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PROGRAMA DE DOCTORADO EN CIENCIAS SOCIALES

TITULO DE LA TESIS:

Redes de amistad y adaptación de los estudiantes extranjeros en Buenos Aires:

Un estudio longitudinal de los programas de intercambio y su impacto

Friendship networks and international student adaptation in Buenos Aires:

A longitudinal analysis of study abroad programs and their impact

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Resumen

En el transcurso del último siglo, facilitar la educación superior entre países se convirtió en un campo profesional que conllevó el surgimiento de numerosas organizaciones internacionales, programas de intercambio e investigación académica. Muchos de estos estudios tratan sobre la adaptación entre culturas señalando que los estudiantes tienden a formar nuevas amistades con sus compatriotas y no desarrollan relaciones con sus anfitriones. Esto es problemático si se tiene en cuenta que la comunicación interpersonal con los anfitriones es el núcleo del proceso de adaptación entre culturas. Esta tesis doctoral examina hasta qué punto los distintos programas de intercambio contribuyen a este problema e identifica las características del entorno cultural, el uso de las nuevas tecnologías y las predisposiciones personales que influyen en el desarrollo de las redes de amistad. Argentina se presenta como un sitio ideal porque tiene una tradición como país receptor de estudiantes extranjeros, lo cual aumentó en la última década. Este estudio incorpora un método mixto y longitudinal que compara la formación de las redes de amistad entre 105 estudiantes extranjeros inscritos en 10 programas. Los resultados amplían la teoría de la adaptación entre culturas y aspectos de la teoría de redes sociales, demostrando que los estudiantes construyen redes de amistad en los primeros días con compatriotas y otros estudiantes extranjeros y luego, más tarde, con los argentinos. Esa red con argentinos se incrementa en los casos en los que los estudiantes participaron en actividades extra-curriculares con argentinos y tuvieron mayor satisfacción con su programa de tutoría. Además, los estudiantes en programas de intercambio cuya sede está en los Estados Unidos, comparados con los de las universidades argentinas, reportaron una mayor cantidad de amigos compatriotas y enfatizaron el rol que sus compañeros de programa juegan en sus actividades sociales. Por último, las nuevas tecnologías han transformado la manera de comunicarse y proveen un medio novedoso para aprender y entender el comportamiento comunicativo de los anfitriones. Los resultados revelan el papel central que la administración de los estudios en el extranjero y los nuevos medios sociales tienen en el proceso de adaptación entre culturas y aportan nuevas direcciones para la gestión en el futuro.

Abstract

Over the last century facilitating education between countries has become a professional field with the emergence of countless international organizations, study abroad programs, and scholarly research. A robust pattern identified in the international education and cross-cultural adaptation literature shows that students tend to form new friendships with co-nationals while failing to develop relationships with host nationals. This is problematic considering that participation in interpersonal communication activities with host nationals lies at the heart of the cross-cultural adaptation process. This dissertation examines the extent to which distinct study abroad program models contribute to this problem while identifying environmental conditions, social media usage, and individual attributes that influence local friendship development. Argentina is an ideal research location due to its history of attracting numerous international students and considering the recent student boom in the past decade. This study uses a mixed-method, longitudinal strategy to compare the friendship network formation of 105 international students enrolled in 10 different study abroad programs and universities. Results extend cross-cultural adaptation, social networking, and intercultural friendship development theories in demonstrating that students build friendship networks rapidly upon arrival with co-nationals and other foreign students, and incorporate more Argentines into this network over time. This addition is heightened for students who participate in organized extra-curricular activities with Argentines and report satisfaction with their tutor program. Furthermore, compared to international students in Argentine Universities, those who study in US based programs report twice as many co-national friends while stressing the influence that their study abroad group has on their social activities. Finally, video chat and social networking programs enhance students' communication with distant relationships while providing a novel medium for learning and understanding host national communication patterns. Findings reveal the central role that both study abroad administration and new social media play in the cross-cultural adaptation process and provide directions for future programming.

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Index of Abbreviations & Acronyms

APA - American Psychological Association

CEA - Cultural Experiences Abroad

CIEE - Council on International Educational Exchange

IES - Institute for the International Education of Students

IIE - Institute of International Education

ISA - International Studies Abroad

NAFSA - Association of International Educators

MEA - Argentine Ministry of Education

PPUA - Program for the Promotion of the Argentine University

SIT - School of International Training

UNESCO - United Nations Educational, Scientific, & Cultural Organization

US - Entity whose origin is in the United States of America (Adjective)

US American - An individual from the United States of America

FtF - face-to-face communication

ICT - Information and Communication Technology: global term used to describe new internet technology, computer mediated communication, smart phone technology, video chat technology, and/or online social networking applications

SNS - An online social networking site such as Facebook

Resumen Extendido

En el 2013, alrededor de 50.000 estudiantes extranjeros cursaron materias en universidades argentinas y otros institutos de educación superior, cifra que duplica los 25.000 registrados en 2007 (Smink, 2013; Universia, 2013). Si bien el fenómeno de estudiantes extranjeros en Argentina no es nuevo, el aumento pronunciado en los últimos años es un hecho bastante llamativo (Giavi, Iglesia, & Iglesia, 2008). Sin embargo, hasta la fecha hay escasos estudios empíricos (Bonafina de Gulias & Falcon, 2007; Castro Solano, 2013a/2011; Isabelli-García, 2006) que analicen las variables que impactan en su adaptación a la cultura del país de destino. Hay un amplio cuerpo de literatura que examina la transformación personal tanto como el impacto social cuando los individuos cruzan fronteras para estudiar. De hecho, hay dos revistas internacionales, *Frontiers: The Interdisciplinary Journal of Study Abroad* y *The Journal of Studies in International Education*, fundadas en 1995 y 1997 respectivamente, dedicadas específicamente al tema dentro de un marco de educación superior. El problema más persistente que se encuentra en la literatura es que los estudiantes extranjeros no se integran fácilmente a la cultura, ya que generalmente se relacionan con estudiantes de su propio país y no logran desarrollar amistad con gente del lugar (Brown, 2009b; Campbell & Li, 2008; Gareis, 2012). Esta tesis doctoral presenta una investigación que busca comprender los factores que contribuyen a ese problema e identificar, en los casos donde los estudiantes lograron integrarse mejor, las condiciones que favorecen dicha integración. El objetivo no es solo aumentar el conocimiento erudito sobre las relaciones interculturales sino también proveer un análisis profundo sobre la experiencia de estudiantes extranjeros en Buenos Aires y los distintos programas de intercambio que administran su educación.

Esta tesis contiene una breve introducción donde se presenta el problema y los objetivos de la investigación, seguida por ocho capítulos. Los capítulos uno y dos presentan los antecedentes acerca de la realización de estudios en el extranjero, los distintos modelos de programas de intercambio así como un marco teórico acerca de los procesos de adaptación a un nuevo

entorno cultural. El capítulo tres presenta las cuatro fases de la metodología mixta y longitudinal utilizada y el plan de análisis de datos. Los capítulos cuatro, cinco, seis y siete son empíricos y analizan las relaciones que los estudiantes extranjeros tienen con argentinos, el impacto que los programas de intercambio y otras condiciones de contacto tiene en dichas relaciones, el rol que los factores de predisposición individual juegan en estas relaciones y cómo el uso de tecnologías de comunicación influyen en ellas, respectivamente. El capítulo ocho resume los hallazgos, señala algunas limitaciones y discute las principales implicancias del estudio.

El primer capítulo describe brevemente el campo de la comunicación intercultural y la historia acerca de la realización de estudios en el extranjero. Se trata de un fenómeno que tiene raíces tempranas, alrededor del año 600 a.C., en los antiguos centros de estudios en India, Grecia, Roma, Medio Oriente y Asia. Desde sus inicios en el siglo XII, las universidades europeas compitieron por profesores y estudiantes extranjeros visitantes. A principios del siglo XX, varias organizaciones, institutos internacionales y programas de intercambio emergieron para facilitar esta actividad, donde se debatía tanto sobre la mejor manera para organizar este tipo de estudios como acerca de la inmersión en la cultura que los estudiantes experimentan. Este capítulo ayuda a comprender el modelo de organización de los programas de intercambio contemporáneo que operan en Buenos Aires.

El capítulo 2 presenta el marco teórico fundado en la teoría de la adaptación entre culturas (Kim, 2001). Esa teoría describe la adaptación como un proceso que empieza cuando uno entra a una nueva cultura, experimentando periodos de estrés, de transformación y, luego, un periodo de crecimiento. Kim (2001) propone que la comunicación entre el individuo y las personas locales en el nuevo ambiente se ubica en el corazón del proceso. La comunicación es la participación de un individuo en las actividades comunicativas interpersonales y masivas del ambiente anfitrión. Las actividades de comunicación interpersonal son interacciones cara-a-cara, que ocurren día a día con los demás, y ofrecen participación personalizada con miembros de la cultura

anfitriona, mientras que las actividades de comunicación masiva, como la radio, televisión, revistas, diarios y publicidad, permiten a los individuos participar en la cultura anfitriona desde una perspectiva macro. Kim (2001) también teoriza que cuando una persona pasa por este proceso, sus redes sociales cambiarán gradualmente. Una red inicial homogénea compuesta de co-nacionales (gente del país de origen) evolucionará a una red con más anfitriones (gente del país de destino).

Debido a la centralidad de la comunicación interpersonal en el proceso de adaptación, el presente estudio analiza específicamente con quiénes se comunican los estudiantes extranjeros, es decir, sus redes de amistad en el nuevo entorno cultural. La teoría de Kim (2001) destaca la importancia que la amistad con anfitriones tiene en la adaptación e integración a la cultura de destino. Otros estudios refuerzan tal afirmación, ya que enfatizan el papel positivo que juega la amistad con individuos del lugar (Bennett, Volet, & Fozdar, 2013; Church, 1982; Hendrickson, Rosen, & Aune, 2011; Savicki, 2010; Yusoff, 2012). Debido a la naturaleza de la adaptación entre culturas, Kim (2001) hace hincapié en la necesidad de un análisis longitudinal y la integración de estrategias cuantitativas y cualitativas que midan las variables clave como la red de relaciones sociales, el entorno cultural y la predisposición individual. Adicionalmente esta tesis busca analizar cómo los estudiantes extranjeros usan las nuevas tecnologías de comunicación que tienen a su disposición para comunicarse con los individuos de su nuevo entorno así como también con sus relaciones distantes.

El capítulo 3 explica la metodología mixta y longitudinal que analiza las variables intervinientes en la etapa clave del proceso de adaptación desde su llegada a Buenos Aires hasta la finalización del cuatrimestre. La metodología triangula encuestas cuantitativas y entrevistas cualitativas en cuatro etapas. En la primera etapa, se hicieron entrevistas con directores de programas de intercambio para poder realizar una clasificación de éstos y tener acceso a los estudiantes extranjeros. Diez programas participaron de la investigación (4 universidades privadas, 3 universidades públicas y 3 programas de intercambio

establecidos en los EE.UU). En la segunda etapa, 105 estudiantes completaron una encuesta en línea donde identificaron a sus amigos, sus orígenes y la fuerza de esos vínculos. También proporcionaron información sobre el alojamiento, sus clases y actividades extra-curriculares, su participación en programas de tutorías, su nivel de etnocentrismo, sus percepciones acerca de las dificultades para comunicarse en español y el uso que realizan de las tecnologías de información y comunicación (TIC). En la tercera etapa se hicieron entrevistas en profundidad con una muestra de 34 estudiantes que completaron la encuesta a fin de profundizar acerca de algunas variables exploradas en ella. Por último, los estudiantes completaron nuevamente la encuesta al final del cuatrimestre. Para el análisis de los datos de la encuesta se utilizó el programa estadístico SPSS; para analizar los datos de las entrevistas en profundidad se aplicaron varias técnicas de análisis cualitativo (Miles & Huberman, 1994), para finalmente combinar los resultados a nivel interpretativo.

El capítulo 4 analiza la formación de redes de amistad y su transformación en el tiempo, lo cual también permite una discusión teórica sobre la amistad intercultural. Los estudiantes extranjeros suelen formar una red de amistad muy amplia poco tiempo después de llegar. Para la mayoría, esa red no está compuesta por argentinos sino por individuos de su propio país y otros estudiantes extranjeros. Sin embargo, y de acuerdo con Kim (2001), a medida que pasa el tiempo agregan más amigos argentinos a su red. Además, este análisis destaca un factor importante sobre el desarrollo de la amistad intercultural que las investigaciones previas no mencionan (Sias, Drzewiecka, Meares, Bent, Konomi, Ortega & White 2008), esto es, la necesidad de los estudiantes extranjeros de formar nuevas amistades que los argentinos no tienen porque su red ya está establecida. Adicionalmente, estudios anteriores explicaron la amistad con otros estudiantes extranjeros como recreacional mientras el presente estudio describe estas amistades como puentes a la adaptación. Si bien no forman relaciones con argentinos, empiezan a comunicarse de otra manera mientras se adaptan a otros estilos de comunicación. Ese profundo análisis de la formación y transformación de las

redes de amistad forma la base para los próximos capítulos que buscan identificar los contextos en los cuales los estudiantes extranjeros desarrollan amistad con argentinos.

El capítulo 5 examina las condiciones de contacto que los estudiantes extranjeros tienen con argentinos y compara el papel que juegan los diferentes modelos de programas de intercambio. El estudio muestra que la gestión de los programas de intercambio influye fuertemente en la formación de las redes de amistad y que hay diferencias importantes entre programas. Los hallazgos demuestran que los estudiantes que estudian en programas establecidos en EE.UU. tienen muchos más amigos de su propio país, menos amigos locales y menos amigos de otros países que los estudiantes extranjeros que estudian en las universidades públicas y privadas de Buenos Aires. El capítulo también examina el rol que el tipo de alojamiento, las clases, la participación en actividades extra-curriculares y en programas de tutoría juegan en la formación de amistad con argentinos. Por un lado, los hallazgos no muestran que quienes viven con argentinos desarrollen más amistad con ellos, ni tampoco que el asistir a clases con argentinos conduzca a tener más amigos locales. Por otro lado, hubo una relación significativa entre la participación en actividades extra-curriculares y un aumento en el desarrollo de amistades con argentinos a medida que pasa el tiempo. Pero no sucede lo mismo entre quienes participan de un programa de tutorías y la mayor posibilidad de tener amigos locales. Mayormente, los estudiantes reportaron poca satisfacción con los tutores asignados, aunque durante las entrevistas en profundidad algunos de ellos destacaron el papel central que ciertos tutores organizadores han tenido en su vida. Además, los estudiantes que sí mostraron satisfacción con su tutor también reportaron tener un mayor número de amigos argentinos en el transcurso del tiempo. Las implicaciones de estos hallazgos se discuten en el capítulo 8.

El capítulo 6 examina la relación entre los atributos individuales de los estudiantes extranjeros al llegar a Buenos Aires y la formación de su red de amistades. Si bien hay una multitud de atributos individuales que pueden

impactar en el proceso de adaptación entre culturas (Wang, 2009), este estudio busca examinar tres que concuerdan con lo señalado por Kim (2001). Las diferencias individuales respecto a la dificultad con el idioma (preparación previa para un cambio), el nivel de etnocentrismo (adaptabilidad de la personalidad) y el país de origen (proximidad étnica) de los estudiantes extranjeros podrían afectar la capacidad de comunicarse con e integrarse a la cultura de destino. Este capítulo no solo analiza esta relación sino también examina cómo la percepción de dificultad con el idioma y el nivel de etnocentrismo se transforman con el tiempo, dos variables cuya evolución son objetivos de aprendizaje a la hora de realizar estudios en el extranjero (Vande Berg, Balkcum, Scheid, & Whalen, 2004). El estudio no mostró patrones de cambio en el nivel de etnocentrismo, salvo que los estudiantes tendían a tener un nivel bastante bajo. Por otra parte, un hallazgo de este capítulo muestra que los estudiantes que percibieron menor dificultad para hablar español también reportaron más amigos argentinos. Asimismo, los estudiantes en general reportaron menos dificultad para hablar y comprender el español oral al final del cuatrimestre. No obstante, hubo una relación significativa entre aquellos que reportaron más dificultad con el idioma al llegar y su percepción de avance al finalizar el cuatrimestre, lo cual concuerda con otros investigadores que miden los cambios en percepciones de adquisición de un idioma (Dewey, Belnap, & Hillstrom, 2013). Los resultados de este capítulo muestran el papel central que el manejo del idioma juega en el desarrollo de las redes de amistad y también, aunque no fue un objetivo del estudio, destaca un patrón sobre las percepciones de adquisición de un idioma.

El capítulo 7 explora cómo los estudiantes extranjeros usan las tecnologías de información y comunicación (TIC) para mantener contacto con su familia y amigos distantes y facilitar su comunicación con sus nuevas relaciones en Buenos Aires. El capítulo revela que los estudiantes extranjeros suelen usar redes sociales como Facebook para su comunicación personal, grupal y académica. El tiempo que dedican a esta actividad es mucho mayor en Buenos Aires que el que le dedicaban antes de su llegada. Además usan Skype

para hacer llamadas a familiares y amigos que se encuentran en lugares geográficamente distantes. Por otra parte, no hubo una relación entre más amigos argentinos en su red social y más amigos cara-a-cara, aunque la comunicación que los estudiantes extranjeros tienen con argentinos les puede servir para aprender sobre los patrones de comunicación de los anfitriones. La teoría de adaptación entre culturas elaborada por Kim (2001) describe dos tipos de comunicación social, la comunicación interpersonal con anfitriones y el consumo de comunicación masiva del país anfitrión. El uso de las TIC para comunicarse representa una combinación de los dos. Los estudiantes pueden intercambiar mensajes personales con argentinos tanto como recibir noticias y videos masivos en sus muros. Por ende, la presente tesis desarrolla un nuevo concepto, *host ICT communication*, a fin de ser utilizado en futuros estudios acerca del campo de la adaptación entre culturas.

El capítulo 8 resume los hallazgos de los cuatro capítulos empíricos, discute sus implicancias y advierte sobre algunas limitaciones. Un primer hallazgo revela que la red de amistades de los estudiantes se forma rápidamente al llegar, aunque la mayoría de esos amigos no son de Argentina. Este hallazgo no solo informa sobre el desarrollo de la amistad intercultural sino también subraya la importancia de implementar estrategias de integración al llegar. Un segundo hallazgo nos señala que ese problema es aun más grave para los estudiantes extranjeros inscritos en los programas de intercambio establecidos en los EE.UU., lo cual deriva de las mismas características de su organización. A pesar de las dificultades que este tipo de programas tienen en la integración de sus participantes en la cultura de destino, se mantienen vigente por diversas razones. En primer lugar, porque ha sido la forma que históricamente han asumido los programas de estudios en el extranjero, sin sufrir grandes modificaciones desde sus orígenes; en segundo lugar, por razones pragmáticas ya que permite evitar las dificultades y barreras que implica llevar adelante programas de intercambio con instituciones educativas de otros países; en tercer lugar, porque esta organización permite que una gran cantidad de estudiantes, incluyendo los que no tienen nivel de español ni conocimiento de la cultura de

destino, puedan realizar estudios en el extranjero; por último, porque es acorde con el nivel de etnocentrismo que las instituciones estadounidenses suelen tener. Un tercer hallazgo, destaca que los estudiantes extranjeros que participan en actividades extra-curriculares y están satisfechos con sus programas de tutorías reportaron, con el tiempo, una mayor cantidad de amigos argentinos. El hecho de que algunos tutores tuvieran un rol central concuerda con lo que las teorías de redes sociales señalan acerca de los individuos conectores o centrales que suelen tener muchos contactos (Barabási, 2003). En marketing se llaman líderes de opinión. En base a este hallazgo, y aplicando la teoría, en este capítulo se argumenta que se podrían identificar y reclutar estudiantes anfitriones con características de conectores para formar parte de un programa de tutorías. Además, tanto los programas de intercambio como las universidades podrían facilitar actividades mixtas con estudiantes extranjeros y estudiantes argentinos. Una revisión de la literatura muestra que muchos estudios destacan el impacto positivo que este tipo de actividades tiene no solo para los extranjeros sino también para los anfitriones. Por último, las TIC como Facebook y Skype son omnipresentes en la vida de los estudiantes y su uso con argentinos colabora con el aprendizaje de los patrones de comunicación de la cultura huésped.

El capítulo 8 también advierte sobre cuatro limitaciones que se encuentra en la tesis. En primer lugar, la muestra cuantitativa para las universidades públicas es insuficiente para llegar a conclusiones concretas y para poder comparar con las universidades privadas y programas establecidos en EE.UU. En segundo lugar, la mayoría de los estudiantes extranjeros en Buenos Aires proceden de otros países latinoamericanos y suelen venir para hacer una carrera mientras los norteamericanos y europeos estudian uno o dos cuatrimestres. Este estudio solo examina el primer cuatrimestre de intercambio y por consecuencia hay que tener precaución antes de generalizar los hallazgos a una estadía de largo plazo. En tercer lugar, hubo pocos participantes latinoamericanos y de este modo no podemos realizar comparaciones entre ellos y los norteamericanos y europeos. Finalmente, por temas de complejidad

metodológica la investigación no examinó la experiencia en el extranjero que los estudiantes tenían antes de venir a Buenos Aires. Es probable que las experiencias previas colaboren con el proceso de adaptación cultural. Si bien estas limitaciones reducen la capacidad de generalizar los hallazgos, orientan investigaciones futuras así como aportan al desarrollo de la teoría de la comunicación intercultural.

Esta investigación nos permitió avanzar en la comprensión del proceso de adaptación entre culturas y contar con herramientas que permitan promover mejores formas de integración para quienes participan de este tipo de programas de estudio. Hay muchas investigaciones que documentan bajos niveles de amistad entre los estudiantes extranjeros y anfitriones; al abordar este problema, esta tesis doctoral aporta hallazgos empíricos que demuestran situaciones en que este problema se disminuye. Cada año miles de estudiantes extranjeros llegan a Buenos Aires para diversificar sus estudios académicos y tener una experiencia única. Esta investigación avanza en la teoría de la adaptación entre culturas que explica y predica su experiencia mientras aporta herramientas para quienes están comprometidos con el mejoramiento de las iniciativas de educación internacional.

Introduction

In March of 2011 US president Barak Obama announced the “100,000 strong in the Americas” program during his visit to Chile (US State Department, 2011). The initiative’s goal is to reach 100,000 US students studying in Latin America and 100,000 Latin American students studying in the United States. This interchange of students, knowledge, and ideas is viewed as a positive way to increase understanding between the two regions by means of building interpersonal ties between students who are billed as future leaders. Scholars in the intercultural relations and study abroad literature describe educational exchange between countries as an activity that instills tolerance in those who participate while converting them into potential bridges between cultures (Cushner & Karim, 2004). Furthermore, a plethora of studies illustrate the positive personal transformations that students undergo while learning in different countries and cultures (Hadis, 2005). Thus, Obama’s proposal for improving the often strained geo-political relationships between the regions through interpersonal contact is encouraging to say the least. However, as with any picture perfect plan there are potential flaws and caveats that policy makers must consider before declaring victory. The goal of this dissertation is to examine the foremost problem underlying this student exchange plan and undermining its potential to build intercultural understanding. Simply stated, in all too many cases international students fail to establish local friendships (Brown, 2009a; Gareis, 2012; Neri & Ville, 2008).

I. Central Problem Underlying International Education Initiatives

Numerous studies show that international students tend to spend most of their time with individuals from their own countries or with those from other foreign countries (Brown, 2009b; Maundeni, 2001) and are largely disappointed with their inability to build interpersonal connections with those from the host country (Brown, 2009c; Campbell & Li, 2008; Gareis, 2012). This reality is unfortunate considering that it not only contradicts institutional initiatives founded on expectations that intercultural friendship will build understanding

between groups (Brown, 2009a), but also bearing in mind that the intercultural relations literature is littered with studies linking positive outcomes for individuals who do establish friendship with those from the host country (Bennett, Volet, & Fozdar, 2013; Church, 1982; Kim, 2001; Hendrickson, Rosen, & Aune, 2011; Savicki, 2010; Yusoff, 2012). This dissertation looks to fill the gap between studies that describe international students' lack of friendship with those from the host country and studies that cite the positive outcomes of such friendship by identifying the specific conditions in which these friendships manifest. This investigation seeks to accomplish this task by examining international students in Buenos Aires, Argentina. Buenos Aires is an ideal location due to the recent surge in international students (McMurtrie, 2007; Smink, 2013) and the fact that there are only a handful of existing empirical studies (Bonafina de Gulias & Falcon, 2007; Castro Solano, 2013a, 2011; Isabelli-García, 2006). The growth of international students in Buenos Aires coupled with the lack of research dedicated to examining their interaction with the local culture presents a critical need for the current investigation.

Although few studies have examined international students in Buenos Aires, Argentina, this phenomenon has been the topic of much research across the globe. Thus, the theoretical base is quite dense with an extensive array of studies, perspectives, approaches, and constructs (Kim, 2001). To account for this enormous and often disjointed literature this investigation adopts Kim's (2001) cross-cultural adaptation theory which encompasses both micro and macro level and time frame factors. Indeed, many researchers analyzing international students have applied Kim's (2001) comprehensive theory (Pitts, 2009; Tian & Lowe, 2013) and researchers who conducted a comprehensive meta-analysis including 64 articles published in 29 journals of international student adjustment commend its utility (Zhang & Goodson, 2011). Furthermore, Kim's (2001) theory emphasizes the role that participation in social communication activities with individuals from the host culture has on the adaptation process, a focus that characteristically implies friendship development, an area with a wide breadth of literature.

In 1977 Bochner, McLeod, and Lin presented the functional model that describes how international students' friendship networks are composed of three unique groups that serve specific functions. First, friends from one's own country (co-nationals) provide a setting in which ethnic and cultural values can be rehearsed and expressed. Second, friends native to the country where the individual is studying (host nationals) facilitate the academic and professional aspirations of the international student. Third, friends from other countries (multi-nationals) provide companionship for recreational activities. Kim (2001) poses several theorems predicting positive adaptive mechanisms related to interaction with host nationals and negative adaptive mechanisms related to interaction with co-nationals and theorizes as to how these networks transform over time. Hence, the current research not only incorporates a solid theoretical framework but also tests several underlying theorems in examining the principal problem, the lack of host national friendship, which plagues the study abroad field in a virtually untapped research location, i.e. Buenos Aires.

Numerous researchers have observed countless reasons explaining why international students lack interaction with host nationals and have difficulty in developing friendships with them. Cultural differences aside, researchers generally attribute responsibility to three separate entities; the international students, the host national students, and the university or study abroad program. First, international students often have weak language skills, prefer to stick to culturally similar others (Trice, 2007), and feel that host nationals do not understand the experience of traveling or living in an international context (Montgomery & McDowell, 2009). Second, host national students complain about international student language deficiencies while perceiving differences related to age, humor, clothing, work ethic, and attitudes related to alcohol consumption (Peacock & Harrison, 2009). These authors even describe a passive xenophobia among many host nationals regarding international students. Furthermore, host nationals already have established friendship networks and lack the motivation and are largely indifferent to developing relationships with international students (Brebner, 2008; Gareis, 2012). Third,

institutions do not do enough to facilitate interaction between international students and host nationals (Brebner, 2008; Gareis, 2012; Peacock & Harrison, 2009). Students have few opportunities to mix and due to academic pressures have little time to develop relationships (Gareis, 2012; Trice, 2007). This research examines the nature of these explanations for the lack of host national friendship problem in Buenos Aires, Argentina, specifically focusing on the third entity described above, the role of universities and study abroad programs.

This dissertation not only examines one of the major setbacks associated with international education but also does so by comparing the role that diverse study abroad program models play. Examining the complex nature of study abroad program models operating in different contexts is fundamental for understanding international and intercultural learning (Rodman & Merrill, 2010). Classification systems describing how programs differentiate according to immersion are widely acknowledged (Engle & Engle, 2003), and the amount of contact with the local university and community that these models facilitate drive the study abroad debate (Rodman & Merrill, 2010). Along with developing model typologies researchers have compared how specific study abroad program characteristics, such as language requirements for example, impact the contact that international students have with the host culture (Savicki, Arrúe, & Binder, 2013). The current investigation aims to provide a better understanding of study abroad program models while contributing to the immersion debate by comparing the friendship network composition of students enrolled in US based study abroad programs with those directly enrolled at local universities. Furthermore, this study examines specific environmental characteristics which these programs largely dictate including housing, classroom makeup, organized extra-curricular activities, and tutor programs. Researchers have provided evidence for relationships between these variables and increased host national friendship (Kudo & Simkin, 2003; Neri & Ville, 2008; Pritchard & Skinner, 2002); however it is not clear which variable is most influential. This investigation aims to examine housing, classroom makeup, participation in extra-curricular activities, and participation in tutor

programs in-depth by measuring the extent to which each variable contributes to friendship formation upon arrival and subsequent transformation over time. A thorough literature review has not produced any research that compares study abroad programs and related micro environmental characteristics in this manner.

Comparing students in US based programs with local universities in Buenos Aires inherently provides a sample comprised of international students coming from three arguably distinct world regions; Europe, North America, and Latin America. International students from different regions experience the adaptation process in different ways (Kim, 2001) and have varying degrees of difficulty developing host national friendships (Gareis, 2012; Peacock & Harrison, 2009). However, intercultural friendship is communicatively complex (Sias, Drzewiecka, Meares, Bent, Konomi, Ortega, & White, 2008) and knowledge of what aids or obstructs intercultural friendship development is relatively limited (Gareis, 2012). Furthermore, information and communication technology (ICT) such as social networking sites (SNS) and video chat have blurred the definition of friendship (Deresiewicz, 2011) while changing the nature of friendship development and maintenance with both existing contacts and new relationships (Mikal & Grace, 2012). Consequently, this investigation aims to build scholarly understanding of intercultural friendship development by applying a communication network theoretical framework which takes ICT into account and by employing an exhaustive friendship network grid methodology (Hendrickson et al., 2011). Additionally this study analyzes this diverse mix of international students longitudinally over the first several months of the study abroad experience and complements this data with in-depth interviews. There is a lack of both longitudinal and comparative studies in the international student adjustment literature (Zhang & Goodson, 2011). Thus, the research in this dissertation is significant because it uses a mixed method approach combining longitudinal quantitative surveys with contextual, qualitative interviews that provide meaning and explanations for data (Kim, 2001).

This mixed method longitudinal design provides for a rich data set with the potential for deducing both practical and theoretical implications. This research is useful and significant not only for administrators designing study abroad programs but also for researchers examining intercultural communication processes and the impact that ICT has on interpersonal relationships. This dissertation has one general research objective and eight specific research objectives.

II. General Research Objective

The general objective of the current investigation is to examine the role that study abroad programs play in international student friendship network formation in Buenos Aires while extending scholarly understanding of the cross-cultural adaptation process.

III. Specific Research Objectives

1. Understand the history of study abroad programming in order to compare programs and universities currently operating in Buenos Aires.
2. Apply cross-cultural adaptation theory to students in Buenos Aires and use findings to extend scholarly knowledge.
3. Incorporate a multi-method, longitudinal research design.
4. Analyze the friendship network formation and transformation process.
5. Identify specific contexts and situations in which international students develop friendship with Argentines.
6. Consider predispositional elements which affect friendship formation with Argentines.
7. Assess the nature of students' Information and Communication Technology (ICT) use to maintain distant relationships and develop new relationships in Buenos Aires.
8. Offer practical and theoretical implications for researchers, study abroad administrators, and university officials.

In order to achieve these objectives and fill the research gap related to international student friendship development with host nationals this dissertation consists of eight chapters organized according to the eight aforementioned specific research objectives.

IV. Summary of Chapters 1-8

Chapter 1 establishes a historical background of study abroad and the intercultural communication field. A field that emerged as a means to explain and understand the intercultural communication processes of not only international students but also other individuals who find themselves crossing cultures or communicating with those from other cultural groups at home. This chapter is necessary because it provides background information regarding this investigation's subject of inquiry, i.e. international students; the main independent variable, i.e. study abroad programs which facilitate their experience; and the intercultural communication field, i.e. the general social scientific area in which this research is situated. Furthermore, this chapter presents the major debate underlying study abroad. A debate which pivots around the amount of immersion into a culture that international students should and can possibly have. This debate represents one of the most significant current discussions in the field. In short this chapter sets the stage for understanding study abroad programming and the international student experience in Buenos Aires.

Chapter 2 presents an extensive review of Kim's (2001) cross-cultural adaptation theory. This theoretical review also includes interrelated social network concepts such as social capital and strong ties vs. weak ties to describe the significance of adaptation enhancing resources that individuals from the host culture provide. Additionally, this review presents cultural contact theory, a theory which holds that interpersonal contact situations which provide opportunities to form friendships with those from other cultures can reduce prejudice and build intercultural understanding (Allport, 1954; Pettigrew, 1998). These three theories coupled together build the argument and subsequent

assumption that this investigation makes. Developing interpersonal friendships with those from the host culture is not only a valuable and desirable endeavor, but is also an indication that an individual has undergone a more successful adaptation. This theoretical review describes two main elements that influence one's ability to participate in social communication processes of the host culture and develop friendships. First, micro environmental conditions, i.e. study abroad program models and the conditions (housing, classroom makeup, extra-curricular activities, tutor programs) which are inherently associated with their organization. Second, predisposition elements including perceived language difficulties, national origin, and ethnocentrism that affect an individual's ability to communicate effectively with those in the host culture. Finally, this review includes literature which addresses the role that information and communication technology (ICT) plays in the cross-cultural adaptation process. This adaptation-influencing element has certainly become more relevant with the introduction of Social Networking Sites (SNS) and video chat technology.

Chapter 3 reviews current methodological issues related to the examination of international students and the cross-cultural adaptation process and presents the chosen methodology for the current investigation. Due to the transformative and contextual nature of adaptation, researchers have always tended to insist on multi-method, longitudinal methodological approaches (Church, 1982; Kim, 2001; Zhang & Goodson, 2011). In light of these issues this research examines the formation and transformation of international students' friendship networks using an exhaustive friendship network grid (Hendrickson et al., 2011). This methodology makes it possible to identify variables that influence both initial friendship network formation and subsequent transformation. Additionally, in-depth interviews with international students provide context for these findings. This chapter describes the quantitative and qualitative measures used in the four data collection phases which include; 1) study abroad director interviews 2) first quantitative survey 3) international student interviews 4) second quantitative survey. This chapter also

describes the sampling procedures for arriving at the 10 study abroad programs, the longitudinal analysis of 105 international student participants, and the 34 in-depth interviews. This chapter concludes with a description of the multi-method data analysis procedures.

Chapter 4 gives a brief review of the role that friendship networks play in Kim's (2001) cross-cultural adaptation theory and poses five hypotheses and three research questions related to friendship network formation and transformation over time. An analysis of these hypotheses and research questions follows as well as a discussion of their implications. This analysis is important as it not only establishes a foundation for assessing the role that the independent variables in Chapters 5 and 6 play, but also advances scholarly understanding of cross-cultural adaptation on two levels. First, it identifies general patterns of international student friendship network formation and transformation in Buenos Aires. Second, it examines these networks in a multi-cultural context thus allowing for a thorough examination of intercultural communication processes by comparing intercultural vs. intracultural friendship development.

Chapter 5 examines the intricate relationship between micro environmental conditions that influence the friendship network formation and transformation patterns presented in Chapter 4. This chapter begins with a characteristic description of the study abroad programs and universities that participated in this investigation. This information was gathered during interviews with study abroad directors and suggests that the best way to categorize programs in Buenos Aires is according to Private Argentine Universities, Public Argentine Universities, and US based study abroad programs. This chapter poses two research questions and three hypotheses concerning study abroad programs along with four related micro environmental conditions (housing situation, classroom makeup, participation in organized extra-curricular activities, participation in tutor programs). Findings not only demonstrate the influence that study abroad program administration has on friendship network formation but also reveal contexts in which international

students develop relationships with host nationals. Finally, this chapter provides a theoretical discussion related to the impact of micro environmental elements presented in Kim's (2001) cross-cultural adaptation theory.

Chapter 6 analyzes the relationship between international students' predisposition to adapt and the friendship network formation and transformation process. Kim's (2001) framework proposes three general predisposition elements (preparedness for change, ethnic group strength, adaptive personality) which inherently affect an individual's ability to participate in host social communication activities. This research includes three variables in the research design, poses three hypotheses and six research questions, and situates the variables according to Kim's framework; Perceived language difficulty (preparedness for change), national identity (ethnic group strength), and ethnocentrism (adaptive personality). Researchers have identified numerous specific predisposition variables which affect adjustment (Wang, (2009), however an examination of all potential causes of variance is not realistic or possible. Additionally, given the longitudinal nature of this study it is possible to describe the change in ethnocentrism and perceived language difficulty over time. The main finding from this chapter contributes significantly to scholarly understanding of the intertwining relationship between perceived language acquisition and host national friendship formation and transformation.

Chapter 7 poses six research questions exploring the role that Information and Communication Technology (ICT) plays in the friendship network formation and transformation process. ICT such as social networking sites (SNS) and video chat programs not only provide international students with a medium for maintaining communication with existing relationships but also a medium for building and maintaining new relationships in Buenos Aires. This investigation's research design makes it possible to observe international student ICT use changes over the course of a semester while comparing FtF friendship network transformation patterns with SNS friendship network transformation patterns. Findings not only provide theoretical implications for

communication researchers concerned with the effects that new ICTs have on interpersonal relationships but also for scholars concerned with cultural differences in terms of online communication behavior. Kim (2001) posits that host social communication embodies both participation in host interpersonal communication activities and participation in host mass media activities. This chapter looks to examine the potential role that a new form, host ICT mediated communication, plays in the cross-cultural adaptation process.

Chapter 8 summarizes the main findings presented in chapters 4, 5, 6, and 7 and discusses the interrelated implications for study abroad programming and theory building. The main theoretical implications are related to the specific time period in which friendships form and what that implies for study abroad programming. First, this chapter discusses the implications of findings from chapter 5 related to US based study abroad programs and Argentine universities. Second, this chapter describes the main limitations of this research and provides suggestions for future research. Third, this chapter and dissertation ends with a discussion of the main theoretical implications of this research.

Chapter 1: Study Abroad and Intercultural Communication History

The goal of this chapter is to give the reader background information concerning the history, premises, and major debates concerning the study abroad and intercultural communication fields. The current research examines a problem that is deeply rooted in the debate as to the best way to administer study abroad, a debate centered on the amount of contact that international students have with the host culture. The intercultural communication field materialized due to a need to better understand how to communicate with those from other cultures. Thus, these two fields have inherently grown and transformed together.

The first section gives a brief history presenting ancient study abroad premises that are still relevant today. This is followed by a description of the many international organizations that have developed due to the popularity of study abroad. The second section presents specific details regarding Argentine study abroad history and the present situation, one that receives among others, many US international students. After this brief discussion a longer section ensues which describes the history of US study abroad programming in the United States, the debate as to the best way to administer study abroad, and a typology of program classification. The third section elaborates on three study abroad learning objectives which are not only pertinent to the central study abroad debate but also to the current research. The fourth section presents the foundations of intercultural communication and its natural relationship with study abroad and international students living in a new cultural environment.

1.1. Historical Study Abroad Premises

The tradition of young people leaving their home cultures to acquire new knowledge in foreign lands is nothing new; in fact it is ancient (Hoffa, 2007). Many earlier societies conformed to the idea that it was possible to learn from those in other places with different values, beliefs, and culture and thus sent their young leaders on journeys of discovery and enlightenment. These

wandering students gathered in ancient learning centers in India, Greece, Rome, the Middle East, and Asia. In India, the University of Takshila received foreign students as early as 600 BC, one of them being Alexander the Great (Hoffa, 2007). Greek philosophers such as Plato, Pythagoras, Ptolemy, and Euclid traveled to foreign lands seeking new truths under the assumption that other traditions of learning existed and it was necessary to travel in order to uncover this learning. In 370 AD Rome had such a high number of foreign students that the emperor issued a decree governing their credentials, residence, field of study, and behavior. These are all issues that are relevant to contemporary study abroad programming. Students had to present passports and permission to be abroad, officially enroll in the university, and notify officials of their residency. Study abroad officers had to monitor their societal behavior and if students didn't comply they were subject to being sent home (and in the case of ancient Rome, public whipping). The Greeks and Romans held an educational vision whereby learning goes beyond one's own cultural roots, thus founding the heritage for study abroad (Hoffa, 2007).

The first European universities appeared in the 12th century and were located in Paris, Montpellier, Oxford, Bologna, and Salerno. The concept of the university developed around ancient manuscripts and the teachers who could read and teach from them (Hoffa, 2007; Métraux, 1956). During the Renaissance period in Europe Christian humanist thinkers such as Erasmus, Hildebrandt, Boethius, Galileo, Hippocrates, and Aquinas traveled to gain access to the ancient learning and to work with other scholars across the continent (Hoffa, 2007). As early as the 13th century universities competed for visiting students and scholars. These early universities had geographically and culturally diverse student bodies with university lists showing names from most European countries, the Middle East, the Far East, North Africa, and the West Indies. With Latin as the universal language students could study across the continent. This phenomenon of international students and scholars studying abroad raised questions concerning comparative education that remain relevant today. Those involved in the business such as parents, teachers, employers, and

authorities were curious as to teacher qualification, quality of instruction, grading standards, quality of other students, student motivation, and whether students were simply traveling to party (Hoffa, 2007). Additionally, more than four hundred years ago, institutions receiving visiting students debated as to how much they should adjust and cater to the needs of foreigners. Some complained the students were spoiled rich kids while others were impoverished and needed help with basic needs (Hoffa, 2007).

Scholars recognize that from the beginnings there has always been an important difference in student motivation to study abroad (Métraux, 1956). Students from those countries who had the highest academic standards at the time such as Germany, France, and Great Britain embarked on what many term the grand tour. After completing formal training in their home countries students went abroad, not in search of any specific specialized knowledge, but as a test (Métraux, 1956). This emphasis on acquiring knowledge by merely traveling led many writers to use the term educational travel when discussing study abroad (Métraux, 1956); it also set precedents for how the US study abroad industry would evolve. While some countries were sending their students on grand educational travel tours, students from countries with less developed university systems such as the American colonies and Russia traveled to Europe to acquire specialized knowledge (Hoffa, 2007; Métraux, 1956). Whether students left to acquire special knowledge or to put their formal education to a test in another country, study abroad has always been laden with the assumption that a spirit of understanding will transpire through contact and friendship development between people from other cultures (Métraux, 1956). This assumption is central to the current research.

Hoffa (2007) contends that the study abroad industry is deeply rooted in ancient Western history and presents twelve study abroad premises that were present in both ancient history and today.

1. No culture or country possesses all of human knowledge and wisdom.
2. Domestic education staying at home leads to provincialism, chauvinism, and narrowness.

