues, I had no reason to doubt the sincerity of the participants in this study as I observed that they were proud of their experiences abroad and were willing to offer seemingly truthful responses.

Overall, a great deal of effort was made to limit any ethical issues pertaining to this study. The researcher selected a sampling group of participants unknown to her. Participants were invited to take part in this study of their own volition, assured that this study would have no bearing on their grades or academic standing. Informed consent forms were reviewed with each participant prior to their interview, and they were given multiple opportunities to ask questions before their consent was obtained. During the interviews, the participants were made to feel at ease to speak freely. Following the interviews, participants received transcribed copies of their interviews for verification and they will have access to this thesis upon its publication.

3.9 Limitations

There were two main limitations to this study: 1) the small sample size 2) the participants' responses cannot easily be generalized to a wider population. First, the small sample size (five participants) provided a limited amount of data for this study. While the researcher aimed to collect complete, detailed descriptions of the participants' experiences in Canada only five perspectives were heard. Each participant's answers were subjective and unique to them, and some participants were more verbal than others. Several themes that emerged in the Literature Review reoccurred in the participants' responses, however, the information gathered in this study should not be generalized to all Korean students, given the

small sample size of this study and the researcher's inexperience conducting masters' level qualitative research. The researcher was also concerned by the linguistic demands of the interview on the participants, who were communicating in their second language. Had the interviews occurred in Korean, perhaps more information could have been yielded. Despite the study's limitations the data collected was rich enough to allow for the creation of several themes, which shall be presented in the following chapter, *Presentation of Data and Results*.

Furthermore, one of the intentions of this study is to create research interest in Korean students in Canadian language learning programs, which is a field lacking in research: perhaps this study will spark further research interest in this topic.

3.10 Conclusion

The methodological aspects of this research project have been explained in this chapter. A qualitative research approach was used as it best facilitated an exploration of the participants' answers about their experiences studying in a short-term language learning program in Canada. Data were collected using a basic interpretive qualitative design involving a small, purposive sampling of university-aged Korean students. Appropriate measures were taken to ensure participant safety and confidentiality. The role of the researcher and biases were addressed. The next chapter will provide a discussion of this study's findings.

Chapter 4 Presentation of Data and Results

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the themes and categories that emerged from analyzing the data gathered from this study's semi-structured interviews. Mainly, three of the four research questions of this study guided this analysis, which were:

1. What factors into a Korean student's decision to study English in Canada?
2. What are Korean students' experiences of studying in an English language learning program in Canada?
3. What do Korean students tell their peers when they return from studying in an English language learning program in Canada?

The purpose of this study was to explore and better understand Korean students' experiences studying English in Canada. Data were collected from interviews conducted with five participants.

This chapter will detail the responses to the interview questions as given by the participants, who were Korean university-aged students and returnees from studying abroad in short-term language programs in Canada. The semi-structured interview questions centered around exploring why the participants chose Canada, the perceptions of the participants' experiences studying in Canada, and what, if anything, they told their peers about Canada after returning home to Korea. The interview questions asked included, but were not limited to, the following list from the researcher's semi-structured interview guide:

- (1) Why did you choose to study English in Canada?

- (2) What was your first impression of Canada?
- (3) What was the best thing about studying English in Canada?
- (4) What was the worst thing about studying English in Canada?
- (5) Do you think that your English improved after studying English in Canada?
- (6) What do you tell others about your experience studying English in Canada?
- (7) Would you recommend studying English in Canada to your peers?

Sections one and two of the Presentation of Data and Results chapter will discuss who the participants were and will detail their answers to the interview questions, using direct quotations to support the researcher's interpretations in some cases as required. Throughout this study, the participants are not identified using their real names, as each participant was assigned a codename unique to them to protect their identity while at the same time allow the reader to recognize who each of the participants were for their distinct perceptions shared. Other interview conditions include that the interviewer made sure to cover the same questions as indicated in the interview guide in each interview with every participant, so the general findings for each question will be presented before an exploration of the any themes will occur. The participants' responses lead the researcher to an exploration of dominant themes that emerged, including any of the participants' perceptions that deviated from the common or dominant themes or interview questions, which will be discussed in the third section. This final section of this chapter will discuss the various categories and themes that emerged from performing data analysis on the participant's transcriptions, overall. By the end of this chapter the researcher hopes to display a

better understanding of Korean students' experiences studying English in Canada by illustrating dominant themes that emerged in this study.

4.2 Section One: The Participants' Experiences

Five university-aged Korean students who had studied abroad in a short-term English language learning program in Canada agreed to participate in this study. All five participants willingly shared their experiences studying English in Canada by answering the interviewer's questions. The participants in this study were all able to communicate well in English and displayed no signs of confusion during the interviews: however, there were some variances in the degree of mastery of the English language amongst the participants. Some participants were able to speak quicker and with a richer vocabulary than others who were slower, perhaps due to personality and shyness. Nevertheless, each participant articulated their answers clearly to the researcher. As well, a passable TOEIC score was necessary in order to be considered to study abroad, which ensured the researcher that any participants of this study would be capable of holding an understandable conversation in English.

Despite some language variances (in the researcher's opinion as a language teacher, they were all intermediate speakers or above) the five participants shared certain core characteristics in common. At the time of the interviews, all of the participants were: in their final year of university study or a recent graduate of an undergraduate degree program in Korea; had studied in a short-term language learning program (less than 6 months) in Canada within the past two years (starting from 2017), had grown up in South Korea, and were in their early to mid 20s at the time of the interview. Three females and two males were interviewed. The males were slightly older than the females as they had both taken a break from their studies to complete a

mandatory 2-year long military service prior to studying abroad and graduating, as is customary for men in South Korea. None of the participants indicated having friends or family living in Canada while they were participating in their exchange program.

4.2.1 Participant Profiles

A brief profile of the participants will be presented, followed by their individual answers to each of the interview questions.

Erin was an upper-year student, a female in her early 20s, studying Tourism Management. She participated in an English language learning program in Calgary. The program was 5 weeks and centered around ESL courses. Upon returning from Canada, Erin found a part-time work-study position working in KNU's Division of International Studies, which required her to speak English on a regular basis.

Mina, a female in her early 20s, was two months from graduation at the time of the interview and majoring in French Language and Literature. She participated in an English language learning program in Vancouver. As of January 2019, she has informed the researcher that she moved to Canada to live with her Canadian boyfriend in Toronto whom she met while living in Vancouver. The program that she participated in was 4 months in Vancouver and was an ESL program that focused on Business English.

Jess, a female in early 20s, was also set to graduate in February of 2019. She studied Home Economics Education as her major and she participated in ESL-based English language learning programs in both in Calgary and Vancouver, each lasting for 4 months. Jess was a unique participant because of her decision to participate twice in an exchange program in

Canada, and her two exchanges were exactly 1 year apart. Jess said that she planned to immigrate to Canada after graduation.

Tom, a male in his mid-20s, was a recent graduate of Chinese Literature and Language who was working at a small company in Korea in a position that required him to speak English with overseas clients. Tom studied in an EAP-focused language program in Toronto, as he had hopes of entering college eventually in Canada, but he decided not to pursue that plan and he returned to Korea upon his EAP program's completion. His program was 4 months. Tom indicated that he was well-travelled prior to studying in Canada, having trekked across Australia and Europe after completion of his military service in Korea. He also partook in English courses while living briefly in Australia before returning to Korea to complete his undergraduate degree. Tom was the oldest interviewee and the most advanced speaker amongst the five participants.

Mike, a mid-20s male, was a recent graduate of Comics and Animation and a self-identified artist. He studied ESL courses in an English language learning program in Toronto. His program was 4 months in duration. In Mike's internship at an online comics company English is rarely used, yet Mike continues to practice his English through connecting with friends that he had met while living in Canada.

The participants answered all of the researcher's questions in private, in-depth interviews that lasted approximately 20 minutes each. The researcher is immensely grateful to the participants who gave up their time to participate in this study. Their intelligent and thoughtful expression in their second language is a testament to their years of hard work in learning the English language, which the researcher applauds with the utmost respect.

For ease of understanding, a table has been made (**Table 4.1**) to summarize the participant's personal data relevant to this study.

Table 4.1 Participant Profiles Summary

*ESL: English as a Second Language

*EAP: English for Academic Purposes

Name	Major in Korea	Destination City in Canada	Destination Program	Program Duration
Erin	Tourism Management	Calgary	General ESL	5 weeks
Mina	French Language and Literature	Vancouver	Business English ESL	4 months
Jess	Home Economics Education	Calgary Vancouver	General ESL Business English ESL	4 months 4 months
Tom	Chinese Literature and Language	Toronto	EAP	4 months
Mike	Comics and Animation	Toronto	General ESL	4 months

As shown above, the average English language-learning program length was 4 months.

Jess spent the longest amount of time studying Canada, as she opted to participate in ESL programs in two different schools and locations. Her exchanges were one year apart and her

reason for participating twice was to better her English so that she could immigrate to Canada in the future. Her interview data was unique as it contained information on both ESL programs, in Calgary and Vancouver. Erin spent the shortest time abroad, which was 5 weeks in an ESL program in Calgary. Regardless of the amount of time spent abroad, the data obtained from the participant interviews were rich and speak to the experiences of five Korean students in short-term English language learning programs in Canada in either Calgary, Vancouver, or Toronto. When possible, I have attempted to contextualize the research data in conjunction with the participants' respective program choices in the Analysis section at the end of this chapter.

In the section that follows, the participants' answers to the interview questions will be presented. I have left the quotes verbatim and have not edited language to maintain the authenticity of the participant's interview data.