3. It is therefore important to provide opportunities for at least some citizens to travel abroad, to learn lessons not available at home.
4. Youth is the best time for this type of education.
5. What is learned has benefits not only for the individual sojourner but also for the home culture or country.
6. Being a student in a place unlike home is never easy, but in the struggle to learn on the linguistic and cultural terms of a new host culture lies much of the wisdom to be gained by the experience.
7. The many ways of learning include vicarious wandering, studying with a wise mentor, being a student in a foreign education system, studying independently, and working in the host culture.
8. One of the benefits of study abroad is an acquisition of substantial knowledge not known at home.
9. Another benefit is the acquisition of new perspectives on life and learning, and on the self.
10. Some of the value of the experience abroad comes from having to learn new ways of learning that are different from those at home.
11. Study abroad via any of these ways of learning is likely to be a combination of academic and experiential modes.
12. There are economic costs to supporting the study abroad sojourn as well as benefits, so each society must decide how to afford those costs to reap the benefits. (Hoffa, 2007, p. 19-20)

1.2. Emergence of International Organizations

These study abroad premises demonstrate that modern humans have emphasized the importance of learning in and from other cultures since the first universities were founded. Statistics from the late 1800s and early 1900s show that a large number of international students were enrolled in European and US universities. In 1904, 8 percent of all students in German Universities were foreigners. In 1911, 3,267 foreign students made up 23 percent of the total enrollment of the University of Paris, including students from Russia, Turkey,

Bulgaria, Egypt, and the United States (Hoffa, 2007). In 1904, 2,673 students from seventy-four countries were studying at US universities and in 1911 that number had risen to 4,856 (Hoffa, 2007).

Due to the popularity of studying abroad and in order to coordinate the inflow and outflow of students, international institutes for foreigners emerged. Universities and national organizations created these institutes specifically for students from other countries. Students took courses outside of the regular university curriculum with professors hired specifically for foreigners. Institutes of this type include the London School of Economics General Course, 1910; The American-Scandinavian Foundation, 1910; The Mozarteum International Summer Academy in Austria, 1917; The Corsi per Stranieri at Siena University Italy, 1917; The Cours de Civilization at the University of Paris, 1919; and The Vacation course for Foreign Students at Cambridge, 1924 (Hoffa, 2007). Universities also appointed foreign student advisors who helped students with their specific needs. Along with University sponsored institutes, international institutes also emerged. In 1919 the Institute of International Education (IIE) was founded to “promote international understanding through international education” (Hoffa, 2007, p. 67). IIE made it possible for thousands of foreign students to study in the US and to help US citizens become more internationally minded (Hoffa, 2007).

In 1946 the newly formed United Nations created the Educational, Scientific, and Cultural organization UNESCO. United Nations member states concluded that wars could be prevented through sharing culture, education, and science. UNESCO’s purpose was to promote cultural relations, educational exchange programs, and the development of education and technical assistance programs. UNESCO’s mission was to build peace and understanding through international education. UNESCO encouraged study abroad and international student mobility and “legitimized international educational exchange on a worldwide basis” (Hoffa, 2007, p. 112). In 1948 UNESCO began publishing *Study Abroad* which became the authoritative publication in the field (Cook & Smith, 1956). UNESCO continues to support study abroad initiatives through

this publication, which includes in-depth information concerning study abroad opportunities and scholarships (UNESCO, 1999).

While UNESCO and IIE generally supported study abroad initiatives and international students, several other organizations emerged that focused on more specific goals. In 1948 the National Association of Foreign Student Advisors (NAFSA) was founded at the University of Michigan in the United States. In 1964 this name changed to National Association of Foreign Student Affairs. NAFSA was originally founded to provide training for international students studying at US universities; however its purpose evolved over time and in 1971 the organization created SECUSSA, which focused on US students abroad. In 1990 NAFSA changed its name to the Association of International Educators, however they kept the acronym in order to maintain name recognition (NAFSA, 2013). In 1950 the Institute for European Studies (IES) was founded in order to create opportunities abroad (Sideli, 2010). This organization later became the Institute for the International Education of Students and is currently a leading study abroad provider (Sideli, 2010). In 1932 the Experiment in International Living (EIL) was created in order to give young US Americans the opportunity to live with a European family, learn the local language, and travel around Europe. In 1964 EIL became the School of International Training (SIT), which was founded to prepare college students for work in international organizations (Hoffa, 2007; Sideli, 2010). Today SIT is known for its excellence in providing study abroad opportunities in nontraditional locations. In 1967 the Council on International Educational Exchange (CIEE) changed its name from an earlier organization, the Council on Student Travel (CST). CIEE's mission was to build exchange programs and facilitate exchange agreements between institutions (Sideli, 2010). Both SIT and CIEE currently operate in Buenos Aires.

These earlier national and international organizations built the study abroad infrastructure and set the groundwork for a wave of organizations and programs dedicated to international education to emerge across the world (Sideli, 2010). For example:

- 1957: The Association of International Educators (AIEJ) in Japan
- 1958: The Organization of American States established the OAS academic scholarship program for students from the Americas to study abroad in other countries in the Americas (OAS, 2013).
- 1966: The Canadian Bureau for International Education (CBIE)
- 1968: The Asociacion de programas universitarios norteamericanos en España (APUNE)
- 1978: The Association of American Colleges and Universities in Italy (AACUPI)
- 1987: The ERASMUS program initiated by the European Union as a way for university students across Europe to study at other European Universities.
- 1987: The European Association of International Education (EAIE) was founded as a way to stimulate international education initiatives through academic conferences and publications.
- 1992: The British Universities Transatlantic Exchange Association (BUTEX) was created to build educational exchange between North America and the United Kingdom.
- 1997: The Association of Academic Programs in Latin America and the Caribbean (AAPLAC) was founded to promote cross-cultural and academic based experiences among Latin American, Caribbean, and US institutions of higher learning.
- 2004: The Asia-Pacific Association of International Education (APAIE)
- 2010: The International Education Association of Australia (IEAA)

Furthermore, in the 1990s two academic journals dedicated to study abroad and international education began publishing research and reviews related to the field. In 1995 *Frontiers: The Interdisciplinary Journal of Study Abroad* began publishing original research related to student learning and development, language learning in a study abroad context, and experiential education. In 1997 the *Journal of Studies in International Education* (JSIE) began publishing articles related to the international dimension of higher

education (Sideli, 2010). This list of international organizations and academic journals is not exhaustive; it simply demonstrates the importance of international education and helps to legitimize the study abroad field.

The premises behind the importance of learning from other cultures were set in ancient India, Greece, Rome, the Middle East, and Asia. The educational value placed upon learning from others is deeply rooted in human existence. International Education as a field emerged in the early 1900s and over the past 100 years has expanded exponentially. Nevertheless, administrators, professors, students, and international education professionals are still confronted with many of the same administrative obstacles and issues as their early predecessors. Argentine Universities also have a deep history of receiving international students. The next section describes this history and details how it has expanded in recent years.

1.3. International Education in Argentina

Argentina is arguably one of the most important learning centers in the Western Hemisphere. The University of Cordoba located in the northern part of present day Argentina was one of the first universities in Latin America. The Jesuits founded it in 1621 to train clerics in the arts of philosophy and theology (Buchbinder, 2005). In 1821, under a secular framework, the University of Buenos Aires (UBA) was founded just 5 years after Argentina became a sovereign nation (Buchbinder, 2005; Giavi, Iglesia, & Iglesia, 2008). Today, Argentina has 114 post secondary degree granting Universities and Institutes with approximately 1,700,000 students (MEA, 2010b).

Argentina also has a history of receiving a large number of foreign students. In a 1956 UNESCO publication Argentina was the fourth ranked country in the world in terms of countries receiving foreign students from abroad. At the time Argentina reported 5,000-6,000 students; the United States 35,000-40,000; France 10,000-20,000; and the UK 10,000-14,000. According to this study, the number for Argentina is quite accurate, although the exact origin of the students is not. Likely, the majority were from other Latin

American countries (Elliot, 1956). This trend continues today as two out of three international students in Argentina are Latin Americans (Smink, 2013). Authorities estimate that there are approximately 50,000 foreign students currently studying in Argentina, a number that has doubled since 2006 (Smink, 2013; Universia, 2013).). These numbers, albeit unofficial, make Argentina host to the most international students in Latin America.

Although there are a multitude of foreign students in Argentina, they only represent a small proportion of the student population at Argentine universities (Universia, 2007). Thus, in 2006 the Argentine Ministry of Education created the Program for the Promotion of the Argentine University (PPUA) with the main goals of promoting Argentine university activities outside of Argentina, increasing the amount of international students in Argentina, and strengthening ties between National universities and local needs (MEA, 2010a). The executive director for the program said that it would be optimal if one out of every 10 students studying at Argentine universities were international (Universia, 2007). One activity that the PPUA initiated in order to achieve this goal is to provide funds for Argentine university administrators to represent their respective universities at international study abroad fairs such as the one hosted by the aforementioned NAFSA (Giavi et al., 2008). Representation at study abroad fairs potentially draws the attention of countries outside the region, one of those being the United States, whose universities are pressured to increase the number of students they send abroad (Woolf, 2007).

The United States is one country that has contributed to the recent expansion of international students in Argentina and has the potential to assist the Ministry of Education in achieving its goal to internationalize Argentine universities. For example, between the years 2000 and 2011, the number of US students in Argentina rose from approximately 1,200 to 4,600 (IIE, 2012). Indeed, Argentina is one the top 5 countries which experienced a growth of US students in 2006 (Samela, 2009). There is a push in Argentina to build upon this boom of international students coming from the United States. EduArgentina is an organization founded in 2007 to promote Argentine higher education and

Spanish Language Schools whose vision is to see universities, libraries, theatres, bookstores, and streets full of students from around the world (EduArgentina, 2007). Their first mission was to invite US universities to a workshop in Rosario in which Argentine universities had the opportunity to directly promote the educational opportunities that they provide for international students (EduArgentina, 2008). Moreover, the City of Buenos Aires together with the Argentine Ministries of Education, Culture, and Economic Development have also responded to this surge of US and other international students with the launch of a website which provides information regarding educational institutes, housing, cultural activities, immigration procedures, and other pertinent information that students might need upon arrival in Buenos Aires (EduArgentina, 2009).

However, the US study abroad industry is organized and administered markedly different than other countries and the experience of US students in Argentina and other parts of the world is often quite distinct from international students coming from other countries. Thus, a deeper understanding of the nature of US study abroad organizational models is necessary not only for Argentine universities aspiring to capture this student expansion but also for US study abroad administrators looking to improve the intercultural experience in Buenos Aires. The following section gives a history of US study abroad programming and outlines its distinct features. This is then followed by a section which explores the study abroad debate and outlines how programs have been classified accordingly

1.4. US Study Abroad Program History

Perrow (1986) insists that “the present is rooted in the past; no organization (and no person) is free to act as if the situation were *de novo*” (p. 158). Thus, the structural and organizational aspects of contemporary study abroad administration cannot be understood without first knowing their history and beginnings. In the early 1920s several US universities developed study abroad programs for US students in European universities. This type of

programming was quite different from previous existing modes of study abroad which mostly involved individual students studying independently. The first university to launch this type of program was the University of Delaware and their foreign study plan whereby students in their third year spent a year of supervised study abroad. These programs became known as Junior Year Abroad (JYA) and are surprisingly similar to US programs in Buenos Aires that participated in the current research. Students took intense language courses upon arriving in France, lived with French host families, took courses at a local university or specialized courses for foreign students, attended various cultural activities such as operas and theatre, and went on short excursions out of the city and away from campus. Shortly after the Delaware program began, other US universities developed similar programs including Smith College, Marymount College, Rosary College, and Montclair Teachers College. These programs set a precedent in US study abroad programming and made clear that full immersion, i.e. US American students sitting in classrooms next to native students, was more an ideal than a practically achievable practice. These programs faced the complicated task of articulating the overseas experience with US academic expectations. Furthermore, few students could realistically take classes alongside academically elite native students without language efficiency, academic background, and historical reference points. This resulted in JYA programs providing a limited experience in terms of living and learning from within the culture (Hoffa, 2007).

Although these programs did not achieve the ideal of full immersion they did bridge the quite different US and European higher educational systems making it possible to transfer academic credit and gave students more institutional support. The majority of US students abroad at this time still likely studied independently, however these programs certainly set a precedent for what the US study abroad industry would become (Hoffa, 2007). After World War II more universities began to develop Junior Year Abroad programs with similar ideas and formats as those from the 1920s. Students generally have an orientation on the voyage to Europe, take intensive language courses for several

weeks upon arrival, and live with host families. Students have the option of taking specialized courses taught by US faculty or specially trained local faculty and/or take regular university courses. The argument for this type of programming from the US American University perspective is that US undergraduate students receive the necessary supervision while US university standards, norms, and requirements are met (Hoffa, 2007).

In the late 1950s US Branch campuses emerged as another type of US study abroad option. In 1958 Stanford University opened the first US branch campus in Germany and over the next ten years opened several more in France, Italy, England, Austria, and Spain (Hoffa, 2007). The premise for these campuses is to offer a more diverse range of students the opportunity to study abroad. Branch campuses require no previous language experience and students from most academic majors can participate. Branch campus are no more than extensions of the main university, the only thing different being the foreign location. Students took classes from Stanford faculty in English and followed the same educational principles as the home campus. Unlike all the JYA programs, Stanford students did not live with host families. This format raised eyebrows and received criticism for being no more than an American “ghetto” abroad (Hoffa, 2007). “Branch campuses that more or less fully isolate students from the host culture and its inhabitants, even if the purpose is to ensure that American values prevail, fail in the fundamental purpose of study abroad, which is to put Americans in a foreign living and learning environment and expose them to differences” (Hoffa, 2007, p. 282). Presently, branch campuses are common. For example, New York University (NYU) is the leading US institution in terms of total students who received study abroad credit in 2010 (IIE, 2011). NYU has branch campuses in twelve different countries including Argentina. However, students from NYU do not study at Argentine universities; they study at an NYU campus in Buenos Aires with other students from NYU. They follow the NYU academic calendar and are evaluated according to NYU standards. Thus, the original and current branch campuses represent a quite different study abroad format than the JYA programs, which

recognized, although they almost never achieved, that full immersion into a host culture and university was ideal.

Along with JYA programming and branch campuses many students began participating in faculty led study tours and short summer tours in the early 1900s. In these types of programs a well-traveled faculty member takes a group of students to one or several countries, with the main distinction between these programs and tourism being the educational pretense. Universities and institutions also began offering summer tours as a study abroad option. Students spent the summer months studying a specific theme, discipline specific topic, or the host language.

In the 1950s Universities also began signing consortium agreements with other universities as a means to provide study abroad opportunities for their students. At the time most universities did not have their own study abroad programs (Hoffa, 2007). Consortiums were different from JYA programs in that several universities were involved in the programming; however they remained quite similar in the educational logistical format. Along with universities third party providers also began signing consortium agreements. Previously mentioned CIEE in 1964, SIT in 1967, and IES in 1950, along with more recent providers such as International Studies Abroad (ISA) in 1987 and Cultural Experiences Abroad (CEA) in 1996 (Sideli, 2010). These organizations all currently operate in Buenos Aires.

In conclusion, early study abroad programming in the 1920s and later in the 1950s not only contained many characteristics of programs today but also encompassed quite diverse formats and premises. This diversity raised the question as to how to evaluate the quality of study abroad programs and who should be considered a study abroad student. The concerns and questions raised in the 1960s remain relevant today.

1.5. Study Abroad Debate

In 1960 study abroad administrators, university deans and presidents, international organization presidents, study abroad providers, and guest

educators from Mexico, Germany, Scotland, and France met at Mount Holyoke College Massachusetts to discuss the rapidly evolving study abroad situation. The debate ranged from two opposite perspectives on how study abroad programming should be conducted. The traditionalists argued that the overseas academic experience should be controlled and resemble the domestic experience whose focus was on formal learning. The internationalists argued that the study abroad experience should expose students to cultural differences and give students the opportunity to compare and contrast values, thus placing importance on experiential learning (Hoffa, 2007). For the traditionalists the value of study abroad lies in the quality of academic courses as judged by US academic standards. For the internationalists the value of study abroad lies in cross-cultural learning and its capacity to build peace and understanding between cultures. Proponents of each argument did not reject the other; rather the debate was on how to find a balance between the two. The general conclusion from this conference was that there needed to be a degree of national control over study abroad programming. Thus, organizers prepared for a conference of greater magnitude in Chicago to discuss the “good way” to arrange foreign study (Hoffa, 2007).

Conference participants in Chicago may not have agreed upon the best way to conduct study abroad, however they did come to general conclusions and present a typology of study abroad programs at the time. Professor Stephen Freeman summarized the discussion into 12 main conclusions and presented a clear vision of the programming he most strongly supported, “year-long language and cultural immersion, with courses taken with native students and taught by native professors” (Hoffa, 2007, p. 259). He recognizes that every country has different institutes of higher learning and that articulating them is impossible, thus home institutions must carefully design curriculums in order to work toward language and cultural immersion. He also recognizes that full cultural immersion is difficult to attain and that programs should not mislead participants. Cultural immersion is only possible if the student has a good working knowledge of the foreign language. To be sure, students can study

abroad to begin learning a language, however programs should not promote this as cultural immersion (Hoffa, 2007). Conference leaders also emphasized the importance of restricting study abroad to those mature, intelligent, sympathetic, and critical students who are committed to working hard and not simply looking to take time off to be a tourist. Hoffa (2007) emphasizes that Professor Freeman's vision of study abroad immersion does not fully describe the conference participants' conclusions. Participants concluded that study abroad programming could vary and still provide educational goals and summarize these options in the following typology:

1. 5.1. Program Classification

Duration of Programs

- a. Short-Term: one quarter, one semester, two quarters
- b. Long-Term: one academic year, or more

Placement in a Four-Year Program

- a. Late Freshman or sophomore year: usual for general education programs
- b. Junior or senior year: usual for advanced, specialized programs

Relationship to Academic Institution in Host Country

- a. Completely separate from: includes independent study programs as well as expatriate campuses
- b. Programs providing special courses for American students taught at or by the host institution
- c. Enrollment in regular courses of host institution

Selection of Participants

- a. Open to any student meeting the college's usual requirement for "good standing"
- b. Specialized academic requirements: knowledge of foreign language
- c. Screening to determine personality suitable for overseas experience

Leadership

- a. Students permitted to function independently

- b. Leadership provided by host institutions overseas
- c. Leadership provided by home institution
- d. Leadership shared with other institutions or organizations

Housing

- a. Students housed under one roof as a group
- b. Students housed with host institution's students
- c. Students placed with selected host families
- d. Students given freedom of choice in housing

(Hoffa, 2007, p. 259-260)

Participants at the Chicago conference recognized that the study abroad field was diverse and would likely continue to be in the future. Rodman and Merrill (2010) suggest that study abroad programming must respond to micro, mezzo, and macro level factors. The micro factors are the needs of individual students and circumstances of specific clients or campuses. Mezzo factors are those issues facing higher education at the time. Macro factors are the political, economic, cultural, and technological trends, both national and international. Thus, in order to ensure quality, universities must carefully plan and design programs that respond to micro, mezzo, and macro factors (Rodman & Merrill, 2010). One very important aspect of quality is the degree of immersion that students experience. In his 1960s writing history professor and study abroad specialist Irwin Abrams stated, "any program that does not find ways to provide meaningful cross-cultural encounters with the host culture fails its students" (Hoffa, 2007, p. 282). For Abrams, cultural immersion through some means, be it in the classroom, host families, extra-curricular activities, or a field project, should be a central goal for all programs. This insistence on immersion forms the foundation for another program typology presented by Engle and Engle (2003).

1.5.2. Study Abroad Immersion Levels

Engle and Engle (2003) insist that focused and reflective interaction with the host culture is what separates study abroad from study at home. They classify study abroad programs into five levels based on immersion into the host culture using seven indicators: duration of the stay, language competence, language of study, context of study, types of housing, provisions for structured cultural interaction, and guided reflection on experience. Level 1 is the *study tour* where individuals are generally guided in a country for several days to a couple of weeks by a home institution faculty. Students study in English, need little competence in the target language, and live collectively with other students from their group. An example of this level would be an art history tour that includes museum visits, lectures, and excursions.

Level 2 is the *short-term study* where individuals are in a country for three to eight weeks. Students take beginner or intermediate level language courses and subject matter coursework in English. Housing is either collective with other students or in host families. These programs are designed to give students a taste of another language and culture but offer very little directed cultural interaction or experiential learning. Many summer programs fall into this category. The next level differs from the *short-term study* primarily due to duration (Engle & Engle, 2003).

Level 3 is the *cross-cultural contact* program where students with elementary to intermediate levels in the target language study for a semester. They have classes in their first language (or English) and the target language with student groups from their own country or with other international students. They live in student residencies, host families, or rentals. There are some provisions for cultural interaction and experiential learning, however no guided reflection on their cultural experience.

Level 4 is the *cross-cultural encounter* where individuals with pre-advanced to advanced levels in the target language are in a country for a semester to a year. They study in the target language but with a student group from their own country. They live with host families or rent a room in

someone's home. They participate in some integration activities and have both initial and outgoing orientations.

Level 5 is *cross-cultural immersion* where individuals with advanced levels in the target language are in a country for a semester to a year. They have all of their classes in the target language with local professors and share the classroom with local students. They are either enrolled directly in the class or in conjunction with a program and have an integrated home stay. The distinguishing element of these programs is the required regular participation in a cultural integration program or cross-cultural perspectives courses with reflective writing and research (Engle & Engle, 2003).

This classification system is not a be-all, end-all typology, as programs must operate differently depending on logistical and practical matters. The authors simply propose this classification system as a way to better understand how programs differentiate and to give potential students a clearer idea of what to expect. However, this classification system does show how differing program characteristics likely make an impact on the social networks that international students form in their new cultural environment. This system served as a solid reference for the current investigation in preparing interviews with study abroad program directors in Buenos Aires. Chapter 3 describes these interviews while Chapter 5 presents program comparison results.

This classification system is also useful when program coordinators enter the debate as to which types of programs do a better job of attaining learning objectives. The next section analyzes the varying rationales for study abroad and learning objectives that study abroad programs purport to achieve.

1.6. Study Abroad Learning Objectives

Every year thousands of students around the world embark on a study abroad experience, they find themselves in new countries due to differing circumstances, motivations, goals, needs, and prior experience. Program designers must take into account the various rationales held by students and other stakeholders who support study abroad. For example, during the Cold

Was the US government clearly supported study abroad for political reasons, whereas students likely cared more about the educational and cultural benefits. In the 21st century the US government's and other governments' rationale for supporting study abroad is more economic; i.e. having citizens with knowledge of emerging economic powers in Asia makes economic sense. The growth of study abroad students coming from Business schools demonstrates that many students share the vision that participating in study abroad gives economic advantages (Rodman & Merrill, 2010). These distinct motivations and rationales for studying abroad lead to a focus on divergent learning objectives. Two basic assumptions about learning and studying abroad is that individuals can learn things in ways that they would not be able to if they stayed on their home campuses and that study abroad programs play a central role in facilitating this learning (Vande Berg, 2007). However, the means to effectively facilitate and define this learning is not clear or easy. Study abroad professionals and researchers in both sending and receiving countries are confronted with the challenge of achieving student learning while catering to diverse situations and high expectations.

Researchers assessing student learning abroad generally focus on three domains; language acquisition, intercultural sensitivity, and field specific knowledge (Vande Berg, Balkcum, Scheid, & Whalen 2004). First, the majority of research dedicated to study abroad learning outcomes and impact is related to language acquisition (Norris & Steinberg, 2008). Research consistently finds that students who study a foreign language abroad compared to those at home show better oral proficiency and fluency (Collentine & Freed, 2004; Lafford, 2004). However, certain elements of the study abroad experience also have an impact on this language improvement. Churchill (2006) writes that study abroad program arrangements shape language learning opportunities and in some cases actually restrict situations for language acquisition by grouping students with co-nationals. Researchers examining English language acquisition of Spanish speakers in Great Britain suggest that living arrangements and time spent with non-Spanish speakers played an important role in obtaining more

lexical richness (Serrano, Tragant, & Llanes, 2012). In Norway researchers found that learners who developed positive network connections with Norwegians showed more native-like pronunciation than those who hadn't established local relationships (Lybeck, 2002). Finally, research analyzing US Americans in Buenos Aires demonstrated that those who had more extended social networks with host nationals and spent more time speaking Spanish informally, out of class, acquired more language ability (Isabelli-García, 2006).

The second learning objective that researchers assess is acquisition of intercultural sensitivity. In the 1970s intensive weekend or semester long workshops designed to teach students intercultural communication principles through experiential learning with other international students became a staple for those preparing for a trip abroad or interested in intercultural learning (Bennet, 2010). The workshops were so prevalent that NAFSA convened a taskforce to evaluate the activity. Their analysis concluded that intercultural workshops not only facilitate effective intercultural communication and give students the resources to achieve their goals but also improve the functioning of persons working with foreign students (Bennet, 2010). Although the intercultural workshops did not become institutionalized on US Universities, they have helped researchers better understand intercultural learning in a study abroad context. Studies show that students who study abroad acquire more global-mindedness (Hadis, 2005), report a greater change in intercultural communication skills (Williams, 2005), and develop more intercultural sensitivity than their counterparts back home (Pedersen, 2009). However these gains depend heavily on how students are guided through the study abroad process (Pedersen, 2009/2010; Vande Berg, 2007). Many study abroad professionals question the notion that simply being abroad will result in the development of more intercultural knowledge. Bennet (2010) contends that through intercultural training “cultural self-awareness, greater appreciation of alternative cultural behavior and values, and increased empathy for people of different cultures is readily attainable” (p. 431). Thus, an important stated learning objective for study abroad programs and participants is intercultural

learning and the acquisition of intercultural sensitivity. There seems to be a consensus among professionals and researchers that students achieve these objectives with the help of guided training.

The third learning objective that researchers assess is if students acquire new knowledge for their specific field of study (Vande Berg et al., 2004). Historically, humanities and social sciences students have constituted the bulk of US students abroad due to obvious benefits such as language acquisition or international awareness (Stallman, Woodruff, Kasravi, & Comp, 2010). However, other disciplines can arguably reap the benefits of study abroad. For example, business students acquire a greater understanding of the global economy while science majors who build their knowledge in a foreign environment can stretch their abilities and gain new perspectives (DeWinter & Rumbley, 2010). Engineering educators stress the importance of acquiring global competency in order to work with people who define problems differently. By studying and working with those from other countries and by learning their patterns of engineering work students not only see distinct ways to approach problems but also different ways to judge their implications (Downey et al., 2006). Cushner and Mahon (2002) recommend that all Education departments make student teaching abroad readily available to students due to the potential for personal and professional development and the potential for students to acquire cross-cultural knowledge. Additionally, researchers found that elementary school teachers obtained personal growth directly related to teaching such as increased confidence, respect for differences of others and other cultures, and an awareness of the importance of feedback and reflection (Pence & Macgillivray, 2007). Accordingly, learning objectives and subsequent assessment differ depending on the field. For example, program administrators for international business schools express a strong interest in setting their learning objectives at the level of understanding and expertise, rather than simple cultural awareness (Lamb & Huq, 2005).

The previous discussion concerning learning objectives is important because they drive the debate as to the most effective study abroad program

design. Arguably the most heated and controversial question for US universities and their affiliate study abroad programs is how much they should intervene in student learning. One common proposal is that of balance, because if students have too much guidance and are not challenged no learning occurs. On the other hand, if students must confront every challenge alone and are unable to cope this will result in fear or rejection of the host culture and not result in learning (Rodman & Merrill, 2010). Finding this balance is a challenge due to diverse student profiles. Vande Berg (2007) discusses his concern and ultimate support for intervention:

It is, of course, true that there are US students who in fact learn a lot through direct enrollment programs. But let us think about who those successful students are. They are the ones who come to programs abroad with the requisite language proficiency, the ones who creatively seek out opportunities to engage with local culture, the ones who adapt well to the challenges of living and learning in another culture. They are the admirably self-sufficient learners who seem to perform well in any environment. I am not alone, however, in adding that I have seen fewer of these US students abroad than I have those others who show little curiosity about the new and different and a lack of interest in engaging culturally. Unreflective and unaware, these are the students who simply do not cope well when left to their own devices. Avoiding meaningful contact with locals, traveling through their experience in groups of other withdrawn and culturally marginalized US students, using English whenever possible, and complaining about the inferior teaching they receive. Too many US students fit the profile because they simply do not know how to go about learning in a new and different cultural environment (p. 394).

Thus, the best way to achieve student learning objectives is highly debated due to student profiles and other factors. The goal of the current

research is not to directly assess learning objectives; it does however hope to shed light on circumstances in which students are better able to achieve them. For example this research includes a self-report of perceived difficulty speaking and understanding the Spanish language when they arrive and before leaving. This research also assesses student's ethnocentrism levels, which is a construct in analyzing intercultural sensitivity. Chapter 6 examines and discusses these variables in greater detail.

Along with comparing diverse study abroad program designs and the specific contexts that shape the learning abroad experience, this research looks to advance intercultural communication theory. The intercultural communication and study abroad fields have expanded and grown together (Bennett, 2010). Intercultural communication theories and subsequent training procedures emerged in order to prepare individuals who were planning to live abroad (Pusch, 2004). At the same time research examining these experiences abroad is what fuels the theory base. International students are probably the most studied group in the intercultural relations literature (Ward, Bochner, & Furnham, 2001). The next section presents a brief history of the intercultural communication field and its relationship with the study abroad experience.

1.7. Intercultural Communication History

Over its long history the act of learning in another country has taken on many different terms and definitions including and not limited to international education, study abroad, educational travel, foreign study, and cross-cultural education. Regardless of the terminology used, a field examining study abroad design innovations and evolution undoubtedly emerged (Rodman & Merrill, 2010). Alongside the emergence of study abroad as an academic field, the intercultural communication field emerged as well. Intercultural communication literature began to mature in the 1950s, while today the findings and theorizing from the field play a central role in study abroad administration and program design (Rodman & Merrill, 2010). The relationship between communication and culture is so intertwined that many scholars maintain the position that

culture is communication and communication is culture (Gudykunst & Kim, 1997). The first to propose this relationship is said to be Edward T. Hall, an anthropologist considered by many to be the founder of the intercultural communication field (Anderson, 1999; Bennett, 2010; Rogers, Hart, & Miike, 2002).

1.7.1. Culture as Communication

Intercultural communication founder Edward T. Hall was an anthropologist, however his influences came from a variety of disciplines, including cultural anthropology, linguistics, ethology (the study of animal behavior), and Freudian psychoanalytic theory (Rogers et al., 2002). The field in general is influenced by other disciplines as well, including sociology, social psychology, communication, and cultural studies (Bennet, 2010; Rogers et al., 2002). This diversity has contributed differently to the path the field has taken and differs as to the way scholars conceive and teach theoretical concepts. Due to Hall's significant contribution to the field this brief review mainly describes his original treatment of intercultural communication.

Hall (1966) maintains that "communication constitutes the core of culture and indeed of life itself" (p. 1). He does not claim to be the first to hold this belief citing anthropologists Franz Boas, Leonard Bloomfield, and Edward Sapir, as well as chemist, engineer, and part-time linguist Benjamin Lee Whorf. Whorf theorized that language is not simply a medium for expressing thought and perception; it is a major element in the formation of thought. The language one speaks programs an individual's perception of the world and since two languages often program the same class of events quite differently, no belief or philosophical system should be considered apart from language (Hall, 1966). Hall (1966) takes this idea a step further by stating, "the principles laid down by Whorf and his fellow linguistics in relation to language apply to the rest of human behavior as well -- in fact, to all culture." (p. 2). Hall's anthropological background equipped him with the tools for studying and teaching cultural patterns.

In 1950 Hall began training US diplomats and foreign service workers for their appointments abroad at the US Foreign Service Institute (Rogers et al., 2002). This assignment surfaced due to the inability of US diplomats to understand and communicate with individuals in the countries in which they were stationed. Originally, he taught trainees about the concept of culture and macro level details of specific cultures. However, he soon realized that this method did little to help his trainees communicate effectively in other cultural environments. Consequently, Hall worked closely with linguist George Trager to develop a training program that combined linguistic and anthropological perspectives (Rogers et al., 2002). The program mainly focused on language training and nonverbal communication. From this work Hall produced *The Silent Language*, which is considered by many to be the founding document of the Intercultural Communication field (Rogers et al., 2002).

1.7.2. The Silent Language

In *The Silent Language* Hall (1959) uses his anthropological background to treat culture in its entirety as a form of communication. He outlines a theory of culture and of how culture came into being by describing 10 primary message systems (interaction, association, subsistence, bisexuality, territoriality, temporality, learning, play, defense, exploitation), which are the foci of culture and constitute the communication process. Only the first message system, interaction, involves language. He then describes how individuals experience these systems on three different levels (formal, informal, technical) and communicate them to their children. One main goal of the theory is to explain how individuals interpret the behaviors of others by reading different segments of the communication spectrum, a spectrum that includes but is not limited to language. In doing this, he helps readers better understand the hidden aspects of culture and how they affect communication in intercultural contexts.

In order to develop his argument for why culture should be treated as communication Hall (1959) describes the elements of verbal language and

linguistic differences. One obvious and technical medium through which people communicate is language and in many cases in order to communicate with those from different cultures one must learn a different language. Some languages are so different that they force speakers into two different images of time learning does proceed, while linguists are those dedicated to analyzing and better understanding the technical aspects of language. Hall (1959) suggested that most of scholarly knowledge concerning communication had been learned from the study of language. Yet, the problem is that mastering another cultures' language does not eliminate hidden barriers that keep individuals from different cultures from communicating and understanding one another effectively. In *The Silent Language* Hall (1959) presents other elements of culture that communicate as powerfully as language. He presents a theory for understanding the non-language elements of communication and sets a foundation and framework upon which other scholars can study and conduct research (Rogers et al., 2002).

Hall (1959) writes that when an individual begins learning a language they start with words made up of sounds, and put together in a certain set of rules or grammar identify the basic components of language. Likewise, Hall (1959) theorizes that all forms of communication, including language, can be understood by separating the message into three elements: sets, isolates, and patterns. Using language as an analogy, sets are the words, isolates are the sounds, and patterns are the syntax. In a cross-cultural situation sets are the first thing that a person will learn or observe about a particular society. There are however, formal, informal, and technical sets with some being more easily perceived than others. Isolates are the elements that make up a set, however, once one examines the set for the appearance of isolates, the difference distinguishing the two dissolve. Isolates exist not only because they provide a transition from sets to patterns but also serve as the principal means for differentiating between patterns. Hall (1959) fittingly terms them illusive isolates. Patterns are the implicit cultural rules by means of which sets are arranged so that they take on meaning. One way to better understand this

complex framework is by applying it to two important ways introduced by Hall (1959) in which people in different cultures communicate; time and space.

1.7.3. Time and Space

Hall (1959) theorizes that people in different cultures use time and communicate by it; time is something that children must learn and internalize. Confounding this learning are the different levels in which individuals experience time; formal time, informal time, and technical time. A good analogy is the year. In formal time, the year is 365 days, or 12 months, or also 52 weeks. Using informal time a person might exclaim, “it takes years to do something”. Technical time is quite exact and used in precise measurements by specialists such as astronomers. The formal system mentioned above that people take for granted was once a technical system known by a few specialists. Technical systems are important but generally not necessary to learn in order to understand other cultures. Hall (1959) then explains how individuals use and communicate time in sets, isolates, and patterns differently, according to the level.

In discussing formal time the day is a *set* while day, night, morning and afternoon are *isolates*. There are seven categories of days (Monday, Tuesday, etc.), some of which are valued differently. Hours and minutes are also sets. Hall (1959) explains how sets can begin as isolates and become sets. For example, the quarter hour is an isolate most easily understood by young children when they start learning time, before long they comprehend 5 minute periods, and finally minutes. The five minute period is a particularly important set in the United States in that it makes people aware if they are late or not and should apologize. Hall (1959) explains that time valuation and tangibility are also formal isolates. In the US there is an attitude that time is valued and should not be wasted. In the US time is tangible, it is a commodity that can be bought, sold, saved, spent, wasted, lost, and measured. Hall (1959) insists that individuals take formal sets and isolates for granted and consider it

inconceivable to organize life in any other way. When a person reads or listens to someone describe formal sets from their own culture it should seem obvious.

For informal time *sets* are most easily recognized with certain vocabulary such as a while, in a little bit, later, and a long time and anybody who has spent time in Mexico is familiar with the infamous word “ahorita”. Informal time is ambiguous due to its contextual nature. According to Hall (1959) in the US there are eight informal time sets in regard to punctuality and length of appointments, including; on time, five, ten, fifteen, twenty, thirty, forty-five minutes, and one hour, early or late. If someone schedules a one hour appointment with you they are communicating something quite different than if they schedule a fifteen minute appointment. In the US, one is expected to apologize if they arrive 5 minutes late while in other cultures 5 minutes late is on time. In the Arab world this informal set has three points, no time at all; now (or present); and forever (too long). Thus, Arabs make different temporal distinctions compared to US Americans. Informal *isolates* are related to such phenomenon as urgency which is related to the impression of time passing rapidly or slowly; monochronism is related to doing one or many things at a time; activity is related to whether or not an individual is active or dormant; and variety which distinguishes between short and long duration. According to Hall (1959) informal time *patterns* are one of the most overlooked aspects of culture because one has to stop using one in order to take up another, they are learned early in life, and they are seldom explicit. One informal time pattern in the US involves the fixing of schedules and it is a violation of patterns if one continually changes appointments or the agenda. Informal time patterns also differ depending on the situation and context, such as work and social occasions, daytime and nighttime activities, and the status of the individuals involved.

In *The Silent Language* Hall (1959) argues that time communicates and introduced a framework for analyzing time in different cultures, in doing so he laid the foundation for chronemics, which is arguably the most researched

nonverbal code in the intercultural literature (Anderson, 1999). Along with chronemics Hall (1959) also theorized as to how space communicates.

Hall (1959) argues there are thousands of experiences that teach us that space unconsciously communicates and when a person enters another culture they notice great differences in the way in which people handle space. These differences include but are not limited to patterns concerning use of personal space, patterns for waiting in lines, landmarks and vocabulary that people use for giving directions, street names, architectural differences, and office arrangements. These differences have great consequences for intercultural communication processes. Individuals from cultures with patterns that afford more personal space are often viewed as distant and unfriendly in cultures with less interaction distance. In 1966 Hall elaborates on the use of space in *The Hidden Dimension*, a book in which he coins the term proxemics, the examination of how humans use social and personal space to communicate. The book emphasizes the importance of space in the human experience and that in order to communicate in one culture one must understand and learn the formal and informal patterns of space.

Hall (1959) founded the intercultural communication field by introducing a framework for understanding culture in terms of communication. He presented a theory for classifying communication behavior across cultures which other scholars have built extensively upon. Two important contributions from *The Silent Language* are the introductions of time and space as communication mediums. In later theorizing he also introduced intercultural communication dimensions such as high context, indirect communication and low context, direct communication (Hall, 1976). Hall never intended to establish a new field; the premise for his research and writings was grounded in his belief that by gaining an understanding of how other cultures communicate individuals can adapt their communication in a foreign culture and be more competent communicators. It is important to note that Hall detracted from many anthropological principles in developing the intercultural communication field

(Rogers et al., 2002), and many anthropologists rejected Hall's work (Bennet, 2010).

Anthropologists at the time criticized Hall because of his radical stance that cultures could be compared in terms of etic categories (Bennet, 2010). This focus on comparison seems to be at odds with one of Hall's biggest influences, Franz Boas, who criticized the use of the comparative method in anthropology due to its tendency to rank cultures into a hierarchy (Bennet, 2010). Boas insisted that cultures could only be understood on their own terms (Bennet, 2010). In the end, the study of communication between individuals of two cultures came to be a sub-field of communication and not anthropology (Rogers et al., 2002). This sub-field uses different terminology to examine communication processes.

1.7.4. Intercultural Communication Terminology

A cross-cultural communication study takes a communication construct and compares how it is manifested differently across cultures, thus showing similarities and differences in group normative patterns (Bennet, 2010; Levine, Park, & Kim, 2007). For example, Hall and Hall (1990) examine how Germans, French, and US Americans use space and time differently. An intercultural communication study analyzes communication interactions between individuals from different cultures and emphasizes how group normative patterns influence those interactions (Bennet, 2010; Levine et al., 2007). Cross-cultural and Intercultural are often used interchangeably, especially in terms of education and study abroad. For example, findings from cross-cultural communication research are used to train international students to be more competent communicators in an intercultural context (Bennet, 2010). Hall believed that the best way to attain communication competence in a foreign setting was by doing, by participating in communication activities with those from other cultures (Rogers et al., 2002). The current research falls into the realm of intercultural communication as it examines the social networks and contact patterns of international students in a new cultural environment.

The goal of the current research is to add to the body of Intercultural communication literature that started with Edward Hall in the 1950s. The literature is broad, incorporates a variety of disciplines, fields, and theories, and constitutes various sub-categories. One of which is the area of cross-cultural adaptation. Edward Hall (1959) introduced the scientific world to the concept that when entering a new culture, one must learn and adapt to new communication processes. This research is dedicated to better understanding the adaptation process by identifying certain elements of the study abroad experience and study abroad programming which most impact international students' communication with individuals in the new cultural environment.

Chapter 2: Cross-Cultural Adaptation Theoretical Framework

This research uses three interrelated theories to explain how individuals entering a new cultural environment learn new communicative norms while undergoing an adaptation process. All three theories are concerned with the type of social contact that individuals have with others in the new cultural environment. First, Kim's (2001) cross cultural adaptation theory describes how an individual adapts to the host environment through communication activities with the local culture. Second, elements of social network theory explain how communication with certain individuals in the host environment gives an individual access to different kinds of resources that shape the adaptation process. Third, cultural contact theory describes how stereotypes, prejudices, and ethnocentric attitudes are reduced, or not, based on the different kinds of contact that one has with those from different cultural and national backgrounds (Allport, 1954). This research specifically applies these theories to international students going through the cross-cultural adaptation process in Buenos Aires.

The ensuing chapter is separated into four parts. The first section defines cross-cultural adaptation as a process and uses a functional friendship network model to explain how interpersonal communication with individuals in the host culture is at the center of the process. The second section gives a background into social networking theory, elaborating on two principle elements, social capital and strength of ties, to explain why differing social resources provide individuals with different kinds of social returns. This section discusses the acquisition and maintenance of social resources in both face-to-face (FtF) interactions and online through the use of innovative information and communication technology (ICT). The third section goes into detail on two variables discussed in Kim's (2001) cross-cultural adaptation theory that inherently influence the adaptation process, contact situations facilitated by the cultural environment and an individual's predisposition to adapt. The fourth section introduces contact theory, which explains how different contact situations presented by the cultural environment potentially influence ethnocentric attitudes and play a role in reducing prejudice. This chapter lays

the general theoretical framework for the current research and is followed by a chapter describing the research methodology. Each subsequent chapter (4, 5, 6, & 7) introduces variable specific research findings and poses related hypotheses and research questions.