4.3 Section Two: Responses to the Interview Questions

Seven interview questions, which were outlined at the outset of this chapter, were asked to the five participants in a semi-structured interview format. These questions formed the basis of the interview upon which each conversation centered, which lead the researcher to ask other questions not included in the interview guide based on the participant's unique answers. As an ESL instructor with a general knowledge of Korean exchange students, the researcher felt confident in asking questions that suited the progression of each interview. The flexible interview structure ensured the collection of data vital to this study's research questions through asking the same core questions to each participant while at the same time allowing for the discussion and exploration of other ideas as they emerged.

This section will present each main interview question and selected responses from the five participants. Other data obtained outside of these questions will be used to inform the Analysis section of this chapter.

4.3.1 Question 1:

Table 4.2 Participants’ Responses to the Interview Question # 1

*R represents the researcher

Question	Responses
(1) Why did you choose to study English in Canada?	<p>Erin: <i>The reason why I chose Canada was that I wanted to study English during vacation, and I found Calgary University period was 5 weeks. And the other university was longer than Canada, so I chose it.</i></p>
	<p>Mina: <i>It has many cultures, many people who have various cultures and various language so I thought it could be a good opportunity for other languages as well.</i></p>
	<p>Jess: <i>My first reason is I heard that Canadian is really great and most Canadian people are kind and nice. Nice people. Canada is a very developed country and I want to immigrate someday. The program is well made. That’s why I chose Canada.</i></p>
	<p>Tom: <i>So, basically, I graduated double major degree in a Korean university. My main major was Chinese Literature and Language and the other one was</i></p>

logistics. So I wanted to study further in Logistics field and I was told that the Canadian education system was really great. And the Logistics study in Canada was also quite famous.

R: And what about English in Canada?

So the reason why I chose to study English in Canada is I used to live in Australia and living in Australia is quite expensive and I didn't like the Australian accent and um the main reason to choose Canada was I wanted to live in Canada so that's the first reason and Canadian English education system is quite famous and ... they do a practical English program so that's why I chose Canada. And, also, studying English courses is quite reasonable so that's why I chose to study English in Canada.

Mike: Uh Actually, I was not good at speaking English in Korea. But luckily I found a language exchange student program in my university so oh why not I -- I wanted to try to be a language exchange student so I studied TOEIC test to apply for that program. And I got it. So I went to Canada.

When asked (1) Why did you choose to study English in Canada? Erin said that she chose to study English in Canada because of the program's length: she wanted a short-term program and she found an exchange program that lasted for 5 weeks, which fit into her vacation from KNU.

Mina, who studied both English and French, stated that her main reason for choosing to study English in Canada was Canada's diversity, saying that Canada has "many cultures, many

people who have various cultures and various languages so I thought it could be a good opportunity for [learning] other languages as well”.

Jess’ reasons for choosing Canada were several: her first reason was that Canada was known to have a good reputation and Canadians were known to be kind. Also, Canada is a “very developed country” that she wishes to “immigrate [to] someday”. She also stated that the English language learning programs in Canada are well-made.

Tom knew of the positive reputation that the Canadian education system had and at the time he wished to further his studies in a Canadian college after improving his English through a language program. He also had experience studying English in Australia and said that he expected that the cost of living in Canada would be less expensive than Australia.

Mike’s reason for choosing Canada was to improve his English in a native speaker setting and his university offered him the opportunity to study English in Canada.

4.3.2 Question 2:

Table 4.3 Participants’ Responses to the Interview Question # 2

*R represents the researcher

Question	Responses
2) What was your first impression of Canada?	<p>Erin: <i>My first impression was kindness of Canadians. For me, most people that I met in Canada was very kind. For example, when I couldn’t find a location of something, some people took me there. So, I was very thankful. And when I entered the building, they held the door. It was very different.</i></p> <hr/> <p>Mina: <i>The beauty, the nature was awesome. The fresh air as well. When I</i></p>

first arrived in Canada, it had huge mountains. I could see mountains just from my home. Huge nature, it was my impression.

Jess: When I arrived in Canada I felt that Canada is really big and my host family was really nice. My English teacher was very warm and kind. And nature was really beautiful. Hm... and the atmosphere.

R: Do you mean, like, the air quality or the people?

Both of them. They had open heart, not money, time.

R: It's not that busy?

No competition.

R: Those are all positive things. Did you have any negative impressions about Canada?

Umm.. the homeless. These people are kind of scary.

R: There aren't many homeless people in Korea, right?

In Korea, homeless people are very quiet. They don't move. In Canada they are very active.

Tom: So, when I arrived in Canada my first impression of Canada was clean and nice. Canadians are very nice. And then um there are lots of races, different races, and I felt that I wasn't that neglected from the others. Always Canadians welcomed me, and they tried to help me out. I felt a warm heart from Canadians. Personally, the transportation was quite inconvenient and

	<p><i>expensive. That's my first impression of Canada.</i></p> <hr/> <p>Mike: <i>Uh, first impression... so Canada is a big country, isn't it?</i></p> <p>R: Yes!</p> <p><i>So, (pause) first, fresh air. Very big. Uh... (pause) that's all. Very big.</i></p>
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When asked (2) What was your first impression of Canada? Erin's first impression was the "kindness of Canadians. For me, most people that I met in Canada was very kind. For example, when I couldn't find a location of something, some people took me there. So, I was very thankful. And when I entered the building, they held the door. It was very different."

Mina stated "the beauty, the nature was awesome. The fresh air as well. When I first arrived in Canada, it had huge mountains. I could see mountains just from my home. Huge nature, it was my impression." Mike was also shocked by the size of Canada, saying that his first impression of the country was its massive size.

Jess stated that "When I arrived in Canada, I felt that Canada is really big and my host family was really nice. My English teacher was very warm and kind. And nature was really beautiful. Hm... and the atmosphere." When asked to describe what she meant by atmosphere, Jess said that Canada seemed less busy and competitive than Korea. She then noted the fresh air in Canada, as well.

Tom replied:

My first impression of Canada was clean and nice. Canadians are very nice. And then um there are lots of races, different races, and I felt that I wasn't that neglected from the others. Always Canadians welcomed me, and they tried to help me out. I felt a warm

heart from Canadians. Personally, the transportation was quite inconvenient and expensive. That's my first impression of Canada.

4.3.4 Question 3:

Table 4.4 Participants' Responses to the Interview Question # 3

*R represents the researcher

Question	Responses
(3) What was the best thing about studying English in Canada?	<p>Erin: <i>The best thing was I could make many friends from various countries. And hang out with them after school. Actually, we went to various places: Banff, pub, downtown, and so on. And we often keep in touch.</i></p> <hr/> <p>Mina: <i>Umm I studied Business English in Canada, so it was good chance to know how Canadians get a job in Canada and how they search for job. And how to write resume, how to do interview.</i></p> <p>R: So it was practical?</p> <p><i>Yes, practical major.</i></p> <hr/> <p>Jess: <i>At first, I studied in UofC, University of Calgary, I could meet like real Canadians, it is good. The campus... I should share the campus with real Canadian students. And the English program was really well made. There were 3 parts. Speaking part, and grammar part, and writing part. I studied all of the parts as my level.</i></p> <p>R: Good. Did you make any Canadian friends?</p>

	<p><i>Yes.</i></p> <p>R: What about in Vancouver?</p> <p><i>I couldn't meet real Canadians.</i></p> <hr/> <p>Tom: <i>The best thing about studying English in Canada is I think all teachers in college, they tried to help each student to improve their English ability. And we do have a writing system and every speaking test with a computer and assignment and we also have a picnic with foreign students and also Canadian students. And also Canadian students are also really bright and want to improve foreign students. So, I think this kind of activity is very helpful for foreign students.</i></p> <hr/> <p>Mike: <i>Yeah, just, studying a language in a native country is the best thing, yeah, that's the best thing about studying English in Canada.</i></p> <p>R: So, you were able to study English...</p> <p><i>In English!</i></p> <p>R: In a native speaking country?</p> <p><i>Not in Korea. Yeah. That's good.</i></p>
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When asked (3) What was the best thing about studying English in Canada? Erin replied that “the best thing was I could make many friends from various countries. And hang out with them after school. Actually, we went to various places: Banff, pub, downtown, and so on. And we often keep in touch.”

Mina cited the practical aspect of her language courses: “I studied Business English in Canada, so it was good chance to know how Canadians get a job in Canada and how they search for a job. And how to write a resume, how to do an interview.” Jess also enjoyed her program:

At first, I studied in [Calgary] I could meet like real Canadians, it is good. I should share the campus with real Canadian students. And the English program was really well made. There were 3 parts. Speaking part, and grammar part, and writing part.

Tom enjoyed learning English in Canada:

The best thing about studying English in Canada is I think all teachers in college, they tried to help each student to improve their English ability. And we do have a writing system and every speaking test with a computer and assignment and we also have a picnic with foreign students and also Canadian students. And also Canadian students are also really bright and want to improve foreign students.

Mike also enjoyed learning English in an English-speaking environment, away from the Korean classroom setting: “Yeah, just, studying a language in a native country is the best thing, yeah, that’s the best thing about studying English in Canada. [...] in English... in a native speaking country. Not in Korea. Yeah. That’s good.”

Question 4:

Table 4.5 Participants’ Responses to the Interview Question # 4

*R represents the researcher

Question	Responses
(4) What was the worst thing about	Erin: <i>Nothing</i> . R: Anything is okay.