2.1. Cross-Cultural Adaptation

2.1.1. Existing approaches

Adaptation is a phenomenon that has been studied and observed by scholars in anthropology, sociology, psychology, education, international relations, and communication. However, the literature surrounding the concept is far from cohesive with four discerning factors. First, researchers distinguish between macro, or group level versus micro, or individual level adaptation. For example, anthropologists have studied how minority groups blend together with majority groups, while social psychologists have examined the individual interpersonal experiences of newcomers in a new environment (Kim, 2001). Second, at the micro-level analysis, studies have differentiated between the long-term adaptation of immigrants and refugees and the short-term adaptation of temporary sojourners like international students (Kim, 2001). Third, in both long-term and short-term adaptation studies researchers tend to treat adaptation as either an undesirable, problematic experience or as an experience that facilitates learning and growth (Kim, 2001). Fourth, traditionally studies have focused on the assumption that cross-cultural adaptation is a natural phenomenon and that successful adaptation is desirable while others use pluralistic models, placing emphasis on the significance of an individual's acceptance or rejection of the host culture. In other words, the traditional approach views adaptation as a matter of necessity while the pluralistic models assume that adaptation is a choice (Kim, 2001).

Due to these factors, there is a lack of consensus concerning the appropriate measures used to assess adaptation. Kim's (2001) theory of cross-cultural adaptation, and the theoretical perspective that the current research

takes, treats the adaptation phenomenon, not as an independent or dependent variable that can be directly measured, but as a dynamic, evolutionary process. Kim's (2001) theory brings together the existing concepts and controversies to clarify their relationships. The current research applies this theory to help better understand and predict the experiences of international students in Buenos Aires.

2.1.2. Adaptation as a Process

Kim (2001) defines cross-cultural adaptation as “the dynamic process by which individuals, upon relocating to new, unfamiliar, or changed cultural environments, establish (or reestablish) and maintain relatively stable, reciprocal, and functional relationships with those environments” (Kim, 2001 p. 31). Her theory describes adaptation as a process that one begins when they enter a new culture and throughout this process an individual experiences a period of stress, transforms accordingly, and a period of growth follows. These fluctuations of stress and growth should eventually get smaller over time as the individual learns how to communicate more effectively in the new environment. Due to the nature of adaptation, Kim (2001) stresses the need for a longitudinal analysis that measures key variables such as one's relational networks. Thus, the current study uses a methodological research design that captures the relational networks of international students at two points during their study abroad experience, at the beginning and end of the semester.

Kim's (2001) cross-cultural adaptation theory positions communication between the individual and the environment, at the heart of the process. Communication is one's participation in the interpersonal and mass communication activities of the host environment. Interpersonal communication activities are those everyday, face-to-face interactions that individuals have with others that offer personalized involvement with members of the host culture, while mass communication activities such as radio, television, magazines, newspapers, and advertising allow individuals to participate in the host culture from a macro perspective (Kim, 2001).

International students are inherently exposed to the new communication patterns, albeit at a superficial level, by simply being in the host culture. They are exposed to communication processes through interactions with local institutions such as universities, shopping centers, restaurants, libraries, public transportation, museums, theatres, bars, clubs, sporting events, restaurants, and libraries, as well as by observing local fashion and trends. In these contexts they have casual interactions with local professors, students, landlords, cashiers, taxi drivers, bus drivers, store clerks, servers, and ticket venders among dozens of other examples. This exposure to the new culture coupled with causal interpersonal interactions provide reference points for which students can compare and then adjust their own communication patterns and build communication competence (Kim, 2001). However, this casual exposure and superficial interaction only scratches the surface of the communication patterns exhibited in another culture. International students largely rely on their newly formed interpersonal (intimate and acquaintance) friendship networks to better interpret their observations of exhibited communication behaviors.

Given the centrality of interpersonal communication in the adaptation process, the present study specifically analyzes international students' friendship networks in the new cultural environment along with their online social networks and communication patterns. The next section discusses the functional model, a theory that describes how the national background of an individual's friends serves different psychological functions and influences the adaptation process.

2.1.3. Functional Model

International students are likely the most studied group in the cultural contact literature (Ward et al., 2001) as they are generally easy for intercultural relations researchers to access (Bochner et al., 1977). One specific area of interest is the unique friendship network that they form while studying abroad. In 1977 Bochner et al. proposed a functional model for understanding the friendship patterns of international students and the specific function that each

group serves. The first group is composed of co-nationals, or individuals from one's own country. The main function of this network is to provide a setting in which ethnic and cultural values can be rehearsed and expressed. The second group is composed of host-nationals, or individuals native to the country where the individual is studying. The main function of this network is to facilitate the academic and professional aspirations of the international student. The third group is composed of multi-nationals, or individuals from other countries who are also studying abroad. The main function of this network is to provide companionship for recreational activities (Bochner et al., 1977).

The current study looks to build on the functional model using a methodology that employs a friendship network grid in which students list all of their friendships and the nationality of those friends. This design gives a more comprehensive picture and illustrates not only how international student friendship groups in Buenos Aires emerge but also how they evolve over time. One common research finding is the prevalence and pervasiveness of co-nationals in an individual's friendship network.

Co-national friendships can serve as vital intimate bonds for international students and operate to enhance cultural learning (Bochner et al., 1977). Students discuss the new culture and exchange experiences with other students who are experiencing the same emotions (Woolf, 2007). These bonds also provide a feeling of cultural identity, offer emotional support (Maundeni, 2001), and give students the opportunity to relieve stress caused by culture shock (Kim, 2001). Often time immigrants and sojourners begin seeking these co-national contacts even before arriving in the new culture (Kim, 2001). Kim (2001) theorizes that co-national friendships may enhance the adaptation process in the short term if those contacts have already advanced in their own adaptation. However, in the long-term, communication with co-nationals tends to impede adaptation as friendship formation with co-nationals likely reduces the opportunities for international students to form friendship with host nationals (Church, 1982). Additionally, friendship with co-nationals limits student's ability to acquire linguistic and cultural knowledge (Brown, 2009b).

Kim (2001) theorizes that extensive and prolonged participation in co-national communication activities hinders intercultural transformation and individuals who have acquired more communication competence in the host culture engage in less communication activities with co-nationals. Likewise, individuals who engage in more host national communication activities acquire more communication competence and experience more intercultural transformation. This theory is well supported.

The positive role, both psychologically and socially, that friendship with host nationals plays in the adaptation process is well established in the intercultural relations literature. These positive effects include more life satisfaction (Rohrlich & Martin, 1991), more feelings of social connectedness, less homesickness (Hendrickson et al., 2011), less loneliness (Sawir, Marginson, Deumert, Nyland, & Ramia, 2008), fewer social difficulties, improved communication competence (Ward & Kennedy, 1993), and more positive feelings about the host culture (Pruitt, 1978). Kim's (2001) theory stresses the importance of having multiple interpersonal communication activities with individuals from the host country. Local contacts offer international students cultural information and resources they could not obtain from individuals from their own country or other international students. By forming friendships with those from the host country international students are able to gain insight into the minds and behaviors of local people and they begin to understand why people behave, communicate, and interact the way they do, thus previously unexplained behavior is put into context and can be interpreted more readily (Kim, 2001). Through interpersonal contact with host nationals international students learn the standards and underlying assumptions for both verbal and nonverbal communication, not to mention the host language. They not only learn what they are supposed to do in given situations but how to go about doing it. They learn what cultural values the new society stresses and what is socially approved or disapproved. Whether they realize it or not they rely on their social contacts to better interpret the various attributes and actions of others (Kim, 2001). Thus, increased interpersonal communication activities

with host nationals are an indicator that an individual is adapting to the new culture. Kim's (2001) theory explicates how host national and co-national friendships influence the adaptation process. The third group identified in the functional model is multi-national friendships.

Although most studies show that international students tend to have friendship networks mostly composed of co-nationals (Bochner et al. 1977; Brown, 2009b; Furnham & Alibhai, 1985; Maundeni, 2001; Neri & Ville, 2008; Pruitt, 1978; Sudweeks, Gudykunst, Ting-Toomey, & Nishida, 1990; Trice & Elliot, 1993; Ying, 2002), some exceptions to this trend exist; at least one study found that the majority of friendships were with host nationals (Hendrickson et al., 2011) and/or multi-nationals (Bochner, Hutnik, & Furnham 1985).

According to the functional model, multi-national friends serve as companions for non-task oriented, recreational activities (Bochner et al, 1977). When international students arrive in a new place they begin to build their social networks, they often do this by making friends with other international students, others who may feel lost and looking for new friends. Furthermore, unlike with co-nationals, multi-national friends present the possibility for language acquisition to occur. This is especially the case for Europeans or US Americans who build friendships with non-Argentine Latin Americans and/or Spaniards in Buenos Aires.

The functional model is useful for explaining the role of host national, co-national, and multi-national friendship networks in the cross-cultural adaptation process. However, friendship origin is just one of two important considerations when examining the interpersonal communication activities of international students (Kim, 2001). This research examines the second important consideration, which is the strength of each friendship that students form. In order to explain why these two communication activities are central to the adaptation process, this research applies various principles of social networking theory. Elements of social networking theory explain how interpersonal social contacts impact the adaptation process.

2.2. Social Network Theory

Social networking theory illustrates an approach to analyzing social phenomenon whereby the relationships between individuals, groups, and/or organizations are the primary focus of study (Monge & Contractor, 2003). This approach diverges from other areas of the social sciences that tend to study the attributes, or the characteristics of the people, groups, and organizations. The analysis of relationships between actors has resulted in the defining of numerous relational properties (indirect links, frequency, stability, multiplexity, strength, direction, symmetry, degree, in-degree, range, closeness, centrality, prestige), roles (star, liaison, bridge, gatekeeper, isolate), and measures (size, inclusiveness, component, connectivity, connectedness, density, centralization, symmetry, transitivity) used to describe networks. This examination of networks and relationships between actors is imperative because it defines the nature of the communication between people, groups, and organizations (Monge & Contractor, 2003). The current research does not purport to conduct network analysis, however several central concepts from the literature such as social capital, relationship strength, and social resource acquisition through ICT play a key theoretical role, along with the assumption that the new relationships that international students develop in Buenos Aires are at center of the adaptation process.

2.2.1. Social Capital

One way to help explain why intercultural friendship and contact is so integral to the adaptation process is by applying the concept, or theory, of social capital. Loosely put, social capital is a metaphor that describes society as a market in which people exchange goods and ideas (Burt 2000). It is a diverse concept with an extensive history that has intrigued scholars in a variety of disciplines (Lin, 2005). One commonality that all scholars share is that social capital is a network-based concept (Lin, 2005). However, branching out from that premise the concept has the tendency to be rather vague in terms of how it is conceptualized, measured, and applied. Lin (2001) defines social capital as,

“resources embedded in one’s social networks, resources that can be accessed or mobilized through ties in the networks” (p.2). This definition is rather close to the original conceptual understanding of social capital defined by Bourdieu, Coleman, and others (Lin, 2005). Lin (2005) stresses that social networks and social capital are not the same thing and must be differentiated. An individual’s total social network is not equivalent to their total social capital. Social networks are inherent antecedents to social capital, and distinct variations in one’s network and features of that network are what contribute to those embedded resources contributing to social capital (Lin, 2005). The basic definition put forth by Lin (2005) allows for a discussion of both the potential sources and returns of social capital. One of the most pervasive methods for analyzing the sources of social capital is by measuring the strength of ties between actors in a given network.

2.2.2. Strength of Ties

Wellman (1998) conceptualizes a strong tie as one where there is a sense that the relationship is intimate and special, the investment in the relationship is voluntary, there is an interest in being together as much as possible through interactions in multiple social contexts over a long period, and there is a sense of mutuality in the relationship, with each partner's needs known and supported. Typical strong ties are family members and best friends. Krackhardt (1992) insists that researchers must identify and comprehend the significant role of strong ties in order to understand social phenomenon and any changes in network structure. Granovetter (1973) presents weak ties as relationships that are important in moving one forward in social settings and give individuals the ability to be recruited into other groups.

Lin (2005) recognizes that tie strength is an important network concept, although argues that not all ties are essential social capital elements. For example, an international student could have a strong tie with an individual in the new cultural environment, but if that strong tie does not provide any resources, or return, than they don’t necessarily contribute to social capital.

Likewise, a person could have various weak ties that bridge them to other groups, however if these other groups are themselves disconnected than they also will not contribute to social capital. This distinction is important when considering the friendship networks of international students.

A host national friend will inherently provide authentic information of how people communicate between one another in the local culture. An international student will be able to use this new information in future communication activities, a resource giving them the ability to communicate more competently. In this case the source of social capital would be a local connection while the return would be more competent communication. This relationship is illustrated in one study showing that students with more host national contacts displayed improved communication competence (Ward & Kennedy, 1993). For international students the strength of the relationship with others, strong or weak, and whom that relationship is with, is what dictates the kind of return.

Strong ties with host nationals play a significant role in an individual's changing identity. One barrier to adaptation is that others constantly reinforce one's "stranger" status in the host environment. However, those host nationals who develop stronger ties with an international student will tend to stop viewing them as a stranger or the outsider (Kim, 2001). When an individual develops an intimate relationship and starts spending weekends, birthdays, outings, and family events with someone they get past the typical outsider questions like "where are you from" "what's it like where you're from" "do they do this where you're from" to more intimate discussions about life and relationships. This ability to function in the host environment, or the return from strong tie host nationals, illustrates social capital (Kim, 2001). Weak ties with host nationals are also a potential source that offer different kinds of returns and contribute differently to social capital.

Weak ties function as a source of information to the host culture's communication patterns and serve as bridges to different groups. The original theory of weak ties developed by Granovetter (1973) posits that acquaintances,

or weak ties, are less likely to be socially involved with one another thus offering links to new groups whereas close friends, or strong ties, are more likely to be involved with one another thus offering fewer links to new groups. His theory illustrates the positive outcomes that weak ties offer individuals in finding new jobs and advancing professionally (Serkan & Şebnem, 2010). Various authors have applied the strength of weak ties theory to other social phenomenon, for example one study found that people with weak ties across groups have higher levels of community involvement, civic interest, and collective efficacy than people without bridging ties (Kavanaugh, Reese, Carroll, & Rosson, 2005). Another study found that the absence of weak tie interracial contacts inhibited relationships between racial groups at a US community college (Price, Hyle, & Jordan, 2009). The theory of weak ties has also been applied in research involving foreigners adapting to new cultural environments.

In Estonia, weak ties played a major role in Finnish immigrant women's integration into the host society (Hyvonen, 2008). Additionally, a study conducted with international students in Hawai'i found that those with a variety of social contacts, i.e. weak and strong ties with host nationals reported feeling more satisfied, content, and feeling more socially connected. Individuals accumulate different kinds of returns or social capital depending on the strength of the relationships they form with host nationals. This is not to say that individuals are not able to accumulate social capital through strong and weak ties with co-national and multi-national friendships, host national friendships simply provide more information regarding the communication patterns of the local culture, which is central to the adaptation process.

The current research design assesses international student friendship origin and strength by having participants list all their friends and indicate on a scale of 1-10 the strength of each friendship. This information is collected shortly after they begin classes and shortly before the semester ends, thus demonstrating how friendship networks develop, grow, and evolve in the new cultural environment. Chapter 4 provides specific hypotheses, analysis of the

results, and implications for cross-cultural adaptation theorizing.

This section explained how strong and weak ties with host nationals are potential sources of social capital. These concepts have been extensively analyzed in the communication network literature, however with the advancement of information and communication technology (ICT), there is a growing trend to also examine how social capital is accumulated using online resources and to examine how internet use affects the cross-cultural adaptation process.

2.3. Information and Communication Technology (ICT)

One element that Kim's (2001) cross-cultural adaptation theory does not explicitly address is the way in which individuals use information and communication technology (ICT) to participate in both the interpersonal and mass communication activities of the host culture as well as with their home culture. ICT has not only changed the way people migrate and subsequently maintain long distance communication with their families and friends (Cemalcilar, Falbo, & Stapleton, 2005; Yusoff, 2012), but also their ability to manage social resources in their new home. When individuals arrive in a new cultural environment they must build new friendship networks, a process described by scholars as social capital renewal (Neri & Ville, 2008). One means to do this and to garner social support is through the use of online social networking sites (SNS) (Ye, 2006). Much research examining the acquisition of social capital through the use ICT does exist. This research base makes it possible to theorize and pose questions as to the role that ICT play in the complex cross-cultural adaptation process.

Ellison, Steinfeld, and Lampe (2007) state that a positive relationship exists between certain kinds of Facebook use and the maintenance and creation of social capital. Findings show that SNS such as Facebook can increase an individual's social capital as they facilitate the maintenance of close friendships and distant relationships (Ellison, Steinfeld, & Lampe, 2008). Other researchers found that Facebook use was related to life satisfaction, social trust, and civic

participation and also predicted social capital (Valenzuela, Park, & Kee, 2009). Eastin and LaRose (2005) found perceived social support to be increased through online social network size and they suggest that support is available online for individuals who actively seek it. For example, although not directly related to social support, in organizations employees seeking technical help can access weak ties electronically (Constant, Sproull, & Kiesler, 1996). Computer networks increase the size and variety of interpersonal ties and are especially useful for maintaining weak ties between face-to-face encounters (Tindall & Wellman, 2001). Zhao (2006) found that social Internet use such as chat and email was positively related to connectivity and increased social ties. Thus, research findings would seem to imply that through ICT international students can maintain distant relationships and/or build new social support networks. However, the influence that ICT usage has on social capital gains in and adaptation to a new cultural environment is still unclear.

One unpublished study examining this question showed that international students who used SNS and Instant Messenger felt more socially connected. Also, those students who reported using a SNS, compared to those who did not, had significantly more host national, multi-national, and overall friends in the new cultural environment (Hendrickson, 2011). Moreover, SNS users with more SNS friends reported having more host national friends and more overall friends in the host culture. These unpublished findings suggest that social Internet use does not necessarily inhibit an individual's ability to make more host national friends. Indeed, Cemalcilar et al. (2005) argue that if ICT is used only as a socialization supplement it should not hinder the adaptation process. It could also be that an individual's social behavior online is reflective of their offline social behavior.

The goal of the current research is to extend cross-cultural adaptation theory by examining how ICT use influences participation in host social communication activities. The current research design asks students to provide information regarding their social networking site and video chat use. This information can potentially demonstrate the intertwining relationship between

online and offline friendship networks and how they simultaneously transform over time. It will also shed light on the relationship between online communication activities with existing relationships and the friendship formation process. Chapter 7.1 presents literature related to social capital gains and SNS ties and poses six research questions regarding ICT use and friendship networks.

Kim's (2001) cross cultural adaptation theory emphasizes the importance of both strong and weak tie interpersonal relationships with host national individuals. The previous section argued that the way in which international students form and maintain these relationships has changed due to the development of innovative ICT. The next section presents several factors which influence an international student's ability to participate in host social communication activities and develop friendship networks. Kim's (2001) cross-cultural adaptation theory proposes that several cultural environmental factors and each international student's predisposition to adapt will significantly impact the amount of contact that they will have with host nationals and the subsequent communication competence they will acquire. The following section elaborates on cultural environment, specifically focusing on the different micro environmental conditions that study abroad programs facilitate. This is followed by a section which discusses individual predisposition.

2.4. Influential Cross-Cultural Adaptation Variables

2.4.1. Cultural Environment

Kim (2001) identifies three significant environmental conditions that influence the cross-cultural adaptation process. These three factors can be easily framed in the context of international students in Buenos Aires. The pressure to conform exerted by Argentinean society on international students, the strength of each student's own ethnic group within the new environment, and the receptivity of Argentinean society and universities toward international students (Kim, 2001). These factors are important and overlapping.

The first cultural environmental factor is host conformity pressure. In cultures that are more pluralistic and have a less evident dominant culture, international students will feel less pressure to conform and be more likely to retain their cultural behavior patterns (Miller, Reynolds, & Cambra, 1987). Benencia (1999) writes about this phenomenon in Argentina with Bolivians. In the northwest of Argentina, closer to the Bolivian border, where the population is composed of people with a transnational identity the cultural habits of both groups can be seen on a daily basis. However, in Buenos Aires where the interaction between locals and Bolivians is more recent and the cultural difference is more distant, the Bolivians tend to conserve their cultural traditions (food, clothes, religious and ritual celebrations) for specific times and places (Benencia, 1999). Societies with more normative expectations to conform are likely to express their discomfort and disapproval in a variety of negative ways (Kim, 2001). However, this environmental factor may not be as salient for international students as for immigrants who tend to be more dependent on natives and host institutions (Kim, 2001).

The second environmental factor identified by Kim (2001) is ethnic group strength, which is the relative status and power that membership in an ethnic group accords. One element that is used to assess ethnic group strength is ethnic prestige, which is the perceived socioeconomic status of an ethnic group. The relative perception that the host country has about specific ethnic groups is translated into more favorable conditions for communication with local people. Kim (2001) cites various social psychological studies demonstrating that equal-status contact promotes positive attitudes and behaviors. In Argentina, international students coming from Europe, the United States, and Latin America may be perceived to have different socioeconomic backgrounds which could have an effect on their adaptation. For example, the Argentine media has created a negative image of immigrants, especially those coming from Perú, Paraguay, and Bolivia (Casaravilla, 2000). Another element of ethnic group strength that Kim discusses is institutional completeness. This element is related to the extent that a group has organized and established its own

economic, political, social, and cultural systems. Kim suggests that the more a group has established its own institutions, the less individuals will rely on host culture institutions. This results in ethnic group strength impeding adaptation. Finally, Kim presents identity politics as a factor that plays a role in ethnic group strength. Group members pressure other members to stick to the group and criticize those who separate.

The third environmental condition is host receptivity. In this case, host receptivity would be Argentinean society's openness toward foreigners and willingness to accommodate them with opportunities to participate in local social processes (Kim, 2001). Receptivity is a combination of government policies and programs developed to provide for foreigners, mass media portrayal of foreigners, and the face-to-face communication behaviors of locals and foreigners.

Kim (2001) argues that these environmental conditions, host receptivity, host conformity pressure, and ethnic group strength influence an individual's ability to participate in the host communication processes. Kim discusses these environmental conditions from a macro-societal level as well as from a micro-local level. Furthermore, she emphasizes the analysis of an individual's immediate social surrounding in order to better understand interpersonal communication patterns. Thus, the current research places the academic program in which each international student is enrolled and the contact situations that they facilitate under Kim's cultural environmental condition framework. Chapter 1 presented a history of study abroad programming and study abroad organizational models. These program models generally dictate an international student's housing situation, classroom makeup, and other social activities, which influence the quality and quantity of interpersonal communication with host nationals. The next section briefly describes the different contact situations that international students experience and research findings related to the cross-cultural adaptation process.

2.4.2. Study Abroad Program Characteristics

In general, programs provide international students with housing options, classes, extra-curricular activities, and academic support and they vary as to the amount of contact that students have with locals in these domains. Some programs, frequently termed “island” programs provide students who have little experience traveling the opportunity to study abroad without going too far out of their bubble (Pedersen, 2009). In general students who choose island programs live and study with students from their home university in a foreign country. Some criticize island programs because students have very little opportunity to integrate and interact with locals. In other programs, termed “direct enrollment” programs, international students take classes in the foreign university with local students and professors.

Vande Berg (2004) says that direct enrollment programs are good for those small numbers of students who adapt well to the challenges of living and learning in a new culture. However, he sustains that direct enrollment programs fail to provide students with out-of-class support (Van Berg, 2004). Woolf (2007) argues that students need to be guided toward examining the experience through analysis and retrospection. Indeed, one study found that students reported greater accuracy in their perception of their own intercultural competence and less disengagement and confusion regarding their own cultural identity when they were guided through their intercultural experience (Pedersen, 2009). See Chapter 1.5. for a more detailed description of program classification and related debate. The effort that programs make to integrate students with locals may be one of the biggest factors for successful adaptation. Living arrangements or housing is one of several domains in which students vary as to their integration into the host culture.

Housing is arguably one of the most important micro environmental conditions influencing adaptation and is one that many intercultural relations researchers and study abroad professionals have analyzed. Indeed, researchers who pioneered studies on international students and friendship networks did so in university housing facilities (Bochner et al., 1977; Bochner et al., 1985;

Furnham & Alibhai, 1985). Along with living in student residencies, students studying abroad also live with host families. Host families play a major role and can make or break a student's experience living in another country, however it is one of the least studied components of study abroad (Schmidt-Rinehart & Knight, 2004). Shared housing presents a situation where international students have contact with the host culture (Savicki, 2010). It is likely that individuals develop both strong and weak tie relationships not only with those who they share living arrangements with but also with their friends and family (Whitworth, 2006). In order to examine the role that living conditions play in friendship development and the adaptation process this research asks participants to report where and who they live with and to describe these relationships.

The classroom is another venue that offers an opportunity for friendship development with host nationals through proximity and contact (Kudo & Simkin, 2003). Although these opportunities are fewer and encompass a shorter time frame than dormitory living (Kudo & Simkin, 2003), the classroom offers a forum for educators to evoke cultural curiosity in their students and to strengthen each other's cultural knowledge (Stier, 2006). This research examines how classroom makeup influences student's host interpersonal communication activities.

International students abroad tend to be quite socially active (Toyokawa & Toyokawa, 2002). Participation in extra-curricular activities gives students the opportunity to develop relationships with host nationals and has even been found to increase life satisfaction of students abroad (Toyokawa & Toyokawa, 2002). Furthermore participating in social activities gives students the opportunity to share cultural aspects from their own countries with local Argentines (Bonafina de Gulias & Falcon, 2007). This demonstrates the importance that international students place on intercultural exchange and their desire to become more integrated into Argentine culture. In response to this desire and acknowledgement of the key role that local friendships play, study abroad administrators have implemented tutoring and mentoring programs

designed to help students adapt (Lassegard, 2008).

Institutionalized peer tutoring is currently an accepted part of the North American college and university education and nearly every Japanese national university has a somewhat similar form of peer tutor program (Lassegard, 2008). Higher education institutions around the world have implemented peer tutoring programs at the university or departmental level. Many programs in Buenos Aires have incorporated some version of peer tutoring or buddy programs. The goal of these programs is to facilitate contact between international students and host nationals and to help make the transition process more positive (Campbell, 2012). Participation in organized group activities and peer tutor programs are ways for international students to build social capital.

Lin (2005) explains how individuals gain social capital at the macro-level through association with groups; this social capital comes from resources directly available from other members of the association or connections to other associations through the first association's members. Social capital mobilized at the macro-level often includes the affiliation with community organizations, clubs, sports teams (Forni, Siles, & Barreiro, 2004), and participation in service learning programs (Howard, 2006). In a study conducted in Australia many international students reported that they built their social networks through memberships in clubs and a majority of those reported to mainly interact with people from different countries of origin during club activities (Neri & Ville, 2008). Like individuals, each organization varies in terms of the types of connections and network resources they afford their members (Lin, 2005). Affiliation with groups that include host national individuals offers weak tie connections that give students information about host national communication patterns, potentially gives the individual access to other groups, and can also lead to stronger ties with host nationals. The current research asks students questions regarding their extra-curricular activities both organized by the program and independently. Students describe the extra-curricular activities in which they participate and with whom. Those who take part in tutor programs report on their satisfaction and expectations regarding their particular tutor

programs.

The environmental conditions that international students encounter play a critical role in how they make, or do not make, host national contacts. These environmental conditions are largely dependent on the study program that facilitates their educational experience. These programs differ considerably in the amount of support they offer students and expose students to varying environmental conditions such as university setting, housing, classroom makeup, and extra-curricular activities. The first phase of the current research involves interviews with study abroad program directors in order to discern the type of support as well as the micro environmental conditions that different programs in Buenos Aires present. This information is then used to classify and compare similarities and differences between programs. Along with these micro environmental factors, Kim's (2001) theory describes how each individual's predisposition to adapt plays a critical role in friendship formation and the adaptation process.

2.4.3. Predisposition

Kim's (2001) theory discusses aspects of individual characteristics that have a significant impact on the cross-cultural adaptation process and are imperative for the examination of international students in Buenos Aires. Berry (2005) iterates that while general acculturation is taking place at the group level, i.e. all the international students in Buenos Aires, individuals have variable degrees of participation in this process, and look to achieve different goals from the contact situation.

The first predisposition factor is an individual's preparation before migrating, such as education, knowledge of Argentinean culture, and challenges that they potentially face, and any specialized training that they have undergone. One longitudinal study conducted with Taiwanese international students found that pre-arrival knowledge of the United States predicted future friendship formation with US Americans (Tanaka, Takai, Kohyama, Fujihara, & Minami, 1997). Another study found that students who better understood US

culture had more relationships with US Americans due to their enhanced confidence and ability to interact competently with them (Ying, 2002). One common predictor of international student's adjustment to the United States is English language proficiency (Zhang & Goodson, 2011). Language training and other sources of pre-departure knowledge isn't always available, thus this is one area where individuals crossing cultures on a long-term basis such as immigrants and refugees differ from short-term visitors such as international students. For example refugees often abruptly flee their homes due to natural disasters, political oppression, and/or economic need (Kim, 2001). Individuals who have crossed cultures to study, progress professionally, or enhance their prestige likely have more time to prepare. However, research examining international student adaptation consistently cites a language burden (Brown, 2008; Dao, Lee, & Chang, 2007; Yeh & Inose, 2003; Sawir, Marginson, Forbes-Mewett, Nylund, & Ramia, 2012; Zhang & Mi, 2010) despite the opportunities that students may have had to prepare themselves linguistically. Consequently, this investigation includes perceived language difficulty in the research design in order to examine its impact on friendship network formation and transformation.

The second predisposition factor is an international student's ethnic proximity (physical characteristics, food, dress, cultural traditions, language) and compatibility (values, goals, attitudes) associated with their country of origin and Argentines. European, US American, and other Latin American international students have varying degrees of ethnic proximity to Argentina, specifically language. Findings from a study conducted in the United States revealed that region of origin significantly predicted international students' acculturative stress. Europeans were less likely to experience acculturative stress than were non-European participants (Yeh & Inose, 2003). Ethnicity and cultural origin is inherently related to language. Language proficiency likely poses little problems for international students in Buenos Aires from Spanish speaking countries, whereas students who are not native speakers may encounter language barriers. In the current research design students provide

their country of origin along with self-reported perceived difficulty speaking Spanish and understanding spoken Spanish. Thus, language ability is an important factor related to both preparedness for change and ethnic proximity.

The third factor is the adaptive personality of each individual international student. Are they open-minded, have a strong ego, and/or have an optimistic outlook. A person who examines the environment more openly is more accessible to local people and ideas (Kim, 2001). Those who have more closed personalities tend to distort their understanding of the host culture, often times criticizing and complaining about the local culture. Kim's (2001) theory includes ethnocentrism as an indicator of openness, while arguing that there are direct and indirect links between openness and cross-cultural adaptation. Ethnocentric attitudes that international students harbor may potentially influence their ability to adapt successfully and communicate within the host culture. Due to the extensive amount of literature examining ethnocentrism and for its pervasiveness among human societies, the current study will directly examine the relationship between ethnocentrism and cross-cultural adaptation.

The current research uses an ethnocentrism scale (Neulip & McCroskey, 1997) to test individual ethnocentrism when students arrive and before they leave. This methodology not only reveals the adaptive personality predisposition factor upon arrival but also shows how these attitudes change, or not, over time. This methodological design examines the relationship between one's complete social network and ethnocentric attitudes, which is a direct test of Kim's (2001) theory regarding adaptive personality.

One's individual predisposition for adaptation along with characteristics of the new cultural environment establish conditions in which international students from varying countries will participate in the social communication processes of the new culture and influence the social networks that they form. Kim's (2001) cross cultural adaptation theory describes the centrality that communication with the host culture plays in the adaptation process and highlights important variables such as individual predisposition and cultural environment conditions. The next section presents cultural contact theory,

which describes how contact that brings authentic knowledge about and acquaintance with those who are from different groups can reduce prejudice, ethnocentric attitudes, and reliance on stereotypes while fostering intercultural understanding.

2.5. Cultural Contact Theory

2.5.1. Original Theory

In his highly influential book, *The Nature of Prejudice*, Gordon Allport (1954) describes how different kinds of contact between members of minority and majority groups impacts relationships, attitudes, and perceptions. Although the majority of his research findings come from studies analyzing interracial contact in the United States, scholars have used contact theory to explain the intergroup contact phenomenon with a wide variety of groups and settings (Pettigrew & Tropp, 2008).

The contact literature principally focuses on school and housing situations but ranges from Chinese students in the United States, interracial workers in South Africa, German and Turkish school children, Australians and Americans getting to know Southeast Asian immigrants, attitudes toward the elderly, homosexuals, the mentally ill, disabled persons, victims of AIDS, and even computer programmers (Pettigrew, 1998). Pettigrew and Tropp (2008) conducted a meta-analysis of the intergroup contact literature and estimate that more than 750 published and unpublished studies exist.

The basic premise of contact theory is that contact which brings knowledge about and acquaintance with out-groups is likely to create more accurate beliefs concerning said group and play a role in reducing prejudice (Allport, 1954). The more knowledge one has about another person, the less social distance they will perceive. Cultural contact is a way for individuals to form beliefs that are based on information other than stereotypes. A true increase in knowledge about others, facilitated by sustained acquaintances will lead to a more accurate set of beliefs about others (Allport, 1954). Allport

(1954) wrote that in order to predict the effect of contact upon attitudes it would be ideal to separately study the consequences of several variables; quantitative aspects of contact, status aspects of contact, role aspects of contact, social atmosphere surrounding the contact, personality of the individual experiencing the contact, and areas of contact. This long list, albeit not exhaustive, illustrates the complexity of the contact phenomenon. Researchers have, however, unearthed several patterns that help explain the effect of intergroup contact on attitudes.

Allport (1954) discusses different areas of contact including casual contact, acquaintance contact, residential contact, occupational contact, and goodwill contact. Casual contact often occurs between people of different groups, especially in big cities where people with diverse ethnicities, nationality, and religions encounter each other in the street, on the bus, train, or subway, and during business transactions. Allport (1954) writes that such contact “does not dispel prejudice because it permits individual thinking about out-groups to remain on an autistic level” (p. 264), and in fact it seems more likely to increase prejudice. Allport (1954) cites several examples with Jews and African Americans in New York City in which casual contact did not facilitate increased intercultural understanding. More recent research has also revealed intercultural contact to have adverse affects. Neulip and McCroskey (1997) found that individuals who reported having more interactions with others from different cultures and countries actually had higher levels of ethnocentrism. Other researchers found that increased contact with locals in Singapore was associated with greater perceived discrimination and identity conflict (Leong & Ward, 2000). Both of these studies show potential negative consequences associated with casual contact with other groups, illustrating the importance of more intimate contact. Indeed, there is a common assumption that students who participate in study abroad will inherently return home with more positive views of the host culture, this view however is potentially naïve due to the diverse amount of interaction variables (Stephenson, 1999).

The second area of contact that Allport (1954) discusses is acquaintance contact. He cites a study where 46 graduate students spent two consecutive weekends in Harlem where they were entertained in African American homes. There was also a control group who did not go to Harlem. The experimental group showed significant increases in favorable attitudes towards African Americans, while the control group did not. Allport (1954) cautions any definitive conclusions concerning this research stating, "This research does not prove that every visit to Chinatown, Harlem, or Little Italy will result in lessened prejudice. Many people start with stereotypes, and the tourist mode of contact is unlikely to change them" (Allport, 1954, p. 266). Another study illustrating the potential effect of acquaintance contact comes from occupying US soldiers' opinions of German civilians. 76% of soldiers with personal contact of 5 hours or more with German civilians reported very favorable or fairly favorable opinions of German people, while only 36% of soldiers who had never been in Germany reported favorable opinions (Allport, 1954). Acquaintance contact provides individuals with more accurate knowledge about those from out-groups and creates a situation in which prejudice is potentially reduced.

The third area of contact that Allport (1954) discusses is residential contact. Research comparing white people who lived side by side with African Americans of the same general economic class with white people living in segregated housing arrangements showed that those living in integrated housing were friendlier, less fearful, and held less stereotyped views than their segregated counterparts. One particular study where white residents had the same initial attitudes toward black people found that 75% of white people living in all-white units reported that they would dislike the idea of living in an integrated unit while only 25% of those actually living in an integrated unit reportedly disliked the idea. Allport (1954) writes that integrated housing creates conditions where communication between the two groups fosters friendly contacts, allows for accurate social perceptions to form, and reduces negative attitudes.

The fourth area of contact that Allport (1954) discusses is occupational contact. Findings from studies analyzing occupational contact illustrate the importance of equal status contact and institutional support in reducing prejudice. Several studies showed reduction in negative attitudes only among those who had worked with minorities at the same or higher level and that institutional policies played important roles in breaking down discrimination. Equal status contact potentially leads to a highly specific attitude towards a single person and not the whole group. This potential person specific drawback leads to the important role that the pursuit of common interests may play. Allport (1954) ascertains that only contact that leads people to do things together is likely to result in changed attitudes. This principal is illustrated in multi-ethnic athletic teams, military regiments, factories, and schools.

Allport (1954) also briefly discusses goodwill contact, which is contact facilitated by community organizations with the objective of combating prejudice and building understanding. This type of contact must have concrete goals and acquaintance contact must be established prior to any attitude changes (Allport, 1954). Furthermore this contact is often forced and unnatural. Authors investigating online contact suggest that contact must be voluntary in order to reduce prejudice (Amichai-Hamburger & McKenna, 2006). Finally, Allport (1954) stresses that contact does not reduce prejudice among all people and that certain personalities tend to resist the influences of contact.

After reviewing the different areas of contact, Allport (1954) concludes that equal status acquaintance contact between groups in pursuit of common goals, aided by institutional support, with a shared perception of common interests and humanity between members potentially reduces prejudice. Under these conditions any negative stereotypes or perceptions that one has about another group will be replaced with positive perceptions of the individual whom they have formed a relationship with. These new positive associations will be projected to the group as a whole. This theory, which is an optimistic outlook on human nature and behavior, gives hope that individuals can alter the

attitudes that others have about their perspective groups, is not without its critics.

2.5.2. Revised Contact Theory

Cultural contact theory as introduced by Allport (1954) has three major shortcomings. The first is that the contact situation has many practical obstacles. This is certainly the case for international students and study abroad programs. Organizing or facilitating relationships that create the necessary conditions for the contact hypothesis to have an effect raises logistical and financial issues. For example, finding feasible ways to house international students with local students is an obstacle for many study abroad programs. The second shortcoming is that anxiety felt by individuals in the situation may cause a contact to be unsuccessful or at least not reach its potential. Anxiety can stem from various causes, particularly for international students communicating in a different language. The third is that the results from contact tend to be limited to the context of the meeting and its participants (Amichai-Hamburger & McKenna, 2006). Several studies examining the contact hypothesis have found that although participants carry positive attitudes toward each other, that does not carry over to a changed attitude about the group as a whole (Amichai-Hamburger & McKenna, 2006). Despite these shortcomings, Pettigrew (1998) asserts that the majority of studies report positive effects from contact, even in situations lacking the key conditions, and puts forth several reasons for why intergroup contact has these effects.

Pettigrew (1998) poses four processes of change that individuals experience through intergroup contact. First, by learning about the out-group an individual simply becomes less ignorant and ignorance tends to promote prejudice. Second, intergroup contact inherently involves behavioral change, which comes hand in hand with attitude change, i.e. reduction in prejudice and ethnocentrism. Third, contact decreases anxiety while increasing positive emotions, empathy for out-groups, and builds friendships. Fourth, contact causes one to re-consider their own group's values and norms, thus causing one

to see the world through a different cultural lens. Studies show that out-group friendship is related to significantly less national pride (Pettigrew, 1998). Considering these four processes for why intergroup contact has positive effects Pettigrew (1998) proposes a reformulation of the contact hypothesis.

Pettigrew (1998) suggests that attitude changing contact is more related to long-term close relationships than to initial acquaintances, which is a considerable shift from the original acquaintance contact discussed by Allport (1954). Researchers collecting longitudinal data from over 2000 White, Asian, Latino, and African American college students found that students with more in-group bias and intergroup anxiety at the end of their first year had fewer out-group friends and more in-group friends. Those with more out-group friendships and fewer in-group friendships in their second and third year showed less in-group bias and out-group anxiety at the end of college (Levin, Van Laar, & Sidanius, 2003). For Pettigrew (1998) “the contact situation must provide the participants with the opportunity to become friends” (p. 12). However, he argues that it takes time for optimal intergroup contact to occur and for intercultural friendships to form and proposes that the most effective way to study intergroup contact is longitudinally. The current research examines the contact that international students in Buenos Aires have with Argentineans upon arrival and at the end of the semester. Other researchers have applied contact theory in examining the various forms of contact that students have with both co-nationals and host nationals in their new cultural environment (Savicki, 2010). In the current study, students give a detailed report of their friendships including contact strength, which indicates the nature of the friendship. Furthermore, interviews with international students provide more detailed information about the contact situations that facilitate conditions in which students meet local friends and in what situations they have casual contact with Argentineans.

The negative potential that casual cultural contact embodies coupled with the positive potential that intimate contact holds increases the importance of the current research. Individuals are coming in close contact with different

groups today more than ever, understanding how this contact impacts societies will help explain how intercultural conflict and ethnocentric attitudes persist.

2.6. Theoretical Framework Summary and Methodological Considerations

Kim's (2001) cross-cultural adaptation theory highlights the importance of host national contact in the adaptation process. A plethora of studies link positive sociocultural, psychological, and communication competence variables with host national contact. Elements of social networking theory such as social capital and strength of ties bolster the argument of the importance that host national friendships play in the adaptation process. Contact theory suggests that intercultural contact can build understanding between groups, however this positive outcome is best attained when the intercultural contact is friendship based. Thus, this study takes as an assumption that host national friendships are not only indicators of more successful adaptation but also indicators of shared intercultural understanding.

Kim (2001) emphasizes the importance of conducting research with an expanded conceptual domain. One major downfall in the cross-cultural adaptation field is related to studies that only consider one or two variables. She insists that whenever possible studies examining cross-cultural adaptation must analyze several if not all six construct dimensions in her theory. Following her research considerations, the current study uses a quantitative strategy to directly examine four (Host Social Communication, Ethnic Social Communication, Environment, Predisposition) of the six construct dimensions in Kim's (2001) theory. Additionally, this research incorporates in-depth qualitative interviews which make it possible to elaborate on the two remaining dimensions, Personal Communication and Intercultural Transformation.

The subsequent chapter presents a comprehensive research methodology that includes four phases. 1) Interviews with study abroad directors; 2) administration of quantitative surveys to international students at the beginning of the semester; 3) In-depth interviews with international students; 4) administration of quantitative surveys at the end of the semester. Due to the

nature of cross-cultural adaptation and social networks, the current research incorporates a longitudinal methodology that analyzes adaptation and social networks at different periods during the study abroad experience.

Chapter 3: Methodology

3.1. Longitudinal Design & Triangulation

This investigation employs a longitudinal design using a quantitative survey assessing the same participants on two separate occasions. This longitudinal technique is commonly termed the panel (Menard, 2002). The main objectives of longitudinal research are to analyze patterns of change and to better explain the magnitude of causality (Menard, 2002). Several scholars analyzing the experiences of individuals crossing cultures emphasize the use of longitudinal research design (Church, 1982; Kim, 2001; Zhang & Goodson, 2011). Researchers can more accurately document patterns in the cross-cultural adaptation process by following a given sample throughout a specific time period (Kim, 2001). Along with a quantitative, longitudinal survey this research also incorporates in-depth, qualitative interviews with a sample of the international students who completed the survey. Church (1982) and Kim (2001) encourage the use of in-depth interviews for cross-cultural adaptation research in order to provide more contextual information. Many scholars and investigators refer to this specific multi-method approach as triangulation.

Triangulation allows a researcher to combine the advantages that quantitative and qualitative methods offer (Cantor, 2002), and neutralize the disadvantages (Jick, 1979) by examining the same phenomenon from different perspectives (Forni, 2010). Instead of treating quantitative and qualitative methods as competing, triangulation uses both methods to complement one another (Jick, 1979). This method produces two sets of data and findings that converge on the same proposition (Jick, 1979). They argue that with this method the variance better reflects the trait than the chosen method, thus allowing researchers to be more confident in their results (Jick, 1979). Furthermore, with triangulation elements of the contexts are illuminated (Jick, 1979). Several different researchers advocate the use of qualitative fieldwork complemented by quantitative surveys. Kim (2001) stresses the use of triangulation in the study of cross-cultural adaptation; she recommends theory-derived, objective, quantitative scales along with interviews that obtain the

subject's self-assessment of those scale items. Furthermore, one goal of this research is to compare different study abroad organizational models. Due to the multi-variable nature of organizations Noguiera and Góngora (2000) recommend the combination of quantitative instruments with qualitatively focused interviews.

One important element to address when conducting mixed method, triangulation research is the sampling procedure. Sampling procedure characteristics for quantitative and qualitative research are dichotomously different (Teddlie & Yu, 2007). Considering this issue, this research employs a Sequential Mixed Method Sampling Procedure (Teddlie & Yu, 2007). In this case, a QUAL-QUAN-QUAL sequence. First, the researcher uses a qualitative, purposive sampling procedure to select University and study abroad programs. Second, the researcher uses a probability, self-selecting sampling procedure in order to get a representative sample of international students from each university. Third, the researcher uses a purposive sampling procedure that selects only those international students who participated in the quantitative survey. Each section explains the sampling procedures more explicitly.

This chapter contains four sections. The first section describes the procedures conducted and steps taken throughout the research process. The second section presents the instruments used to measure all variables. The third section describes the universities and participants, as well as the sampling procedures used in each case. The final section presents the proposed data analysis procedure.

3.2. Procedures: Methodological Organization

The current research is divided into four phases. First, the researcher conducted systematic qualitative interviews with program directors of eleven study abroad programs in Buenos Aires. Qualitative research is important for pretesting and developing survey instruments (Jick, 1979) and using an initial qualitative approach helps the researcher add new ideas and adapt the study (Charmaz, 2008). In order to gain a greater understanding of the overall

international student population in Buenos Aires, the researcher also conducted an interview in the Argentine Ministry of Education with the director of the Program for the Promotion of Argentine Universities.

In the second phase the researcher administered an online quantitative survey assessing the friendship networks, contact situations such as housing and extracurricular activities, language difficulty, ethnocentrism levels, online communication patterns, and demographic information two weeks after students began classes.

In the third phase the researcher conducted systematic qualitative interviews with international students towards the end of their study abroad experience.

In the fourth phase students completed a second quantitative survey two weeks before the end of the semester, the survey was identical to the first with a few minor changes stemming from in-depth interviews. The ensuing section explains the four phases of the current research design.

3.2.1. Phase 1: Interviews with Study Abroad Directors

Although many international students come to Buenos Aires for their entire undergraduate or postgraduate education, the present research focuses on international students studying in Buenos Aires for one or in some cases two semesters. The researcher chose these students due to time constraints and because the majority of international students study abroad for one semester or a year (Giavi et al., 2008). In order to gain access to international students who fit this category and to gather information about study abroad programs and offices operating in Buenos Aires this study used a purposive sampling procedure which would be best classified as snowball or chain referral sampling (Biernacki & Waldorf, 1981; Teddlie & Yu, 2007). The researcher solicited interviews with directors of fourteen programs from private, public, and US based educational institutes operating in Buenos Aires that fit within these parameters. Contact information for program directors was acquired through

researcher connections and information available to the public on program web sites.

Eleven program directors responded to an email requesting an interview. See Appendix A for interview email request and Appendix B for study abroad director interview questions. After the interview the researcher sent a follow-up email to each director detailing the research project and officially requesting participation. See Appendix C for official research proposal and participation request. Nine of those program directors interviewed agreed to be involved in the study. The two programs that chose not to participate after the interview provided no specific reason for doing so. Program directors of four private universities agreed to interviews and all four agreed to participate in the study. Program directors of three public university branches agreed to interviews and two agreed to participate in the study. A program director from one of the public university branches did not respond to the email request, however the tutor program organizers from that university helped the researcher by sending students a link through the tutor program Facebook group. Program directors of four US based study abroad educational institutes agreed to interviews and three agreed to participate in the study. Thus, the final sample included international students from four private universities, three public universities, and three private US based institutions.

3.2.2. Phase 2: Quantitative Survey Administration Time 1

Program directors and the researcher administered online surveys two weeks after the students began classes. The researcher accommodated each program director's specific requests regarding the survey distribution in terms of privacy and email access. Program directors sent an email prepared by the researcher to all international students currently affiliated with each program's respective study abroad office. Students had approximately one week to participate. See Appendix D for student request for participation. In order to achieve maximum participation the researcher incorporated three response facilitation activities identified as effective in increasing response rates

(Edwards et al., 2009). First, using a pre-contact strategy the researcher asked all program directors for the opportunity to give a brief participation request presentation to international students during their orientation. Two program directors complied with this request. Second, the researcher offered a non-monetary incentive in the form of a drawing. Everyone who participated in both phases had the chance to win a night in a house in Tigre with a group of friends.¹ However, for specific program policy and logistical reasons the researcher was only able to offer the incentive to students in 6 out of 10 programs. Third, the researcher asked all program directors to send follow-up emails reminding students to participate. The effectiveness of these three strategies is not clear considering the influence of each study abroad directors' behavior. For example, it is not certain how each director presented the research to international students in the initial email. Research suggests that messages within the request effect response rate such as topic importance and university sponsorship (Edwards et al., 2009). Furthermore, there is no assurance that the directors complied with the request to send the researcher's reminder email.

Students had the option of completing the online survey in English or Spanish. Several practical problems arise when translating questionnaires from one language to another (Behling & Law, 2000) and researchers have employed a wide array of techniques to overcome these problems (Sumathipala & Murray, 2000). One common technique is translation-back translation that involves bilingual individuals independently translating from the source language to the target language and then back to the source language. However, some researchers contend that this technique is inadequate and recommend that translation be undertaken by teams rather than individuals (Sumathipala &

¹ Tigre is a tourist city approximately one hour from Buenos Aires that is known for its intricate Delta system with many summer cabins and cabanas, as well as permanent homes along the river. In order to make the drawing fair and unbiased the researcher created a numbered list of all those who participated in both quantitative phases. A study abroad program director not familiar with this list then provided the researcher with ten random numbers. Subsequently the researcher sent a congratulatory email in order of the numbers provided until the winner was able to accept. The first four students were unavailable that weekend. The participant who finally accepted was the fifth number randomly selected. The researcher rented a house from an Argentine friend and with another doctoral student accompanied the winner and his group.

Murray, 2000). These authors recommend group consensus arguing that the likelihood of one person producing an acceptable instrument for a wider group is unrealistic due to individual idiosyncrasies. Considering these translation issues and the resources available for the current investigation, the researcher translated survey items from English to Spanish and a native Spanish speaking certified literary translator with 15 years experience then reviewed and edited any language discrepancies together with the researcher. Then, as a pre-test the researcher asked four native Spanish speaking international graduate students to complete the survey and provide feedback. This test allowed the researcher to ensure accurate translation and survey comprehension while detecting any un-anticipated flaws that could occur completing and uploading data from the online survey format. Both the English and Spanish versions of all instruments appear in their respective Appendix.

3.2.3. Phase 3: Participant In-Depth Interviews

The third phase of the current research involved in-depth interviews with a sample of international students who completed the quantitative survey. The goal of this phase was to provide context to the quantitative data collected in the first phase as well as to potentially include questions or items in the second quantitative phase.

The researcher sent an email requesting an interview to every other student who completed the quantitative survey. In those universities with high participation on the quantitative survey the researcher choose every third participant. See Appendix E for email request for in-depth interviews. In the case that an insufficient amount of students either did not respond or responded but were unable to meet during the proposed time frame, the researcher sent additional emails to remaining students. The researcher followed interviewing guidelines in preparing questions and conducting interviews (Charmaz, 2008). See Appendix F for interview questions. In order to be confident that all pertinent questions were included the researcher conducted a pilot interview with a Spanish international student studying at one of the participating

universities. The interviews were semi-structured, recorded, and lasted approximately one hour. Students had the option of speaking Spanish or English. See Appendix N for interview reference list which indicates nationality, age, gender, study abroad program type, and interview language.

3.2.4. Phase 4: Quantitative Survey Administration Time 2

The second phase of the quantitative analysis included the same survey items described in the first phase with several slight variations. These variations are described in each respective instrumentation section. The researcher sent a personalized email to each student who participated in the first phase of the quantitative survey and a second reminder email if they did not complete the survey after one week. See Appendix G for email requests and reminders. Students had provided their emails in the first online survey upon agreement to participate. After participants completed the online survey the second time, the researcher sent each individual a personalized thank you email. See Appendix H for example thank you emails.

3.3. Instrumentation

This research uses several quantitative measures, however due to the longitudinal nature and to avoid attrition the survey remained short. Shorter questionnaires also increase the odds of response (Edwards et al. 2008). The goal of the quantitative survey is to illustrate the social networks of international students by capturing different types of information, who is in their social network, where those people are from, and how strong those contacts are. SPSS statistical software can then analyze the relationship between this network information, contact conditions, country of origin, reported language difficulty, ethnocentrism, and online communication patterns.

3.3.1. Host/Ethnic Social Communication Measure: Friendship Network Grid

Hendrickson et al.'s (2011) friendship network grid assesses the complete friendship network of international students in the new cultural environment. Participants list all their friends, indicate where they are from, and report how strong those friendships are on a scale from 10-1 using giving definitions. Researchers examining friendship intimacy indicate that best friendship may be used as a point of reference for judging the intimacy involved in other friendships (Rawlins, Leibowitz, & Bochner, 1986). Thus participants first read the definition of a 10 followed by the definition of a 5 and a 1. The authors conceptualized friendship using eight characteristics of quality friendship, including enjoyment, acceptance, trust, respect, mutual assistance, confiding, understanding, and spontaneity (Davis & Todd, 1982). Authors examining friendship in Japan identified nearly the same characteristics with the only exception being respect. These similarities between two distinct cultures indicate the feasibility of using the same friendship definitions for an international student population. However, this does not negate the reality that terms such as friends and acquaintances carry distinct meanings across cultures (Church, 1982; Maeda & Ritchie, 2003). Interpreting and comparing the intimacy of interpersonal relationships across cultures is challenging and certainly presents potential confounds. See Appendix I for friendship network grid and friendship definitions.

Social science researchers have used this method for collecting and analyzing relationship data since the 1960s (Wasserman & Faust, 1994). Additionally, its general reliability is validated by a plethora of sociological and anthropological findings (Rogers & Kinkaid, 1981). This type of survey is a shift in the direction that Oliveira and Garcia (1987) indicated by permitting the investigator to analyze an individual international student in a network of relationships instead of viewing the international student as an uprooted individual, separated from society (Oliveira & Garcia, 1987). Social network

analysis paints a bigger picture and helps explain the relationships between one's social contacts and other variables. Additionally, educational researchers encourage the use of social network analysis in conjunction with a longitudinal design in order to track processes over time (Rienties, Nanclares, Jindal-Snape, & Alcott, 2013).

The researcher has used the friendship network grid in three previous studies involving international students. The first was a pilot study (Hendrickson & Rosen, 2009) in which 71 international students in Hawai'i reported their overall friendship networks and completed homesickness, contentment, and satisfaction scales. Findings from this study showed positive relationships between host national friendship and reduced homesickness and increased satisfaction and contentment. The second study was an experimental study with 31 US mainland students studying in Hawai'i (Hendrickson, 2009). This study treated US mainland students as international students in Hawai'i based on findings from several studies that showed cultural differences between people in Hawai'i and the continental US (Kim, Aune, Hunter, Kim, & Kim, 2001; Kim, Kam, Sharkey, & Singelis, 2008). Due to the small sample size no concrete findings could be reported, however some friendship patterns emerged. Mainlanders had a higher ratio of friendships with other mainlanders even though the university has proportionately more local Hawaiian students. The third, published, study involving 83 international students in Hawai'i (Hendrickson et al., 2011) showed positive relationships between host national friendship and satisfaction, contentment, social connectedness, and reduced homesickness. Results obtained from the friendship grid and analyses are presented in chapters 4, 5, 6, and 7.

3.3.2. Cultural Environment & Contact Condition Measures

Interviews with study abroad directors confirmed five contact situations in which international students show the most variation; 1) study abroad program/university; 2) classroom composition; 3) housing; 4) extra-curricular

activities; 5) presence of tutor programs. Chapter 5 presents the results and analysis of these measures.

3.3.2.1. University Setting. The first variable is the specific study abroad program/University type in which students were enrolled. This variable was inferred as students studying at each university received links to different surveys.

3.3.2.2. Classroom Makeup. In order to assess classroom composition students indicated the amount of classes they have with Argentines and the amount of classes they have with only other international students. To be sure, this research is mainly interested in the amount of classes that students have with Argentines, however two questions were included to avoid potential confusion. These questions include: How many regular classes with Argentine students did you take this semester? How many classes did you take with just international students? See Appendix J for all contact situation measures.

3.3.2.3. Housing. Students indicated their housing situation by answering one open-ended statement: “In one or two sentences describe where and whom you live with.” In order to make the coding procedure more precise the survey provided sample responses to give participants an example to follow. See Appendix J for sample responses and all contact situation measures.

3.3.2.4. Organized Extra-Curricular Activities. Students indicated their participation in extra-curricular activities by answering one open-ended statement: “In one or two sentences please describe any group or organized extra-curricular activities in which you participate and with whom.” In order to make the coding procedure more precise the survey provided examples of responses to give participants a format to follow. See Appendix J for example responses and all contact situation measures.

3.3.2.5. Tutor Programs. Students enrolled in study abroad programs that have tutor programs indicated whether or not they participated in them and indicated on 5 point Likert-type scale anchored by 1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree their attitudes about the program and their assigned tutor: “My expectations about participation in the tutor program have been met” “I am satisfied with the person that the Tutor program assigned to me” “I am looking forward to spending more time with my Tutor” Reliability for the three item scale was $\alpha = .85$. Students also had the opportunity to leave any comments that they had concerning their perspective tutor program. See Appendix J for tutor program questions and example responses and Appendix O for student comments regarding tutor programs.

3.3.3. Predisposition Measures

Kim (2001) proposed three background characteristics that constitute the adaptation potential of an individuals in a new cultural environment. This investigation assesses one aspect of each of these background characteristics. 1) Preparedness for change using language proficiency; 2) Ethnic proximity using national origin; 3) Adaptive Personality using an ethnocentrism scale. Chapter 6 presents the results and analysis of these measures.

3.3.3.1. Perceived Language Difficulty. Students reported their own perceived language proficiency by answering two questions: 1) “How much difficulty do you have understanding spoken Spanish?” and 2) “How much difficulty do you have speaking Spanish?” on a 7 point Likert-type scale whereby 1 = extreme difficulty and 7 = no difficulty. Student self assessment of language ability is a useful and common tool for determining language aptitude and researchers have identified much similarity between students’ ratings of their ability and actual ability (MacIntyre, Noels, & Clément, 1997; O’Donnell, 2004; Pellegrino, 1998). These perceived language difficulty measures form part of the demographic information section of the questionnaire. See Appendix M for all demographic measures.

3.3.3.2. National Origin. Using a drop down menu listing all the countries in the world participants choose the country/nationality that they most identified with. See Appendix M for all demographic measures.

3.3.3.3. Ethnocentrism Scale. Neulip and McCroskey (1997) recognized that ethnocentrism has an important impact on an individual's communication behavior with people from diverse cultural, ethnic, religious, and/or regional backgrounds. They conceptualized a study with the purpose of validating a scale and standardizing the operationalization of ethnocentrism. After conducting two separate studies, the first with 396 participants and the second with 369 participants, the authors present a general scale that is appropriate for individuals from any country and recommended it for use in ethnocentrism research. Participants report on a 5-point Likert-type scale the extent to which they agree or disagree with 22 statements. Example statements include; "Most other cultures are backward compared to my culture" "My culture should be the role model for other cultures" "People from other cultures act strange when they come to my culture" and "Lifestyles in other cultures are just as valid as those in my culture". Reported scale reliability for the general ethnocentrism scale was $\alpha = .92$ (Neulip & McCroskey, 1997).

The current research uses this scale to assess ethnocentrism for several reasons. First, the scale's second author Jim McCroskey is a respected scholar in the communication field who has authored or co-authored over 200 journal publications, 50 books, and 30 book chapters, many of which are methodological works. Second, other authors have incorporated this ethnocentrism scale in their research design. One study used the scale to examine the relationship between ethnocentrism and the apprehension that individuals experience in communicating with people from different ethnic backgrounds (Toale & McCroskey, 2001). This study reported a scale reliability of $\alpha = .92$. Another two part study (Neulip, Hintz, & McCroskey, 2005) used this scale to examine ethnocentrism in organizational settings

reporting scale reliability of $\alpha = .82$ and $\alpha = .70$. Borden (2007) used this ethnocentrism scale in a longitudinal study examining the impact of service learning on ethnocentrism. Researchers also used this scale cross-culturally with a US American and Japanese sample. Reliability for the Japanese sample was $\alpha = .84$ and $\alpha = .93$ for the US Americans (Neuliep, Chaudoir, & McCroskey, 2001). Third, the ethnocentrism scale contains 22 items requiring little time to complete. Furthermore, the original scale uses dummy questions, questions not relevant to the scale that are later dropped. Thus, the current research uses an adapted 15 question scale. Other available scales that operationalize ethnocentrism contain more items. For example, many intercultural researchers using international students have used the intercultural development inventory (IDI) to assess ethnocentrism, however this scale contains 50 items (Hammer, Bennett, & Wiseman, 2003). Other authors operationalized the construct using an ethnocentrism scale with 45 items (Bizumic, Duckitt, Popadic, & Krauss, 2009). Due to the longitudinal nature of the current research, a shorter scale was necessary in order to ensure a high response rate and to avoid attrition. The adapted scale had a reliability of $\alpha = .844$ in the first quantitative phase and a reliability of $\alpha = .845$ in the second quantitative phase. See Appendix K for adapted ethnocentrism scale.

3.3.4. Information and Communication Technology (ICT) Measures

The current study assesses international student's information and communication technology (ICT) usage using two measures; 1) social networking site (SNS) usage; 2) Video chat usage. These information and communication technology (ICT) items were chosen partly based on unpublished findings indicating relationships between face-to-face friendship network patterns and SNS friendship patterns (Hendrickson, 2011).

3.3.4.1 Social Networking Site (SNS) Usage. This study assessed social networking site usage with an adapted Facebook intensity scale created to measure university students' SNS usage per day and to assess total number

of friends (Ellison et al., 2007). First, participants in the current study indicated whether or not they use a SNS, how many minutes per day they spend on their SNS, and approximately how many friends they have (for the site that they use most often). Second, participants indicated how many of those friends are co-national, host national, and/or multi-national. See Appendix L for SNS usage questions.

3.3.4.2. Video Chat Usage. Participants indicated whether or not they use a video chat service (e.g. Skype) to keep in contact with individuals not in Buenos Aires. If they answered yes to the first question they subsequently reported approximately how many video calls they make per month and how many different people they call. See Appendix L for video chat usage questions.

3.3.5. Confound Checks & Demographics

Participants indicated on a 7 point Likert-type scale whereby 1 = did not understand anything and 7 = completely understood everything their comprehension of the survey in order to eliminate any participants who did not understand the survey for language proficiency reasons. Students also reported their age, nationality, university education, and time spent in Argentina. See Appendix M for all demographic questions and language comprehension items.

3.3.6. Time 2 Additional Questionnaire Items

There were several measures that appeared only in the first phase or second phase of the quantitative survey. First, in the initial phase students were still finalizing their classes so the question concerning classroom makeup only appeared in the second phase. Students reported how many regular classes with Argentine students they took that semester and how many classes they took with just international students that semester. Second, one question concerning the tutor program had different wording, so instead of answering the questions, “I am looking forward to spending more time with my tutor” students answered

the question “ I plan to stay in contact with my tutor after leaving Buenos Aires.” Reliability for the second phase tutor program satisfaction was $\alpha = .86$, which was nearly the same as the first phase. Third, one study abroad director requested that students have the opportunity to give advice for future international students. Thus, the last item on the survey asked students “If you could give one piece of specific, practical, advice to other international students coming to Buenos Aires what would it be?”

3.4. Subjects

3.4.1. Sampling Design

The present research follows guidelines discussed by Hill (1998) in order to determine the appropriate sample size. According to these guidelines a statistical sample should never be less than 10 while there is seldom justification for sample sizes of less than 30 or more than 500, and within these parameters the use of 10% of the parent population is recommended. If a researcher wants to compare sub-samples within these groups then they should follow the same guidelines stated for the overall group, i.e. each sub-sample must have at least 30 participants. However, these numbers are debated as some authors suggest that 20-25 subjects per independent variable group should be the minimum, not 30. Hill presents these guidelines, however the author also argues that there is no one accepted method of determining necessary sample size. To iterate this argument Hill subjected the same data set to seven different formulas present in the methodological literature for determining sample size and found that there were seven different required sample sizes, ranging from 35-400, for the same research scenario. Furthermore, sample size often depends on budget and time considerations more than statistical considerations (Hill, 1998). In these cases researchers must report the appropriate sample size, the actual sample size, and discuss any effects of inadequate sample sizes on the results (Bartlett, II, Kotrlik, & Higgins, 2001).

The imprecise numbers as to the exact amount of international students studying for one or two semesters in Buenos Aires, coupled with the vagueness of sample size requirements makes determining the adequate sample size for this research a formidable challenge. Nevertheless, this research proposes two sample size objectives. The first is to sample at least 10% of the parent population that received a link to the survey. The second is to have at least 25 students from each program type in order to conduct categorical comparisons.

International students affiliated with 10 different universities and/or US based Study abroad institutes received an email from their respective study abroad programs requesting their participation in a research project (See section 3.2.1. for study abroad program sampling procedure). The most up to date numbers come from a 2008 ArgEdu research report which estimated that 25,000 international students arrived in Argentina for undergraduate, postgraduate, and study abroad programs (Giavi et al., 2008). In a 2013 BBC news article authorities reported that there were approximately 50,000 international students in Argentina (Smink, 2013). Given that these numbers speak for Argentina as country it is difficult to measure the exact number of international students in Buenos Aires considering that many students registered with the immigration authorities study outside of Buenos Aires, and not all students in Buenos Aires are registered with the immigration authorities as international students. For example, students who study at US branch campuses or through study abroad programs in which students have no affiliation with an Argentine university are not eligible for student visas. Thus, the 61 students studying at the US branch campus that participated in this research simply travel to Uruguay as a group every three months to renew their tourist visas. Some of these students are in Buenos Aires for as long as 8 months, however they fall under the register of official international student immigration statistics. Furthermore, some students take classes in several different locations making statistics collected from each individual institution equally complicated due to between-university agreements. For example, a private university in the current study receives students from one of the US

based programs; consequently these students could potentially be counted twice. Thus, the following numbers for total international students from each university are approximations and are not limited to those studying for only one or two semesters.

Private University 1 reported 300 international students and 22 participated in this study. Private University 2 reported 135 international students and 12 students participated. Private University 3 reported 200 international students and 9 participated. Private University 4 reported 190 international students and 26 participated. Public University 1 reported 37 international students and 2 participated. Public University 2 reported 80 international students and 2 participated. Public University 3 reported 200 international students and 5 participated. US Study Abroad Program 1 reported 120 students and 14 participated. US Study Abroad Program 2 reported 61 international students and 6 participated. US Study Abroad Program 3 reported 35 international students and 7 participated.

Thus, from these numbers it can be estimated that across the 10 programs or universities, approximately 1000 to 1400 international students received an email request to participate in the present study. A total of 105 of those students participated in both phases, including 69 participants affiliated with a private university, 9 affiliated with a public university, and 27 primarily affiliated with a US based study abroad program. Thus, this sample does achieve the first sampling objective, which was to obtain 10% of the students studying in those universities that participated. However, this investigation did not fully achieve the second sampling objective, which was to obtain 25 students from each study abroad program type. In this case the private university and US based program samples are sufficient, however only 9 students from the public university participated. Subsequently, this research will present sub-sample comparative findings; however will be careful not to draw any strong conclusions regarding the public university. Chapter 5 describes these programs and their characteristics in greater detail as well as providing the rationale for dividing the programs into three categories.

3.4.2. Participants

This research employed a non probabilistic, self-selecting sampling procedure whereby 146 students voluntarily completed an online survey in Spanish or English two weeks after beginning classes, however several failed to participate again two weeks before classes finished, leaving a sample consisting of 105 international students. 81 (77%) were female and 24 (23%) were male. Not all study abroad programs shared demographic information with the researcher, but of those who did, all reported that at least 60% of their participants were female. This ratio of female to male participants is not alarming as research shows that a higher ratio, nearly 2 to 1, of females to males choose to study abroad due to various factors (Salisbury, Paulsen, & Pascarella, 2010). Participants reported an average age of 22 ($SD = 2.64$) years at the end of the semester and had completed 5 ($SD = 2.23$) semesters of university education at the beginning of the semester.

The participants came from 20 different countries: 46 (44%) from Europe (16 Germany, 10 France, 8 Spain, 3 Austria, 2 Finland, 1 from Italy, Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, Czech Republic, Switzerland, Sweden, respectively) 45 (43%) from North America (43 US, 2 Canada), 12 (11%) from Latin America (5 Brazil, 3 Colombia, 3 Mexico, 1 Chile), 1 from Morocco, and 1 from India. Study abroad program directors reported to have students from a variety of different countries but did not provide information specifying the number of students from each country, thus a description of exact representativeness is not possible. The sample includes 3 study abroad programs that only have students from the United States and in some special cases foreign students completing degrees in the United States but spending a semester in Argentina through a US based study abroad program. This explains the high ratio (41%) of US participants.

3.4.3. Interview Participants

The researcher conducted in-depth interviews with international students who completed the online survey upon arrival. This procedure is

classified as random purpose sampling (Miles & Huberman, 1994; Sandelowski, 2000) as all participants had to be international students that had completed the quantitative survey. However, identifying the appropriate amount of interviewees from this group involves the determination of data saturation, which is the theoretical point in which more interviews do not lead to new information. Data saturation is a common theme and issue discussed in qualitative methods articles and texts, however there are few guidelines as to what that magic number is (Bunce & Johnson, 2006). Findings from Bunce and Johnson's (2006) article examining data saturation informed the in-depth interview sampling procedure. They conducted 60 in-depth interviews and concluded that data saturation occurred after 12 interviews, although these authors consider that 6 interviews were sufficient to develop useful themes and meaningful observations. They suggest that saturation is dependent on many participant factors as well as how researchers plan to use their data. For example, with homogenous populations researchers arrive at data saturation must faster, although if researchers plan to use their data to compare groups they will need more interviews to reach data saturation for each group. Considering these findings related to data saturation this research set as an objective to interview 3-5 students from each university or study abroad program. This would insure the possibility of comparing universities and study abroad programs.

The researcher interviewed 35 of those international students who completed the quantitative survey, thus reaching the data saturation goal for the total population. The mean interview length was 1 hour and 13 minutes ($SD = 15$ minutes). Out of those interviewed only one failed to participate in the second phase of the quantitative survey, leaving the total number of interviews at 34. There were 23 females and 11 males with an average age of 22 ($SD=2.52$) years. 20 interviewees studied at private universities, 4 studied at public universities, and 10 were part of US based study abroad programs. These numbers reached the data saturation objective for private universities and US based programs, but not for public universities. This is not surprising

considering that only 9 students from the public university participated in both phases of the quantitative survey. Results related to public university comparisons are thus discussed with caution and no conclusions related to causality are made.

Interviewees came from 13 different countries: 14 (41%) from Europe, 15 (44%) from North America (14 US, 1 Canada), and 5 (15%) from Latin America. Thus, in terms of regional origin the 34 students interviewed represent a sample nearly proportionate to the larger sample that completed the online survey. The researcher interviewed participants in Spanish and English. Given the option, 29 chose Spanish and 6 chose English. See Appendix N for interviewee reference list.

3.5. Multi-Method Data Analysis

The goal of the quantitative survey is to directly examine the hypotheses and research questions presented in the introduction of each chapter. The goal of the in-depth interviews is to provide more information and context to the answers provided in the quantitative survey. Jick (1979) maintains that triangulation researchers should indicate exactly how convergent data are analyzed. Thus, the current analytic approach to triangulation examines the quantitative data using quantitative techniques and the qualitative data using qualitative techniques. The results are then combined at the interpretive level (Sandelowski, 2000). The quantitative survey tells the researcher what an individual's friendship network looks like and how it has evolved, whereas in-depth interviews introduce context and demonstrate how the subjects feel about their friendship network while giving them the opportunity to reflect upon their actual experiences in Buenos Aires. The quantitative survey shows the raw number of Argentine friends each person has, while interviews give the researcher information as to how those networks form, where those friendships were made, and in what context. For example: During the pilot interview the Spanish girl commented that her best friends in Buenos Aires were other Spanish individuals, however she has two Argentine friends who she met

through the study abroad tutor program. Her quantitative survey would reflect this high ratio of co-national friends, participation in a tutor program, and low satisfaction with the tutor program because she had never even met her tutor. However, she became friends with Argentines that were volunteer tutors of her other friends. Thus, through the tutor program she did form host national friendship, albeit not in the traditional way.

3.5.1. Quantitative Analysis

This investigation uses SPSS statistics software to analyze the quantitative data collected longitudinally in two stages. The first stage of analysis involved cleaning and organizing the data, running confound checks, conducting reliability tests of psychometric scales, and describing the characteristics of the international students in the sample. The second stage uses a variety of statistical analysis to examine the hypotheses and research questions presented separately in the introductions of Chapters 4, 5, 6, and 7. These analyses include means tests followed by paired sampled T-tests which are one way to examine before and after comparisons (Nolan & Heinzen, 2010), thus revealing friendship network, language proficiency, and ethnocentrism changes over time; One-way ANOVAS which highlight significant differences between Study abroad programs and the other contact condition variables; Pearson Correlation Coefficient analyses which reveal relationships between friendship network variables and other relevant variables.

In order to analyze the data, this research uses hypothesis testing and the reporting of subsequent *p* values, which is the dominant approach for distinguishing statistically significant differences in quantitative communication research (Levine, Weber, Hullett, Park, & Lindsey, 2008). This common and universal statistical practice is not without harsh critics (Fritz, Scherndl, & Kühberger, 2012; Hubbard & Lindsay, 2008; Levine et al., 2008). Levine et al. (2008) insist that researchers must be aware of these statistical issues and suggest that reporting estimates of effect size is one way to counteract the problems associated with hypothesis testing. The American

Psychological Association (APA) also recommends that researchers report effect sizes along with p values (Fritz et al., 2012). Fritz et al. (2012) argue that reporting effect sizes is not enough and that confidence intervals around the estimate are necessary in order to be sure that effect sizes are accurate. Researchers also recommend reporting the exact p values (Smith & Fox, 2010). Considering these issues, this research sets the p value at .05, which is a general guideline for determining significance (Rudestam & Newton, 2007), however each test reports the actual p values, the effect sizes, and confidence intervals to give the reader a more complete understanding of the hypotheses tests and research question analyses. To be sure, an effect size of .10 is considered a small effect, an effect size of .30 a medium effect, and an effect size of .50 a large effect (Field, 2005). The results sections of Chapters 4, 5, 6, and 7 describe these analyses in greater detail.

3.5.2. Qualitative In-depth Interview Analysis

The objective of the in-depth interview was to extract contextual data focusing on ten variables. 1) Friendship networks 2) University/Study abroad program 3) Housing 4) Classes 5) Extra-curricular activities 6) Tutor programs 7) Language proficiency 8) Ethnocentrism 9) Information and Communication Technology Use 10) Notes: pertinent information provided by students but not related to any specific variable. The researcher listened to each interview and recorded participant answers to questions under each variable using an Excel spreadsheet. This coding procedure made it possible to consult and analyze each participant in terms of specific variables. This technique represents several of the classic sets of analytic moves described by Miles and Huberman (1994). The researcher then summarized relationships between friendship networks and contact situation variables. For example, 23 of the 34 students had at least 1 class with Argentines, 14 of those students mentioned that they had made some acquaintances with Argentines in class and 2 mentioned that they had met their best friend in class. The purpose of summarizing is not to quantify the interviews but to better understand patterns. This analysis then uses individual

quotations to describe these patterns and put the quantitative survey findings in context.

3.5.3. Confound Checks

The majority (78 participants, 74% of sample) of students who participated in this study reported to be studying in Buenos Aires for one semester. However, 19 students planned on studying for 2 semesters and 7 planned on staying for more than 2 semesters. The goal of this research is to examine international students studying in Buenos Aires and to capture their friendship networks at two points, particularly shortly after arriving in Buenos Aires. Due to the diversity of programs several problems arose during the data collection process that deserve attention.

First, study abroad directors invited all international students associated with their programs to participate, which resulted in some students participating after already having completed one semester. Three students completed the quantitative survey at the beginning and end of their second semester in Buenos Aires. These discrepancies directly affect some of the variables and these cases are not included in the majority of the analyses, specifically those that examine change or relationships upon arrival. After dropping these three cases students completed the first quantitative survey 4.9 weeks after arriving in Buenos Aires and the second survey 18.6 weeks after arriving. In other words a time frame of approximately 13.7 weeks or 3.5 months elapsed between the first and second phases.

Second, students had the option of completing the online survey in Spanish or English. Thus, survey comprehension was potentially a problem for those students whose first language is neither Spanish nor English. In order to control for this confound students answered the following question “English/Spanish may not be your first language so some of the previous questions may not have been clear. Please indicate the number that best indicates your understanding of the questions asked on this survey” on a Likert-type scale with 1=did not understand anything and 7=completely understood

everything. Students reported high survey comprehension at the beginning 6.86 ($SD=.47$) and the end 6.92 ($SD=.27$) of the semester, thus giving confidence that students understood the questions on the survey. See Appendix M for all confound measures.

Chapter 4: Friendship Network Formation and Transformation

The principal objective of this chapter is to extend cross-cultural adaptation theory in terms of the host social communication and ethnic social communication dimensions presented by Kim (2001). Quantitative analyses examine participants complete friendship networks upon arrival and subsequent evolution over the course of the semester. Qualitative analyses give contextual information regarding the nature of how international students' friendship networks form and transform. Additionally, findings present the opportunity to augment scholarly understanding of intercultural friendship by suggesting new propositions concerning its development. Researchers have recognized the role that friendship plays in building intergroup understanding and much literature focusing on intercultural friendship development exists (Gareis, 2000, 2012; Sias et al., 2008; Kudo & Simkin, 2003). One stated study abroad learning objective presented in chapter 1.6 is the development of intercultural sensitivity. Thus, a secondary objective of this chapter is to extend intercultural friendship development theory considering its inherent link to building intercultural sensitivity.

This chapter contains three sections. The first section briefly reviews the literature regarding host social communication, host ethnic communication, and intercultural friendship. This leads to five hypotheses and three research questions followed by a brief description of measures unique to this chapter. The second section presents the results from both the quantitative survey data and the qualitative interviews. The third section discusses the findings in terms of cross-cultural adaptation and intercultural friendship development.

4.1. International Students and Friendship Networks

The interpersonal relationships that international students form are a major factor influencing their adjustment to a new culture (Al-Sharideh & Goe 1998; Church, 1982; Zhang & Goodson, 2011). Kim (2001) presents a series of theorems posing relationships between host social communication and ethnic social communication. Host social communication is generally related to

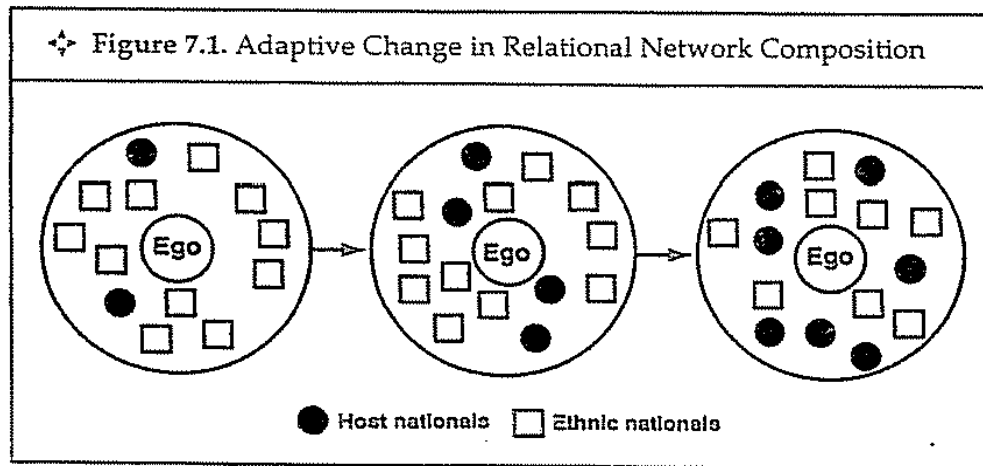
positive adaptive outcomes while ethnic social communication is related to negative adaptive outcomes (Kim 2001). Given the pervasiveness of the positive outcomes related to host social communication, this research examines the dimension in great detail. One common method of assessing an individual's host social communication is by examining their interpersonal relationships, specifically the friendships that they form in the new cultural environment (Kim, 2001; Tanaka et al., 1997). A plethora of research exists examining the influence that newly formed friendships play in the cross-cultural adaptation process (Zhang & Goodson, 2011).

Analyzing international students friendship networks provides a challenge, as they are complex, composed of co-nationals, i.e. friends from one's own country, multi-nationals, i.e. friends from other foreign countries, and host nationals, i.e. friends from the country where one is studying. See chapter 2.1.3. for complete review of Bochner et al.'s (1977) functional model. The interpersonal communication that international students have with the latter group, host nationals, is the principal, driving mechanism in the cross-cultural adaptation process (Kim, 2001) and the most important factor for those adjusting to a new culture (Zimmerman, 1995). However, these host national friendships do not stand alone, they are embedded in, and shaped by the student's whole network. Indeed, most studies using friendship network variables have shown that international student friendship networks were composed mostly of co-national individuals (Bochner et al. 1977; Brown, 2009b; Furnham & Alibhai, 1985; Maundeni, 2001; Neri & Ville, 2008; Pruitt, 1978; Sudweeks et al., 1990; Trice & Elliot, 1993; Ying, 2002). This co-national friendship majority impedes students' ability to develop host national friendships (Kim, 2001). Furthermore, as a person goes through the adaptation process their friendship networks will inherently change over a period of time.

Kim (2001) suggests that an initial homogenate network composed of co-nationals will transform into a network with more host nationals. Thus, over time individuals gradually report more host national friends and fewer co-national friends. Figure 1 provides a visual of this hypothesis.

Figure 1

Kim's (2001) Friendship Network Transformation Illustration



Note: Network size is held constant in this figure to emphasize network composition.

Source: Kim (2001, p. 127)

However, little research involving international students directly examines this proposition. The majority of studies tend to assess students' friendships after individuals have been in the country of study for several months or years. For example one four phase longitudinal study analyzing Taiwanese international students only assessed friendship networks in the last phase after being in the US for 14 months (Ying, 2002). The current research looks to fill this gap by examining individuals' whole networks (co-national, host national, multi-national friends) at two points during the study abroad experience, upon arrival in the new cultural environment and several months later after having almost finished one semester. The following hypotheses are derived from Kim's (2001) propositions regarding initial friendship composition and subsequent transformation.

4.1.1. H1: Students will report more co-national friends than host national friends upon arrival.

4.1.2. H2: Students will report an increase in host national friends over time.

4.1.3. H3: Students will report a decrease in co-national friends over time.

Most empirical studies and theorizing regarding international students and friendship networks involve the comparison between host national and co-national friendship (Gareis, 2000, 2012; Kim, 2001; Kudo & Simkin, 2002; Ying 2002). This is justified considering the role that both groups play in the adaptation process. However, studies have found students to have more multi-national than host national or co-national friends (Bochner et al., 1985; Montgomery & McDowell, 2009). Bochner et al. (1977) describes the multi-national group as a much less salient network that provides companionship for recreational activities. Kim (2001) suggests that there is no relationship between multi-national friends and the development of host communication competence or with the psychological or social dimensions of cross-cultural adaptation. Perhaps multi-national friendships do not drive cross-cultural adaptation, however scholars have observed positive outcomes associated with intercultural friendships for those studying abroad (Sias et al., 2008). Multi-nationals offer the academic, social, and emotional support that students may have lost in the transition to a new country (Montgomery & McDowell, 2009). Furthermore, close, personal relationships with foreigners are an important factor in changing one's international perceptions (Yum, 2001). Given the pervasive existence of multi-national friendships this research looks to better understand the role that this group plays in the cross-cultural adaptation process. Thus, the following research question is posed.

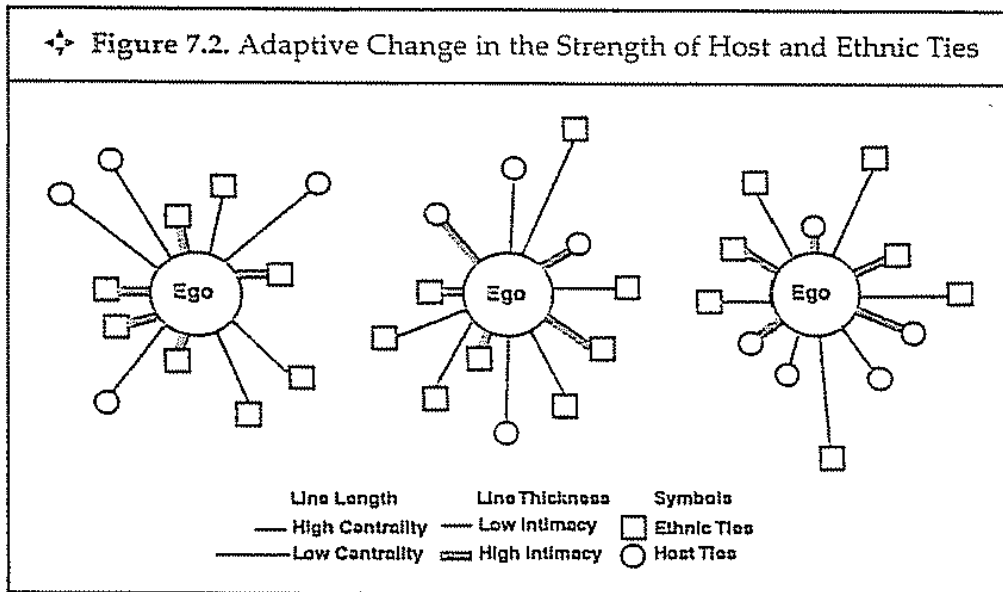
4.1.4. RQ1: What is the relationship between multi-national friendships and co-national and host national friendships?