<p>studying English in Canada?</p>	<p>Erin: <i>Um...</i></p> <p>R: (Prompting) Was it cold? How was the weather?</p> <p>Erin: <i>Yeah! It was cold. So cold! One day snow was very heavy, so the snow was this (gestures to waist) high. It was very hard to go to school.</i></p> <hr/> <p>Mina: <i>It had a freak teacher who forced the students to do whatever he want like repeating his words. Also anyone couldn't go washroom while in the class.</i></p> <p>R: You didn't like that teaching method?</p> <p><i>The man was so, how can I say, jerk?</i></p> <p>R: Oh, he was a jerk?</p> <p><i>He was so jerk.</i></p> <p>R: I'm sorry to hear that. Was he mean to the students?</p> <p><i>Yes, he was. One of students were kicked out.</i></p> <p>R: Kicked out? Why was the student kicked out?</p> <p><i>Because he had a question and he wanted the teacher to answer the question, but the teacher doesn't like that kind of question. I can't remember what it was. One of student was against of him and he kept questioned why the teacher think so, but even this question can't be allowed for him. But very (pause) I can't remember the word. The person who forces you to something?</i></p> <p>R: Like a bully? He pressured or bullied?</p> <p><i>Yes.</i></p>
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R: So you did have a bad teacher.

He was the worst teacher ever.

R: Did you have many teachers? Was he your only teacher or was he one among many in that language program?

We had many teachers. So we could choose our teacher.

R: Did anybody make a complaint or report against that teacher?

I think somebody could have done that.

R: I'm sorry to hear that.

Other than this, it was so nice. They are so nice. So, I had no trouble.

Jess: *In Calgary the weather was really cold but it didn't matter. When I studied English, the teacher was an immigrant so their accent was kind of difficult. From India or Hungary?*

R: They had a different accent, not a North American accent?

But I could hear Indian accent or Hungarian accent so it was a good thing.

Tom: *I had to think of expenses, especially living expenses. So, overall, studying English in Canada is quite good. Especially the education system. But it's really hard to keep their life or living in Canada because compared to Korea or China or any other country it's really expensive.*

R: And I think they charge international students more money as well?

Yeah, that's true. I paid 3 or 4 times more what Canadians students paid.

Yes, that's true. I will say that if a student really wants to live in Canada,

	<p><i>they might need a certain visa, like a resident's visa or a citizenship. This study English program is the first step of getting a visa. So that is really important to them. So that's why they just have a risk to pay a lot of money.</i></p> <p>R: I heard that a lot of students after graduating try to get a permanent residency visa.</p> <p><i>Yeah, and they are expected to get a visa but it's not true, I think. It's getting harder, I think.</i></p> <hr/> <p>Mike: <i>Ugh actually homesick. I think probably many Asians could have homesick. Totally different food. Actually, my stomach is kind of weak, so I had, like, biological trouble. That is important. That is important to everybody.</i></p> <p>R: So you had trouble with Western food?</p> <p><i>Yes.</i></p>
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When asked (4) What was the worst thing about studying English in Canada? Erin reported the weather. Mina reported having a bad experience with a language school teacher. Jess reported the weather as well. Tom reported the cost. Mike reported homesickness and trouble eating Canadian food: “Ugh actually homesick. I think probably many Asians could have homesick. Totally different food. Actually, my stomach is kind of weak, so I had, like, biological trouble.”

4.3.5 Question 5:

Table 4.6 Participants' Responses to the Interview Question # 5

*R represents the researcher

Question	Responses
<p>(5) Do you think that your English improved after studying English in Canada?</p>	<p>Erin: <i>I think a little bit was better.</i></p> <hr/> <p>Mina: <i>Yes, but, it wasn't actual studying English in the school. So I should have found another way of speaking English. So I joined some English speaking meet-up.</i></p> <p>R: How did the meet up go? Was it beneficial for learning English?</p> <p><i>So I think from that and from my internship I felt I am improving.</i></p> <p>R: From both of them together?</p> <p><i>Yes.</i></p> <hr/> <p>Jess: <i>Of course. Yes, of course. When I went to Calgary I could understand what they said but I couldn't speak. My host family thought I couldn't understand English but after that I could speak what I want. When I studied in Calgary my host family wanted to correct my pronunciation of words so it was really helpful to me.</i></p> <p>R: So you did 4 months in Calgary, and after that your English got better?</p> <p><i>Yes.</i></p> <p>R: From mostly talking with the host family?</p> <p><i>And classmates. And teachers.</i></p>

	<p>R: And next time, how do you think your English improved? When you were living in Vancouver, did you English improve or stay the same?</p> <p><i>It stayed the same.</i></p> <hr/> <p>Tom: <i>Yes, I did, especially my writing in English was not good and now I spent a lot of time writing English. I had like 2 or 3 writing in English classes in the college and I had a writing class for vocabulary and reading articles and those 3 classes really helped me out to improve my English.</i></p> <p>R: How about your speaking?</p> <p><i>I will say, yeah, I think I improved my speaking as well. But mostly the writing.</i></p> <hr/> <p>Mike: <i>Yes, yes, I think, like, the most different thing after Canada is like confidence. You know, just, if someone has good English skill but when they have no confidence they cannot say like something easily. But, just, yeah, why not, just low language skill with big confidence can make your English better, more and more.</i></p>
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When asked (5) Do you think that your English improved after studying English in Canada? All of the participants reported that their English improved, to various degrees. Erin said that her English improved a little. Mina said that her English improved, but she credited her interactions outside of the language school, which she felt helped her improve more, stating that she joined some English-speaking meet ups to supplement her learning. Jess reported that her speaking skills increased a lot in a short period of time during her first stay in Canada. Tom

reported that his English increased overall but mostly in the area of writing, as he took classes that specialized in writing. Mike said that his English increased because his confidence increased, having lived in a country where English is spoken as a first language.

4.3.6 Question 6:

Table 4.7 Participants' Responses to the Interview Question # 6

*R represents the researcher

Question	Responses
<p>(6) What do you tell others about your experience studying English in Canada?</p>	<p>Erin: <i>When I was in Canada, I stayed in homestay with home mother and father. So... we could do many things, like making dishes with each other and going to market with family and watching movies in theatre.</i></p> <hr/> <p>Mina: <i>Umm...</i></p> <p>R: Like, do you recommend it to other people? Or do you tell them, don't go?</p> <p><i>Hmm... yeah studying English in Canada is good. Every people try to speak English, not with their language, so I think studying in Canada is the best.</i></p> <p>R: Do you give advice to other Koreans about going abroad?</p> <p><i>Yeah, I did. From this program. If you want to learn second language then you should be the country where they use the word. Especially for speaking fluently. Even going to grocery store, you might learn many things. Also you could meet others who strive for learning language.</i></p> <hr/>

Jess: *Only positive things.*

R: Do your friends ask you for advice about going abroad sometimes? Like, I'm going to go to Canada, give me a tip or something? Where should I go?

Um **(pause)** *my friend didn't go to Canada. Ah! My friend's nephew went to Canada because of my recommendation.*

R: Oh? Where did he go?

Toronto.

R: What did you say to him?

Canada is very nice.

R: Wow, so you actually recommend somebody.

Yeah. And I recommended studying in Canada to my younger sister, so she studied English in University of Calgary for 1 semester, too. And she applied for Canada working holiday visa so she's been waiting for visa.

Tom: *I'm going to tell them if they would mind the living expenses the Canadian English program is really, really nice and these English systems are very systematic so I saw lots of friends improving their English ability in Canada. So, it's a great opportunity to spend money and time if they really want to improve their English. Yes, I'm going to recommend a really good and bright side about studying English in Canada.*

Mike: *Yeah, yeah, although studying English in Canada is good, like, I could have like many experience. Like I could make many friend from different*

	<p><i>country. I could uhh hang out with them. Yeah, that's a good thing. And now I keep in touch with them, so, ah yeah, actually I met my Japanese friend in Japan and in Korea so like without Canada study yeah it could have not happened.</i></p> <p>R: Good. Did you make friends with any of the local people? Not other exchange students? Like, Native-speakers?</p> <p><i>Umm yeah I had some but I don't keep in touch with them cause I usually spend time language school friend.</i></p>
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When asked (6) What do you tell others about your experience studying English in Canada? Erin stated that she tells others that she had positive experiences studying in Canada. Mina said that she tells people that Canada was nice. Also, she offers advice for language learners:

If you want to learn second language then you should be the country where they use [the language]. Especially for speaking fluently. Even going to grocery store, you might learn many things. Also you could meet others who strive for learning language.

Jess reported that she says “only positive things” about her time in Canada to others. Tom said that he reports to others that “the Canadian English program is really, really nice” and it is a “great opportunity to spend money and time if they really want to improve their English”. Mike reported that studying English in Canada was positive and that it allowed him to make friends from various countries.

4.3.7 Question 7:

Table 4.8 Participants' Responses to the Interview Question # 7

*R represents the researcher

Question	Responses
<p>(7) Would you recommend studying English in Canada to your peers?</p>	<p>Erin: <i>Yes, of course. I want to recommend studying abroad including Canada so actually I recommended my friends. She applied to this program, but to Australia. She wanted to apply Canada but, yeah, she failed.</i></p> <hr/> <p>Mina: <i>Yes, I would. As I mentioned, it has many people who have various background. So, even if one couldn't speak English well, most people try to listen and understand them well. So, studying English in Canada is best choice I think.</i></p> <hr/> <p>Jess: <i>For sure. There is no racism. Australia or USA I heard a lot of experience from my friends. So I recommend Canada.</i></p> <hr/> <p>Tom: <i>As I mentioned, the English program in Canada is quite developed and they do some practical English program like for example picnic or watching with Canadian friends and they also do reading articles or writing. I actually had a great experience studying in Canada and I do recommend for my peers.</i></p> <hr/>

	<p>Mike: <i>Yeah, yeah, yeah, it was good. Yeah many Koreans want to study English in a native country. Yeah, I like Canada.</i></p> <p>R: Is there anything else you want to say before we finish?</p> <p><i>Umm yeah just learning a new language is not only learning a language. You can learn more like culture difference. You can make yourself even better person. I recommend you guys to study in abroad.</i></p> <p>R: Thank you.</p>
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When asked (7) Would you recommend studying English in Canada to your peers?" Erin said "Yes, of course. I want to recommend studying abroad including Canada so actually I recommended my friends. She applied to this program, but to Australia. She wanted to apply to Canada, but, yeah, she failed." Mina said that although she had not recommended anyone she would recommend it if given the chance. Jess said that she recommended two people toward studying English in Canada: "My friend's nephew went to Canada because of my recommendation." Also, "I recommended studying in Canada to my younger sister, so she studied English in University of Calgary for one semester, too." Tom stated that he does recommend Canada to others: "I actually had a great experience studying in Canada and I do recommend for my peers." Mike stated that he would recommend studying English in Canada to Koreans, as "many Koreans want to study English in a native country".

4.4 Other Responses

The answers quoted verbatim, as provided above, were given by the participants in direct response to the interviewer's pre-selected questions from the semi-structured interview guide.

Other conversations occurred in addition to these direct questions which have informed the findings of this study. Other information collected, but not included in the tables above, include discussions of homestays, friendships, and, in the case of Mina, Canada's other official language, French.

While all of the participants had a homestay, which was arranged by their home university in Korea and their chosen English language learning program in Canada, three of the five participants, Erin, Jess, and Mike, opted to speak about their homestays in the interviews. Homestays are a popular boarding option for international students as they provide an opportunity for students to live with a local family, experience daily life, and eat home-cooked local food for a fee that is often cheaper than alternative living arrangements. The three participants reported that their homestays were a positive experience. Mike, who enjoys drawing and exercise, reported a good relationship with his host family: "Yeah, good family. They lent me a bike to ride so I rode a bike and I drew them; they were happy". Erin spoke fondly of her homestay in Calgary: "When I was in Canada, I stayed in homestay with home mother and father. So... we could do many things, like making dishes with each other and going to market with family and watching movies in theatre." Jess credited her conversations with her homestay family as one of the reasons why her English improved while in Canada, as she stated that her Calgary homestay family often spoke with her and corrected her pronunciation. However, her second homestay, in Vancouver, seemed less memorable as she stated that her homestay family was less involved with her: "They were busy. And ate dinner or lunch separately. I didn't have a chance to talk."

Another opportunity to practice speaking, outside of the homestay and language program, was at social gatherings. Mina drew the researcher's attention to the importance of social

meetings in improving language learning. She explained that she felt that her studies in Business English were insufficient to provide her with the language practice necessary to improve her English. She said that in addition to her Business English program's internship, which was a practical chance for her to use her English in a job-like setting, she joined an English-speaking meet-up. Other participants spoke of the benefits of practicing English outside of the classroom, too. Erin stated that the best thing about studying English in Canada was that she could "make many friends from various countries." While she did not report making any Canadian friends, apart from her language school teachers, she reported having friendships with fellow language program students, from Japan, Ecuador, Venezuela, and Columbia. Given that Erin's language program friends came from different parts of the world, they would have had to use English, which was their common language, in order to communicate, which provided the students with an authentic way to practice their English. Tom reported interacting with Canadian peers in addition to language program friends in Toronto, and Jess reported making Canadian friends in Calgary but not in Vancouver, where, according to Mina, "Vancouver has many Koreans. Every street has Korean people. So I could hear every Korean speaking." Mike, who went to Toronto, reported that he mostly spent time socializing in English with his language school friends who were from different countries. He reported losing touch with his Canadian friends made while in Canada although he remains in contact with his language school friends who, like Erin's, come from all over the world. English as the *lingua franca* amongst the participants and their study abroad peers in Canada is a somewhat obvious yet vital piece of social information about the participants' experiences in Canada.

Mina, who also studied French, indicated that her main reason for choosing to study English in Canada was that Canada offered linguistic and cultural diversity: "it has many

cultures, many people who have various cultures and various language so I thought it could be a good opportunity for other languages as well”. She said that Canada’s diversity allowed for ample opportunities to meet others who were interested in language learning. She noted trying to practice French but since she was focusing on English her French was not a priority.

4.5 Word Cloud

The word cloud (**Figure 4.1**) on the following page of participant’s answers displays some of the commonly used words and their frequency in the transcripts of each interview in its entirety (this word cloud was generated by worditout.com). Word clouds are useful visual representations of text data which display the frequency that words appear in a piece of writing. The importance of each word is represented by size and color, where a large font corresponds to a particular word’s high frequency of occurrence in a text. In the word cloud generated from the interviews of this study, many of the words in **Figure 4.1** have positive connotations and can be grouped as either relating to socializing or language learning. High frequency words include “studying,” “language,” “speaking,” “people,” and, of course, “Canada”. When reading this word cloud is useful to keep in mind that English is not the native language of this study’s participants, which can explain the simplicity of some of the words displayed on the following page in Figure 4.1.

The five interviews explored in this section provided ample evidence for the researcher to conduct an analysis of dominant themes that emerged from the interview data, including any of the participants' perceptions that deviated from the common or dominant themes or interview questions, which will be discussed in more depth in the section that follows.

4.6 Section Three: Analysis

This section will unpack the categories and themes that were found through data analysis of the interviews. The data presented here is supported by direct quotes from the participants to add clarity when necessary. The data was compiled by the researcher coding and highlighting poignant statements from the interviews' transcripts. Through coding the transcripts, the researcher noted the emergence of themes and patterns from participant responses which related to the study's research questions. The data coding process began as open coding, which allowed the researcher to identify initial key ideas. Repeated coding lead to the realization of recurrent ideas, which were grouped into categories. Axial coding allowed for a synthesis of the initial categories into more comprehensive categories. A table (**Table 4.9**) that summarized these comprehensive categories emerged, containing supporting quotes and notes from the participants' interviews. Analysing the contents of the table allowed the researcher to examine the data in relationship to this study's research questions.

The following categories emerged from data analysis and will discussed here in turn: reputation, kindness, diversity, friendships, environmental observations, negative experiences, English improvements, recommendations, and immigration.

Table 4.9 Themes

Theme	Explanation
Reputation	The reputation of Canada as a country and the education system of Canada was regarded as positive.
Kindness	Each participant shared stories of the kindness they encountered in Canada.
Diversity	All five participants spoke of Canada’s diversity, including the diversity of the language learning programs in Canada, in a positive manner.
Friendships	Friendships were described as an important part of all of the participants’ experiences. There were mixed reports about making friends with Canadians, with most participants indicating that they made friends with their language-school peers.
Environmental observations	Canada’s landscapes and air quality were positive viewed by the participants. Some students reported negatively on Canada’s cold climate.
Negative experiences	Were unique to each participant, and include: negative experiences with teachers, Canada’s cold climate, homeless people, loneliness, trouble eating Canadian food, and the financial pressures of studying abroad.
English improvements	All participants reported that their English improved, although the degrees of which varied

Recommendations	All participants reported that they would recommend studying English in Canada to their peers, with two participants claiming that they had already recommended Canada to a peer.
Immigration	Even though the interviews did not center around immigration, this topic naturally arose in several of the interviews. Canada was viewed as a favorable country to immigrate to and the English-language learning programs were regarded as a way to facilitate future immigration into the country.

The nine themes summarized in the table above will be expanded upon in the paragraphs that follow:

4.6.1 Reputation

Canada and its education system had a good reputation amongst the participants. Mazzarol and Soutar (2002) outlined pull factors, which were factors that attracted students toward a particular country or program for study. The host country’s reputation as well as the reputation of that country’s particular schools are factors that influence a prospective student’s decision to study in a particular locale. Jess reported that she heard that Canada was a good country to study in, which helped her make her decision to study abroad. Tom affirmed that “I was told that the Canadian education system was really great” and he felt that Canadian schools were also good in his field of study.

4.6.2 Kindness

Three out of the five participants directly commented on the kindness of Canadians. Erin reported that one of her first impressions of Canada was the kindness of Canadians. She provided the example that when she could not find a place, Canadians were willing to help her as a lost newcomer and take her directly to her destination. She also noted that people holding the door was something she was not used to in Korea. Jess reported that she chose to study in Canada because of Canada's positive reputation, which included the characteristic kindness of Canadians: "My first reason is I heard that Canadian is really great and most Canadian people are kind and nice. Nice people. Canada is a very developed country and I want to immigrate someday." Tom's first impression of Canada was "clean and nice. Canadians are very nice ... I felt a warm heart from Canadians". Mina reported that Canadians were willing to help her improve her English and Mike shared stories of the kindness of his homestay family.

4.6.3 Diversity

All five participants reported on this aspect, whether on the diversity of Canada itself or on the diverse range of students present in their language learning programs. Erin reported that she had the chance to make friends from many other countries through her English program. She reported staying in touch with those friends. Mina reported that she chose to study English in Canada because of its diversity in terms of cultures and languages. She thought it would be a good opportunity for learning "other languages as well," perhaps referring to French as she was studying both English and French in her home university, although she stated that she went to Canada specifically to improve her English. Mina reported that "[Canada] has many people who have various backgrounds. So, even if one couldn't speak English well, most people try to listen

and understand them well. So, Studying English in Canada is best choice I think.” Mina brought up the interesting point that since Canada is a country made up of various diverse groups of people all speaking English or French, yet with their own accents and linguistic patterns, Canadians are perhaps accustomed to listening well to and accepting various types of English.

With English spoken world-wide, various dialects, varieties, and creoles exists which has led scholars to debate the value of nativeness when it comes to language evaluation. Braj Kachru’s (1991) idea of ‘liberation linguistics,’ for instance, places “Outer Circle” varieties of English, such as Indian English, Nigerian English’ and Singaporean English, in the same category as “Inner Circle” (or Native) varieties such as American English and British English (Song, 2016). Jess reported that she perceived one of her language school teachers to have a “non-North American” accent which she said was a positive thing because it exposed her to different variations of English. She also reported that she perceived no racism in Canada, which she said set Canada apart from stories she heard from her friends about their experiences in the USA or Australia. Tom reported that “there are lots of races, different races, and I felt that I wasn’t that neglected from the others. Always Canadians welcomed me, and they tried to help me out”. Mike commented that he could make friends from various other countries while participating in the language program, which he experienced as a positive thing.