Along with examining the influence that co-national, host national, and multi-national friends have on the adaptation process; researchers have also examined the relational intimacy of these friendships.

Kim (2001) posits that individuals who have developed stronger relationships with host culture individuals will be more advanced in the cross-cultural adaptation process. These individuals are more likely to incorporate many of the social and psychological attributes of the host culture. However, weaker ties with host nationals also provide information to the host culture's communication patterns and serve as bridges to different groups. See Chapter 2.2.2. for complete review of the resources provided by strong and weak ties. Kim argues that over time individuals will not only incorporate host nationals into their network but will also develop stronger, more intimate relationships with them. Figure 2 provides a visual of this hypothesis.

Figure 2

Kim's (2001) Friendship Tie Strength Transformation Illustration



Source: Kim (2001, p. 129)

Based on Kim's cross-cultural adaptation theory and in order to better understand the intertwining relationship between co-national, host national, and multi-national relationship intimacy the following hypotheses and research question are posed.

4.1.5. RQ2: What kinds of relationships (in terms of tie strength) do international students form with co-nationals, host nationals, and multi-nationals?

4.1.6. H4: International students will report stronger relationships with host nationals over time.

4.1.7. H5: International students will report weaker relationships with co-nationals over time.

Given that international students also develop friendships with multi-nationals and these friendships influence the overall network this investigation also poses the following research question.

4.1.8. RQ3: To what degree do multi-national friendships strengthen over time?

Researchers have also theorized as to how intercultural friendships develop (Sias et al., 2008) and examined the nature of intercultural friendship compared to intracultural friendship (Gudykunst, 1985; Chen, 2002). This investigation adds to this literature as it examines both intercultural (Host nationals and multi-nationals) and intracultural friendships (co-nationals). Findings lead to a theoretical discussion and propositions for future intercultural friendship research.

4.2. Chapter 4 Methodological Considerations

4.2.1. Friendship Network Grid

This chapter analyzes data captured from the exhaustive friendship network grid described in chapter 3.3.1. This longitudinal analysis includes 102 international students after dropping three participants due to time in Buenos Aires confounds. One student did not complete the friendship network grid at the beginning of the semester, but did at the end. This student is included in the time 2 analyses but not in the time 1 analysis nor in the analyses that measure change. Participants list all their friends, indicate where they are from, and report how strong those friendships are on a scale from 10-1 using giving definitions (Hendrickson et al., 2011).

4.2.2. In-Depth Interviews

Sample in-depth interview questions for this chapter include: “How would you describe your friendship network here in Buenos Aires?” “Where are your friends from?” “Who is your best friend?” “When did you meet them?” “How has your friendship network changed?” “Do you have difficulty making local friends?”

4.3. Friendship Network Analysis Results

The subsequent results section contains three parts. First the analysis examines the relationship between co-national, host national, and multi-national friendship networks upon arrival and at the end of the semester and illustrates how these groups transform over time. The analysis includes total co-national, host national, and multi-national friends as well as friendship ratios in relation to the whole network. Second, the analysis examines friendship strength for co-national, host national, and multi-national friends and this evolution over the course of the semester. Third, the analysis includes findings from in-depth interviews with students regarding their friendship network formation and transformation.

4.3.1. Friendship Network Formation and Transformation

This chapter posed three hypotheses and one research question related to friendship network formation and transformation over time. Hypothesis 1 predicted that international students would report more co-national than host national friends at the beginning of the semester. Related to this hypothesis, Research question 1 inquired as to the relationship between multi-nationals, host nationals, and co-nationals. Paired sample T-tests analyses supported hypothesis 1 and speak to research question 1 demonstrating several significant differences between co-national, host national, and multi-national friends at the beginning and end of the semester as well as significant changes over time.

First, international students had more co-national than host national friends at the beginning of the semester $t(100) = 4.95, p = .000, 95\% \text{ CI } [2.11, 4.94], d = .49$. Students also had significantly more co-national than multi-national friends $t(100) = 2.54, p = .013, 95\% \text{ CI } [.47, 3.83], d = .25$. Finally, students had significantly more multi-national friends than host national friends $t(100) = -2.39, p = .019, 95\% \text{ CI } [-2.52, -.24], d = -.24$.

Second, at the end of the semester they still reported significantly more co-national friends than host national friends $t(101) = 2.07, p = .041, 95\% \text{ CI } [.07, 3.46], d = .20$. However, they no longer reported significantly more multi-national friends than host national friends $t(101) = 1.83, p = .07, 95\% \text{ CI } [-.11, 3.28], d = .18$ or more co-national than multi-national friends $t(101) = .17, p = .86, 95\% \text{ CI } [-1.83, 2.19], d = .02$. These reports illustrate friendship networks did indeed change over the course of the semester. The subsequent analysis examines the extent of this change.

Hypothesis 2 predicted that students would report an increase in Argentine friends over time. Paired sample t-tests supported this hypothesis as host national friendship increased significantly $t(100) = -3.19, p = .002, 95\% \text{ CI } [-2.5, -.58], d = -.32$.

Hypothesis 3 predicted that students would report a decrease in co-nationals over time. This hypothesis was not supported, students reported a

slight insignificant decrease in co-nationals over time $t(100) = .395, p = .69$, 95% CI [-.76, 1.1], $d = .04$.

Research Question 1 inquired as to the relationship between multi-nationals and the overall network. Students reported a significant increase in multi-national friends over time $t(100) = 3.45, p = .001$, 95% CI [-2.75, -.74], $d = -.34$. Table 1 shows total co-national, host national, and multi-national friends several weeks after classes began and at the end of the semester.

Table 1

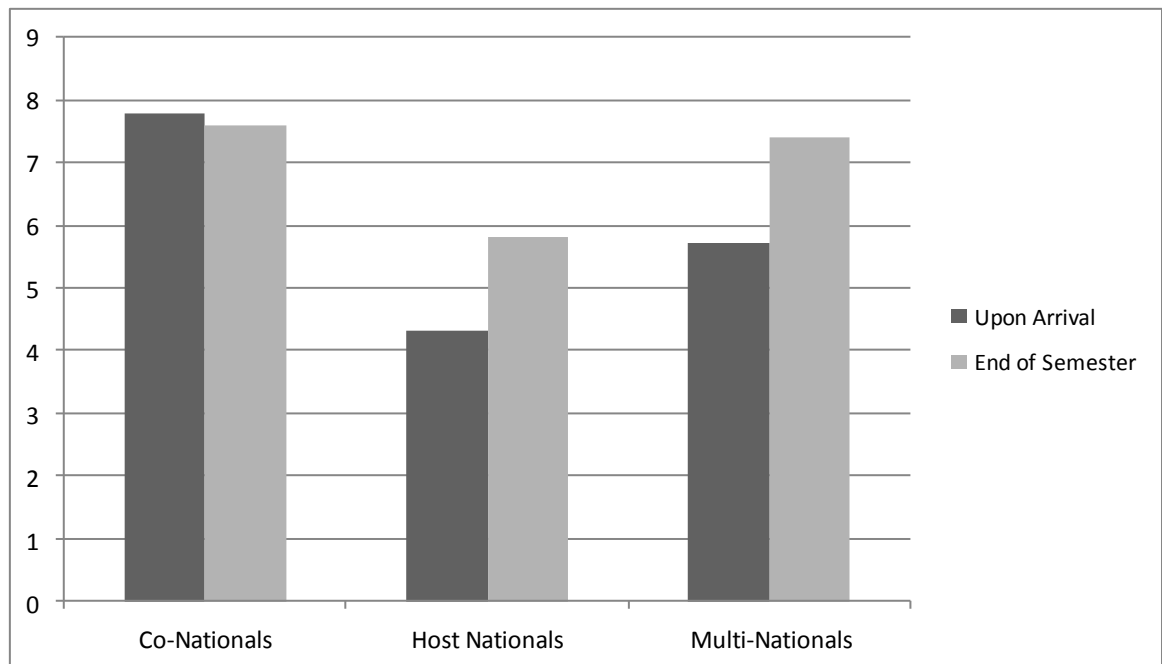
Friendship Variables upon Arrival (Arr) and at the End of the Semester (Dep).

Variable	N = 101				
	Arr <i>M</i>	Dep <i>M</i>	Change <i>M</i>	Arr <i>SD</i>	Dep <i>SD</i>
Co-national Friends	7.8	7.6	-0.2	6.0	6.2
Host national Friends	4.3	5.8	1.5*	4.9	6.1
Multi-national Friends	5.7	7.4	1.7*	5.4	7.7

Note. Change *M* * denotes Paired sample T-test significant differences for arrival and departure * $p < .01$, two-tailed.

Graph 1

Visual of Friendship Variables Upon Arrival and at the End of the Semester



These analyses are based on co-national, host-national, and multi-national friendship totals. However, students varied considerably in the amount of total friendships that they reported. Upon arrival students reported an average of 17.74 ($SD = 10.6$) total friends, although five students reported up to 50 friends while two students reported only four friends. Thus, a second analysis using friendship ratios helps to illustrate friendship network composition more clearly.

At the beginning of the semester students reported a significantly higher ratio of co-national friends than host national friends $t(100) = 6.02, p = .000, 95\% \text{ CI } [.16, .32], d = .60$ and a significantly higher ratio of co-national friends than multi-national friends $t(100) = 3.01, p = .003, 95\% \text{ CI } [.05, .25], d = .30$. They also reported a significantly higher ratio of multi-national than host national friends $t(100) = 2.97, p = .004, 95\% \text{ CI } [.03, .15], d = .30$. At the end of the semester students continued to have a higher ratio of co-national than host national friends $t(101) = 3.31, p = .001, 95\% \text{ CI } [.05, .21], d = .33$ but they no longer had a higher ratio of co-national than multi-national friends $t(101) =$

1.41, $p = .22$, 95% CI [-.04, .16], $d = .12$ or a higher ratio of multi-national than host national friends $t(101) = 1.75$, $p = .06$, 95% CI [.00, .14], $d = .19$. These patterns do indeed mirror the earlier analysis that examined co-national, host national, and multi-national totals as opposed to ratios. Finally, students ratio of co-national friends significantly decreased over time $t(100) = 3.69$, $p = .000$, 95% CI [.03, .10], $d = .37$ while host national friendship network ratio significantly increased over time $t(100) = 2.81$, $p = .006$, 95% CI [-.08, -.01], $d = -.28$. Multi-national friendship ratios remained stable over time $t(100) = -1.1$, $p = .293$, 95% CI [-.05, .02], $d = -.11$. Table 2 illustrates friendship ratios at the beginning and end of the semester along with percent change. Graphs 2 and 3 provide visuals for these changes.

Table 2

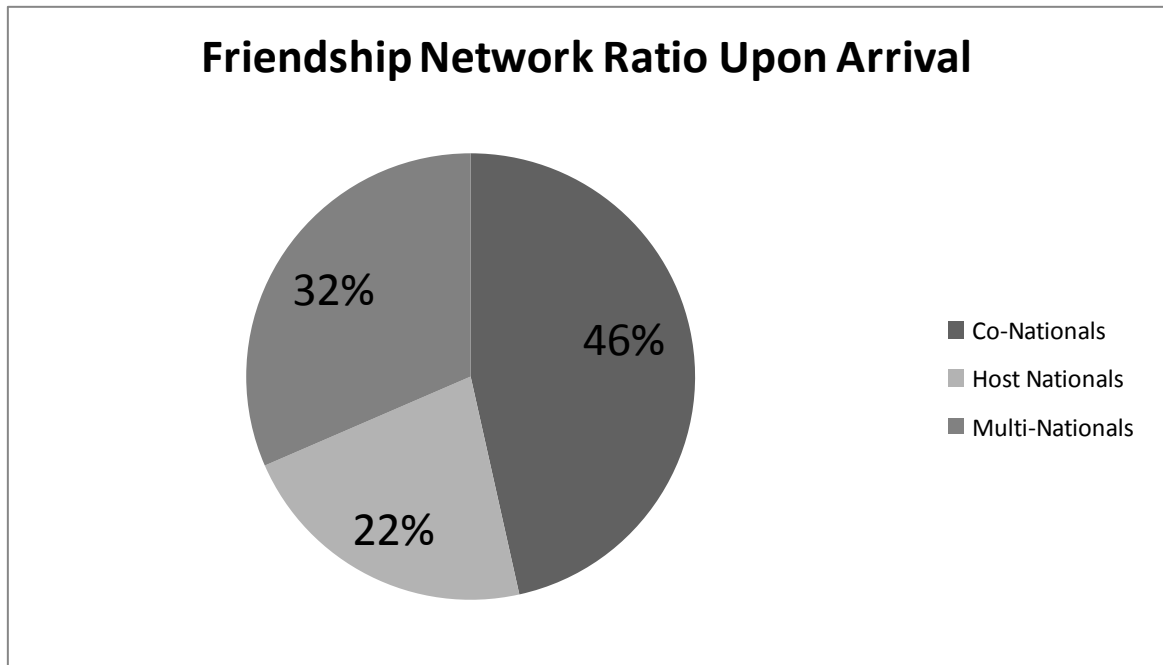
Friendship Ratios upon Arrival (Arr) and at the End of the Semester (Dep).

Variable	N = 101				
	Arr <i>M</i>	Dep <i>M</i>	Change <i>M</i>	Arr <i>SD</i>	Dep <i>SD</i>
Co-national Ratio	46.4%	40.1%	-6.3%*	.29	.28
Host national Ratio	22.3%	26.7%	4.4%*	.17	.19
Multi-national Ratio	31.4%	33.1%	1.7%	.24	.26

Note. Change *M* * denotes Paired sample T-test significant differences for arrival and departure, * $p < .01$, two-tailed

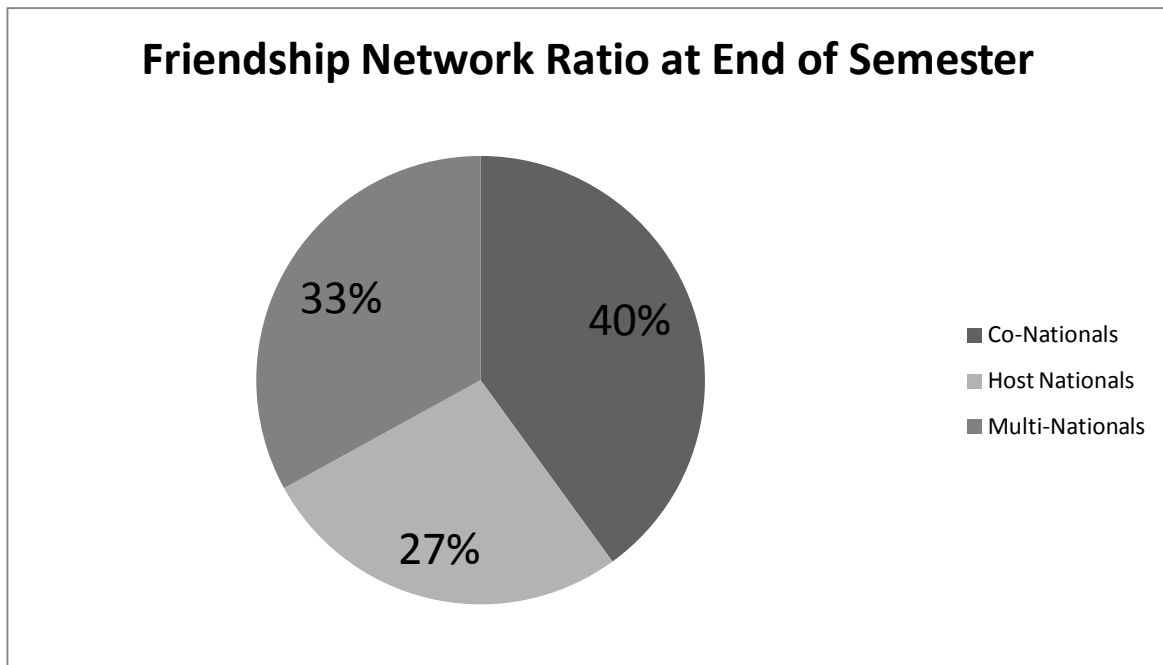
Graph 2

Friendship Network Ratios upon Arrival



Graph 3

Friendship Network Ratios at the End of the Semester



These analyses demonstrate how friendship networks transformed over time and follow the pattern posed by Kim (2001). However, despite this transformation there also tends to be much similarity between time 1 and time 2 friendship networks. Although not specifically stated as hypotheses or research questions, it seems necessary to report the significant correlations between friendship network composition upon arrival and at the end of the semester. Pearson's correlation Coefficients showed significant positive relationships upon arrival and at the end of the semester for host national friends $r(101) = .63, p = .000$, co-national friends $r(101) = .70, p = .000$, and multi-national friends $r(101) = .76, p = .000$. These relationships are not surprising; however they are important to note as future chapters examine factors that influence host national friendship at the end of the semester. These large correlations imply that one potential predictor of host national friendship at the end of the semester is initial composition.

Findings from the quantitative survey provide information as to how international students' friendship networks formed and transformed over the course of the semester. These analyses indicate several important patterns in the overall friendship network composition of international students in this sample. First, students developed significantly more friendships with co-nationals upon arrival than host nationals and multi-nationals. Upon arrival students also developed significantly more multi-national than host national friends. Second, over time the co-national friendships remain relatively stable while host national and multi-national friendships increased. Third, at the end of the semester students still reported more co-national friends, however the ratio of co-nationals decreases while host national ratio increases. These patterns illustrate findings regarding friendship origin. The subsequent section examines friendship strength.

4.3.2. Friendship Strength & Evolution

Research Question 2 asked what kinds of relationships (in terms of tie strength) do international students form with co-nationals, host nationals, and

multi-nationals. Paired sample T-tests revealed that upon arrival students reported significantly stronger friendships with co-nationals than host nationals $t(87) = 4.49, p = .000, 95\% \text{ CI } [.57, 1.5], d = .48$. They also reported significantly stronger friendships with co-nationals than with multi-nationals $t(99) = 4.80, p = .000, 95\% \text{ CI } [.79, 1.9], d = .48$. This pattern remained at the end of the semester as students reported stronger friendships with co-nationals than with host nationals $t(87) = 6.99, p = .000, 95\% \text{ CI } [1.0, 1.8], d = .74$; and stronger friendships with co-nationals than with multi-nationals $t(95) = 6.26, p = .000, 95\% \text{ CI } [1.2, 2.3], d = .64$. These analyses illustrate the differences in friendship strength between the three groups upon arrival and at the end of the semester. See Table 3 for friendship means and standard deviations. The subsequent analysis examines how these friendships strengthened over time.

Table 3

Friendship Strength (scale of 10-1) upon Arrival (Arr) and at the End of the Semester (Dep).

Variable	Arr <i>M</i>	Dep <i>M</i>	Change <i>M</i>	Arr <i>SD</i>	Dep <i>SD</i>
Co-national Friends Strength	6.4	7.3	0.8*	1.8	1.5
Host national Friends Strength	5.3	5.8	0.5*	2.0	1.7
Multi-national Friends Strength	5.0	5.6	0.6*	2.4	2.6

Note. Change *M* * denotes Paired sample T-test significant differences for arrival and departure * $p < .01$, two-tailed. The degrees of freedom for the paired sample t-tests for friendship strength vary because some students reported having either no host national, co-national, or multi-national friends, thus making it impossible to report strength.

Hypothesis 4 predicted that international students would report stronger relationships with host nationals over time. A paired sample T-test supported this hypothesis revealing a significant change in host national strength over

time $t(82) = -3.12, p = .003, 95\% \text{ CI} [-1.2, -.26], d = -.34$.

Hypothesis 5 predicted that international students would report weaker relationships with co-nationals over time. A paired sample T-test did not support this hypothesis. In fact, the analysis revealed significant increases in co-national strength $t(94) = -5.29, p = .000, 95\% \text{ CI} [-1.1, -.50], d = -.54$.

Research Question 3 inquired as to multi-national strength over time. Paired sample t-tests demonstrated significant increases in multi-national strength over time $t(100) = 2.10, p = .039, 95\% \text{ CI} [-1.0, -.03], d = -.21$. These analyses demonstrate that all relationships strengthened over time, consequently a final analysis tested if there was a significant difference in the amount of change. Paired sample T-tests revealed no significant differences between co-national friendship strength change and host national friendship strength change $t(77) = .443, p = .66, \text{ CI} [-.35, .56], d = .05$; no significant differences between co-national friendship strength change and multi-national friendship strength change $t(94) = .80, p = .43, \text{ CI} [-.36, .84], d = .08$; no significant differences between multi-national friendship strength change and host national friendship strength change $t(82) = -.011, p = .99, \text{ CI} [-.67, .67], d = .00$. Table 3 shows co-national, host national, and multi-national friendship strength upon arrival, at the end of the semester, and change over time.

Taken together these analyses illustrate two main patterns regarding the degree of friendship that international students developed with co-nationals, host nationals, and multi-nationals and the way in which these friendships strengthened over time. First, students reported significantly stronger friendships with co-nationals than host nationals or multi-nationals at the beginning and end of the semester. Second, all friendship groups did strengthen over time and there was no significant difference in the degree to which these friendships strengthened. Figures three and four provide a network map of friendship totals and strength upon arrival and at the end of the semester and illustrate network transformation over time. These figures were produced using UCINET and Netdraw software (Borgatti, 2002; Borgatti, Everett, & Freeman, 2002).

Figure 3

International Student Friendship Total and Strength Upon Arrival

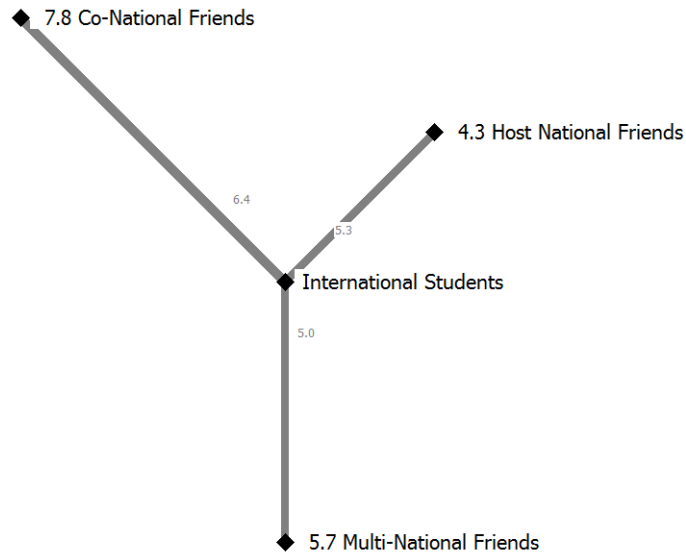
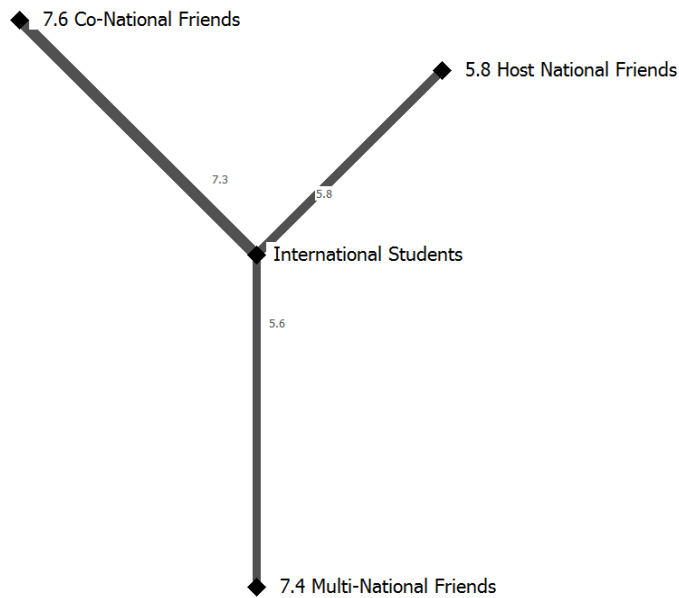


Figure 4

International Student Friendship Total and Strength at the End of the Semester



Source: UCINET and Netdraw software (Borgatti, 2002; Borgatti, Everett, & Freeman, 2002).

4.3.3. Friendship Networks in Context

During interviews students discussed their friendship network formation and transformation in-depth. The researcher asked students who their best friends and acquaintance friends were, when and where they met them, and how their network had changed over time. Findings from in-depth interviews not only contextualize and corroborate the quantitative survey results but also help explain the many patterns that emerged.

The majority of students mentioned that they had met their best or closest friends when they first arrived in Buenos Aires. These initial encounters occurred at student orientation, during intensive Spanish classes, at the airport, and in student's first housing situations. In these initial meetings students tended to be with other international students and/or students from their specific study abroad program. Students answered the question, how would you describe your friendship network here in Buenos Aires? A German student at a private university said (Ref 2):

My friends are mostly other international students that I met during the first week of orientation, not so many locals (...) Students from all over the world, North America, France, Germany, Italy, and other Latin American countries.

A US student at a private university commented (Ref 12):

My best friends are 3 girls from my university in the US that I met and got to know here in Buenos Aires. Those three know me the best. After that other foreign students; a German girl, a Dutch girl, another US girl, and three argentine girls that I see on the weekends.

An Austrian student at a private university said (Ref 15):

I'm a special case because one of best friends from Austria is here as well. My other good friend is from Germany. Three weeks ago I met a Colombian girl. I just met an Argentine girl that I have communication with almost everyday.

This student already had a close friend when he arrived in Buenos Aires. Many students already had close friends before arriving and/or met their best friends during their first few days in Buenos Aires. A student from the Czech Republic said (Ref 16):

My best friend is my roommate who I met the first day here, she's a girl from Russia who studies at my university in Prague, and my other close friend is an Argentine who I met in Prague before coming.

Along with discussing friendship composition students also described how their friendship network changed or did not change over the course of the semester. A German student described this evolution (Ref 8):

Many of my friends are international students, not Argentines, but Spanish speakers from Chile, Ecuador, Uruguay (...) I also have some Argentine friends, but more distant, not that many 4 or 5 (...) Once you know one person, you always meet more. The Argentines bring more Argentine friends and the network grows.

[The researcher then asked, do you feel as if your network has changed?]

Yes, when I arrived I talked a lot with German speakers, Swiss, Austrians, and Germans. It was really easy because they had the same problems and all that. After I told myself that I didn't come here to speak German, I want to learn Spanish so I sought out other people.

A Mexican student explained how she gradually incorporated more host nationals into her network towards the end of her stay and expressed her disappointment in not having Argentine friends from the beginning (Ref 20):

I would have liked to integrate myself sooner, now that I've developed friendships with Argentines I'm leaving.

International students that participated in this study described their friendship networks and how they transformed over the course of the semester. Students tended to form their closest friendships upon arrival or even before coming and those friendships were with co-nationals and multi-nationals. Students also described their relationships with host nationals and in many cases said that they had met them after being in Buenos Aires for several months. They also discussed reasons for why international students do not make as many Argentine friends as they would like, a girl from Finland commented (Ref 7):

It could be because we're here only for a short time and a lot of Argentines are working and going to school, and they don't really have the same life that we live (...) It's easier to make friends with the exchange students because they're in the same situation as you.

During in-depth interviews several international students mentioned that they had spent time contemplating their friendship networks as well as discussing the issue with other students. A US student studying at a private university expressed this idea (Ref 1):

I was thinking that if one day I want to return to Argentina I won't have one connection here because all of my friends are foreigners. I could go to France, Colombia, whatever, but I don't have friends here, it's a shame.

This theme was evident on the quantitative survey as well. The last question on the questionnaire asked students if they could give one piece of specific, practical, advice to other international students coming to Buenos Aires what would it be. Students' responses ranged from where to live and places to visit in Buenos Aires along with ways to stay safe. However, the most common theme was related to friendship network formation. Students recommended building more friendships with host nationals and encouraged them to reduce time spent with co-nationals and multi-nationals. The following is one example response from a US student studying at a private university.

Don't stay super tight with your group of exchange students - it makes it almost impossible to become good friends with local Argentines.

Thus, students are not oblivious to the role that friendships networks play in their lives in Buenos Aires. They are aware of the importance of making host national friends but also realistic regarding the possibilities of completely immersing themselves into the culture.

4.4. Friendship Analysis Discussion

Results from the quantitative survey and interview analysis add to current scholarly knowledge concerning international student friendship network formation and transformation. First, findings demonstrate the nature of friendship network development and transformation while highlighting the interplay between strong and weak ties. Second, findings confirm three hypotheses derived from Kim's (2001) cross-cultural adaptation theory predicting stranger's social communication patterns. Third, findings highlight the challenges and nuances of friendship formation in an international education context. The ensuing discussion first compares these findings to other research concerning adult friendship. It then describes these results under Kim's framework and advances her theory. The second part contemplates the implications of this research for intercultural friendship development.

4.4.1. Cross-Cultural Adaptation Theory Confirmation and Extension

Findings from this research illustrate rapid friendship network development. Research on adult friendship in the US has found that on average, adults have ten to twenty casual friends, four to six close friends, and only one to two best friends (Beebe, Beebe, & Ivy, 2007). Although the current research did not ask students to categorize friends in this way, findings do follow a similar pattern in a relatively short time period. After 4.9 ($SD= 2.1$) weeks students reported an average of 17.74 ($SD=10.6$) total friends with an average strength of 5.89 ($SD=1.25$). More specifically, 9% of total friends reported were rated as a 9 or 10 while 16% were rated as a 7 or 8. This finding is important as it shows that friendship networks that started at nearly zero grew to similar proportions as in friendship network studies conducted with adults already established in a geographic location. Another study conducted with international students who had been in Hawai'i for an average of 32 months found students to have an average of 20.56 ($SD=14.61$) friends (Hendrickson et al., 2011). The finding from this research illustrates a tendency, at least for international students in Buenos Aires, to build new friendship networks similar in size to that of average adults and other international student samples. This information puts subsequent co-national, host national, and multi-national friendship network transformation into context.

Findings from this research supported the hypothesis that international students would gradually incorporate more host national friends into their network over time. This is congruent with Kim's (2001) proposition that over time strangers will develop, at least a limited number of, interpersonal ties with host nationals. Furthermore, this augmentation of host nationals subsequently produces an increased ratio of host ties to all ties included in the personal network. Findings from the current research demonstrate both phenomena. Over the course of 3.5 months student's initial host national ratio changed from 22.3% to 26.7% a significant increase of 4.4%. Likewise Kim theorizes that as host national ratios rise, co-national ratios drop. Findings from this research

confirm this as well. Over the course of 3.5 months students' initial co-national ratio decreased from 46.4% to 40.1%, a significant decrease of 6.3%. These findings are important as they not only confirm Kim's theory concerning adaptive change but also extend the theory by specifying the time frame in which the changes occur. Findings from the current research also illustrate the role of multi-nationals in the friendship network patterns of international students.

Research suggests little relationship between multi-national interpersonal relationships and cross-cultural adaptation (Bochner et al., 1977; Kim, 2001). Findings from the current study contrast these earlier premises suggesting that multi-nationals do play an active role in the adaptation process, at least in the international student context. On one hand, they potentially hinder the potential to make host national friends. Upon arrival many international students' first contacts are with those from other countries. Students, although they come from different countries, find a sense of security with multi-nationals who share the common experience of being strangers in Buenos Aires (Sias et al., 2008). They meet others who are in the same eager search for new friends and social support. However, this rapid friendship network construction with multi-nationals seems to leave students with less room to incorporate valuable host national friends into the network.

Although multi-nationals act like co-nationals in that they hinder a student's ability to make host national friends, they do seem to be a better alternative in terms of cross-cultural adaptation and increased host communication competence than co-nationals. Friendship with multi-nationals potentially paves the way for interactions with and participation in communication activities with host nationals. Students get accustomed to adapting to different communication patterns and with multi-nationals students spend time comparing cultural similarities and contrasting cultural differences. Moreover, in many cases international students practice speaking and communicating in the local language with other native Spanish speakers, whereas with co-nationals they tend to speak their native language.

Additionally, individuals from Spanish Speaking South American countries share many communication patterns due to a common cultural history (Stephenson, 2003). Consequently, non-native Spanish speakers, particularly those from the United States and Europe benefit from Latin American friends not only for language acquisition but also for better understanding common regional communication patterns. In short, multi-nationals serve as a bridge for students to acquire host communication competence.

Findings from this research confirm Kim's (2001) theory positing that individuals will increase friendship strength with host nationals over time. However, even though students' overall network evolved with the inclusion of more intimate relationships with host nationals and multi-nationals over time, students' closest, best friends remained stable and these stronger, more enduring relationships tended to be with co-nationals met upon arrival. Brown (2009b) observed the same phenomenon with international students in England. One logical explanation for this tendency to form stronger relationships with co-nationals can be attributed to cultural similarities in friendship patterns. When students arrive in a new culture they are faced with an abundance of cultural differences (e.g., institutions, language, food). By building friendships with co-nationals they avert the further challenge of negotiating intercultural friendship as well.

Cultural differences related to friendship patterns have received much attention in the intercultural relations literature (Gareis, 2000, 2012; Maeda & Ritchie, 2003; Trice, 2007). Stephenson (2003) describes different friendship characteristics in Spanish Speaking South America (SSSA) than English speaking North America (ESNA). In SSSA friendship involves a significant investment of personal energy and commitment while people tend to prefer a tight-knit group of intimate peers with some degree of inclusion within the family unit. Thus, it is important to acknowledge the potential role that cultural differences play in hindering intercultural friendship. Communication researchers note that perceptions of intercultural interactions do affect initial encounters (Chen, 2002). However, research suggests that intracultural

relationships follow similar patterns as intercultural relationships (Gudykunst, 1985) and that once intercultural friendships form, individuals tend to perceive similarities in the same way as with intracultural friendships (Gudykunst, 1985). Moreover, one study reported that international students were able to satisfy emotional needs with both co-national and host national friendships (Kudo & Simkin, 2003). Findings from the current investigation suggest that co-national, multi-national, and host national friendships grow stronger at similar rates. However, the friendship groups do seem to differ in terms of their development. This extends previous research related to intercultural friendship development.

4.4.2. Intercultural Friendship Development

Sias et. al (2008) identified four factors that influence intercultural friendship development; perceived similarity, perceived differences, prior intercultural experience, and targeted socializing. Findings from the current study highlight these four factors, distinguish how these factors manifest differently for host nationals and multi-nationals, and propose a fifth intercultural friendship development factor.

First, upon arrival and at the end of the semester international students reported approximately one-third of their friends to be multi-nationals. During in-depth interviews they discussed the ease of forming friendships with other international students due to perceived similarities. Regardless of cultural origin students share the common experience of living away from home, exploring a new city, facing challenges adapting to Argentine culture, and in the case of many enjoy a great deal of free time to socialize. Shared experiences function to make friendships closer while giving individuals common conversation topics (Montgomery & McDowell, 2009). However, intercultural friendship with host nationals does not present the same perceived similarity element as multi-national friendship. Moreover, results indicate that international students and host nationals often lead parallel lives, a finding which mirrors studies in other countries (Montgomery & McDowell, 2009). A large majority of local students

not only work and study but also live with their family far away from the university, thus have much less free time than international students. In many cases host nationals do not have the same experiences traveling or living in an international context (Montgomery & McDowell, 2009).

Second, international students share differences with multi-nationals which results in their relationships being more mysterious and exciting. In the current study a Colombian student said that he enjoyed his newly formed French friends more than his co-national friends because they always have new things to discuss beyond mundane daily activities (Ref 3). The perceived differences factor is certainly a constant in both host national and multi-national friendship. Cultural differences spark ones interest, give the impression of uniqueness, and facilitate intriguing conversations and discussions (Sias et al., 2008).

Third, international students have several days of orientation and group activities upon arrival and thus share immediate targeted socializing. They also have specialized classes and Spanish language classes, as well as organized group trips and gatherings throughout the semester. However, this targeted socializing tends to include mostly international students with the exception of host national organizers and other local students interested in forming relationship with foreigners. These individuals likely have prior experience, which is one factor presented by Sias et al. (2008) that both multi-national and host national friends share.

The fourth factor in Sias et al.'s (2008) model, prior experience, was present during in-depth interviews as many students did discuss their previous experiences living and studying abroad. When Sias et al. conducted their research they interviewed foreigners as well as host nationals and addressed the prior experience factor in terms of host nationals. Prior experience as an intercultural friendship formation factor likely plays a central role with host nationals (Bennett et al., 2013). Along with highlighting the four factors of intercultural friendship development presented by Sias et. al findings from this research suggest that necessity is also a factor that plays a role in friendship

formation.

When international students first arrive in a new cultural environment, the majority of them form intercultural friendships, along with intracultural (co-national) friendships. Interpersonal communication scholars identify two relationship types; those of circumstance and those of choice (Beebe et al., 2007). Circumstantial relationships form situationally and include family members, teachers, classmates, and coworkers. Choice relationships are those that individuals seek out intentionally such as friends or lovers. International students' initial circumstantial relationships (classmates, person sitting next to them at orientation, person in line to get food at orientation, person waiting next to them at the airport) evolve into those of choice hastily due to necessity. One student answered the question "how would you describe your friendship network here in Buenos Aires?" by directly mentioning this factor (Ref 18):

That's a difficult question for me because I came here to learn the culture and the language and it seems like many of the students here made friends out of necessity because they don't want to do things alone. I'm not like that, I don't want friends out of necessity just because I'm afraid to do things alone.

The current study suggests that one reason why international students participate in targeted socializing, at least upon arrival, is out of necessity to build a social network and have friends. Necessity is a factor that differentiates intercultural friendship formation with multi-nationals and host nationals. Locals simply do not have the same necessity as international students to build their friendship networks (Brebner, 2008; Gareis, 2012). One exception may be those host nationals who moved to Buenos Aires from other parts of the country. Many students described their host national friends as non-Porteños (Buenos Aires natives). These individuals do share the perceived similarity of being an outsider in Buenos Aires to some degree and potentially have more necessity to make new friends. Future research on intercultural friendship

development should focus on the specific characteristics of those host nationals identified as friends by international students.

4.4.3. Friendship Network Theorizing Limitations

First, this longitudinal study captured friendship networks early in the study abroad experience. Consequently, the generalizability of the findings to students studying abroad for several years is not possible. These findings indicate rapid friendship network development and transformation; however, this evolution could potentially slow over time. Further research assessing student's networks after one year or even two years is needed to better understand the cross-cultural adaptation phenomenon from a long-term perspective. Second, the international students in this sample differ greatly from other sojourner groups and caution should be taken before generalizing these findings. They have relatively few responsibilities and a great deal of time to build their social networks and search for new friendships.

4.5. Friendship Network Formation and Transformation Conclusion

This chapter informs scholarly understanding of how intercultural friendships initially develop and subsequently transform over time. Students tended to form extensive, complex, friendship networks rapidly, and upon arrival these networks comprised significantly more co-national and multi-national than host national friends. This study theorized that this fast network formation was partly due to necessity. Previous research has focused on the function of host national and co-national friendship in the adaptation process, while this study suggests that multi-national friends also play a unique role. On one hand they potentially impede the formation of host national friendship but on the other hand they pave the way for host communication competence acquisition. Finally, this study confirms Kim's (2001) cross-cultural adaptation theory and extends the host social communication dimension regarding the time frame in which individuals incorporate and develop more intimate relationships with host nationals.

Chapter 4 focused on friendship network development and subsequent transformation. The next chapter identifies the situations and contexts in which students build their friendship networks.

Chapter 5: Micro Environmental Conditions: University Setting, Housing, Classroom Makeup, Extra-Curricular Activities, and Tutor Programs

One of the most important factors shaping the cross-cultural adaptation process is the new cultural environment in which individuals find themselves (Kim, 2001). This cultural environment can range from macro level factors such as the new country in question and rural versus urban living distinctions to micro level factors such as the individual's neighborhood, workplace, and/or building. This research analyzes the intricacies of international students' micro-environment, and although not specifically included as a variable in this chapter discusses macro level factors related to cultural variations between countries of origin.

This chapter first analyzes the University setting and specific study abroad program in which each student is enrolled. This analysis is followed by an individual analysis of each micro level variable presented in Chapter 2 and later verified as significant elements during interviews with study abroad directors. These variables include classroom makeup, housing, extra-curricular activities, and tutor programs. Findings and implications for each variable are presented separately. The final section gives overall conclusions related to the micro-environment.

5.1. Study Abroad Programs and University Setting

As previously described in Chapter 1.5.2, Engle and Engle (2003) classified study abroad programs into five levels based on immersion into the host culture. Level one is the *study tour*, level two is the *short-term study*, level 3 is the *cross-cultural contact* program, level 4 is the *cross-cultural encounter*, and level 5 is *cross-cultural immersion*. This classification system was useful in preparing interviews with study abroad directors and findings from the interviews show many similarities with this classification system. However, in

order to better understand how this micro-environment factor influences the adaptation process, a different, more pragmatic means for classifying programs is necessary considering that the selected programs tend to combine various immersion characteristics described in levels three, four, and five of Engle and Engle's (2003) typology. Furthermore, this research only includes students studying for at least one semester, thus excluding level one and level two type programs.

5.1.1. Program Classification

Findings from interviews with study abroad directors revealed that programs vary considerably in terms of the overall experience that their respective students have. Despite this diversity, administrative origin is the clearest way to categorize the distinct study abroad programs that participated in the current study. Categorizing according to administrative origin makes it possible to compare the experiences of those international students affiliated with study abroad offices operating in Private universities in Buenos Aires, Public universities in Buenos Aires, and US based study abroad programs. Furthermore, this categorization highlights the debate presented in chapter 1 which considers the impacts of intervention and extent of immersion on both cross-cultural adaptation and student learning abroad. It is important to recognize that the following classification only refers to the 10 programs and universities that participated in this study and is certainly not exhaustive of the existing programs in Buenos Aires.

The first types are study abroad programs operating in private universities in Buenos Aires who have agreements with foreign universities and study abroad institutes. In general the students arrive in Buenos Aires a few weeks before classes start and begin the housing search. The program is not directly involved in this process but does provide students with ample information about housing and some of the programs do contract private companies that offer host family options. These programs have orientations in which they provide students with information concerning Buenos Aires.

Students directly enroll in classes at the university and take classes side by side with local students. The private universities also offer a variety of classes specifically designed for international students and in some cases these classes are in English. The program advises them on classes they should or should not take based on the experiences of past international students with specific subjects, classes, and professors. They generally take Spanish language classes according to their Spanish level. These programs also help students with the visa process and provide support throughout the semester. Three out of the four private university programs have a tutor program that assigns a host national student volunteer to those international students who want to participate in the program. The host national volunteer helps them with any academic or social questions they might have and in some cases they develop a friendship.

The second types are study abroad programs operating in public universities in Buenos Aires who have agreements with foreign universities or in some cases students enroll directly to the university without any kind of between university agreements. Each public university has an independent study abroad office that conforms to the needs of their international students. Three of the ten programs that participated in this study were from the public university. These programs are similar to the private universities in terms of orientation, academic counseling, and an independent housing search. One program that participated in this research has a tutor program, although the tutors are volunteers who do all the organization and receive no support from the program administration.