Regarding Jess’ statement about her perceived lack of racism in Canada, the interviewer refrained from discussing Canada’s history of racism which continues to affect certain communities in Canada today. The interviewer did not want to impose her beliefs on the participant and risk swaying her ideas. Jess may had been oblivious to Canadian social issues and only offered her personal opinion of people’s treatment toward her in Canada.

4.6.4 Friendships

There were mixed reports about making friends with Canadians. A study by the Canadian Bureau of International Education (CBIE) found that over half of 3,000 international students surveyed in Canada reported having no Canadian friends (CBIE, 2016). This was the case for Erin who made no Canadian friends (friends outside of the language program), apart from her teacher. Jess stated that she made Canadian friends when in Calgary but not in Vancouver. Mike claimed that he made Canadian friends but that he only stays in touch with his language school friends now that he is back in Korea.

4.6.5 Environmental Observations

“Bad weather,” “beautiful nature,” and “large” were some of the ways that the respondents described Canada. Erin reported a lot of snow, one time being so bad that she had trouble going to school. Jess reported that the Canadian climate, while cold, did not bother her. Mina reported that one of her first impressions of the country was the size of Canada and its mountains, in addition to its beauty and fresh air. Jess said that the size of Canada impressed her. Mike said that his first impression of Canada was its size and fresh air. It was interesting that two of the five respondents reported on the fresh air in Canada in light of the current pollution problem in many regions in Asia – Korea’s air quality is consistently among the worst in the OECD (OECD, 2017).

4.6.6 Negative Experiences

Negative experiences seemed to be generally minor, and included Mina having had problems with a teacher whom she felt did not listen well to the students. Erin’s negative

experience was the cold weather in Canada. Jess reported her negative experiences encountering homeless people in Canada: “in Korea, homeless people are very quiet. They don’t move. In Canada they are very active”. Tom cited the financial burden of pursuing education abroad:

I had to think of expenses, especially living expenses. So, overall, studying English in Canada is quite good. Especially the education system. But it’s really hard to keep their life or living in Canada because compared to Korea or China or any other country it’s really expensive.

Mike reported homesickness and trouble digesting the Western diet. While the participants did not spend much time in their interviews discussing their negative experiences, cultural factors relating to social manners and saving-face may have played a part in the participants’ reluctance, if any, to criticize aspects of their stay in Canada. Speaking directly to authority figures or even those older than you can be seen negatively in Confucian cultures, which led the researcher to question whether any of the participants accounts of negative experiences were watered-down due to politeness. In addition to the participants’ possible reticence in providing accounts of negatives experiences in Canada, the homogeneity of the research subjects – in terms where they came from and where they chose to study – could have played a limiting role as well. Perhaps an anonymous survey given after the interviews could have garnered more information on negative aspects of studying English in Canada.

4.6.7 English Improvements

All participants reported that their English improved from their time spent in a language learning program in Canada to various degrees. As a supplement to their classroom study in their respective English-language learning programs, meet-ups, time spent socializing with friends,

and interactions with their homestay families aided the students in their development. Mike said that his English improved because his confidence in himself improved from living in Canada. However, it was surprising that the participants did not indicate unanimously that their English improved a great deal. Mike's observation that his confidence improved the most was poignant because in his case it appeared that he had a good grasp of English previous to studying abroad in Canada but it was his experience in a Canadian language school that gave him the confidence to display what he already knew.

4.6.8 Recommendations

Erin recommended studying in Canada to her friend, who applied to study in Canada but was unsuccessful and instead opted for Australia. Jess recommended her friend's nephew and her sister, who both studied in Canada. Mike, Mina, and Tom said that they will recommend studying in Canada based on their positive experiences.

4.6.9 Immigration

Jess said that she intends to immigrate to Canada, which was one of her reasons for studying English in Canada. Tom wanted to study long-term in Canada, and indicated that he was aware of people who wanted to immigrate to Canada. Tom explained that he knew of some people who study in Canada in the hopes of facilitating a permanent residency visa: “[The] English program is the first step of getting a visa. So that is really important to them. So that's why they just have a risk to pay a lot of money.” Tom seemed aware that studying in Canada makes applying to permanent residency an easier process, as former study permit holders are often given priority when applying to permanent residency (Canadian Citizenship & Immigration

Resource Center, 2018). As well, in a follow-up email to the researcher, Mina shared that she moved to Canada to live with her Canadian boyfriend in Toronto, whom she met while studying in Vancouver.

Overall, the participants' responses to the interview questions were generally positive and reflected mostly socially-related themes regarding studying in a short-term English language learning program in Canada. Given that language is a social tool and learning a language cannot occur in a vacuum, as language cannot be disconnected from its social aspects, it is not surprising that the participants shared their social experiences with the researcher. Once again, the researcher would like to express her gratitude to the five participants for their thoughtful responses during their one-on-one interviews. These face-to-face interviews provided rich data, which were categorized into the overarching themes discussed above – kindness, diversity, friendships, environmental observations, negative experiences, English improvements, recommendations, and immigration.

4.7 Summary

This chapter, which was divided into three sections, presented the study's data collected through the semi-structured interviews with the participants. The first section introduced the study's participants by providing brief respondent profiles, the second section provided selected participants' responses to each of the interview questions, and third section presented the results of the data analysis which were divided into categories. In these sections quotes from interviews were provided as evidence when necessary.

In the chapter that follows, a discussion and interpretation of the study's findings will be carried out. The researcher will address to what extent the findings answer this study's research

questions, how the findings relate to the Literature Review, the implications of the findings, an evaluation of this study, and any recommendations for future research.

Chapter 5 Discussion and Conclusion

5.1 Introduction

The purpose of this study was to explore and better understand Korean students' experiences taking part in short-term English language learning programs in Canada. Particularly, this study sought to know what students returning from language programs in Canada have to say about their experiences, since word-of-mouth referrals factor into the decision to study abroad (Mazzarol & Soutar, 2002). To this end, four research questions were asked in this study and have been addressed in various degrees by the research data:

- 1) How do English language learning programs in Canada market themselves to Korean university students?
- (2) What factors into a Korean student's decision to study English in Canada?
- (3) What are Korean students' experiences of studying in an English language learning program in Canada?
- (4) What do Korean students tell their peers when they return from studying in an English language learning program in Canada?

The research questions above were asked in order better understand the experiences of Korean students studying in Canada. While the findings may apply to other Korean students in similar contexts, this study does not contend that these findings speak for all Korean students. Therefore, the discussions that follow will be limited to what the participants of this study said and are non-applicable to all Korean students. Nevertheless, these results provide some

interesting points for future research in the area of Korean students studying in Canadian language schools. As well, language learning programs could benefit from consideration of some of the insights of this study.

This final chapter will begin with a discussion of each research question in conjunction with an analysis of this study's results, contextualized by the Literature Review. This chapter will conclude with thoughts on the implications of this study's findings, an evaluation of this study, and any recommendations for future research.

5.2 Answers to Research Questions

5.2.1 *Research Question 1*

- (1) How do English language learning programs in Canada market themselves to Korean university students?

As explained in Chapter 2 Literature Review, the benefits of having international students studying in Canada are plenty, ranging from the financial to the cultural to the social. Literature has shown that international students in higher education contribute significantly to the Canadian economy (Tascón & Viczko, 2016), develop Canada's diversity (Cudmore, 2005), and provide ideal candidates for future immigrants to the country (Fama, 2011). A popular method of recruiting international students to Canadian universities is through offering English language learning programs (Chen, 2017).

While conducting this study, the researcher noted that a significant portion of the educational marketing made by the Canadian language schools attended by the participants were simply inherent in their language school's partnerships with KNU, the Korean university

involved in this study. The participants did not mention any types of education fairs or online marketing campaigns that informed them of their study abroad options in Canada. However, the participants were well aware of the exchange programs available to Canada and other destinations through the Global Language Clinic, which was the only centre on campus available to students who wished to study abroad. KNU's Global Language Clinic exchange programs, which seemed to be well known by the student body in general, provides opportunities to study English in Canada, as well as in Australia, New Zealand, and the Philippines.

The researcher could assume that the participants knew of the exchange opportunities through word-of-mouth on campus, especially considering the hierarchical nature of campus life in Korea. Students who are one year older than their peers are called *sunbaes* and are responsible for taking care of their juniors, called *hubaes*. It is customary for *sunbaes* to teach their juniors about every aspect of campus life. Most universities, including KNU, provide a mentor matching service that the students take seriously: juniors greet their seniors with bows and are expected to show gratitude toward their mentors, who provide them with guidance and support throughout the school year. The researcher gathered that the language exchange programs could have been promoted by the older students who are responsible for teaching the younger students about university life.

Marketing for the Canadian language school largely took form through reputation and word-of-mouth on campus, as social links have an important influence on destination choice for students who study abroad (Mazzarol & Soutar, 2002). Jess indicated that she chose to study in Canada partly based on Canada's reputation amongst Koreans: "My first reason is I heard that Canada is really great and most Canadian people are kind and nice. Nice people. Canada is a very developed country and I want to immigrate someday". Echoing Jess, Tom stated that "I was

told that the Canadian education system was really great”. From the point of view of Canada as a brand, the study in Canada experience relied on positive word-of-mouth, which is one of the most powerful referral methods available in educational marketing (Mazzarol & Soutar, 2002).

The Global Language Clinic’s exchange programs to Canada were attractive to the university’s students for various reasons, one of which being the programs’ durations. The length of some of the exchanges to Canada appeared well-suited the students’ busy schedules. They could opt for a 5-week study abroad program during their summer or winter holiday or they could elect for an entire semester abroad, lasting approximately 4 months. Erin stated that she chose to study in Canada particularly because she found a program that was the right fit for her: a 5-week English language learning program in Calgary, which fit well into her break from her studies at her Korean university.

Implicit in the decision to study abroad as well is the notion held by many in Korea that you can only learn English from native speakers, and thus immersion in an English-speaking environment is a crucial step in English fortification. Mike indicated that “studying a language in a native country is the best thing about studying English in Canada,” specifically emphasizing “not in Korea,” in a later question, when asked what the benefit was for choosing to study in Canada. The idea of the native speaker as an ideal teacher of English is not new to Korea. According to Jeon (2009), “South Korea plays an active role in the circulation of the ideology of the native English speaker as the ideal teacher” – a belief that has supporters in the ELT (English Language Teaching) community, who purport that English is best taught by native speakers, monolingually, and not in conjunction with other languages (p. 241). The belief that one has to go abroad to learn a language in its natural environment plays a role in attracting students to Canada to study English and French, although this study only focused on English.

5.2.2 *Research Question 2*

(2) What factors into a Korean student's decision to study English in Canada?

The decision-making process that prospective international students undergo before they decide to study overseas consists of at least three stages, according to Mazzarol and Soutar (2002). First, the student decides to pursue education outside of their country. Once they have made the choice to study abroad, they decide on a host country. In this part, potential pull factors from each country are weighed against one another. In stage three, the student selects an institution. The Global Language Clinic had exchange programs with institutions in Toronto, Calgary, and Vancouver, in addition to exchange programs in Australia, New Zealand, and The Philippines. The researcher focused on the second stage of the decision-making process, in which pull factors from each country were identified and weighed against one another. Mazzarol and Soutar (2002) outlined a push-pull model to help explain factors that influence students' decisions to study abroad: push factors can be seen as elements in a subject's home country that push them to move abroad to study and pull factors are the factors that attract students to a particular country. Given the importance that learning English has to Koreans, as English is linked with economic success in Korea (Lee, 2007), we can surmise that the largest push factor for the participants was to go abroad to improve their English.

Pull factors, which attract students to the country, identified by this study fall in line with previous research on what brings international students to Canada. The participants' answers touched on many themes originally collected by Laughlin (2014). Based on the participant's answers, what attracted students to Canada were: positive word-of-mouth messages about Canada, the perceptions of diversity in Canada (including the opinion, as articulated by Jess, that there could be a perceived lack of racism toward Koreans in Canada), Canada's reputation for

quality education, the potential for future immigration, and financial considerations. Canada was viewed as a cheaper alternative to study in Australia by Tom. This agrees with what Lee and Wesche (2000) found about Canada being viewed as an affordable place to learn English by the group of Korean students who participated in that study.

According to Massey and Burrow (2012), short term students tend to choose to go abroad with the goal of having a new cross-cultural learning experience in mind. Although no participants directly expressed this desire, travelling abroad to study a foreign language in its native context, which all of these participants did, has implications of being a cross-cultural learning experience. Many of the participants spoke fondly of their friendships made with Canadians as well as with fellow international students in the language programs – it can be assumed that the participants in the language programs had cross-cultural learning experiences given their descriptions of their interactions and experiences in Canada. The social aspect of participating in the language programs were widely discussed by this study's participants.

According to *Canada First: The 2009 Survey of International Students in Canada* by the Canada Bureau for International Education, nearly 3 out of 4 international students claimed that they chose to study in Canada because of the country's high quality education (CBIE, 2009). Tom knew of the positive reputation that the Canadian education system had and at the time he wished to further his studies in a Canadian college after improving his English through a language program. He also had experience studying English in Australia and said that he expected the cost of living in Canada would be less expensive than Australia. Tom's evaluation supports Laughlin's (2014) claim that Canadian universities are relatively well-funded, which keeps tuition affordable for most students compared to the fees facing international and domestic students in other English-speaking countries.

According to the CBIE study, the second commonly cited reason for international students choosing Canada was Canada's reputation for being a safe country (CBIE, 2009). Lee and Wesche (2000) found that Korean students viewed Canada as a safe place to study as well. However, none of the participants of this study addressed Canada as a place of safety in terms of protection from crime, with one participant expressing shock at Canada's homeless population. However, some noted that Canada was socially safe due to its diversity and acceptance of multiculturalism.

In the research literature, it is noted that the decision to study abroad is usually a family-made decision but even more so in Confucian societies, such as mainland China, Japan, and South Korea, where education is highly regarded and parents exert more control over their adult children (Brown et al., 2015; Shin, 2012.) Surprisingly, this study did not receive any feedback about the family situation of the participants. Only Jess mentioned her family in the interview, and it was because she recommended studying in Canada to her younger sister, who proceeded to study English in Calgary for one semester and apply for a Canadian working holiday visa.

Additionally, some of the participants indicated that they chose to study in Canada out of interest in immigrating to Canada in the future. Jess stated that she plans to immigrate to Canada in the future and Tom had wanted to immigrate at one point as well. Shortly after taking part in this study, Mina moved to Toronto, where she now currently resides.

5.2.3 *Research Question 3*

(3) What are Korean students' experiences of studying in an English language learning program in Canada?

It is too early to note whether studying English in Canada helped the participants in their professional lives, as they are still young and have not been out of the program for enough time. This study also did not address the issue of the participants' perceptions of their experiences of studying English in Canada changing over time. Nevertheless, at the time of their interviews the participants reported generally positive experiences, unrelated to how Canada helped them achieve any of their academic or career goals. It must be remembered that each of the participants' experiences were unique and should be treated as standalone perceptions, not speaking for the experiences of any other Korean students outside of this study. Nevertheless, some common themes emerged: particularly that Canada provided the opportunity to foster cross-cultural friendships and an improvement in English. Also, Canada was frequently described as a big country with lots of beautiful nature. In addition, Canada was often praised for being diverse, which may be a unique feature to this group of students, as Korea has been traditionally known as an ethnically and culturally homogeneous country (Choi, 2008), lacking in the sort of diversity one would find in Canada.

“Studying in English in a native speaking country is the best thing” according to Mike. Mike addressed the importance of speaking, rather than book learning, in his interview. As discussed in the Literature Review, English language education in Korea tends to an over-emphasize test-taking skills, which has led to a lack in oral fluency in English for many students (Hyun, Finch, & Hyun, 1997). A high score on the TOEIC can be more beneficial in Korean society than practical English skills, such as speaking. Conversational English abilities are known to be underdeveloped in the typical Korean school setting, representing a need for Korean learners to improve their speaking skills to become successful users of the English language (Hyun, Finch, & Hyun, 1997). The word “practical” was used many times, often by

Mina and Tom, to describe their studies in the Canadian language schools. Mike reported how he felt that after his time studying in Canada his confidence greatly increased. Perhaps referring to the characteristic lack of confidence that many Koreans have in their English ability, where test scores in English are high but speaking skills are low, Mike provided the following explanation:

I think, like, the most different thing after Canada is like confidence. You know, just, if someone has good English skill but when they have no confidence they cannot say like something easily. But, just, yeah, why not, just low language skill with big confidence can make your English better, more and more.

5.2.4 Research Question 4

(4) What do Korean students tell their peers when they return from studying in an English language learning program in Canada?

It appears that these participants have said, or plan to say, generally positive remarks about their time spent studying English in Canada. All stated that their English improved, which was the main reason why these participants decided to study abroad in Canada. Success in English language learning in Korea is associated with upwards social mobility not only for the individual themselves for also for their entire family (Lee, 2014).

Erin recommended her friend to study in Canada through the Global Language Clinic exchange program, but her friend was unsuccessful in securing a spot for Canada. Jess successfully recommended her friend's nephew and her sister, who both studied in Canada. Mike, Mina, and Tom said that they will recommend studying in Canada based on their positive experiences. Given their positive remarks, it appears that all of the participants display

destination-loyalty toward Canada, which is the sense of loyalty a returning international student has toward an educational destination and their willingness to recommend it to others or to revisit it (Jamaludin et al., 2018). In the case of Jess and Mina, they have revisited Canada as well.

Social links have an important influence on destination choice for students who study abroad (Mazzarol & Soutar, 2002). Awareness that someone they knew studied in a particular country or institution is a way for prospective students to feel a sense of connection to it. In the case of Jess, she influenced her sister to study abroad in the same country and even the same institution as she did. Mazzarol & Soutar (2002) found that immediate or extended family members who studied at a particular institution in a country and who enjoyed the experience are likely to suggest that to their own family members and friends. Jess appeared to have adopted the role of the reverse ambassador (Jamaludin et al., 2018), with the ability to influence whether or not her peers decide to choose to study overseas in Canada.

In short, this study's research questions were addressed from the data gathered in face-to-face interviews with five participants. Their responses were generally positive and reflected mostly socially-related themes regarding studying in a short-term English language learning program in Canada. In the section that follows, the implications of this study's findings will be explored.

5.3 Implication of the Findings

This study sought an in-depth exploration of the experiences of Korean students in short-term English language learning programs in Canada: what brought the students to Canada, how they experienced Canada, and what they told others about their experiences in Canada upon

returning home to Korea. This study found that, overall, all of the participants had a positive experience studying English in a short-term language learning program in Canada and they would recommend studying in a Canadian language school to their peers. Social themes were the most talked about ideas by the participants and positive social experiences encouraged positive reviews of Canadian language schools. In addition, all of the participants indicated some improvements in their English. Two of the five participants have recommended Canada to their peers. One of the participants is currently living in Canada again and another participant plans to immigrate to Canada in the future. The results found in this study are in line with the findings in the research literature which show that Canada is an attractive study abroad choice for students. The implications of this research point to Canada, as a country, having good reputation for being a studying abroad destination amongst this study's participants.