The main difference between the private and public university has to do with the different kind of experience that they offer and the amount of support that the program provides. Students in public universities generally have a more independent experience in which the institution offers minimal special accommodations for international students. In theory, they have contact with local students from a broader socioeconomic range than in private universities for two reasons. First, public universities are free for all Argentine citizens so students from more humble families who don't have the resources to attend a

private university have the opportunity for higher education. Second, many public universities are highly regarded in terms of academic rigor, thus students who do have the resources to pay for a private education also choose public universities for their excellence. The private universities are more heavily staffed and provide more support for international students than public universities. For example the study abroad offices in the private universities have longer office hours during which students can raise questions or concerns. Furthermore, international students have much more flexibility in class selection in the private universities than the public university. Indeed, international students in many of the private universities have the option of taking courses specifically designed for international students.

The third types are study abroad programs that would fall under the island or branch program classification presented in chapter 1 (Hoffa, 2007; Pedersen, 2009; Vande Berg, 2004). Four programs of this type agreed to interviews and three participated in the current study. These programs are branches of U.S. Universities or independent study abroad companies with campuses in Buenos Aires. The three island programs that participated share similar organizational characteristics but also several differences. In all three programs students live with Argentine host families, although in one program they have the option of seeking independent housing. They study with other students from the US and in some cases students from their home university. All students take Spanish language classes with other students from the United States and depending on their level take coursework in English and Spanish. In general Argentine professors give classes but students are otherwise separated from the Argentine university system. These programs organize several days of group orientation, group events, group excursions, and provide the students with a great deal of support. They have excellent facilities, including modern computer labs, libraries, lounge areas, and in the case of the branch campus, a private pool and grilling area.

These programs also differ in several ways. One of these programs has special agreements with public and private universities in Buenos Aires that

give students the option of taking one or two classes at Argentine universities. Thus, in this case the students have varied classroom dynamics, some are composed only of U.S. Americans, others are in private universities with just international students or mixed with Argentine students, and still others in the public university in shared classes with Argentine students. This program also organizes music and art workshops along with conversation exchanges. Finally, one of these programs requires students to conduct an independent research project on a specific topic of interest in which they must conduct interviews with key informants and in some cases travel to other parts of Argentina or neighboring countries. Indeed, the US based programs that participated in this research have several distinguishing elements. However, the founding structure is the same; US students studying with other US students separated from the local university structure.

The main objective of this chapter is to examine how the cultural environments, specifically micro level factors, influence the amount of interpersonal contact that students have with host nationals and shape the friendship networks of international students in Buenos Aires. This study proposes that study abroad program administration, and the university setting that they offer, will strongly influence the friendship networks that students develop. In order to compare how these three program groups impact international friendship networks the following research question is posed.

5.1.1.1. RQ4: What differences in friendship network composition exist between students studying at private universities, public universities, and in US based study abroad programs?

Findings from interviews with study abroad directors identify administrative origin as an environmental variable that likely affects the quantity and quality of interpersonal contact that students have with host nationals. However, there is much contact variability within programs specifically in terms of classroom composition, living arrangements, organized

extra-curricular activities, and tutor program participation. As such, the following analysis first presents the relationship between study abroad program administrative origin and friendship network formation. This is followed by an across program analysis of the relationship between each independent variable (housing, classes, extra-curricular activities, tutor program) and friendship network formation. The goal is to identify the variables that most influence host national friendship formation.

5.1.2. University Setting and Friendship Formation

This study proposed that the study abroad program organizational model would strongly influence how international students' friendship networks formed and transformed in Buenos Aires. This analysis categorizes semester long study abroad programs in Buenos Aires into three types; private Argentine universities, public Argentine universities, and US based study abroad programs. Table 4 presents demographic information for the three university types. Participants from the three types differed in terms of age and semesters of university education completed. Specifically, students in US based programs are younger on average than their counterparts in local universities. This difference illustrates a general trend in the US study abroad industry. This investigation poses no hypotheses or research questions related to age or university experience, however it does not discount the role that age could potentially play in the friendship formation process.

Table 4

Across University Participant Demographics

	Participants				Age M (SD)	Semesters Completed
	Total	N. A.	Europe	L. A.		
Private	69	18	42	9	22 (2.73)	5
Public	9	1	5	3	24 (3.26)	6
US Based	27	27	0	0	20 (.58)	4

Statistical analyses demonstrate several significant differences in friendship network composition between the three university settings shortly after students arrived and at the end of the semester. See Table 5 for both time 1 and time 2 co-national, multi-national, and host national friendship totals between university settings. As noted in chapter 3.4.1. the sample size for the public university is considerably smaller than the private university and the US based programs. This analysis presents the data for all three groups and cautions the reader in making any concrete conclusions related to significant public university findings.

First, one-way ANOVAs revealed a significant difference between the three university settings for co-national $F(2, 98) = 15.15, p = .000, \eta^2 = .24$, multi-national $F(2, 98) = 16.28, p = .000, \eta^2 = .25$, and host national friends $F(2, 98) = 3.9, p = .02, \eta^2 = .07$ at the beginning of the semester. The ANOVA test only illustrates that there is a significant difference between university settings, but does not specify which university settings were significantly different from each other. Thus, an additional analysis, the Tukey Post Hoc test was run. This analysis revealed that students studying in US based programs ($M = 12.59, 95\% \text{ CI } [10, 15]$) had significantly more co-national friends than those studying at public universities ($M = 6.57, 95\% \text{ CI } [1.2, 11.9]$), $p = .023$ and private universities ($M = 6.01, 95\% \text{ CI } [4.9, 7.2]$), $p = .000$; that students studying in US based programs ($M = 1.44, 95\% \text{ CI } [.8, 2.1]$) had significantly less multi-national friends than those studying at public universities ($M = 10.43, 95\% \text{ CI } [4.5, 16.4]$), $p = .000$ and private universities ($M = 6.87, 95\% \text{ CI } [5.6, 8.2]$), $p = .000$; and that students studying in US based programs ($M = 3.04, 95\% \text{ CI } [1.32, 4.76]$) had significantly less host-national friends than those studying at public universities ($M = 8.71, 95\% \text{ CI } [3.2, 14]$), $p = .018$.

Second, one-way ANOVAs at the end of the semester also showed that there was a significant difference between the three university settings for co-national friends $F(2, 99) = 4.8, p = .010, \eta^2 = .09$ and multi-national friends $F(2, 99) = 15.41, p = .000, \eta^2 = .24$, but not for host national friends $F(2, 99) = 2.13, p = .124, \eta^2 = .04$. Tukey post hoc tests revealed that students studying in

US based programs ($M = 10.41$, 95% CI [8.3, 12.5]) still had significantly more co-national friends than those studying at public universities ($M = 4.13$, 95% CI [1.8, 6.5]) $p = .030$ and private universities ($M = 6.81$, 95% CI [5.2, 8.4]) $p = .027$ and that students studying in US based programs ($M = 1.7$, 95% CI [.95, 2.5]) still had significantly less multi-national friends than those at public universities ($M = 14.63$, 95% CI [4.2, 25]), $p = .000$ and private universities ($M = 8.79$, 95% CI [7, 10.5]), $p = .000$.

Table 5

Friendship Totals Across University Setting

University Type	N	Co-Nat (Arr)	Co-Nat (Dep)	Multi (Arr)	Multi (Dep)	Host (Arr)	Host (Dep)
Private	67	6.0	6.8	6.9	8.8	4.3	5.9
Public	8	6.6	4.1	10.4	14.6	8.7	9.5
US Based	27	12.6	10.4	1.4	1.7	3.0	4.6

It is important to note that some students listed up to 50 friends while others listed as few as 3 friends. Consequently, this analysis includes friendship ratios in order to better understand overall friendship networks and to more accurately compare these networks across university settings.

First, one-way ANOVAs showed that upon arrival there was a significant difference between the three university settings for co-national ratios $F(2, 98) = 40.23$, $p = .000$, $\eta^2 = .45$, multi-national ratios $F(2, 98) = 24.29$, $p = .000$, $\eta^2 = .33$, and host national ratios $F(2, 98) = 6.97$, $p = .001$, $\eta^2 = .12$. Tukey post hoc tests for friendship ratios revealed the same trends as with friendship totals, students studying in US based programs ($M = .77$, 95% CI [.70, .84]) had a significantly higher ratio of co-national friends than those studying at public universities ($M = .21$, 95% CI [.09, .33]), $p = .000$ and private universities ($M = .37$, 95% CI [.31, .42]), $p = .000$; that students studying in US based programs ($M = .08$, 95% CI [.05, .12]) had a significantly lower ratio of multi-national friends than those studying at public universities ($M = .41$, 95%

CI [.24, .57]), $p = .001$ and private universities ($M = .40$, 95% CI [.34, .45]), $p = .000$; and that students studying in US based programs ($M = .77$, 95% CI [.70, .84]) had a significantly lower ratio of host-national friends than those studying at public universities ($M = .39$, 95% CI [.18, .60]), $p = .002$ and for private universities as well ($M = .24$, 95% CI [.20, .28]), $p = .040$. Table 6 illustrates friendship network ratios.

Second, one-way ANOVAs at the end of the semester showed the same significant differences for friendship ratios as for friendship totals. There was a significant difference between the three university settings for co-national ratios $F(2, 99) = 33.16$, $p = .000$, $\eta^2 = .40$ and multi-national ratios $F(2, 99) = 21.76$, $p = .000$, $\eta^2 = .31$, but not for host national friendship ratios $F(2, 99) = 1.26$, $p = .289$, $\eta^2 = .02$. Finally, Tukey post hoc tests for friendship ratios at the end of the semester revealed the same trends as with friendship totals. Students studying in US based programs ($M = .68$, 95% CI [.60, .76]) still had a significantly higher ratio of co-national friends than those studying at public universities ($M = .13$, 95% CI [.08, .19]), $p = .000$ and private universities ($M = .32$, 95% CI [.26, .37]), $p = .000$ and that students studying in US based programs ($M = .10$, 95% CI [.06, .14]) still had a significantly lower ratio of multi-national friends than those studying at public universities ($M = .55$, 95% CI [.36, .74]), $p = .000$ and private universities ($M = .40$, 95% CI [.34, .47]), $p = .000$. However students studying in US based programs ($M = .22$, 95% CI [.14, .30]) no longer had a significantly lower ratio of host-national friends than those studying at public universities ($M = .32$, 95% CI [.14, .49]), $p = .41$. Thus, the additional friendship ratio analysis demonstrated that friendship network ratios across university settings were similar to friendship totals. Table 6 illustrates friendship network ratios.

Table 6*Friendship Ratios Across University Setting*

University Type	N	Co-Nat Ratio (Arr)	Co-Nat Ratio (Dep)	Multi Ratio (Arr)	Multi Ratio (Dep)	Host Ratio (Arr)	Host Ratio (Dep)
Private	67	36%	32%	40%	40%	24%	28%
Public	8	21%	13%	41%	55%	39%	32%
US Based	27	77%	68%	8%	10%	15%	22%

Analyzing friendship totals and friendship network ratios illustrates three general trends concerning different university settings and international students' friendship groups. First, students who study abroad through US based programs have significantly more co-national friends shortly after classes begin and at the end of the semester than students who study at Argentine private and public universities. Second, students who study at Argentine private and public universities have significantly more multi-national friends shortly after classes begin and at the end of the semester than students studying abroad through US based institutions. Third, students studying through US based programs have significantly less host national friends than students studying at Private and Public universities at the beginning of the semester, however this difference is no longer significant at the end of the semester.

During in-depth interviews students from the three different university settings described their friendship networks. One student from the US studying in a US based program gave a rather blunt answer to the question "Who are your friends here?" (Ref 31):

Americans, Americans mostly from my group. I have another friend from high school studying in the _____ program that I hang out with too. We haven't integrated at all.

This specific program is well organized. The majority of students arrive at the airport together, however one girl said she arrived in Buenos Aires a few days early and then went to the airport to meet up with the group (Ref 28). The coordinators then take the group to an “estancia” outside of Buenos Aires for three nights where the students have a group orientation, get to know each other, and learn how to navigate the city (Refs 28, 29, 30, 31). After the initial orientation at the estancia students spent a night together at a hotel in Buenos Aires. The following day they did a drop off activity where small groups had to find their way back to the program headquarters from various points in the city. After four days and nights together their homestay families came to pick them up (Refs 28, 29, 30, 31).

These first encounters and initial days in Buenos Aires were influential in the friendship network formation for these students. All of the students interviewed recalled meeting their best friends in BA for the first time at the airport or before arriving (Refs 28, 29, 30, 31) and although not every student reported positive first impressions, the extended time together allowed them to grow closer. One US student in this program reflected upon his friendships (Ref 29):

The big majority of my friends are from the program, my core friends are those that I met during the first week. I have some Argentine friends that I know from playing rugby, going to the gym, and from going out, but not friends that I'd call to do something with, the friends who I make plans with are all from the program and their friends from the United States studying here.

Another US student in the same program described her best friend in Buenos Aires and when they met (Ref 30):

We have a Facebook group that started before we got down here and I hit it off online with one of the girls in our program. Then she happened to be sitting by me on the same flight to Buenos Aires.

Students enrolled in these programs not only meet and get to know each other upon arriving they have continued extended contact throughout the semester. They have all of their classes together and go on group trips to other regions of Argentina. They have private buses and stay in the same hotels. Thus students build very tight bonds with each other that potentially hinder their ability to make friends with other people. One student studying at a US campus in Buenos Aires stated (Ref 27):

With this program there is a big force to stay in the group, it's an interesting dynamic, we have a lot of events that only contain students from the group, it's a force that holds us together that is good for the bonding kind of thing, but doesn't involve Argentines. I've met some Argentines, not as many as I'd hoped to, one of the things I like best is going out with a mix of those friends with those from the group.

Another student studying at the US campus admitted that she flaked out on the one Argentine contact that she had met in order to stick to the group (Ref 26):

I would say that the only people that I've honestly met outside of the group were two Argentine girls who I met at my bakery internship. I befriended the girl who taught me and I went out for dinner with two other girls a couple of times. We made plans to meet up for a language exchange, but those plans failed after just 2 meetings. At this campus we're here all the time so the free time we have to hang out with others is extremely limited. A few weeks ago the girl who taught me how to bake contacted me and asked to hang out and I never responded.

Another student studying in a US based program reflected on her group's dynamic (Ref 28):

It's interesting because we're together all the time, the friendships evolve and small groups form within the big group. I'm part of the group, for the first month and a half I was more connected to the others, we did everything together. But after that I decided to get away from the group a little, I said to myself, I need to meet other people. But, it's not easy to get away, everyday there's a guy in our group very focused on the group doing activities together, always screaming at us for not wanting to do things with the group.

One student enrolled in a US based program who took one class in the public university, one class in the private university, and two classes at the program study center compared his experiences in all three contexts. His multiple context perspective led to the question, "If you could choose to study directly at the university or with this program what would you prefer?" (Ref 19):

That's a difficult question...I like that the program helps us a lot organizing classes and offers support with our lives here in general. However, we're not really foreign students, we're students in an exchange program and we don't have much contact with traditional students, I don't like that part. I can't complain because they take really good care of us.

Students studying at Argentine private and public universities also discussed their respective study abroad programs and offices, however, their "program" played less of a role in their experience. Students had mixed opinions of the role that the international student office should play. For example two girls from the same program gave opposing opinions. Ref (20)

said that she had hoped more from the university and that they were super disorganized and not very useful, whereas Ref (21) said that the study abroad office was very active and that they took good care of students. The study abroad program and subsequent university setting in which students find themselves certainly influences friendship network formation.

5.1.3. Program Comparison Discussion

Results from this study demonstrate that study abroad program organization and administration plays a key role in the friendship network formation of international students. Students in US based “island” programs or “branch” campuses have significantly more friendships with individuals from their own country, significantly fewer local friendships upon arrival, and significantly fewer friendships with individuals from other countries than those studying in Argentine private and public universities. This finding is relevant to one of the central debates concerning study abroad organization and administration, one that is largely centered around the amount of immersion and time that students spend communicating with those from the host culture. The current research clearly shows that students in US based study abroad programs develop more relationships with individuals from their own country and fewer relationships with individuals from the host country (at least upon arrival) and other international students than their counterparts studying in local universities. There are several observable explanations for this finding, however the ensuing discussion focuses on the environmental conditions that Kim (2001) theorizes will significantly influence the cross-cultural adaptation process.

The first environmental condition that Kim (2001) identifies is host receptivity. Findings from this research indicate that this does not seem to be an important factor, at least not one which explains the finding that students in US based programs have a twice as many co-national friends as those studying in Argentine public and private universities. Host receptivity is a combination of the host culture’s attitude toward, openness, generosity, goodwill, and support

that they extend to strangers (Kim, 2001). In the current investigation the researcher asked students if they felt discriminated by people in Argentina and the majority of students said not at all. This finding is consistent with recent research findings in which local Argentine students reported generally positive attitudes and harbored positive stereotypes regarding international students (Castro Solano, 2013b). Argentina is an immigrant country and Argentines tend to be more comfortable than many other Spanish speaking South Americans interacting with peoples of different cultural backgrounds and linguistic skills. Furthermore, Argentines often treat foreigners from English speaking North America and Europe better than their compatriots (Stephenson, 2003). It should be noted that groups from other world regions may not receive the same receptivity in Argentina (Casaravilla, 2000). Indeed, a Colombian student commented on the relationship between Argentina and the rest of Latin America (Ref 3):

Here, I've noticed that people are very warm in general, which is not the image that people in Bogotá have of Argentines (...) but I sometimes have the sensation that Argentines look down on me, maybe not, but a part of me has that idea

[Researcher: and they don't look down on Europeans?]

No, they see Europeans as equals or want to be like them, gringos too, that's the idea that we have is that Argentines think they are better than the rest of Latin America (...) There's a prejudice and stereotype from both sides that makes it difficult to get to know one another.

Furthermore, students from the US do occasionally experience negative attitudes from the local Argentines but these occur infrequently. A student in a US based program stated (Ref 19):

People here generally treat me really well, people in Argentina are really warm, and they always want to help you. The truth is they treat me really well. Obviously there have been a couple of bad experiences.

[Researcher “for example?”]

One time we were in the Plaza speaking English and an Argentine came up to us and said in English, ‘Go back yankees’.

The second environmental condition that Kim (2001) describes in her theory is host conformity pressure. This is the degree to which host nationals pressure international students either consciously or unconsciously to change their original behaviors. This pressure is typically less in urban, cosmopolitan areas and is often related to language use. In the case of students in Buenos Aires it is quite easy for them to survive speaking English combined with limited Spanish. One student even commented on her frustrations because locals often insist on speaking English with her (Ref 17). Host conformity pressure is largely dictated by the degree to which individuals’ everyday activities depend on host institutions (Kim, 2001). In cases of high conformity pressure academic success is contingent on students’ willingness to abandon their own academic values and their ability to conform to aspects of the new academic culture (Brown, 2008). Students in US based programs rely on local institutions that exist to conform to their needs, whereas students at local universities are visitors who must conform and rely more on their ability to adapt to different institutions. In other words, institutions adapt to students in US based programs, in fact they exist because of them, while international students studying at Argentine universities must adapt to, rely on, and learn to navigate local institutions.

The third environmental condition is ethnic group strength, which refers

to the status or power of a particular group. This environmental condition is important in explaining the finding that students in US based programs had twice as many co-national friends. One element of ethnic group strength is institutional completeness, which is the degree to which a group is institutionalized. Students studying at US based island programs and branch campuses enjoy many institutional similarities. For example, the only difference between branch campuses and the home campus is the foreign professor, although the branch campus that participated in the present research has visiting professors from the home campus. Students take the same classes with the same syllabus and readings that they would have at their home campus and in some cases they study with many of the same students that they knew from their home campus (Ref 25). In no capacity do they rely on host institutions. Some of these programs cater to the US academic calendar, complete with Spring break and a Thanksgiving holiday. Thus, due to institutional similarities students inherently have less pressure to adapt and learn new communication patterns. Furthermore, findings from in-depth interviews presented in the previous section suggest that students feel pressure to stick to their own group.

Students arrive in Buenos Aires and feel pressure to remain part of the study abroad group; Kim (2001) describes this pressure as identity politics, an element of ethnic group strength. Strangers facing strong in-group pressure may be discouraged from learning the host language and culture. The pressure is not only evident in the US based programs but among smaller groups in private universities as well. One US student described identity politics at play when attending classes with local Argentines, she answered the question, “How do the Argentine students receive you in class?” (Ref 6):

At first I was the only international student in my history class. The Argentine students were really friendly and made an effort to talk to me even though my Spanish wasn't good, then my other US American friends joined the class so I sat with them because they were my friends

and I wasn't going to not sit with them. After that it was more difficult to talk with the Argentines because my US friends didn't want to, I felt divided because I wanted to be friends with the Argentines and talk to them, but I had my US friends who didn't want to. For a long while I didn't talk to Argentines, however a few weeks ago during the class break I decided to leave my US friends and try to talk to the Argentines drinking mate outside of the classroom.

This comment demonstrates that international students in private and public universities also experience identity politics and feel pressure to stick to those from their own cultural group. Although this strong group dynamic was more evident in the US based programs. Furthermore, students at the local university do have the daily option to seek out local friendships. Students in US based campuses inherently have fewer options.

This analysis examined study abroad programs as an independent variable which influences international students' friendship network formation. Results reveal considerable differences between students enrolled in US based "island" programs or "branch" campuses and those who study at Argentine public and private universities. Most notably, students in US based programs reported twice as many co-national friends as those studying in Argentine universities and Kim's (2001) cultural environment construct ethnic group strength tended to be the most influential factor.

Interviews with study abroad directors and international students revealed that programs exhibit much variety in terms of the contact that students have with the local culture, thus making it necessary to explore other contact variables and highlight specific program elements that potentially affect friendship formation. The subsequent sections explore the effects of other independent contact situation variables that vary between programs. These variables include housing situation, classroom makeup, organized extra-curricular activities, and participation in tutor programs.

5.2. Housing

Many researchers have examined the relationship between living arrangements and friendship network variables. Existing studies mostly focus on host families and student residencies. Kudo and Simkin (2003) found that on-campus dormitories were the most favorable housing situation for maximizing intercultural contacts and that frequency of contact with host nationals decreased when students moved out of dormitories. Students tend to establish intercultural friendships in situations where efforts to initiate relationships are minimal (Kudo & Simkin, 2003), thus housing international students with local students increases the opportunity for interpersonal communication. Along with student residencies, host families also represent a common living arrangement for international students.

Researchers suggest that host families potentially turn the study abroad experience into a more inclusive living abroad experience and are an element of international education that should be analyzed more profoundly (Schmidt-Rinehart & Knight, 2004). The development of close ties with host families gives students more exposure to the host culture and allows them to be more comfortable and confident communicating in the host language in informal, social situations (Jackson, 2009). Shared housing with host nationals, whether it be in student residencies or with host families creates a situation in which international students must consistently participate in host social communication activities. Furthermore, they are theoretically exposed to other host national individuals such as friends and family members. The goal of this research is to identify micro environmental conditions that facilitate host national friendship, and given the potential that shared housing has for close, interpersonal contact, the following hypothesis is posed.

5.2.1. H6: International students who share housing with Argentinesans will show an increase in Argentinesans in their friendship networks over time.

The subsequent section briefly presents the measures used to test this hypothesis. This is followed by statistical tests and an analysis of the in-depth interviews related to housing. A brief discussion of findings related to friendship networks and housing follows.

5.2.2. Diverse Housing Situations and the Role in Friendship Formation

Findings from study abroad director interviews showed that programs are very diverse in terms of the contact conditions that they create within the local culture. For example students in the island type programs and some from the private university programs live with Argentine host families, which offer direct residential contact with host nationals. However, the apartment search process in itself puts students in direct contact with the local culture and many end up sharing apartments with host nationals.

This analysis uses several measures to test Hypothesis 6. First, participants reported where and who they live with. See Chapter 3.3.2.3 and Appendix J for more details. This analysis also incorporates Hendrickson et al.'s (2011) friendship network grid. See Chapter 3.3.1. and Appendix I for more details. Second, the researcher asked students several questions related to their housing situation. Example questions include: Can you describe where you live? Who do you live with? What do you think about your neighborhood? Have you met other Argentines through your housing situation?

Hypothesis six predicted that international students who share housing with Argentineans will show an increase in Argentineans in their friendship networks over time. Student responses to the housing question were coded into three categories; 21 lived with at least one Argentine, 40 lived with no Argentines, 41 lived in an Argentine host family. The coding process was complex because many students reported different living situations at the end of the semester than at the beginning. Students did not indicate when they moved or the length of time they lived in each place. Thus, for coding consistency the categorization procedure placed students under live with at least one Argentine

if they reported living with at least one Argentine in the beginning or end of the semester. Findings did not support Hypothesis 6, however they did reveal several significant relationships

First, a one-way ANOVA comparing the three groups showed no significant difference in host national friendship upon arrival $F(2, 98) = .65, p = .536, \eta^2 = .01$, nor before leaving $F(2, 98) = .93, p = .397, \eta^2 = .02$. There was also no difference in mean change between these groups $F(2, 98) = .243, p = .785, \eta^2 = .00$. These results were the same when combining those that live with an Argentine host family and those that live with at least one Argentine, suggesting that living in a host family or other forms of shared housing had no significant effect on friendship formation with host nationals.

These analyses did however unveil a positive relationship between living with an Argentine host family and co-national friendship. International students who live with a host family showed significantly more co-national friends upon arrival $F(2, 98) = 17.15, p = .00, \eta^2 = .26$ and before leaving $F(2, 99) = 9.18, p = .00, \eta^2 = .16$. However, this finding could be potentially misleading because of the 41 students who reported to live with host families, 39 were from the United States, and 27 studied at US based study abroad programs. Living with host families is a distinct characteristic of the US participants in this sample.

The housing variable is rather diverse as students within each category differ, specifically the composition of host families. Some host families consist of single ladies or men in their 50s whereas others are larger, more traditional families consisting of one or both parents, and 1-4 children. In some cases the host families have several international students. Furthermore, some students live in apartments with one or two Argentine roommates while others live in houses or student residences with one or several Argentine roommates. These fluctuations among categories partly explain why the ANOVA group comparisons revealed no significant relationships between living with an Argentine and increased Argentine friends over time. During the interviews students discussed their varying housing situations and patterns related to

friendship formation in general do emerge.

The majority of students reported to have at least a weak tie friendship with their roommate and/or people who they met through their housing situations. One German student who shares an apartment with an Argentine said (Ref 8):

I live with a young Argentine guy, we go out together, go to futbol games, and I've met several of his friends at gatherings in our apartment.

Several students reported to live with their best friends in Argentina or met their best Argentine friends through their housing arrangement. One student in a US based program described her best Argentine friend (Ref 28):

My host mom's oldest daughter is my closest Argentine friend, she's really nice, if I need something or want to go out with Argentines, I've gone to her house and met her friends and boyfriend. I'm going to stay with her friend in Lima.

One student stated that the majority of her friends were from her second living arrangement where she lived in a house similar to a hostel with twenty international students (Ref 36). Another student lived in a host family for the first two weeks in order to get settled into Buenos Aires and then moved into a student residence with other international students and Argentines from the provinces. This Mexican girl described her friends in Buenos Aires (Ref 20):

My best friends here are Columbians, Mexicans, Venezuelans, and Argentines from the Province, those who I live with in the residency. Also, my ex host mom's daughter who has integrated into my group of international student friends.

Students also discussed and contrasted host families with independent living. Students mentioned many positive aspects of living with host families, but generally felt that living with Argentine students would be the ideal housing situation. A US student commented on what would be the ideal housing situation (Ref 12):

I know it's difficult for US students to adapt to host families because they're used to being independent, it would be ideal to share an apartment, not with other US students because they'd speak English, but with Argentine students.

Another U.S. student commented on the advantages of host families (Ref 30):

I think the host family experience is such an important part of being abroad in general, you really get to talk about what you've learned in class, the trips we went on, the things you see in the street, and you get to practice Spanish.

This student described her family as a valuable element of living abroad, however, not all students have positive host family experiences, one US student described his uncomfortable host family situation (Ref 37):

I'm in a weird place with my host family (...). I've never had the family experience that others have (...). I'm kind of like a renter (...). When they have big family lunches, they set me up in the breakfast nook and don't invite me to eat with them which has been really strange.

5.2.3. Housing Implications and Discussion

Findings from the friendship network grid coupled with in-depth interview analysis help to better understand the role that housing plays in friendship formation and the cross-cultural adaptation process. First, students

reported rather diverse housing situations and many students moved once and in some cases twice during the course of the semester. Second, sharing housing with Argentines did not lead to an increase in host national friends over time, although friendship networks did seem to be influenced by living arrangements. Third, students in US based programs all reported staying with host families and the majority of US students enrolled in local universities also lived with host families. The phenomenon of US students staying with host families is noteworthy.

Housing students with host families is a pervasive trend in US study abroad. In this sample of international students 41 out of 44 US students lived in host families and only 2 out of 61 non-US students lived in host families. Proponents of host families argue that these living arrangements give students first hand insights into the host culture's communication patterns and family relationships, and accelerate informal language acquisition (Paige, Cohen, Kappler, Chi, & Lassegard, 2002). A national survey conducted in New Zealand found that international students staying in host families reported more satisfaction with their living arrangements than those in rentals or student hostels (Ward & Masgoret, 2004). Host families help students linguistically, culturally, and psychologically and not only provide an important language learning context (Allen & Herron, 20013) but also in many cases represent the only contact that students have with the host culture (Schmidt-Rinehart & Knight, 2004; Dewey, Belnap, & Hillstrom, 2013). Indeed, in the current study several students in US based programs commented that their only contact with Argentines was through their host family and that they perceived the most language gain at home. Given the positive outcomes cited in previous literature and the findings from in-depth interviews demonstrating that some students made friends through their host families, along with the widespread belief that living in host families is ideal for international students, the current research does not call the practice into question. However, findings from this study do provide the opportunity to critique host family arrangements in terms of the overall US study abroad administration framework and the immersion

perception that they offer.

In US branch campuses and island programs US students have very little organic contact with local students and other international students. Furthermore, by being segregated into host families they have fewer opportunities to meet students their age from Argentina and other countries. Additionally, in many cases students do not integrate into the host family as much as they anticipated and consequently their expectations of cultural immersion fall short (Wilkinson, 1998). They are not independent as they don't have to cook, clean, go to the grocery store, negotiate with landlords, or learn how to live with roommates from Argentina and/or other countries. Findings from this research demonstrate an enormous difference between US students and those from Europe and other Latin American countries who manage to arrive in Buenos Aires and find a place to live on their own while students from the United States do not. The next section analyzes classroom makeup, which is another micro environmental factor which influences friendship network formation.

5.3. Classroom Makeup

The current research examines the role that classroom composition plays in the friendship network formation and cross-cultural adaptation of international students. There is a plethora of research which examines the classroom's affect on language learning (Collentine, 2009), along with a handful of studies examining the influence that contact with host nationals in the classroom has on friendship formation (Kudo & Simkin, 2003; Rienties et al., 2013). The classroom presents an important venue for students to interact with and learn the communication behaviors of host nationals. Shared classrooms put students in close proximity with host nationals who share academic interests, and increase the opportunities for shared communication activities (Bennett et al., 2013). Given this potential for shared communication this research poses the following hypothesis.

5.3.1. H7: International students who take classes with Argentine students will show an increase in Argentines in their friendship networks over time.

The subsequent section presents the measurements used to test Hypothesis 7 followed by an analysis of the results and discussion related to the role that the classroom plays in friendship network formation.

5.3.2. The Role of Classroom Diversity in Friendship Formation

This analysis uses several measures to test Hypothesis 7. First, participants indicated the amount of classes that they have with Argentines. See Chapter 3.3.2.2. and Appendix J for more details. This analysis also incorporates Hendrickson et al.'s (2011) friendship network grid. See Chapter 3.3.1. and Appendix I for more details. Second, during in-depth interviews the researcher asked students several questions related to their classes. Example questions include: What are your classes like? Who are your professors? Who are the other students in your class? Do you have group projects? Are you friends with any of your classmates?

Findings from the quantitative surveys and in-depth interviews illustrate the diverse classroom situation in which international students found themselves in Buenos Aires. The amount of classes that students take, the academic rigor of their classes, classroom makeup, and even the language of instruction are different in each program. Furthermore, this diversity often occurs within programs and university settings as well. For example, in the same private university one student reported having 4 classes with just international students while another student reported to have 4 regular classes with Argentine students (Refs 1, 3).

Hypothesis seven predicted that International students who take more classes with Argentine students would show an increase in Argentines in their friendship networks over time. In order to maintain clarity the survey asked students to report the amount of regular classes that they had with Argentines

and classes with just international students. Overall, the sample indicated an average of 2.50 ($SD = 1.72$) classes with Argentines. 19 students reported zero classes, 11 reported one class, 19 reported two classes, 21 reported three classes, 17 reported four classes, 13 reported five classes, and 2 reported six classes. Correlation coefficients showed no relationship between the amount of classes that international students take with Argentine students and initial host national friendship $r(101) = .13, p = .20$, final host national friendship $r(102) = .16, p = .10$, or changes in friendship with Argentineans over time $r(101) = .09, p = .37$.

In order to examine this relationship further an additional ANOVA analysis tested the difference between those with no classes and those with at least 1 class with Argentines. This test also revealed no significant differences in initial host national friendship $F(1, 99) = .159, p = .21, \eta^2 = .02$, final host national friendship $F(1, 100) = .92, p = .34, \eta^2 = .01$, or change in host national friendship over time $F(1, 99) = .00, p = .97, \eta^2 = .00$. Findings from the quantitative data show no relationship between more classes with Argentines and increased host national friendship, thus hypothesis seven was unsupported. During in-depth interviews students explained their class setting and class offerings in their respective study abroad programs. They also described their interactions and communication with Argentines in class and discussed the types of friendships that they formed in class.

5.3.3. In-depth Interviews Regarding Classroom Interaction

Study abroad programs generally offer Spanish Language courses for those students who wish to participate and some programs offer intense courses before the semester begins. One private university and all three US based programs require students to take a semester long Spanish language course. Two of the four private universities offer classes specifically tailored to international students. These classes are generally less rigorous and easier for students than regular classes. Students discussed their advantages and disadvantages and how they differ from classes with Argentine students. A

German student stated (Ref 5):

I only have classes for international students, I like them, but they're really easy.

A student from Quebec in a different private university re-iterated this notion (Ref 14):

I take 1 specialized course and 2 regular courses, and they're really different, regular courses are more of a challenge. So I study law, and it's much more difficult to take a regular class because when they speak it's not only difficult with Spanish but also problems with Argentine concepts and legal principles that I don't know, at times I'm completely lost. It's really interesting, but difficult.

Specialized classes are easier and at times more practical for international students as they lack the cultural and historical background and language ability necessary to comprehend readings and lectures. However, all three students who reported only having these types of classes mentioned their disappointment with the lack of local contact. A Brazilian student studying at a private university commented (Ref 4):

I hoped to meet international students but also students from Argentina in my classes and that didn't exactly happen, but.... the truth, I don't know. I don't know if I like the atmosphere at this university. I would have liked to study at the public university. I have the impression that people here are less open than in the public university.

For practical purposes these courses necessarily segregate international students and compromise potential classroom contact with Argentines. A German student who has both specialized courses and regular courses stated (Ref 5):

In the specialized classes we don't have contact with the Argentines, just international students. I have one class with Argentines but they don't talk much with the foreigners.

[The researcher asked, "They don't talk to you?"]

A little of course but only if we need something.

The majority of students with at least one regular class reported to interact and communicate with Argentines and to have made acquaintance contact with Argentines. People who they went out with, said hello to in the hallway, or met up with for group projects, however the majority did not report close friendship with Argentines in class. A Norwegian student in a public university explained the relationship with her classmates (Ref 32):

I haven't made friendship with my Argentine classmates, I have acquaintances, we greet each other, talk, sometimes we have coffee during breaks, we don't meet up outside of the university, and I don't have their phone numbers. They're really interested and open, but they all have their lives, their family, they're working. It's easier to make friends with international students who are in the same situation.

This student expressed the common theme that international students and local students lead quite different, parallel lives, in which each group has already formed their relationships and not necessarily looking for more friends. One student studying at the private university had reflected upon his friendships and relationship with his classmates. He arrived in Buenos Aires two weeks before classes began (Ref 10):

When I started classes I already had a network, I didn't have to make an effort to make friends with my classmates.... Argentines are really open...the thing is everybody already has their network formed.

Additionally, various students studying at private universities mentioned that the Argentines in their classes have been studying with the same cohort for several years and have already formed cohesive friendship groups, making it difficult to make friends in class. In general, findings from the in-depth interviews corroborate with and offer explanations for the survey results which revealed no significant relationship between classes with Argentines and more host national friends. Nevertheless, two Spanish students who live together did report meeting their closest (strong tie) Argentine friend in class (Ref 22):

On the second day of class an Argentine girl invited us to her house, it surprised us, we went to her house, met her family, and from that day on we've become close friends with her and her group.

The classroom serves as a forum for students to exchange ideas and information while participating in consistent communication activities with host nationals. Most students studying at Argentine universities mentioned that they socialized and interacted with host nationals and rated these experiences positively. On the other hand, students who study in US based programs described different classroom situations and dynamics than those in Argentine public and private universities. One student stated (Ref 31):

We take classes with each other, travel together, we don't know what it's like to be a student here, in the US we've all had experiences of having exchange students in our classes and that hasn't been our experience here.

Studying at Argentine private and public universities gives students

insights into the culture and the Argentine university system that they may not get at their US based programs. When asked if he would prefer to take classes in a local university a student in a US based program said (Ref 30):

I would prefer to take classes in the local university. I think it's better for understanding the system of the country where you are studying.

Students from one of the US based programs that participated in this study do have the opportunity to take classes at local universities. Consequently, one student studying in this program had experience taking classes in three different settings. He offered a distinct perspective on the Argentine university system while contrasting his observations (Ref 19):

In the public university there are students from different socioeconomic levels, on the other hand in the private university the students all have a higher socio-economic level and you can really tell. One thing that surprised me is that in the public university they use "vos" because we're all equals, in the private university they use "usted."

Students who take classes at Argentine private and public universities are also exposed to cultural norms and nuances that those who only take classes in US based programs are not. Students do not always view these norms positively, although they have the opportunity to see the local students' perspective of the same phenomenon. A girl from a US based program who has one class in a private university commented (Ref 19):

*I don't like the professors, they are in the clouds, they're a mess, the two professors don't seem to communicate with each other, most of the class is wasted, the class starts late, we have a long break, and it runs long [What do the other students say, do they complain?]
No, for them it's normal.*

A German student studying at the public university discussed the university resources (Ref 33):

I don't think the University has the resources for the professors to be able to teach well. Nobody uses powerpoint or anything like that and when they do, it's not prepared and the students have to wait 30 minutes for someone to connect the projector.

Results from this study shed light on the role that classroom interaction plays on the friendship network formation and cross-cultural adaptation process. Overall, results did not reveal significant relationships between shared classroom with Argentines and host national friendship. Findings from in-depth interviews suggest that even though students share classes they often find it challenging to integrate with host nationals. Whitworth (2006) conducted a four participant case study with US students in France and noted a similar phenomenon. Researchers examining intercultural relationship development state that shared classrooms provide repeated contact with host nationals and a context for friendships to develop; however they suggest that individual motivation to build relationships tends to play a more important role (Bennett, et al., 2013). In any case, international students did report increased communicative activity with Argentines during class and stressed the importance of sharing classrooms with host nationals. The subsequent section examines the relationship between participation in organized extra-curricular activities with Argentines and friendship network formation.

5.4. Extra-Curricular Activities

The goal of the current research is to identify the role that social activities play in the friendship network formation of international students. A study conducted in Buenos Aires showed that extra-curricular activities better integrated international students with Argentineans (Bonafina de Gulias & Falcon, 2007). International students in New Zealand reported difficulty

making host national friends, although they did make some through social events and sporting activities (Campbell & Mi, 2008). Extra-curricular activities create conditions for individuals to build social networks (Neri & Ville, 2008), make local contacts, and gain confidence in social settings (Toyokawa & Toyokawa, 2002). Given this potential for shared communication with host nationals, the following hypothesis is posed.

5.4.1. H8: International students who participate in extra-curricular activities with Argentines will show an increase in Argentines in their friendship networks over time.

5.4.2. Extra-curricular Activities and their Role in Friendship Network Formation

The objective of this analysis is to identify activities in which international students share the same social space with Argentines by specifically examining student participation in organized activities on a consistent basis with Argentines. These activities include but are not limited to weekly sports events, music or dancing groups, and language exchanges. First, in order to measure this variable students reported their participation in extra-curricular activities by describing the activity and specifying who was involved. See Chapter 3.3.2.3. and Appendix J for more details. This analysis also incorporates Hendrickson et al.'s (2011) friendship network grid. See Chapter 3.3.1. and Appendix I for more details. Second, during in-depth interviews students answered questions related to these activities including: What do you do in your free time? Do you participate in any organized extra-curricular activities? Have you met any Argentine friends through participation in these activities?

Findings from both the quantitative survey and in-depth interviews demonstrate that participants were involved in a variety of social activities. These activities ranged from tango classes, yoga classes, internships, part-time jobs, going to the gym, martial arts club membership, university running club,

dance class, soccer team, rugby team, music workshop, dance workshop, bible study, and conversation exchange activities. In several cases students reported different organized activities at the beginning and end of the semester. In order to simplify the coding procedure and analysis student responses to the extra-curricular activity question were coded into two categories; 48 students reported participating in an organized extra-curricular activity involving Argentines at the beginning and/or end of the semester and 54 did not participate in an organized extra-curricular activity involving Argentines at any point during the semester.

Hypothesis 8 predicted that International students who participated in organized extra-curricular activities with Argentines would show an increase in Argentines in their friendship networks over time. Results from the quantitative analysis support this hypothesis. When students arrived there was no significant friendship difference between the two groups $F(1, 99) = .40, p = .53, \eta^2 = .00$, however the one-way ANOVA test showed a significant difference $F(1, 100) = 5.49, p = .021, \eta^2 = .05$ at the end of the semester between those who participated in an extra-curricular activity with Argentines ($M = 7.3, 95\% \text{ CI } [5.1, 9.4]$) and those who did not ($M = 4.5, 95\% \text{ CI } [3.3, 5.7]$). The one-way ANOVA also showed a significant difference $F(1, 99) = 5.74, p = .018, \eta^2 = .05$ in host national friendship change over time between those who participated in an organized extra-curricular activity with Argentines ($M \text{ change} = 2.78, 95\% \text{ CI } [1.2, 4.4]$) and those who did not ($M \text{ change} = .51, 95\% \text{ CI } [-.6, 51.6]$). Table 7 illustrates this change in host national friends over time for those who participated in extra-curricular activities with Argentines.

Table 7

Means and Standard Deviations for Those who Participated in Extra-Curricular Activities with Argentines and Those who did not.

	Extra-Curr w/Argentines	NO Extra-Curr w/Argentines
Host Nat Friends Upon Arrival M (SD)	4.55 (4.71)	4.06 (5.18)
Host Nat Friends Upon Departure M (SD)	7.13 (7.38)	4.59 (4.36)
Host Nat Friend Change M (SD)	2.7 (5.38)	.54 (4.15)

Results from the one-way ANOVA confirm hypothesis eight which predicted that students who participated in organized extra-curricular activities with Argentines would show an increase in Argentine friends over time. This significant finding is important and illustrates the positive influence that participation in organized extra-curricular activities has on friendship network formation. Furthermore, unlike housing and classroom setting there was no inter-correlation between extra-curricular activities and study abroad program type. During the in-depth interviews students not only discussed the role that extra-curricular activities played in the formation of their friendship network and the importance of these activities in their life in Buenos Aires but also elaborated on their excursions to other parts of Argentina and other social activities such as going out.

Several students stated that they made the majority of their Argentine friends outside of the university while participating in extra-curricular activities and in many cases students met their best friends. A student from Norway elaborated on her participation in extra-curricular activities and her closest friendships (Ref 32):

I made my good Argentine friends and acquaintances dancing Tango. I also sang in a choir and made friends there. I have an Argentine boyfriend and through him I have lots of Argentine friends. [Where did you meet him?] dancing tango, haha...

A Brazilian student at one of the public universities answered the question, “who are your best friends here?” (Ref 34):

I take tango classes....the majority of my friends are Argentines from tango class.

Participation in organized extra-curricular activities puts students in contact with others who have similar interests. Furthermore, these activities represent a situation in which neither local students nor international students have to make an additional effort to spend time together. Through the shared activity friendship can develop and grow. A German student described her positive experience playing soccer on her university’s team (Ref 36):

I play on a soccer team and have lots of friends there, we play games every Saturday and practice once or twice during the week. The university has three teams for women, A, B, C. I’m on the C, haha, it’s the worst but our team is like a family, a community, everybody together, let’s go ___C, lots of solidarity....There are 30-40 of us and when a teammate has a birthday everyone gets together.

Another German student also alluded to this element of solidarity that stems from extra-curricular activities and its extension to other social activities (Ref 8):

I’m in a Sports Club and there I’ve met many Argentines. If I have any questions I can always call them and sometimes we go out (...) It’s a

martial arts club, it's really good for meeting people outside of the university. There are only Argentines there, we talk a lot, practice together, we fight, and then celebrate.

Participation in extra-curricular activities was particularly important for students in US based study abroad programs. These students have little to no contact with Argentines in class and do not share the same university space. Several students reported meeting their only Argentine friends during extra-curricular activities; one student during an internship working as a gym receptionist (Ref 26), one student during an internship at a bakery (Ref 26), one student became friends with a trainer while preparing for a marathon (Ref 30), and one student playing rugby (29). Students reported meeting locals at bars, clubs, concerts, and in the street, however friendship takes time and does not always materialize after the first encounter. One US student described this element of friendship. She had just recently incorporated Argentine friends into her friendship network from a dance workshop that she had been attending every Monday (Ref 17):

There was some time at the beginning when we just talked a little, but now we're friends, one guy just invited me to an event this weekend.

Another student in a US based program met her Argentine friends at her music workshops (Ref 18):

The program offers music workshops with both US students and Argentines, we get together once a week for 2 ½ hours to learn how to play different instruments and types of music. The leader is great and we chat for hours drinking mate after the workshop is over

One US student noted that the conversation exchange that his program organizes has made an important impact on his friendship network (Ref 19):

I have lots of Argentine friends from the conversation workshop that the study abroad program coordinates, there are two guys who I go out with all the time.

Results from both the quantitative survey and in-depth interviews demonstrate the influence that extra-curricular activities have on international student friendship development with host nationals. However, these activities are voluntary and the opportunities may not always be apparent or available for students. During interviews students gave reasons why they did not participate in extra-curricular activities. These comments illustrate the parallel life reality of international students discussed in the classroom interaction section of this chapter. Students mentioned that that did not participate in extra-curricular activities because they wanted time to travel (Ref 13) or they were busy going on organized trips with the study abroad program (Ref 34). One student even decided to quit playing rugby because he was gone so often on trips with his program and felt too much like a tourist on his team (Ref 32).

Travel during the semester is a very common practice for international students and several students stated that the group trip that they took was the best moment in their study abroad experience (Ref 18, 16, 29). However, one student discussed how his lack of traveling allowed him to integrate himself more into the local culture. He answered the question, “How would you compare your experience with other international students?” (Ref 15):

I know that I have more time after the semester to travel (...) so right now I'm in no hurry to travel, so what I do here is very local, meet with local people, I love cultural centers, I'm always there with locals, small independent theaters, on the other hand the gringos that I know, my North Americans friends always stay together speaking English and are away almost every weekend, always traveling.

Indeed, one challenge that program directors and study abroad professionals face is finding a balance between encouraging students to learn about other regions of the country while integrating them into the local culture. In any case programs generally do recognize the importance of extra-curricular activities and some have volunteer tutors who organize extra-curricular activities, excursions, and outings. Due to logistical issues not all study abroad offices have tutor programs and not all students affiliated with those study abroad offices with tutor programs have a tutor and/or participate in the activities that the tutors organize. The subsequent section analyzes the relationship between tutor program participation and friendship network formation.

5.5. Tutor Programs

Four of the ten programs that participated in the current research organize tutor programs for international students. Study abroad offices use distinct names for these programs yet offer basically the same service. Thus, this research uses the term tutor in order to maintain the anonymity of the universities who participated in the current investigation. These programs recruit Argentine student volunteers willing to help international students integrate into the local university community and adapt to studying and living in Buenos Aires. Tutors serve as local contacts that guide students in their new cultural environment with practical questions such as using public transportation, finding housing, and visiting sites of interest. Tutors also offer companionship and organize social events for recently arrived international students.

Researchers have identified several positive outcomes associated with peer tutoring programs. These outcomes include higher social adjustment (Abe Talbot, & Geelhoed, 1998), better adjustment to university life (Glaser, Hall, & Halperin, 2006), higher achievement and lower dropout rates (Westwood & Barker, 1990), more satisfaction with the study abroad experience, higher academic average, improved attitudes toward the host society (Lassegard,

2008), and more likely to feel part of the university community and to be happier with their level interaction with other students (Leask, 2009). Furthermore, tutor programs help students learn elements of the host culture, their own cultures and identities, and understand the communication challenges presented during intercultural interactions, and to appreciate cultural diversity (Campbell, 2012). Tutor programs facilitate interaction between international and host students (Leask, 2009) and study abroad directors bill these programs as a valuable way to provide local students with intercultural communication experience while giving international students the opportunity to get to know local people and their culture (Campbell, 2012). Campbell (2012) suggests that tutor programs remove a stumbling block towards making local friends. However, to the author's knowledge no research exists which demonstrates a direct test of the relationship between tutor program participation and increased host national friendship. Thus, in order to better understand the role that tutor programs play in friendship network formation the following research question is posed.

5.5.1. RQ 5: Do international students who participate in tutor programs report an increase in Argentine friends over time?

The subsequent section briefly outlines the measures and procedures used to analyze Research question 5. This is followed by a statistical test of the survey data and an analysis of the in-depth interview questions regarding tutor programs. A short discussion of these implications follows.

5.5.2. Tutor Programs and their Role in Friendship Formation

The current research examined the role that tutor programs play in the friendship network formation and cross-cultural adaptation of international students. First, on the quantitative survey students indicated whether or not they participated in a tutor program, their satisfaction with the program, and had the option to leave additional comments. See chapter 3.3.2.5. and Appendix J for

more details. This analysis also incorporates Hendrickson et al.'s (2011) friendship network grid. See Chapter 3.3.1. and Appendix I for more details. Second, during in-depth interviews the researcher asked several questions related to tutor programs including: Do you participate in the tutor program? What do you think of the tutor program? Are you friends with your tutor? Have you made other friends through your tutor?

Research question 5 asked if international students who participated in tutor programs would report an increased amount of Argentines in their friendship networks over time. In the overall sample 33 participants reported to have directly participated in a tutor program while 69 students did not directly participate. One-way ANOVA results showed no significant differences between tutor program participation and host national friendship upon arrival $F(1, 99) = 1.20, p = .28, \eta^2 = .01$, nor at the end of the semester $F(1, 100) = .06, p = .81, \eta^2 = .00$. There was also no significant difference in host national increase over time $F(1, 99) = .55, p = .46, \eta^2 = .01$.

In order to further test the influence of tutor programs and to account for the variability in tutors the analysis examined tutor program satisfaction and host national friendship. This analysis only included those students who participated in tutor programs. As described in the methodology section 3.3.2.5. students indicated on a 5 point Likert-type scale the degree to which they agree with the following statements (1 = strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = neutral, 4 = agree, 5 = strongly agree) "I am satisfied with the person that the tutor program assigned to me", "My expectations about participation in the tutor program have been met" "I am looking forward to spending more time with my Tutor" (Time 1) and "I plan to stay in contact with my tutor." (Time 2) Reliability for this three item scale was $\alpha = .86$. Findings showed a relatively low mean satisfaction $m = 2.80 (SD=1.26)$. However, Pearson's correlations coefficients did show a significant correlation $r(32) = .39, p = .027$ between tutor program satisfaction and more host national friendship at the end of the semester.

Taken together these two findings demonstrate that tutor program

participation does not necessarily lead to more host national friends, however those students who participated and reported more satisfaction with the program also had more host national friends at the end of the semester. On the quantitative survey students left comments concerning the program and during in-depth interviews they discussed in detail their tutors and the influence that the tutor program had on their own and other students' friendship networks.

5.5.3. In-Depth Interviews Regarding the Central Role of Tutors in International Student Social Organization

The majority of students who chose to participate in a tutor program stated that they either made no lasting friendships or never met their tutor. However, almost all of the interviewees reported making friendships with other Argentines through their tutors or at events organized by the Argentine tutors at their respective university. A French student said (Ref 21):

My tutor has become my friend but she lives far away, I became really good friends with my French friend's tutor, we have lunch on Sundays and I give her French classes. The tutors are super active, they organize events and invite all the international students.

A US student at a private university discussed the relationship with her assigned tutor (Ref 1):

Yes, I have a tutor, I met her once, we had lunch together, I tried to meet up with her again and she didn't answer me, the other day I saw her in the hallway and she ignored me, I guess it's luck of the draw. Some tutors are super nice and spend their time with us. They organize nights out and trips to other parts of Argentina. I went to Iguazú with them.

A German student studying at a private university discussed the tutors' role in general (Ref 2):

Some tutors are really present, you see them a lot, they organize parties and trips, that's really good. They help a lot with questions that we have and through them I've met more people.

A US student in a private university who did not have a tutor discussed their role in the lives of international students (Ref 6):

The tutors are friends of the international students, they organize activities, trips, parties, and are like a go-between for the students. They understand the international students a little better and make the effort to help us out.

One female US student studying at a private university left an optional comment on the quantitative survey summarizing the role and importance of certain tutors in the lives of international students. See Appendix O for all comments left by students regarding tutor programs.

I never met the tutor that was assigned to me. He sent me one email before the semester, added me on Facebook, and that was all. I asked if he would like to get together (for my benefit, really!) to chat and ask questions about the university, Argentina, etc. and he never responded. So I can't really answer for him. But there were 2 tutors that planned everything we did, were always there for us, and are truly amazing people. They were always glad to help and I really appreciated their hard work. I will definitely remain in contact with them.

Overall findings from both quantitative surveys and in-depth interviews shed light on the role that tutors play in the friendship network formation of

international students. In this sample only one-third of students participated in tutor programs while finding showed no significant relationship between participation and host national friendship. It is important to note however, that those who did participate generally reported low satisfaction with the program, although those who reported more satisfaction did indeed have more host national friends at the end of the semester. Campbell (2012) measured student expectations concerning tutor programs on a similar 5 point Likert-type scale. Unlike the present research, Campbell (2012) reported much higher satisfaction averages $m = 4$, compared to the current research $m = 2.8$. However, their tutor program formed part of an intercultural communication class in which host nationals were required to participate and received credit for class. Furthermore, in-depth interviews revealed that some Argentine tutors in particular were extremely active and played an important role in the friendship networks and social lives of international students.

Findings from this research suggest that friendship formation with central, socially active tutors, potentially facilitates more host national friendship. These tutors are *connectors* or *hubs*, individuals who serve as bridges that facilitate flow of information and contact between Argentines and international students (Barabási, 2003). Several students met locals at events that the tutors organized and some met their best friend through tutor programs. This finding suggests that forming weak ties with connectors such as Argentine tutors may help international students develop more host national friendships. Future research should focus on the qualities of tutors and identify the role that tutor programs play in friendship network formation.

Additionally, findings from this research highlight three main challenges regarding tutor programs. First, tutor programs often facilitate forced and uncomfortable interactions (Campbell 2012; Geelhoed, Abe, & Talbot, 2003). Second, in many cases students do not make contact with or meet their tutor (Stone, 2000). Third, students are busy and lead parallel lives, thus finding time to organize out of class activities is of concern (Campbell, 2012). Along with reiterating tutor program organizational challenges, findings from this

research provide direction for future tutor program administration. The main direction addresses all three of these challenges while corroborating Campbell's (2012) list of recommendations regarding tutor program effectiveness. Tutor programs should provide a mix of interaction with host national students in which students meet in large and small groups as well as in dyads. This makes interaction less forced, provides the opportunity for participants to meet each other, and does not require individual planning.

The concluding section of this chapter discusses the intertwining relationship between study abroad programs, housing, classroom makeup, extra-curricular activities, and tutor programs and the role that micro environmental factors play in the friendship formation process.

5.6. Study Abroad Program (University Setting) & Contact Situation

Conclusion

Research examining the cross cultural adaptation process has emphasized the integral role that host national friendship plays for those individuals in a new cultural environment. However, making host national friends tends to be an elusive task for international students and findings presented in Chapter 4 reiterate this reality. Host national friendship is hard to achieve and students are often times rather disappointed with the lack of local friendship. The objective of this chapter was to identify micro environmental contexts which present conditions for friendship with host national friendships to form and grow stronger and also identify those situations where it does not. Findings from both the quantitative surveys and qualitative interviews offer important insights as to how and where international students' friendship networks form. The first part of this chapter examined study abroad programs as an independent variable whereas the second part explored the effects of other independent contact situation variables. This research theorized that these contact situations form part of the students' new cultural micro environment, conditions that significantly influence the cross-cultural adaptation process (Kim, 2001) and friendship network formation. Interpersonal relations scholars

note that most relationships form in social environments where individuals are repeatedly in close physical proximity, like the workplace, classroom, neighborhood, and/or adult/childhood playgrounds (Dillard & Miller, 1988). This is also the case for many international students in Buenos Aires. An Austrian student at a private university stated (Ref 15):

There are three essential places where I met my people; at the university I met other international students, at my first house in San Telmo where I lived with 18 others, and at "La Catedral" my weekly tango place

Indeed findings showed that the university setting significantly influenced friendship networks, albeit not necessarily with host nationals. Students in US based programs tended to form friendships with other students from the program while students at private and public universities tended to form friendships with other international students. Students that shared classrooms with Argentines had interpersonal contact and interacted with them in class, however the classroom did not tend to be a place in which lasting interpersonal relationships with host nationals developed. Students also reported to have made friends in their housing situations; however housing situations did not necessarily encompass host national individuals and if they did, did not lead to friendship formation with those outside of the housing situation.

Finally, students who participated in extra-curricular activities with host nationals had more host national friends at the end of the semester and reported a larger increase in host national friends over time than those who did not. Participation in shared extra-curricular activities puts students in situations in which they can build trust and comradery in a relaxed atmosphere with the same host nationals on a consistent basis. Additionally, there are specific host national individuals that play an important role in the lives of international students. Tutor programs represent an important medium for facilitating contact

between these socially active host nationals and international students. At the end of the day friendship transpires with less effort and in some cases without conscious realization, thus participation in extra-curricular and social activities with host nationals provides a context for friendships to develop and grow.

Chapter 6: Predisposition to Adapt: Examining Perceived Language Ability, National Origin, and Ethnocentrism

The objective of this chapter is to analyze the influence of international students' individual predisposition on friendship network formation and the cross-cultural adaptation process. The first section introduces the predisposition dimension of Kim's (2001) cross cultural adaptation theory. This theoretical framework suggests that three background characteristics, preparedness for change, ethnic proximity, and adaptive personality influence an individual's ability to participate successfully in host social communication processes. This chapter poses three hypotheses and six research questions related to these predisposition characteristics. The second section describes the methodological elements including an ethnocentrism scale, perceived language difficulties, and in-depth interview questions. The longitudinal methodology and predisposition measures allow for an analysis of how international students' predispositional characteristics undergo change. The final section contains three parts with each presenting results, analysis, and discussion of the relationship between the predisposition variables and host social communication. Additionally, the last part includes a brief examination of the relationship between predisposition and the micro environmental variables analyzed in Chapter 5.

6.1. Preparedness for Change (Language ability)

Kim's (2001) cross cultural adaptation theory explains how individuals differ in their adaptation potential. The knowledge that one has of the particular host culture and its communication patterns, or previous experience crossing and adapting to new cultures is an individual's preparedness for change. This preparedness for change is enhanced by the amount of formal education they have, through prior cross-cultural experiences, and by specialized training in the host language and culture. The current study directly analyzes the latter aspect, the influence that difficulties communicating in the host language has on friendship network formation.

For international students understanding and communicating in a different language is perhaps the most challenging aspect of the study abroad experience (Mori, 2000). Language serves as a bridge or door to the social world of the host culture, while the inability to open that door often causes students distress (Brown, 1998; Yeh & Inose, 2003) and depression (Dao et al., 2007). Metaphorically, language serves as the face of a culture, the aspect that is immediately visible and audible. If two people do not share a common language, a “barrier” immediately appears and with this barrier comes the perception that communication is hopeless and impractical. Much research exists citing the impact that language ability has on international student’s interaction with the host society. The lack of host language fluency is often the primary impediment for an individual becoming socially active in the host culture (Hayes & Lin, 1994). Studies show that individuals with adequate language ability upon arrival in the new cultural environment were better adapted (Hayes & Lin, 1994) and those with prior language study had fewer negative experiences than their peers (Brown, 1998). Language ability creates a situation in which individuals can interact with the host society with more ease (Yeh & Inose, 2003).

The ability to understand the host language is a strong predictor of international student friendship formation with host nationals due to more effective communication (Ying, 2002). Confidence in the host language not only facilitates more contact with host nationals but also influences the amount that a person can self-disclose. Through language, students can both transmit and receive more complex information, which makes relationship development more feasible (Kudo & Simkin, 2003). On the other hand, the inability to speak the host language creates two simultaneous communicative setbacks. First, students with language inefficiencies experience more insecurity and anxiety during intercultural encounters (Kudo & Simkin, 2003). These insecurities may cause them to feel awkward and uncomfortable about their accent (Sawir et al., 2012), as well as anxiety, embarrassment, shame and nervousness (Brown, 2008). Students often cite their inability to speak the host language as a main

reason for not establishing relationships with host nationals and for congregating with those from their own culture (Sawir et al., 2012). Although they do hold the host culture responsible for the lack of friendship formation as well (Gareis, 2012). The two-way nature of friendship formation is the second communicative setback, host nationals likely have less interest in socializing with international students with poor language skills (Gareis, 2012). The formation of friendship and intimate interpersonal relationships requires interest from both parties and there is often a lack of interest from host culture individuals (Bochner et al., 1985).

Despite the problems and challenges that language inadequacies present for international students, most scholars who assess language acquisition would agree that students who study abroad do improve their second language abilities (Collentine & Freed, 2004; Hadis, 2005; Isabelli-García, 2003; Lafford, 2004; Pellegrino, 1998). Thus, while students are abroad they inherently develop language skills necessary to build interpersonal relationships with host nationals. Paradoxically, social networks and more specifically friendship formation with host nationals is a factor related to language acquisition (Dewey et al., 2013; Isabelli-García, 2006). Research findings also show significant relationships between language gains and interaction with local individuals other than friends and acquaintances (Dewey et al., 2013). Students learning a language in a study abroad context tend to emphasize the importance of being exposed to the language in their social environment (O'Donnell, 2004). Furthermore, Pellegrino (1998) suggests that there is a relationship between perceived language use while studying abroad and perceived language gain. Consequently, using a communicative perspective in understanding the relationship between language acquisition and host national friendship formation inherently creates a chicken or the egg scenario. Students need adequate language ability in order to build relationships with host nationals; however, speaking the language with host national friends potentially increases language abilities. The goal of the current research is to analyze this paradox longitudinally.

Kim's (2001) cross-cultural adaptation theory poses that the greater the preparedness for change the greater the host interpersonal communication. In order to better understand the relationship between perceived language difficulties, perceived reduction in language difficulties, and host national friendship formation this study poses the following hypotheses and research questions.

6.1.1. H9: International students will report a decrease in perceived difficulty speaking and understanding spoken Spanish over time.

6.1.2. H10: Students who report fewer perceived difficulties speaking and understanding spoken Spanish upon arrival will report having more host national friends.

6.1.3. RQ6: What is the relationship between host national friend increases and perceived reduction in difficulties speaking and understanding spoken Spanish?

6.1.4. RQ7: What is the relationship between decreases in language difficulties and the micro environmental variables (University setting, Housing, Classroom, Extra-curricular Activities, Tutor Programs) analyzed in Chapter 5

6.2. Ethnic Proximity (Regional Origin)

The second predispositional factor that Kim (2001) includes in her cross-cultural adaptation theory is ethnic proximity, a construct which some scholars term cultural distance. Individuals who share fewer ethnic similarities with the mainstream ethnicity dominant in the host culture will experience more difficulties adapting. Ethnic characteristics may range from physical characteristics that distinguish the international student from locals to

psychological thought patterns, values, and social orientations. Research has shown that this cultural dissimilarity predicts psychological distress (Ward & Searle, 1990) and potentially influences an individual's participation in host communication processes. Several studies have examined the effects of ethnic proximity and adaptation by comparing international students and their countries of origin.

Researchers have analyzed the friendship networks of students from Anglophone, North Central European, African, Latin American, and Asian countries in the United States (Gareis, 2012; Yeh & Inose, 2003). Gareis (2012) found that students from Anglophone and Northern European countries had more close US American friendships and were more satisfied with the number and quality of their US friends than their counterparts from East Asian countries. There are several factors related to ethnic proximity and cultural distance that potentially explain these findings. First, Asians, Africans, and Latin Americans potentially experience more racism and discrimination in the United States than their European, mostly white counterparts (Yeh & Inose, 2003). Second, in addition to having more similar physical characteristics, US Americans share a common history and cultural heritage with Anglophone and European countries (Gareis, 2012). Third, Europeans are more similar to US Americans in that they share more individualistic cultural values (Gareis, 2012; Yeh & Inose, 2003). These findings illustrate differences in national origin for international students in the United States. Peacock and Harrison (2009) found that host students in the United Kingdom treated international students from other European, Anglophone, and Latin American countries much differently than those from the rest of the world. Furthermore, at one Argentine University students rated more culturally distant international students less positively in terms of customs and values (Castro Solano, 2013b). Given these patterns, the current research compares the friendship networks of international students from different countries in Buenos Aires, Argentina.

Although Argentina lies in South America and undeniably forms part of Latin America, it is considered by many to be very "European" both ethnically

and culturally (Stephenson, 2001). Indeed, the well-known Argentine writer Jorge Luis Borges describes the Argentine as “someone who gestures like an Italian, talks like a Spaniard, is educated like a French person, and copies British Fashion” (Stephenson, 2001, p. 131). However, despite the evident European influence on Argentine culture, Argentines also share similarities with other Latin Americans, specifically language. Kim (2001) includes shared linguistic origins when discussing ethnic proximity. Due to the cultural mix and shared similarity with both Europeans and other Latin Americans the current research poses two research questions related to ethnic proximity and shared language.

6.2.1. RQ8: What is the relationship between regional origin and host national friendship formation?

6.2.2. RQ9: What is the relationship between native Spanish speakers and host national friendship formation?

6.3. Adaptive Personality (Ethnocentrism)

The third predisposition factor is related to individual personality traits. Attributes such as being open-minded, having a strong ego, and/or possessing the ability to remain positive are particularly pertinent characteristics of an adaptive personality (Kim, 2001). These characteristics make individuals more or less willing to accept different ideas and develop new relationships. For example, one study concerning Taiwanese students in the United States found that pre-arrival personality and attitude about forming relationships with US Americans predicted future relationships (Tanaka et al., 1997). Additionally, a study examining four US Americans in Buenos Aires found that the positivity or negativity of one’s attitudes and opinions played a role in the desire and drive to build a social network (Isabelli-García, 2006).

A high degree of openness gives individuals the ability to make more accurate assessments of observations while discouraging ethnocentric snap

judgments (Kim, 2001). Researchers have used various constructs to examine the relationship between specific personality characteristics and cross-cultural adaptation. The current research examines the relationship between ethnocentrism, a construct that Kim's theoretical framework includes as an openness concept, and individuals' participation in host communication activities. This research also inquires as to how an individual's ethnocentrism undergoes change, i.e. decreases or increases while studying abroad in Buenos Aires.

In 1906 sociologist William Sumner published his highly influential book *Folkways*, which is a study of the sociological importance of the usages, manners, customs, mores, and morals that drive human behavior. According to Sumner, folkways are a societal force that produces individual habits and group customs. They are not conscious creations, but products of natural forces set into motion by humans and passed down through generations (Sumner, 1906). Sumner maintains that people exaggerate and intensify everything in their own folkways that differentiate them from others. Sumner defines ethnocentrism as, "the view of things in which one's own group is the center of everything, and all others are scaled and rated with reference to it" (p. 13). Sumner offers several illustrations of group level ethnocentrism in various societies using examples of superior names that one group gives themselves in relation to others. Countless authors and researchers have analyzed, discussed, and redefined Sumner's rather ambiguous descriptions of ethnocentrism leaving the concept open to differing interpretations (Bizumic et al., 2009).

One common theme in the ethnocentrism literature is that it is a social dysfunction or pathology (McEvoy, 2002). Indeed ethnocentrism is associated with various negative outcomes. For example, one study found that ethnocentrism negatively affects interpersonal perceptions in organizational contexts and individuals with high ethnocentrism tended to perceive individuals from out-groups to have less credibility (Neuliep et al., 2005). These results indicate that ethnocentrism can lead to discrimination in the workplace and cause employers to inaccurately evaluate the abilities of potential employees.

One study looking at international students found that those with ethnocentric attitudes had less appreciation for cultural differences and were unaware that their communication style was potentially hampering their ability to build cross-cultural relationships (Jackson, 2008).

McEvoy (2002) argues that ethnocentrism is not necessarily a dysfunction but an adaptive evolutionary behavior. Ethnocentrism helps the individual to be openly reciprocal among its members while protecting itself from being taken advantage of by members of other groups. He argues that the influential nature of an ethnocentrism gene would likely cause ethnocentrism to be a favored trait within groups (McEvoy, 2002). Finally, he argues that ethnocentrism causes an individual to evaluate violence towards the in-group as negative, but violence against the out-group as positive, thus justifying advantages gained through the killing and destruction of others. However, Brewer (1999) contests this commonly held evolutionary explanation that in-group bias, or ethnocentrism, inherently translates into out-group prejudice. She writes that out-group prejudice is manifested under conditions of moral superiority, perceived threats, and group comparisons. Thus it is not necessarily a love for one's group that causes negative attitudes but the consequences that emerge from favoritism for and maintenance of the in-group. Ethnocentrism is a major component of nationalism and prejudice while history shows that people have tended to be ethnocentric for centuries (Bizumic et al., 2009). Debating whether or not ethnocentrism is a learned social dysfunction, an inherent biological trait, or if it produces hatred toward out-groups is not the goal of this study. However, understanding its origins and nuances should help find ways to reduce ethnocentric attitudes and increase intercultural sensitivity, which is a stated study abroad objective and has been the research goal of many scholars.

Fluck, Clouse, and Shooshtari (2007) investigated ways to reduce ethnocentrism in the international business environment and found that students who participated in a multi-cultural online supplement had increased global mindedness than those who had not. Borden (2007) found that service learning

in a multicultural environment reduced ethnocentrism because it provides individuals with a consistent, deep, and meaningful contact with other cultures. Along with these within culture research findings, several researchers have reported relationships between studying abroad and constructs similar to ethnocentrism.

Zhai (2001) reported that studying abroad enhanced US students' global perspective and contributed to their intercultural sensitivity. A longitudinal study examining US students studying abroad in several different countries demonstrated an increase in intercultural communication skills over time (Williams, 2005). Additionally, research findings show that after returning from study abroad students are worldlier and more interested in international affairs (Hadis, 2005). Researchers have also found that individuals who study abroad develop more intercultural competence. However, specific characteristics of those experiences such as length of study abroad and the inclusion of guided cultural reflection had greater impacts on increased intercultural sensitivity and positive attitudes toward the culture (Pederson, 2009). Given the research findings demonstrating a relationship between studying abroad and positive transformations in constructs that are similar to ethnocentrism, the following hypothesis is posed.

6.3.1. H11: International students in Buenos Aires will report a decrease in ethnocentrism over time.

Ethnocentrism is an individual trait that impacts the way in which a person responds to and communicates with their environment (Neulip & McCroskey, 1997). Ethnocentrism is a concept used to measure adaptive personality, a predispositional factor which Kim's (2001) theorizes will influence an individual's ability to successfully participate in host communication activities. Finally, ethnocentrism is a predispositional factor that potentially undergoes change due to an individual's participation in host communication processes and exposure to distinct micro environmental

elements. Thus, in order to better understand ethnocentrism in relation to other elements of the cross-cultural adaptation process the following research questions are posed.

6.3.2. RQ10: What is the relationship between ethnocentrism levels upon arrival and changes over time with host national friendship?

6.3.3. RQ11: What is the relationship between the micro environmental contact situations (University setting, housing, classroom makeup, extra-curricular activities, tutor programs) presented in Chapter 5 and ethnocentrism?

The ensuing section briefly presents the measures used to test the three hypotheses and six research questions above mentioned. This is followed by results, analysis, and discussion related to the predispositional factors and their implications. Finally, brief conclusions related to predisposition follow.

6.4. Predisposition Methodological Considerations

This research uses a longitudinal design in order to better understand how language ability, national origin, ethnocentrism levels, and friendship patterns interact and change over time. In terms of the quantitative measures, this analysis incorporates Hendrickson et al.'s (2011) friendship network grid. See Chapter 3.3.1. and Appendix I for more details. Students also report their perceived difficulty speaking Spanish and comprehending spoken Spanish along with reporting their country of origin. See Chapters 3.3.3.1., 3.3.3.2., and Appendix M for more details. Finally, the goal of this research is to better understand the role that ethnocentrism plays in the cross-cultural adaptation process. This is indeed a challenge as identifying and measuring ethnocentrism is a complicated endeavor. This research incorporates a 5-point Likert-type ethnocentrism scale (Neulip & McCroskey, 1997). This scale makes it possible

to compare participant's ethnocentrism at the beginning and end of the semester and test this relationship with host national friendship. See Chapter 3.3.3.3 and Appendix D for more details.

Methodological designs that include participant self-reports run the risk of response bias. One of the most prominent response biases is a social desirability bias, which is the tendency for participants to give responses which make them look good. Participants display impression management and purposely tailor their answers to create a positive social image (Paulhus, 1991). Strong attitudes of ethnocentrism are generally considered socially unacceptable, especially for those international students aspiring to achieve global competence. Consequently, there is a concern regarding ethnocentrism measurement that participants will show a social desirability bias (Negy, Shreve, Jensen, & Uddin, 2003). It is common for researchers examining ethnocentrism and other related constructs to include measures assessing social desirable responding to control for this bias (Negy et al., 2003; Paulhus, 1991). In order to keep the quantitative survey short and to avoid participant attrition this investigation does not directly measure or control for a potential social desirability bias; however, this research takes the social desirability bias into account when analyzing and discussing implications of results related to ethnocentrism.

This analysis also incorporates findings from in-depth interviews. The researcher asked students questions related to their perceived difficulties with the language and gathered participant perceptions of language improvement. For native speakers these interview questions were modified focusing on their interpretations of the language nuances that exist between Spanish speaking countries. Example questions include: "Do you feel as if your language ability has improved?" "In what situations do you feel you have improved the most?" "What do you think about Argentine Spanish?" Unlike perceived language difficulties and friendship network questions, inquiries regarding unconscious ethnocentric attitudes involve indirect questioning due to a potential social desirability bias. Furthermore, in consideration of triangulation critics (Massey,

1999), the goal of the in-depth interviews is not to place participants on the same quantitative ethnocentric scale but to identify ethnocentric attitudes and statements while discussing how this might affect their social relationships. The researcher asked students a variety of questions related to their own country and Argentina. These questions include: “Do you like your country?” “What do you like/dislike about your country?” “What do you like/dislike about Argentina?” “What could your country learn from Argentina?” “What could Argentina learn from your country?” “What do you think about the food in Argentina?” “What do you think about Argentine fashion?” “What do you think about Buenos Aires nightlife?” “What do you think about the quality of life in Argentina?” “What do you think about the Argentine Educational system?” “How would you rate the academic level of the ____?” “What do you think about Argentine politics?” “How do you feel about male/female relations in Argentina?”

6.5. Results, Analysis, and Discussion for Preparedness for change (Perceived Language Ability)

Hypothesis 9 predicted that international students would report a decrease in perceived language difficulty over the course of the semester. First, this analysis excluded those 13 participants whose native language was Spanish. Second, Paired sample T-tests examined the difference between reported difficulties speaking and understanding Spanish upon arrival and 3.5 months later. Findings supported the hypothesis revealing that international students reported a decrease in their perceived difficulty understanding spoken Spanish $t(85) = -5.74, p = .000, 95\% \text{ CI } [-.93, -.45], d = -.62$ and a decrease in their perceived difficulty speaking Spanish $t(87) = -5.45, p = .000, 95\% \text{ CI } [-.88, -.41], d = -.58$. See Table 8 for perceived language difficulty means and standard deviations.

Table 8

Non-Native Speaker Reported Difficulty Speaking and Understanding Spoken Spanish Upon Arrival and at the End of the Semester.

	N	Arr m(sd)	Dep m(sd)	Mean Change
Perceived Difficulty Speaking Spanish	88	4.24 (1.41)	4.87 (1.32)	0.65*
Perceived Difficulty Understanding Spoken Spanish	86	4.97 (1.42)	5.65 (1.03)	0.69*

Note: Students reported language ability on a Likert-type scale whereby 1 = extreme difficulty and 7 = no difficulty. $p < .000^*$

Hypothesis 10 predicted that students who reported fewer perceived difficulties speaking and understanding spoken Spanish upon arrival would report having more host national friends. Pearson's correlation Coefficients showed a significant positive correlation between reported Spanish speaking ability and host national friendship both at the beginning of the semester $r(100) = .236, p = .018$ and at the end of the semester $r(100) = .247, p = .012$. To be sure this positive correlation was no longer significant at the $p = .05$ level when excluding native speakers from the analysis both at the beginning of the semester $r(87) = .192, p = .075$ and at the end of the semester $r(89) = .182, p = .087$. There were no positive correlations for more host national friends and reported understanding of spoken Spanish.

In order to further test the positive correlation between difficulties speaking Spanish and host national friendship upon arrival this analysis split the sample in two groups. The high difficulty group ($n = 49$) included those students who reported a 1, 2, 3, or 4 while the low difficulty group ($n = 51$) included students who reported a 5, 6, or 7. A One-way ANOVA test showed a significant difference $F(1, 98) = 6.3, p = .014, \eta^2 = .06$ in host national friendship upon arrival between those with high difficulty ($M = 3.1, 95\% \text{ CI } [1.8, 4.4]$) and those with low difficulty ($M = 5.5, 95\% \text{ CI } [4.0, 6.9]$). When

excluding native speakers this effect was still significant albeit smaller; $F(1, 85) = 4.7, p = .033, \eta^2 = .06$ between those with high difficulty ($M = 3.1, 95\% \text{ CI } [1.8, 4.4]$) and those with low difficulty ($M = 5.1, 95\% \text{ CI } [3.7, 6.5]$). This additional test helps to demonstrate the relationship between perceived speaking difficulties and host national friendship.

Research Question 6 inquired as to the relationship between improved language ability and an increase in host national friends. Pearson's correlation Coefficients showed no positive relationship between increases in host national friendship and decreases in reported perceived difficulties speaking Spanish $r(87) = -0.05, p = .658$ or decreases in reported perceived difficulties understanding spoken Spanish $r(85) = -.12, p = .285$.

Finally, Research Question 7 inquired as to the relationship between improved language abilities and micro environmental factors. There were no significant relationships between decreases in language difficulties with university setting, housing, classroom makeup, extra-curricular activities, or tutor program participation. Based on this test, it would seem that the micro environmental elements did not tend to be a significant factor in decreased language difficulties. However, related to this question, it should be noted that students in Public, Private, and US based programs differed in terms of their difficulties speaking and understanding spoken Spanish upon arrival and at the end of the semester. Table 9 illustrates these differences in Spanish language difficulties across university settings

Table 9

Perceived Difficulty Speaking and Understanding Spoken Spanish Across University Settings Upon Arrival and at the End of the Semester

	Private m(sd)	Public m(sd)	US Based m(sd)
N	54	8	27
Perceived Difficulty Speaking Span (Arr)	4.2 (1.4)	5.7 (.95)	4.0 (1.3)
Perceived Difficulty Speaking Span (Dep)	5.0 (1.2)	5.4 (.92)	4.5 (1.6)
Perceived Difficulty Speaking Change	.85 (.99)	-.29 (2.2)	.48 (.72)
Perceived Difficulty Understand Span (Arr)	4.9 (1.0)	5.4 (2.3)	4.8 (1.3)
Perceived Difficulty Understand Span (Dep)	5.8 (1.1)	5.5 (.93)	5.4 (1.0)
Perceived Difficulty Understand Change	.83 (1.0)	.13 (2.2)	.54 (.72)

Note. These numbers exclude all native speakers, all of which studied at the private university

Overall findings from the two hypotheses and two research questions reveal that students perceived fewer difficulties speaking and understanding Spanish at the end of the semester and that those who reported speaking Spanish with less difficulty had more host national friends at the beginning and end of classes. However, there was no relationship between an increase in host national friendship and decreases in perceived Spanish language difficulties. These findings coupled together suggest that students who are better able to speak Spanish made host national friends, but having host national friends did not necessarily influence ones' perceptions of decreases in language difficulties. During in-depth interviews students discussed their improvements or not in Spanish level and their view on how language influences intercultural

friendship.

Paired sample T-tests revealed that students reported a significant decrease in their difficulties both speaking Spanish and understanding spoken Spanish. Students' comments during in-depth interviews reinforced this finding with the large majority of students expressing their language advances. Example responses to the question, "Do you feel like your Spanish has improved?" include "Obviously" (Ref 15); "Yeah, you could say that" (Ref 8); "Yes, a lot" (Ref 29); "I believe so" (Ref 10). Even though most students described an improvement in language ability, some students stated that their language had not improved or that they were disappointed that they had not improved more. These students indicated various causes for this lack of improvement and disappointment. One student in a US based study abroad program did not think her Spanish had improved, this particular student chose to have the interview in Spanish, she answered the language improvement question by blaming her group's dynamic (Ref 29):

No, in reality no, that's probably the biggest problem with our program, we're together with our group of 20 all the time and we speak English... it's been difficult to improve. The thing's that's helped me the most is speaking Spanish at home with my host mom.

Students whose language ability was less advanced often referred to speaking Spanish as "practicing" Spanish. They speak their native language often, but cherish the moments to practice speaking Spanish. A German student who had mostly German friends expressed her slow language development and commented on her desire to spend more time with host nationals (Ref 5):

I thought I'd learn more, I thought I would be able to speak much better. Today I'm a little bit disillusioned because I thought I could speak....I'm looking forward to a party this weekend where there will be Argentines for us to practice with.

Findings from the longitudinal survey showed a positive relationship between fewer perceived difficulties speaking Spanish and more host national friends upon arrival. This finding illustrates the importance of language in the friendship formation process. One student in a US based program that reported having zero host national friends discussed language and its affect on deep friendship (Ref 26):

Here, because of the language I don't have the possibility to get know people and that freaks me out (...) I think for me I don't think you can communicate without a language and completely know who someone is.

Research Question 6 inquired as to the relationship between decreased language difficulties and increased host national friends. Pearsons correlation Coefficients revealed no positive relationships between perceived language difficulty changes and increased host national friends. During in-depth interviews several students who had little difficulty speaking and understanding Spanish commented that their Spanish hadn't improved during their time in Buenos Aires (Refs 16, 19, 21, 34). The students who reported the most improvement during in-depth interviews tended to be those with relatively low levels. Furthermore, as illustrated in Table 9 students in the public university perceived the least difficulties speaking and understanding Spanish both upon arrival and at the end of the semester, however they also reported no perceived language improvement. In considering these comments and findings related to university setting, a Pearsons correlation Coefficient analysis was run between perceived language difficulties upon arrival and decreases in perceived language difficulty over time. Indeed, there were significant relationships between difficulties speaking Spanish and understanding spoken Spanish upon arrival and decreases in language difficulties over time. See Table 10 for all correlations.

Table 10

Correlations Between Perceived Difficulties Speaking and Understanding Spoken Spanish and Decreases in these Difficulties Over Time.

Language Variables	1	2	3
1. Difficulty Speaking Span Upon Arrival	-		
2. Difficulty Understanding Span Upon Arrival	.71*	-	
3. Decrease Difficulty Speaking Span	.48*	.23*	-
4. Decrease Difficulty Understanding Span	.35*	.70*	.41*

Note. * $p < .00$, two tailed.

Thus, students who perceived the most decrease in difficulties speaking Spanish were those who reported the most difficulty upon arrival in Buenos Aires. While those who perceived fewer difficulties upon arrival reported less change in their perceptions of difficulties speaking Spanish.

The goal of this study was to identify the role that perceived difficulties speaking and understanding spoken Spanish plays in developing friendship with host nationals and to better understand the relationship between host national friendship and perceptions of language acquisition. Although many questions regarding these relationships remain, two main themes did emerge. First, there was a relationship between perceived Spanish speaking difficulties and fewer host national friendships. This finding is consistent with other researchers longitudinally examining perceptions of language acquisition (Dewey et al., 2013). Second, overall students perceived a reduction in their difficulties with the language, however this decrease was much greater for those who reported the most difficulties upon arrival. Although this research did not set out to examine language acquisition explicitly, this finding is useful for those concerned with perceptions of language acquisition in a study abroad context. This finding is consistent with researchers using the Oral Proficiency Indicator (OPI), a highly regarded language proficiency assessment instrument (Brecht, Davidson, & Ginsberg, 1995). These researchers reported that individuals with lower initial levels in Russian showed higher gains over time than those who

reported higher initial levels. Language acquisition researchers describe second language learning as a cyclical process with developmental advances and temporary setbacks (Pellegrino, 1998). Researchers have also found that language acquisition follows an S-shaped learning curve pattern (Brecht et al., 1995; Murre, 2013). Little initial improvement is followed by rapid learning which eventually hits a plateau. This plateau is often referred to as the ceiling effect (Coleman, 1998). It is possible that students perceive great strides in the early stages of language acquisition; however over time their perceptions of improvement become less evident as they reach the ceiling.