After having done this study, recommendations geared toward language course organizers would emphasize that programs which include social aspects are more likely to engender a positive word-of-mouth response. Participants spoke fondly of their cross-cultural experiences with their fellow peers in their language programs. Friendships were an important part of the language school experience and were often spoken about by all of this study's participants. Opportunities to practice speaking English outside of the classroom were viewed favorably, as well. Mike expressed that living abroad in an English-speaking country helped him build his self-confidence, which had a huge impact on his language learning. Language school programs and activities geared toward practical English use and confidence building activities could be ways to better teach Korean students in language programs in Canada. With the participants having spent a deal of time discussing friendships and interpersonal relationships in their interviews, it was clear that friendship was an important concept to the participants.

Language schools that promote cross-cultural friendships and that have programming that allows plenty of opportunities to socialize may be attractive to prospective students similar to the participants of this study.

Reported negative experiences in Canada were subjective and could be hard to avoid at a programming level. However, educational service providers geared toward Korean international students in Canada could focus on providing more alternatives to the Western diet, which was the largest complaint of one of this study's participants. Methods to help these students live more comfortably in a climate colder than Korea could be considered, as well. More orientation support help students adjust to Canadian life could help students deal with personal finance, which was another issue brought up about living in Canada.

5.4 Evaluation of this Study

The author has been privileged to have had the opportunity to converse with five intelligent and considerate university-aged Korean young adults. However, it must be remembered that this study was limited to five participants at one university in South Korea, and as such the data collected for this study cannot be generalized to all Korean students. The small sample size of five participants provided a limited amount of data for this study: while the researcher aimed to collect complete, detailed descriptions of the participants' experiences in Canada only five perspectives were heard, which significantly limits the scope of this study. Each participant's answers were subjective and unique to them and therefore cannot be applied to wider populations, although this study's results are worth considering and investigating further. While some themes that emerged in the Literature Review reoccurred in the participants'

responses, the information gathered in this study still should not be generalized to all Korean students, given the small sample size of this study.

This research was conducted using a basic qualitative design, which focused on exploring the perceptions of five Korean students who studied in English-language learning programs in Canada. Interviews were used to obtain the data, and the participants generously shared their experiences. Upon reflection at the end of this study, two potential issues may have arisen during the data collection process that may have had an impact on the data obtained in this study. The first potential issue is regarding the willingness of the participants to share their honest answers. While it appeared to the researcher that the participants were sincere in their responses to the interview questions, there still exists the possibility that the participants could have downplayed the negative aspects of their experiences in Canada out of politeness, especially if they had inferred that the researcher was herself Canadian. Another potential issue concerns the language barrier between the researcher and the participants. Although all of the participants were fluent in English, the participants were nevertheless communicating in their second language, which means that the data obtained by the researcher could have been lacking in depth or detail in some instances. Overall, however, all participants seemed eager to share their honest experiences with the researcher and the data collected were still rich, in line with current research, and encouraging for future study in this field.

5.5 Recommendations for Future Research

This study intends to create research interest in Korean students in Canadian English language learning programs, which is a field lacking in research. The findings indicate areas for future research, the most significant being whether or not English language learning programs

provide successful outcomes for the careers of the participants. A longer-term study might have been able to address this question. As well, this study found that positive social experiences encouraged positive reviews of Canada. More research could be explored in the development of programs that include high levels of social activities for language school students.

Another area for further research is the dispersion of international students across Canada and how that relates to Korean international students. With Atlantic Canada and Northern regions of Canada lacking international student presence compared to other regions in Canada (CBIE, 2014), it would be interesting to look into ways to promote these regions to Korean students. Canada was a popular choice for studying abroad and also for future immigration, as a majority of this study's participants expressed interest in immigrating to Canada. Another way to extend the spirit of this study would be to investigate how language learning programs in Canada promote the country as an ideal immigration choice to foreign post-secondary students. The relationship between language schools and immigration in Canada is rife with potential for future research.

As well, the word-of-mouth aspect of this study could be further explored in a variety of ways. In particular, the hierarchical social relationship between juniors and seniors on Korean college campuses is a phenomenon that incorporates word-of-mouth transmission and the unique pressures of an age-based hierarchal social system. It would be interesting to see if the word-of-mouth of older students had more of an influence on study program choice than word-of-mouth from other sources.

A final suggestion for future research would be to extend this study to a wider population of Korean students to garner more data on how to promote Canadian language schools to Koreans.

5.6 Conclusion

This research documented the positive views expressed by the participants and shows that Canada and its education system have a good reputation amongst the participants. Despite concerns that Canada lags behind other countries in terms of educational marketing, studying in Canada seems to have advantages known to Korean students. This study is significant because it is important to draw attention to the experiences of Korean students in Canadian institutions. It is hoped that further research will be undertaken to more fully understand Korean overseas students' experiences in Canada and to make the Canadian experience more attractive to this group of students. Since word-of-mouth referrals factor into the decision to study abroad (Mazzarol & Soutar, 2002), it is important to know what Korean students returning from language programs in Canada say about their experiences. Studying the perceptions of Korean students in language programs in Canada could have the potential to identify areas of improvement for Canadian English language schools as well as provide insight into ways to better promote English language learning programs to Koreans.

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Appendix A – Request for Community Approval Letter



Faculty of Education

Memorial University of Newfoundland
St. John's, NL Canada A1B 3X8
Tel: 1-709-864-8553 Fax: 1-709-864-4379 www.mun.ca

Office of International Affairs and Public Relations
Kongju National University
Kongju, Republic of Korea 314-701

Dear Vice President,

My name is Cassandra Nykyforak. I am a Visiting Professor in the Freshman English program at KNU's Kongju Campus and I am also currently a graduate student of Memorial University's Faculty of Education. My supervisor is Dr. Cecile Badenhorst of Memorial University's Faculty of Education.

The reason why I am writing you today is to ask permission to conduct research at KNU. With your administration's approval I wish to interview some of the undergraduate students (5–10) who recently participated in the Global Language Clinic's English language exchange program to Canada. This research is for my Master's thesis. I would like to explore the experiences of Korean undergraduate students who have studied in an English language program in Canada. My research project is called "An Exploration of Korean Students' Experiences Studying English in Canada" and my research questions are: 1) What factors into a Korean student's decision to study English in Canada? 2) What are Korean students' experiences of studying in an English language program in Canada? 3) What do Korean students tell their peers when they return home from studying in an English language program in Canada?

The objective my study is to contribute to an under-researched area in the field of international student studies. As well, I would like to learn more about how to attract Korean university students to Canada and about what can be done to improve their experience of learning English in Canada.

Participation in this study is voluntary, confidential, and nonremunerated. Students interested in participating in this study will be given an informed consent form, which is attached in this email. Regarding the timeline for this project, I would like to interview the students in December, 2018. The interview should last no more than 20 minutes and it would take place in the Global Language Clinic. The interview questions are attached in this email.

The proposal for my research project has been reviewed by the Interdisciplinary Committee on Ethics in Human Research and found to be in compliance with Memorial University's ethics policy. All efforts will be made to ensure student safety, anonymity, and confidentiality throughout all stages of this research project. Should you agree to this project, I will follow the steps necessary to obtain ethics approval by your Institutional Review Board.

I will follow up with a telephone call next week and would be happy to answer any questions or concerns that you may have. I can be reached via email at cjnykyforak@mun.ca or by phone at 82-010-4257-1899.

Thank-you in advance for considering my request,

Sincerely,

Cassandra Nykyforak
Faculty of Education, Memorial University
010-4257-1899

Appendix B - Introductory Email to Global Language Clinic



Faculty of Education

Memorial University of Newfoundland
St. John's, NL Canada A1B 3X8
Tel: 1-709-864-8553 Fax: 1-709-864-4379 www.mun.ca

Global Language Clinic
Kongju National University
Kongju, Republic of Korea 314-701

Dear Communications Coordinator,

My name is Cassandra Nykyforak. I am a Visiting Professor in the Freshman English program at KNU's Kongju Campus and I am also currently a graduate student of Memorial University's Faculty of Education. My supervisor is Dr. Cecile Badenhorst of Memorial University's Faculty of Education.

The reason why I am writing you today is to ask your assistance in my Master's research project with Memorial University. I have been given permission by KNU's Office of International Affairs and Public Relations (see Attachment 1) as well as KNU's Ethics Board (see Attachment 2) to conduct a research project entitled "An Exploration of Korean Students' Experiences Studying English in Canada". The proposal for my research project has been reviewed by the Interdisciplinary Committee on Ethics in Human Research and found to be in compliance with Memorial University's ethics policy. All efforts will be made to ensure student safety, anonymity, and confidentiality throughout all stages of this research project.

Your assistance in helping me contact the participants for this project would be greatly appreciated.

Would you please forward the attached INFORMATION LETTER and INFORMED CONSENT FORM to the students who participated in this year's language exchange program to Canada? To protect student confidentiality, please email them one-by-one.

Thank-you in advance for considering my request. If you have any questions or need any further information please email me at cjnykyforak@mun.ca or you can contact me by phone at 82-010-4257-1899.

Sincerely,

Cassandra Nykyforak

Appendix C - Introductory Email to Participants



Memorial University of Newfoundland
St. John's, NL Canada A1B 3X8
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Information Letter

An Exploration of Korean Students' Experiences Studying English in Canada

Hello,

My name is Cassandra Nykyforak, and I am a Visiting Professor in the Freshman English program at Kongju National University. I am also a graduate student in the Faculty of Education at Memorial University of Newfoundland. I am conducting a research project called "An Exploration of Korean Students' Experiences Studying English in Canada" for my master's degree under the supervision of Dr. Cecile Badenhorst. The purpose of the study is to learn more about the experiences of Korean undergraduate students who studied in English language programs in Canada.

I am contacting you to invite you to participate in an interview in which you will be asked to answer several questions in an interview about your experience in Canada, why you chose to study in Canada, and what you tell your peers about your experience in Canada. Participation will require up to 25 minutes of your time and the interviews will be held at the Global Language Clinic at your convenience, any time in December. Participation in this study is completely voluntary, meaning that it is not a KNU requirement. Your decision whether or not to participate in this study will not impact your student status, and it will not be reported to the Language Clinic coordinator, University administrators, or other faculty or students.

If you are interested in participating in this study, then you must read and understand what is stated in the INFORMED CONSENT FORM. If you agree to its conditions, then please email me at cjnykyforak@mun.ca to arrange an interview time.

Please print and sign the INFORMED CONSENT FORM and bring it with you to the interview.

If you have any questions about me or my project, please contact me by email at cjnykyforak@mun.ca or by phone at 010-4257-1899.

Thank-you in advance for considering my request.

Sincerely,
Cassandra Nykyforak

The proposal for this research has been reviewed by the Interdisciplinary Committee on Ethics in Human Research and found to be in compliance with Memorial University's ethics policy. If you have ethical concerns about the research, such as the way you have been treated or your rights as a participant, you may contact the Chairperson of the ICEHR at icehr@mun.ca or by telephone at 1-709-864-2861.

Appendix D - Informed Consent Form



Memorial University of Newfoundland
St. John's, NL Canada A1B 3X8
Tel: 1-709-864-8553 Fax: 1-709-864-4379 www.mun.ca

Informed Consent Form

Title: An Exploration of Korean Students' Experiences Studying English in Canada

Researcher(s): Cassandra Nykyforak, Faculty of Education, Memorial University, cinykyforak@mun.ca
(82-010-4257-1899)

Supervisor(s): Dr. Cecile Badenhorst, Faculty of Education, Memorial University, cbadenhorst@mun.ca
(1-709-864-7654)

You are invited to take part in a research project entitled “An Exploration of Korean Students' Experiences Studying English in Canada”. Your opinions would be greatly appreciated!

My name is Cassandra Nykyforak and I am a graduate student at Memorial University’s Faculty of Education. As part of my master’s thesis I am conducting research under the supervision of Dr. Cecile Badenhorst, Faculty of Education.

This form is part of the process of informed consent. It should give you the basic idea of what the research is about and what your participation will involve. It also describes your right to withdraw from the study. In order to decide whether you wish to participate in this research study, you should understand enough about its risks and benefits to be able to make an informed decision. This is the informed consent process. Take time to read this carefully and to understand the information given to you. Please contact the researcher, Cassandra Nykyforak, if you have any questions about the study or would like more information before you consent.

It is entirely up to you to decide whether to take part in this research. If you choose not to take part in this research or if you decide to withdraw from the research once it has started, there will be no negative consequences for you, now or in the future.

Purpose of Study:

The purpose of this study is to learn more about the experiences of Korean students who have studied English in Canada. This will be a qualitative research paper that will look at what it was like for Korean undergraduate students who took part in an English language learning program in Canada. This will be the first study of its kind to focus uniquely on Korean students who studied abroad in Canada. The researcher hopes to contribute the findings of this project to an under-researched area in the field of international student studies. As well, the researcher would like to learn more about ways to attract more Korean university students to Canada as well as to learn about what could be done to improve their experience of learning English in Canada. My research questions are: What factors into a Korean student’s decision to study English in Canada? What are Korean students’ experiences of studying in an English language program in Canada? What do Korean students tell their peers when they return home from studying in an English language program in Canada?

What You Will Do in this Study:

Participants in this research project will be expected to be available for in an in-depth, semi-structured interview. During this interview you will be asked several questions about your experiences studying English in Canada. The entire interview process should take no more than 25 minutes to complete. The interview will be recorded using an audio-recording device. After the interview you will receive a typed transcription of our conversation by email. Please read this transcription to verify its accuracy and please confirm via email your agreement for its use in this research project.

Length of Time:

The interview should take up to 25 minutes. Please be available by email in case any follow-up questions are needed following the interview.

Withdrawal from the Study:

If you decide to withdraw from the study at any point in the interview, please tell me right away and we will stop the interview immediately. I will turn off the recording device and delete the recording. There will be no consequences for you if you withdraw from the interview because your participation in this project is voluntary. Should you wish to withdraw from this study after the interview please inform me via email (cjnykyforak@mun.ca), telling me that you would like to withdraw from the project. Your data will be erased from all electronic devices and any papers containing your data will be destroyed. However, please be aware that if you wish to discontinue your involvement in this project once data analysis has begun, starting January 1, 2019, you may no longer be able to withdraw because your data may already be used toward the research project by that point.

Possible Benefits:

This project will give you the chance to talk about your experiences studying English in Canada. This research project will hopefully add to the growing body of knowledge on international student experiences in Canada. It may even help post-secondary institutions in Canada provide a better experience to Korean students who choose to study English in Canada.

Possible Risks:

Participating in the study is voluntary and low risk, although you should be aware that you could experience some emotional discomfort during the interview if you had had negative experiences studying English in Canada. You do not have to answer any question that you do not want to. While the researcher will not push you to share intimate or upsetting information, if you experience any emotional pain during or after the interview please contact Kongju National University's Health and Counselling Services, found on the second floor of the Post Office Building (82-41-850-8754).

Confidentiality:

The ethical duty of confidentiality includes safeguarding participants' identities, personal information, and data from unauthorized access, use, or disclosure. Your confidentiality is of utmost importance and will be maintained as best as possible throughout this research project. Only the researcher and the researcher's thesis supervisor will have access to data involved in this project. Your real name will not be used anywhere in this study and any identifying markers will be removed from the transcripts. Sensitive information, such as interview recordings and transcriptions, will be safeguarded during the research process and then later destroyed (data will be kept for a minimum of five years, as per Memorial University policy on Integrity in Scholarly Research).

Anonymity:

Anonymity refers to protecting participants' identifying characteristics, such as name or description of physical appearance. Every reasonable effort will be made to ensure your anonymity. You will not be identified in

publications without your explicit permission. After our interview your real name will be removed from the study immediately and replaced with a code. From that point on a code will be used instead of your real name so that your identity should be protected. Any identifying markers will be removed from the transcripts. Electronic data will be encrypted and secured on a password-protected hard drive and any paperwork will be locked in a filing cabinet that only the researcher can access.

Reporting of Results:

Upon completion, my thesis will be available at Memorial University’s Queen Elizabeth II library, and can be accessed online at: <http://collections.mun.ca/cdm/search/collection/theses>.
The data collected for this study may also be published in peer-reviewed journals.

Note:

You are welcome to ask questions before, during, or after your participation in this research. If you would like more information about this study, please contact me.

The proposal for this research has been reviewed by the Interdisciplinary Committee on Ethics in Human Research and found to be in compliance with Memorial University’s ethics policy. If you have ethical concerns about the research, such as the way you have been treated or your rights as a participant, you may contact the Chairperson of the ICEHR at icehr@mun.ca or by telephone at 1-709-864-2861.

Consent:

Your signature on this form means that:

- You have read the information about the research.
- You have been able to ask questions about this study.
- You are satisfied with the answers to all your questions.
- You understand what the study is about and what you will be doing.
- You understand that you are free to withdraw participation in the study without having to give a reason, and that doing so will not affect you now or in the future.
- You understand that if you choose to end participation **during** data collection, any data collected from you up to that **point will be destroyed**.
- You understand that your data cannot be removed once data collection has ended as of January 1, 2019.

I agree to be audio-recorded

Yes No

I agree to the use of direct quotations

Yes No

By signing this form, you do not give up your legal rights and do not release the researchers from their professional responsibilities.

Your Signature Confirms:

- I have read what this study is about and understood the risks and benefits. I have had adequate time to think about this and had the opportunity to ask questions and my questions have been answered.
- I agree to participate in the research project understanding the risks and contributions of my participation, that my participation is voluntary, and that I may end my participation.
- A copy of this Informed Consent Form has been given to me for my records.

Signature of Participant

Date

Researcher's Signature:

I have explained this study to the best of my ability. I invited questions and gave answers. I believe that the participant fully understands what is involved in being in the study, any potential risks of the study and that he or she has freely chosen to be in the study.

Signature of Principal Investigator

Date

Appendix E – Research Instrument

Possible Interview Questions and Prompts

Script: Thank you for coming to this interview. Before we begin, I want to tell you a couple of things. As you know, this interview will be tape-recorded. Is that okay with you?

Remember that if you want to stop the interview at any time just say “stop” and we will stop the interview and I will delete our recording. Also, you may skip any questions that you do not wish to answer. Do you understand?

Do you have any questions about anything that you read in the informed consent form?

Are you okay with me contacting you by email 1-2 weeks after our interview today? I probably won't have any more questions to ask you but I will transcribe (type out) what was said in today's interview and I will ask that you read this transcription over to confirm its contents. If there is something you'd like to change or if you'd like to withdraw from the study at that point it would be fine. After January 1st, though, if you decide to withdraw it might be difficult because your information would already be a part of my study's analysis so please don't let me know too late if you want to quit this study. Ok? After a few months from now this study will be published and you will be able to read it at this web address or you can contact me by email, cjnykyforak@mun.ca, to help you find it online. Do you understand?

Okay, let's get ready for the interview. Please answer the questions truthfully. You can say anything that you want. Do you have any final questions or concerns before we start? Okay, I will turn on the audio-recorder now and we will begin.

Possible Questions:

- (1) Why did you choose to study English in Canada?
- (2) What was your first impression of Canada?
- (3) What was the best thing about studying English in Canada?
- (4) What was the worst thing about studying English in Canada?
- (5) Do you think that your English improved after studying English in Canada?
- (6) What do you tell others about your experience studying English in Canada?
- (7) Would you recommend studying English in Canada to your peers?

Please note that the use of prompts may occur to encourage the participant during the interview.