It is important to highlight that this study relied on students' self reports of their difficulties with Spanish and did not assess their actual language ability. Students' perceptions of language learning are valuable for understanding the language learning process in a study abroad context (Pellegrino, 1998) and researchers comparing student reports of perceived language acquisition with objective language assessment measures have identified much similarity (MacIntyre et al., 1997; O'Donnell, 2004). However, students' ratings are not without biases. MacIntyre et al. (1997) found that students with more language anxiety tended to underestimate their abilities while students with low anxiety overestimated their abilities. This discrepancy between students' perceptions and their actual ability limits this study in that any conclusions only refer to perceptions of language difficulty.

The theoretical framework for this research places perceived language difficulty as a predisposition element which influences one's ability to participate in host social communication activities. Further, according to this framework some predispositional characteristics do undergo change. Findings from this study are consistent with Kim's (2001) theorizing regarding preparedness for change. First, individuals who were more prepared, i.e. perceived fewer difficulties speaking spoken Spanish developed more host national friendships. Second, the predispositional element considered here, perceived language difficulties, did undergo change, however, there was no

relationship with this perceived change in language difficulty and friendship network patterns.

6.6. Results, Analysis, and Discussion for Ethnic Proximity (National Origin)

Research Question 8 inquired as to the relationship between country of origin and host national friendship formation. For comparison purposes this analysis divided participants into three groups, North America, Europe, and Latin America. One-way ANOVA analysis revealed significant differences in host national friendship upon arrival $F(2, 99) = 4.28, p = .016, \eta^2 = .08$ between North Americans ($M = 3.35, 95\% \text{ CI } [2.2, .4.5]$) and Latin Americans ($M = 8.4, 95\% \text{ CI } [.69, .16]$), $p = .012$. This difference was also present at the end of the semester $F(2, 100) = 3.42, p = .037, \eta^2 = .06$ between North Americans ($M = 4.78, 95\% \text{ CI } [3.0, 6.5]$) and Latin Americans ($M = 10.2, 95\% \text{ CI } [2.8, 17.6]$), $p = .028$. The Tukey post hoc analysis did not show significant differences for Europeans with North Americans or Latin Americans. See Table 11 for a regional breakdown of host national friendship.

Table 11

Regional Host National Friendship Breakdown

Region	n	Arrival M(SD)	End of Semester M(SD)	Mean Change (SD)
Latin America	10	8.44 (10.1)	10.2 (10.36)	2.78 (10.22)
North America	46	3.35 (3.75)	4.78 (5.85)	1.43 (4.56)
Europe	46	4.41 (4.23)	5.83 (4.68)	1.41 (3.58)

Research Question 9 inquired as to the relationship between native Spanish Speakers and host national friendship formation. A one-way ANOVA compared host national friendship between the 13 native Spanish speakers who participated in this research and the 88 whose native language was not Spanish. Native Spanish speakers ($M = 9.08, 95\% \text{ CI } [5.2, 13]$) had significantly more host national friends at the end of classes $F(1, 100) = 4.53, p = .036, \eta^2 = .04$

than non-native Spanish speakers ($M = 5.3$, 95% CI [4.1, 6.5]). See Table 12 for means and standard deviations for friendship differences between native and non-native Spanish speakers.

Table 12

Native and Non-Native Spanish Speaker Host National Friendship Breakdown

Spanish Language	n	Arrival M (SD)	End of Semester M (SD)	Mean Change (SD)
Native	13	6.62 (7.42)	9.08 (6.45)	2.46 (8.04)
Non-Native	89	3.94 (4.43)	5.03 (5.91)	1.40 (4.26)

Findings from the quantitative survey showed that native Spanish speakers had significantly more host national friends than non-native speakers at the end of the semester. During in-depth interviews students from all regions discussed language, however interviewees who were native speakers described their experience with Argentine Spanish in a different way than non-native speakers. They reflect upon the nuances such as accents, grammatical differences, word meanings, and the tone of voice. Furthermore, instead of discussing their language acquisition they discuss their language adaptation. Another important difference is that they never refer to friendship with Argentines as a pragmatic event that leads one to practice Spanish. A student from Spain discussed his opinion of Argentine Spanish (Ref 11):

I've never had any problem with the language. I love el voseo...it's beautiful, sexy, attractive. There are some people that are really lovely when they talk, men and women, wow, other people I don't like, sometimes the tone is really strong. The words are good, el lunfardo, I really like it, some words are totally Italian or French.

A Mexican girl shared a similar opinion and discussed her adaptation, she answered the question, What do you think about the way they speak here? (Ref 20):

I've always liked it a lot, even before coming, really nice accent, the yo.

Researcher: Have you changed your way of speaking?

I've incorporated a few words and sometimes take on the accent, but in general I've kept my accent.

Kim (2001) suggests that the chances for successful adaptation are greater for individuals whose ethnic backgrounds are similar to the mainstream ethnicity of the host environment. Findings from this study are consistent with this proposition in terms of shared language and region, however there may be other nuances that affect these relationships and any concrete conclusions related to this variable should be considered with caution. Most notably, findings revealed that North Americans in this sample had fewer host national friends than Latin Americans. This finding is potentially confounded by results presented in Chapter 5 related to university settings and the role that US based programs have in shaping the friendship networks of those participants, all of which are from North America. Furthermore, the regional breakdown categorized participants from Spain in the European group and Brazilians in the Latin American group, whereas the native Spanish speaker categorized those from Spain in the same group as non Brazilian Latin Americans. This classification is potentially confounding.

6.7. Results, Analysis, and Discussion for Adaptive Personality

(Ethnocentrism)

Hypothesis 11 predicted that international students would report a decrease in ethnocentrism over time. The minimum score on the ethnocentrism scale that an individual can report is 15 while the maximum is 75. Upon arrival students reported an ethnocentrism of $m = 24.72$ ($SD = 6.43$) and at the end of

classes an ethnocentrism of $m = 24.40$ ($SD = 6.25$). A Paired sample T-test revealed that this slight decrease was not significant, $t(98) = .927$, $p = .356$, 95% CI $[-.52, 1.43]$, $d = .09$. Overall, 50 participants reported reduced ethnocentrism levels, 15 reported no change, and 37 reported increased ethnocentrism levels.

Research question 10 inquired as to the relationship between degree of ethnocentrism upon arrival and changes over time with host national friendship. Pearson's correlations Coefficients did not reveal any relationships between lower ethnocentrism levels and more host national friends at the beginning $r(101) = -.05$, $p = .63$ or at the end of the semester $r(99) = -.05$, $p = .642$. To further test this hypothesis the sample was split into three groups; lowest ethnocentrism, average ethnocentrism, and highest ethnocentrism. One-way ANOVA analysis comparing the three groups also revealed no significant differences in host national friendship upon arrival $F(2, 98) = 1.57$, $p = .214$, $\eta^2 = .03$. or at the end of the semester $F(2, 96) = .042$, $p = .959$, $\eta^2 = .00$. Finally, there were no significant relationships between ethnocentrism change and host national friendship.

Research question 11 inquired as to the relationship between degrees of ethnocentrism and the micro environmental contact situations analyzed in Chapter 5 (university setting, housing, classroom makeup, extra-curricular activities, and tutor programs). First, a one-way ANOVA analysis compared the three university settings; Public, Private, and US based programs. Findings showed several significant differences between participants in these settings upon arrival $F(2, 99) = 7.34$, $p = .001$, $\eta^2 = .13$ with participants in private universities ($M = 26.30$, 95% CI $[24.7, 27.9]$) reporting significantly higher degrees of ethnocentrism than those in the public universities ($M = 19.5$, 95% CI $[15.9, 23]$), $p = .009$ and US based programs ($M = 22.33$, 95% CI $[20, 24.5]$), $p = .014$. This difference was also significant at the end of the semester $F(2, 96) = 5.94$, $p = .004$, $\eta^2 = .11$ between the private university ($M = 25.6$, 95% CI $[24.2, 27.1]$) and public university ($M = 18.5$, 95% CI $[15.5, 21.5]$), $p = .005$. There were no significant relationships for ethnocentrism change in any of

the university settings. See Table for 13 for means and standard deviations for ethnocentrism across University settings.

Table 13

Means and Standard Deviations for Ethnocentrism upon Arrival and End of the Semester Across University Settings

	Public M (SD)	Private M (SD)	US Based M (SD)
Ethnocentrism Arrival	19.5 (4.3)	26.3 (6.4)	22 (5.6)
Ethnocentrism End of Sem	18.5 (3.5)	25.6 (5.8)	23 (6.9)
Ethnocentrism Change	-1.0 (3.6)	-.9 (4.8)	.9 (5.2)

Note. Means are based on a scale whereby the minimum ethnocentrism score is 15 and the maximum ethnocentrism score is 75.

Second, One-way ANOVAs showed no significant relationships for housing arrangement and ethnocentrism. Third, Pearson's correlation Coefficients showed no relationship between more classes with Argentines and ethnocentrism. Fourth, One-way ANOVAs showed that individuals who participated in tutor programs ($M = 26.88$, 95% CI [24.5, 29.3]) had significantly higher degrees of ethnocentrism upon arrival than those who did not participate ($M = 23.68$, 95% CI [22, 25]), $F(1, 100) = 5.79$, $p = .018$, $\eta^2 = .05$, however tutor program participants ($M = -2.28$, 95% CI [-4.2, -.32]) also reported a greater decrease in ethnocentrism over time than those who did not participate ($M = .42$, 95% CI [-.65, 1.5]), $F(1, 100) = 7.03$, $p = .009$, $\eta^2 = .07$. See Table 14 for means and standard deviations for ethnocentrism and tutor program participation.

Table 14

Means and Standard Deviations for Degree of Ethnocentrism upon arrival and departure for Tutor program participation

	N Yes/No	Tutor Program Par M (SD)	NO Tutor Program Par M (SD)
Ethnocentrism Arrival	33/69	26.9 (6.8)	23.7 (6.0)
Ethnocentrism End of Sem	32/67	24.8 (5.7)	24.2 (6.5)
Ethnocentrism Change	32/67	- 2.3	.42

Note. Means are based on a scale whereby the minimum ethnocentrism score is 15 and the maximum ethnocentrism score is 75.

During in-depth interviews international students answered questions related to their own countries and Argentina. Ethnocentrism did not seem to be a pervasive theme during the majority of the interviews. Many students tended to be careful about expressing or harboring ethnocentric attitudes. A German student answered the question, “Do you like your country?” with extreme caution (Ref 8):

As a German you always have to watch out for nationalism and all that, I don't like nationalism, many Germans won't say that they're proud of their country.

Several students from the US were also careful not to openly express strong nationalistic sentiments. One student answered the same question, “Do you like your country?” (Ref 31):

Yeah, I do, I mean, I'm not in any way patriotic or nationalistic, I don't believe that America is the greatest.

Not all students were reserved about expressing positive sentiments concerning their own countries. Students answered the question, “Do you like your country?”

Yes, I am a Mexican in love with her country, I love my country
(Ref 20).

Yes, people always say, no, I don't like my country, me, I love France
(Ref 21).

The Czech Republic? Ah yes, I love it (...) it's a good country
(Ref 16).

However, openly expressing positive sentiments concerning ones country did not seem to be an automatic indicator of ethnocentrism among this sample. In these affirmations of liking for their own countries they were not making comparisons or stating that their homelands were necessarily better than others. However, some students who expressed liking for their own countries did do so in a manner which demonstrates a more ethnocentric attitude by emphasizing that their country is superior to a certain extent. A US student answered the question, “Do you like your country?” (Ref 26):

I love the United States
(Researcher: What do you like about the United States?)
when you study and travel abroad you have a new appreciation for everything back home in your country (...) in the US you expect everything to work, whereas here plans fall through and what you expect isn't what you get and you have to roll with it.

This new appreciation for one's own country potentially helps explain why some students reported increased ethnocentrism on the quantitative survey.

Many students described how visions of their own countries had changed after studying in Buenos Aires and in several cases this was a realization of the opportunities that they have in their own countries. On the other hand some students also described new information that they learned about their countries which potentially lead to decreases in ethnocentrism. One student answered the question, do you like your country? (Ref 30):

Sure, I like the US, but I don't think I have a sense of pride in being from America and whatever sense of pride I did have before coming here has definitely been diminished since learning; like for example, we went to Paraguay on one of our trips and we learned about their dictatorship and the role that Henry Kissinger and Operation Condor had in their dictatorship, and heard first hand from one of the tortured survivors that was living in a detention center, innocent, young, and how it was controlled by people from our military, when you actually hear first hand from someone who experienced that, and see how their lives have been impacted by something that our government has done. Sure, I like the life that I have in America but wouldn't say that I'm proud to be American.

This student recognized a negative aspect of her own government. On the other hand some students recognized positive aspects of their own government. One student answered the question, do you like your country? (Ref 18):

Yes, I anticipated that I would resent the US when I came here but actually I'm proud of our country after being here (...)

(Researcher: What do you like?)

I like our democracy

Another student described a similar sentiment when answering the question, do you like your country? (Ref: 12):

Yes, I like it, when I arrived in Argentina I loved it, really beautiful here, the trees, the people, natural food, but after I see the injustice, the inefficiency, the disorganization, no, now I know that I could never live outside of the US, realistically, I'm used to what I was raised with.

Students also commented on differences between their own cultures and Argentina. In recognizing these differences some rate their own cultures as superior while some do not. In one or two interviews students made comments demonstrating obvious examples of ethnocentrism. One student clearly holds superior attitude in answering the question, what do you think about Argentine fashion? (Ref 25):

I feel like everybody is 10 years behind us with music/fashion, like the turn of the century is where they'd be now, kind of funny, awkward, not normal to us, people would make fun of them in America, funny that they think GAP is cool, GAP is the cheap place that your momma takes you when you're a kid, everybody wears gap sweatshirts, you can tell they wanna be like americanized, US brands, Nike, Adidas, Abercrombie & Fitch; guys have the weirdest haircuts with mullets & rattails.

This student reported that all his friends were other students from his study abroad program and when asked if he had any Argentine friends he mentioned some acquaintances at the gym. This student discussed his motivations for study abroad and language learning. He was mostly motivated to have fun in a country and meet some new people, mainly from his own country. Other students made less obvious ethnocentric statements. A Spanish girl discussed Argentine Spanish and answered the question, “What do you

think about how the people speak here? Some people say that they speak really vulgar” (Ref 23):

No, I don't see it as vulgar, I see it as a non neutral Spanish, if I had to send someone to learn to speak Spanish, the place that I would least recommend is Argentina, the least.

Results from the quantitative surveys and in-depth interviews regarding the adaptive personality predisposition element in Kim's (2001) cross cultural adaptation theory revealed mixed findings with no definitive trends other than that participants generally tended to demonstrate low ethnocentrism. One potential explanation for this finding could be attributed to the attitude about other cultures and ability to interact with those from other cultures that those who choose to study abroad tend to have. For example, one study analyzing US college students found that those students who had more favorable attitudes about study abroad also had lower ethnocentrism levels and low intercultural communication apprehension (Kim & Goldstein, 2005). Another study compared US students who studied abroad with those who did not and found that students who studied abroad demonstrated more intercultural communication skills before and after studying abroad (Williams, 2005). Thus, participants that study abroad or have intentions of studying abroad may tend to be more open and have more adaptive personalities. Another explanation has to do with the reality that ethnocentrism is a rather complex construct as it represents unconscious attitudes laden with social desirability bias. For example, one study found that individuals studying abroad tended to overestimate their level of cultural sensitivity (Jackson, 2008).

This study did not show evidence that students significantly decreased their degree of ethnocentrism over the course of a semester abroad. On the contrary, although not significantly, some students reported higher ethnocentrism levels at the end of the semester. A logical argument for this finding is as follows. Upon arrival international students begin with an open

minded and politically correct attitude about individuals and institutions operating in other countries and cultures. After spending several months in another cultural environment students get frustrated with different communication and organization systems and develop attitudes of superiority. This exposure to other cultures and systems may simply give students reasons, examples, and personal “evidence” for why they prefer the cultural values and norms from their own culture. This highlights the argument previously presented, that by simply being in another country students do not inherently develop more openness and reduce ethnocentric attitudes (Pederson, 2011). Pederson (2011) argues that students need to be guided and those who have specific intercultural competence training will develop more intercultural sensitivity.

In considering these concerns, this chapter did inquire as to the relationship between micro environmental conditions and ethnocentrism and one main finding related to reduction in participant ethnocentrism emerged. Students who participated in tutor programs reported higher ethnocentrism at the beginning of the semester than those who did not participate, however they also reported significantly less ethnocentrism at the end of the semester. Thus, the exposure to specific, open-minded individuals concerned for the well being of international students may lead one to reduce their degree of ethnocentrism while living in a new cultural environment. A further, more comprehensive examination of the role that tutors play in reducing ethnocentric attitudes and building intercultural sensitivity is one avenue to consider for future research.

6.8. Predisposition and Friendship Formation Conclusions

International students do not arrive in a new cultural environment with a clean slate. There are predispositional elements which influence the adaptation process (Kim, 2001). This research examines three predisposition factors, language ability, regional background, and ethnocentric attitudes. Findings highlight the importance of perceived language ability in developing host national friendships, and also suggest several regional and linguistic

similarities. Ethnocentrism did not tend to bear significance in host national friendship formation, although findings do offer implications for better understanding the role that ethnocentrism potentially plays in the cross-cultural adaptation process. These findings also indicate how student's background characteristics change throughout the study abroad experience and potentially prepare them for future intercultural experiences.

Chapter 7: The Role of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) in the Cross-Cultural Adaptation Process

In 1977 Stephen Bochner and colleagues analyzed the friendship networks of international students and distilled the networks into three categories; co-nationals, multi-nationals, and host nationals. They then theorized that these distinct friendship types served unique psychological functions for individuals in new cultural environments (Bochner et al., 1977; Bochner et al., 1985). Three decades later, with the introduction of innovative communication and information technologies (ICT), the way in which international students manage these newly developed friendships has evolved. Furthermore, ICT facilitates continuous contact with distant family and friends while enabling individuals to stay abreast of the social, cultural, and political life of their home culture (Cemalcilar et al., 2005). Consequently, through ICT individuals can support relationships both globally and locally, depending on the manner in which they exploit the resources afforded to them (Hampton, Lee, & Her, 2011). The goal of this chapter is to extend this line of research by examining how international students communicate “globally” with their distant family and friends, and “locally” with their new, geographically close relationships in Buenos Aires.

Understanding the role that ICT plays in the lives of those living in new cultural environments and the influence it has on cross-cultural adaptation processes is critical. Past research, as well as the current investigation, has pointed to the conclusion that the friendship networks that international students develop in their new cultural environment play an influential role in the cross-cultural adaptation process (Hendrickson et al., 2011; Kim, 2001). However, social networking sites (SNS) such as Facebook have arguably muddled the concept and definition of friendship (Deresiewicz, 2011), making international student friendship network research more conceptually and operationally complex. Therefore, this study examines the interplay between SNS and face-to-face (FtF) friendship network patterns in order to better

understand the cross-cultural adaptation process. Additionally, Boyd and Ellison (2008) recognize that scholars have a limited understanding of SNS usage, especially outside of the US. This study explores the online communication behavior patterns of international students from around the world in Buenos Aires to better explain the role of these patterns in a multi-cultural context.

The structure of this chapter is as follows; the first section discusses the role that ICT use potentially plays in the cross-cultural adaptation process and poses three research questions. The second section outlines the structure of social networks in online contexts and poses three research questions. The third section briefly reviews the quantitative measures and interview questions specifically used in this chapter followed by an analysis of the six research questions and a model which proposes how international students use ICT. The final section presents a discussion outlining the limitations and implications of these findings.

7.1. ICT and Cross-Cultural Adaptation

Many researchers would agree that the loss of social support is one of the most important factors influencing the stress levels and the adaptation process of international students (Poyrazli, Kavanaugh, Baker, & Al-Timimi, 2004; Yeh & Inose, 2003). However, due to recent advances in ICT such as social networking sites and video chat programs international students are able to maintain communication with their family and friends like never before, potentially mitigating the stress resulting from the loss of social support (Mikal & Grace, 2012; Mikal, 2011). Nevertheless, whether or not this constant communication with distant relationships facilitates more successful adaptation to the new cultural environment is up for debate (Mikal, 2011). Kim (2001) theorizes that participation in interpersonal and mass communication activities with co-nationals restricts one's ability to establish communication with the host culture, resulting in less communication competence and intercultural transformation. Then again, her theory refers to interpersonal communication

with co-nationals living in the host culture and not online communication with distant relationships. Indeed, Savicki (2010) reported no relationship between more contact with home and less contact with the host culture. ICT such as SNS and video chat not only facilitate these distance relationships, but also relationships with locals in the new cultural environment.

The ability of an individual to communicate effectively with the local environment is central to the adaptation process, and this communicative ability is best learned through contact with host nationals (Kim, 2001). Due to the pervasive presence of ICT like SNS, international students now experience a mix of ways to facilitate their interpersonal contact and communication with host nationals (Mikal & Grace, 2011). ICT not only provides additional forums for interaction, but these interactions are through a medium in which the burgeoning host national friendships are merely a click away, helping to overcome potential social barriers. Thus, SNS such as Facebook would seem to have the potential for facilitating valuable host national friendship, a position that is supported by various ICT research findings indicating a relationship between online communication and increased social capital.

According to social capital theory, those who do better are somehow better connected; however, what it means to be better connected is not clear (Burt, 2000). Research findings suggest that those who take advantage of ICT afforded to them are indeed better connected (Kim & McKay-Semmler, 2013; Cemalcilar et al., 2005; Ellison et al., 2007, 2008). Other research shows that internet users exhibit more pro-social behaviors and have more active social lives (Robinson, Kestnbaum, Neustadt, & Alvarez, 2000). However, a possibility remains that this reliance on support from ICT may replace an international student's ability to make new, FtF host national friends in the new cultural environment, contacts which are integral for successful adaptation to the new cultural environment. Hampton et al. (2011) found that SNS users had more network diversity than non-users but they also had less diversity in their neighborhood setting, i.e. they had fewer local ties. Although Hampton et al.'s study was not conducted with international students in a multi-cultural context,

a concern remains that online communication potentially takes away from an international student's participation in FtF communication activities with the host culture.

One goal of the current research is to explain how international students use ICT and to better understand how this usage impacts FtF host national friendship and the cross-cultural adaptation process. Consequently, the following research questions are posed.

7.1.1. RQ12: How do International students use SNS such as Facebook to maintain distant relationships and communicate with those in their new cultural environment? How does this pattern change over the course of the semester?

7.1.2. RQ13: What is the relationship between the time one dedicates to their SNS and FtF host national friendship?

7.1.3. RQ14: How do international students use video chat programs such as Skype to maintain distant relationships? How does this pattern change over the course of the semester?

7.2. Social Network Structure

Deresiewicz (2011) discusses the changing pattern of social relations and concepts of friendship. He argues that SNS sites expanded the concept of friendship to engulf a person's whole social world while making said world visible for all to see. However, the reality is that individuals only have the potential to actively maintain a certain amount of relationships, and that there is attrition of actionable social capital as the number of relationships increase, or when these numbers dilute the otherwise stronger ties (Stefanone, Kwon, & Lackaff, 2011). In order to understand which online connections contribute to social capital, the network structure of social relationships must be analyzed.

Individual social networks are composed of ties with varying degrees of intimacy and contribution to overall social support (Rosen & Chu, 2011). Granovetter (1973/1983) explored the concept of weak ties to explain how individuals make social advancements by attaining new information and getting recruited into new groups; weak ties potentially represent access to more novel information and resources than strong ties do. Weak ties with host nationals give international students the opportunity to learn the communication patterns of various groups within the host culture, while strong ties with host nationals offer psychological support that one lacks when they move to a new country (Kim, 2001). Invitations to family events, birthdays, dinners, and even shared living give an international student intimate information about individuals in the new culture. One study analyzing the strong and weak tie friendships of international students demonstrated a positive relationship between those who had a variety of host national friendships and feelings of social connectedness (Hendrickson et al., 2011). See Chapter 2.2.2. for a more detailed description of strong and weak ties in the cross-cultural adaptation scenario.

Furthermore, when Granovetter (1973) put forth the strength of weak ties theory, online social networks were nonexistent. Arguably, an international student has the ability to accumulate new weak ties through SNS at a much faster rate than in the past. This argument can be sustained by introducing a third, more recent type of social connection, latent ties, which have become more relevant with the development of ICT. A latent tie can be thought of as a tie for which a link is technically available but that has not yet been initiated by social interaction (Haythornthwaite, 2002). An important characteristic of latent ties is that they are not established by individuals, but through organizational structures, such as through internal email lists (Haythornthwaite, 2002). Other researchers expand the definition of latent ties using them to describe certain SNS friendships, i.e. individuals who someone met online through a SNS, individuals who someone has a passing awareness of, or individuals who someone has briefly met FtF (Ellison, Steinfield, & Lampe, 2011). Through SNS these latent ties have the potential to be converted into weak ties and/or

strong ties (Ellison et al., 2007, 2011; Stefanone et al., 2011), and thus contribute to ones accumulated social capital.

SNS give international students the ability to build relationships with host nationals that begin as “latent” ties, perhaps by searching on a SNS for individuals that they may have met in person at a social gathering or class, for example, but were unable to strengthen the bond at the time (Lampe, Ellison, & Steinfield, 2006). Furthermore, participation in SNS social functions, like Facebook groups, arguably provides students access to embedded latent ties. Individuals use Facebook groups to satisfy social needs, gain access to information, and in some cases for civic and political involvement (Park, Kee, & Valenzuela, 2009). Thus, international students have the ability to connect to and communicate with host nationals and build relationships through the online interface of SNS. The following research questions are posed concerning SNS friendship evolution and this intertwining relationship with FtF friendships, taking into account the potential for strong ties, weak ties, and latent ties.

7.2.1. RQ15: How do international students’ SNS friendship networks evolve over time?

7.2.2. RQ16: What is the relationship between SNS host national friendship and FtF host national friendship? How does this relationship evolve over time?

7.2.3. RQ17: What relationships exist between host national, multi-national, and co-national SNS friends and FtF host national, multi-national, and co-national friends?

The ensuing section briefly describes the methodological elements specific to this chapter. This is followed by an analysis of the six research questions above presented. Finally, implications for ICT and the cross cultural adaptation theory are discussed.

7.3. ICT Methodological Considerations

Boyd and Ellison (2008) state that longitudinal studies are necessary for SNS researchers to make causal claims, while Rosen, Barnett, and Kim (2011) identify its importance for understanding the co-evolution of network science and applications. Furthermore, it is beneficial for administrators to understand the nature of international student internet use patterns while studying abroad (Mikal, 2011). Additionally, questions regarding general SNS use, as well as for specific purposes, require both quantitative and qualitative research (Boyd & Ellison, 2008). Thus, due to the nature of ICT and cross-cultural adaptation this chapter incorporates longitudinal quantitative measures complemented by qualitative in-depth interviews.

This chapter assesses ICT by specifically examining individual SNS and Skype video chat usage. For SNS use participants indicate the time they spend per day on their SNS, approximately how many friends they have, and the national origin of those friends. If they used video chat they indicated how many calls they make per month and with whom. See Chapter 3.3.4.1. and Appendix K for details regarding questionnaire origin and specifics. This chapter also incorporates Hendrickson et al.'s (2011) friendship network grid in order to examine the relationship between ICT usage and FtF friendship network formation. See Chapter 3.3.1. and Appendix I for more details. Finally, the researcher asked participants several questions regarding their ICT use. Example questions include: How do you use skype and Facebook to communicate with back home? Has this changed since arriving here? How do you use Facebook in your daily life here? Has your Facebook use changed since arriving in Buenos Aires?

7.4. ICT Results and Analysis

The results section is divided into two parts. The first part analyzes research questions twelve, thirteen, and fourteen, concerning SNS and video chat usage patterns and changes over time. This is followed by a model that summarizes these patterns for international students in Buenos Aires. The

second part employs correlation analysis to examine research questions fifteen, sixteen, and seventeen which explore the relationship between SNS friends and FtF friendship networks.

7.4.1. SNS (Facebook) Usage Patterns

Research Question 12 inquired as to how international students use SNS such as Facebook to maintain distant relationships and communicate with those in their new cultural environment and how this pattern changes over the course of a semester. All but one international student who participated in this investigation reported using a SNS. This student was one of the 34 interviewees and her comments appear later in this section (Ref 18).

Measuring the amount of time that an individual spends using Facebook and comparing this usage with other variables is a complex and elusive task. Students use SNS both actively (i.e. chatting, posting pictures, browsing others profiles), and passively (i.e. receiving messages and updates on handheld devices such as smartphones). One participant reported using Facebook for 1439 minutes per day, which was the maximum allowed on this survey and equal to 24 hours. Of course it is not likely that they actively used Facebook non-stop without sleeping for 24 hours; as such, these high reports simply reflect passive use and the notion that for some individuals SNS are not something that one logs on and off of, one is always connected and available, even while sleeping. Researchers examining general internet use also discuss this complex difference between active and passive use (Cemalcilar et al., 2005).

Upon arrival in Buenos Aires, students reported to dedicate an average of 156 ($SD = 202$; $Mdn = 90$) minutes per day to a SNS, while at the end of the semester students reported an average of 133 ($SD=200$; $Mdn = 75$) minutes per day. A paired sample T-test revealed that this was not a significant change $t(100) = .862, p = .391, CI [-30, 76], d = .09$, in the amount of time spent using a SNS per day over time. In order to better understand and further examine how international students in this sample differentiate, this analysis split participants

into three categories (Tufekci, 2008); 49 participants were *light* users (those who are on their SNS for less than 1 hour per day), 34 were *moderate* users (those who are on their SNS for 1-3 hours per day), and 19 were *heavy* users (those who are on their SNS for more than 3 hours per day). These distinctions will be used to examine Research Question 13 as well. During the in-depth interviews students discussed their SNS use and the role that it plays in their lives in Buenos Aires.

Students did not report their SNS usage before coming to Buenos Aires on the quantitative survey, however during in-depth interviews several students emphasized a drastic change in their communication patterns. Such changes are directly related to an increase in SNS use, specifically Facebook, which plays a central role in students' lives both academically and socially. Samples of student answers to the question, "How do you use Facebook in your daily life here?" include:

Here I use Facebook much more than in Germany (Ref 5).

Here, a lot, haha, the truth is in Prague I didn't use Facebook that much, but here yes, because it's the easiest way to communicate with both my friends in Prague and my friends here (Ref 16).

I use Facebook much more than in the US (...) here all of my friends try to plan everything on Facebook before leaving the house so we don't have to waste credit on our phones (Ref 12).

For everything, [student laughs] because I don't have credit on my phone (Ref 33).

One common reason that students give for using Facebook more in Buenos Aires is the cost of cell phones. Many students noted that pay as you go cell phone credit is expensive in Argentina. Cell phone companies offer various packages with free numbers and unlimited texting when clients sign a two year contract. However, in order to sign a contract, cell phone companies require an Argentine national identity number and a one-year commitment, which means

that very few international students qualify. Cell phone costs were a common theme among students.

I have an Argentine card for my cell phone, but I don't have a contract and it's expensive to recharge, I pay 30 pesos (5 US dollars at the time), make one call, and then I don't have credit (Ref 16).

The cell phone is really expensive here so I use Facebook to make plans with all my friends and stay in touch with my friends back home (Ref 7).

Here, the truth is that I use Facebook a lot, it's my key to communication, this [student points at cell phone and shrugs sarcastically] does me no good, it's really expensive to call (Ref 10).

No one in our program has phones, we just use Facebook (Ref 26).

Along with discussing their increased Facebook use and why, students also went into detail as to how they used Facebook to maintain contact with friends and family back home and to organize their life in Buenos Aires. One re-occurring theme during in-depth interviews was the importance of Facebook groups.

7.4.2. Facebook Groups

Almost every student interviewed discussed the importance of Facebook groups for organizing both social and academic events, and in most cases students participate in several different groups. Most of the study abroad programs have a formal Facebook group that they use to disseminate academic information regarding classes, registration, and visa requirements. Students then typically arrange a separate student only group used for sharing social information. One student in a US based campus in Buenos Aires explained this distinction (Ref 25):

Facebook is huge here, there are two groups, the whole program, directors, and visiting faculty for normal stuff and then the "kids

group” for nightlife, that things always gettin’ blown up with events, pictures, comments, whatever, the main way we communicate, where’re we rolling out tonight, when’re we rolling out, how much does it cost, that’s been clutch (...) I spend a whole lot more time on Facebook than ever before.

Students also discussed who belongs to these Facebook groups. A French girl described the Facebook group organized by the international students at her private university (Ref 21):

We have a Facebook group for just the international students, it’s not organized by the university.

[Researcher asked: is the group big? do you know everyone in the group?]

I know all the international students in my department, but not all the students in other departments. I’ve seen them a few times, some of them I’ve met or know their faces, there are almost 100 people, I can’t know them all.

Additionally, the dynamic of these Facebook groups varies considerably depending on the study abroad program and the FtF network. Specifically, the Facebook groups organized by students in the US based programs are generally comprised of just US students, while the Facebook groups for the private and public Universities are more diverse in that they include international students from other countries, and in some cases Argentines. In several cases, Argentine students administer the group forum, organize gatherings and trips, post information, and invite international students to attend events.

Students also organize more intimate groups; a German girl discussed her Facebook group with other German friends at her private university (Ref 5), a US girl mentioned that the 14 students from her US university program had a special sub-group (Ref 12), and a German girl studying at a public university discussed her two Facebook groups, one is a small group for playing music and

cooking dinner and the other is for all the girls on her soccer team. She stated (Ref 35):

I don't know how everybody in Argentina uses Facebook, but the girls from my group write everything, everything, every little detail, every thought (...) my soccer shoes smell really bad (...) and in Germany people don't share so much information.

This particular student had contact with her teammates twice a week at practice, but also had daily communication online. The above comment illustrates how students can learn communication behaviors and habits of Argentines through FtF communication as well as online through small group forums, wall posting, and personal messages.

Facebook is overwhelmingly the principal means of communication for the majority of international students who participated in this study. Students use the words *essential*, *necessary*, *key*, and *important* to describe Facebook's role in their daily communication.

Research Question 13 inquired as to the relationship between increased time spent on a SNS and FtF host national friendship. Pearson's correlations coefficients showed no significant relationships between time spent on SNS and FtF host national friendship at the beginning $r(100) = .01, p = .94.$, nor at the end of the semester $r(101) = .04, p = .73.$ Furthermore, one-way ANOVAs showed no difference between *light*, *moderate*, and *heavy* SNS users. Correlation and ANOVA analyses showed no relationship between the amount of time spent on SNS and amount of FtF host national friends, although during in-depth interviews some students did express their reservations about Facebook's role and its potential negative impact. One student went so far as to say that Facebook was destroying humanity because people don't communicate anymore face-to-face (Ref 26). The one girl who reported to not have Facebook stated (Ref 18):

I'm a rare case because I don't have Facebook.

[Researcher asked, "really?"]

Si! I hate it, you can't delete it, but you can choose to not participate anymore, they have all your information (...) it is a useful tool, sometimes I would like to use Facebook, I miss out on all of the group invitations, today its more and more necessary, I don't like it, and what's more you spend so much time on Facebook, it's a sickness.

Other students echoed the concern that Facebook takes time away from other activities (Refs 7, 10, 12, 26), and admit that they try to limit their use. In any case, Facebook is omnipresent in the lives of international students in Buenos Aires and strongly influences their communication patterns. Facebook also influences the lives of non-users who find themselves out of the loop (Ref 18). International students use Facebook to communicate with the new cultural environment and maintain contact with family and friends back home. Video chat services such as Skype also play a central role in their online communication activity, particularly communication with distant family and friends.

7.4.3. Video Chat (Skype) Usage Patterns

Research Question 14 inquired as to how international students use video chat programs such as Skype. At the beginning of the semester 93% of students reported using video chat, they made an average of 21 ($SD = 22$; $Mdn = 13$) video calls per month to an average of 6.7 ($SD = 4$; $Mdn = 5$) different people. At the end of the semester 91% of students reported using video chat, they made an average of 17 ($SD = 20$; $Mdn = 10$) video calls per month to an average of 5.5 ($SD = 3$; $Mdn = 5$) different people. Four students started using video chat after having participated in the initial survey while five students who initially used video chat reported to not use at the end of the semester. Thus, for the purpose of the longitudinal analysis these cases were considered zeros. For example, if a student reported to not use Skype at the beginning of the semester

and reported 3 calls at the end, their net increase would be 3. Paired sample T-tests showed a significant decrease in the amount of video chat calls per month at the end of the semester $t(98) = 2.34, p = .021$, CI [.73, 8.8], $d = .24$ and the amount of different people that students called $t(98) = 2.80, p = .006$, CI [.34, 2.0], $d = .28$.

During interviews students discussed the importance of video chat, particularly Skype, for maintaining relationships with their family, friends, and boy/girl friends. One student described his online communication behavior and how it has changed in the new cultural environment (Ref 3):

I used to use messenger all the time, now I use Facebook to communicate with everyone. Before coming to Buenos Aires I gave the basic Skype course to my parents, my mom adores Skype, 10, maybe 5 years ago, she would have had to wait 6 months to see me, now she can see me everyday, everynight, it's super important. I also use Skype with my girlfriend. Skype is for communicating with Colombia.

One student gave a blunt, definitive answer to the question, “How do you use facebook, internet, msn, skype, first to communicate with back home and second how do you use it here?” (Ref 26):

Skype. I Skype my family twice a week and my best friend once a week...it's...this skype, is ...wow... it's like the best thing ever for if you're traveling, because if you can't communicate with someone the relationship is going to fizzle, there's going to be strains, and so the fact that I can communicate maintains my friendships. And actually being abroad with slight communication has strengthened the relationships with all the people I have back home.

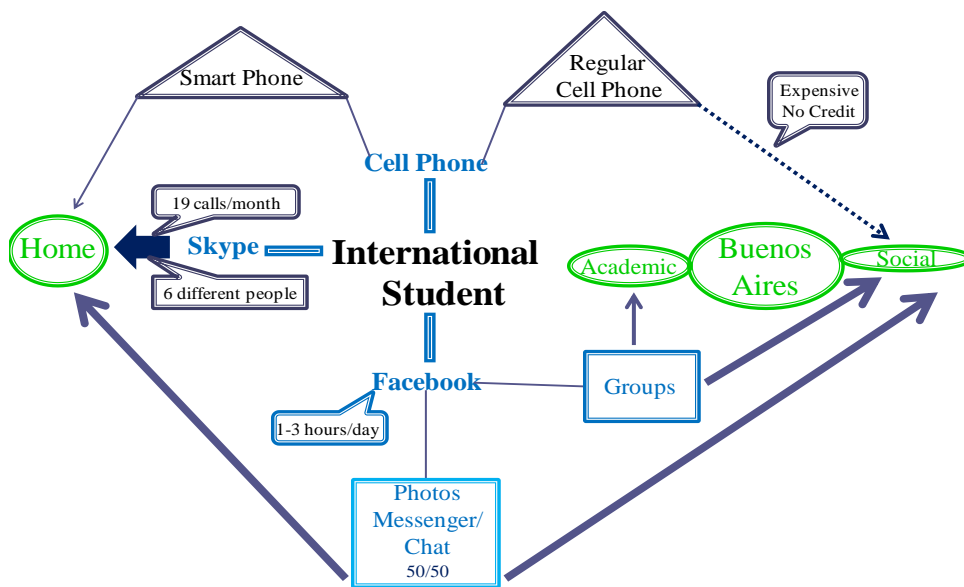
The majority of students stated that they used Skype to communicate with and maintain relationships with their distant family and friends. Some

students reported using Skype almost every day (Ref 24), others two to three times a week (Ref 33, Ref 30), and others use it, but less often (Ref 10). Skype and Facebook were the unanimous choice for students in communicating with back home. Finally, students tended to use Skype less over time, which indicates that students spend less time maintaining communication with distance family and friends, at least through that medium.

The way in which international students use ICT to communicate with distant family and friends as well as with relationship in their new cultural environment is complex. SNS have become a key means for communication, they have not only altered how students communicate with their newly formed friendship networks, but also represent potential for developing new relationships. Model 1 summarizes the findings from both the quantitative surveys and in-depth interviews and represents the online communication behavior of international students in Buenos Aires.

Model 1

International Student Mediated Communication



7.4.4. SNS Friendship Network and Evolution

Research Question 15 inquired as to how SNS friendship networks evolved over time. Students reported slight increases in total SNS friends, total multi-national SNS friends, and total SNS host national friends, and a slight decrease in total SNS co-national friends over time. However, paired sample T-tests show that none of these changes were significant. Table 15 displays means and standard deviations for reported SNS friends at the beginning and end of the semester. This table also shows FtF friendships for comparison purposes as Chapter 4 presents and analyzes these findings in detail.

Table 15

Total, Co-National, Multi National, & Host National SNS and FtF friends at the Beginning and End of the Semester.

SNS friends	Arrival M (SD)	Departure M (SD)
Total	505 (249)	524 (261)
Co-National	378 (232)	375 (236)
Multi National	23 (83)	26 (24)
Host National	109 (106)	114 (112)

FtF friends	Arrival M (SD)	Departure M (SD)
Total	17.75 (10.6)	20.86* (12.35)
Co-National	7.8 (6.0)	7.6 (6.24)
Multi National	5.66 (5.43)	7.41* (7.74)
Host National	4.29 (4.99)	5.83* (6.09)

Note: * denotes Paired sample T-test significant differences for changes between arrival and departure * $p < .01$, two-tailed

Research Question 16 analyzes the relationship between SNS and FtF host national friendship and their simultaneous evolution over time. First, Pearson's correlations Coefficients showed no significant relationship between

SNS host national friends and FtF host national friends at the beginning $r(100) = .009, p = .93$, nor at the end of the semester $r(101) = -.07, p = .50$. See Table 16 for all correlations at the beginning of the semester and Table 17 for all correlations at the end of the semester. Second, this analysis created a friendship change variable which represented the friendship difference between phase 1 and phase 2 (Table 15 shows these changes). Pearson's correlations Coefficients showed no significant relationship between SNS host national friends at the beginning of the semester, and host national FtF increases over time $r(100) = -.12, p = .23$ nor with SNS host national friends at the end of the semester and host national FtF increases over time $r(100) = -.16, p = .12$. There was also no relationship between SNS and Ftf host national friendship change $r(100) = -.07, p = .50$

Research Question 17 inquired as to the relationship between reported SNS friends and FtF friends. This question required several simultaneous tests, thus in order to account for experiment-wise error a Bonferroni correction was used to reduce the risk of Type 1 error. Nine tests were run using an alpha level of .006. Pearson's correlations Coefficients revealed several significant relationships. Results showed a significant negative relationship between SNS host national friends and FtF co-national friends at the beginning of the semester $r(100) = -.35, p = .000$ and also at the end of the semester $r(101) = -.31, p = .002$. Additionally, there was a positive relationship with SNS host national friendship and FtF multi-national friendship at the end of the semester $r(101) = .31, p = .001$. Finally, there was a positive relationship between SNS multi-national friends and FtF host national friends at the end of the semester $r(101) = .36, p = .000$. See Table 16 for all correlations at the beginning of the semester and Table 17 for all correlations at the end of the semester.

These correlations suggest three relationship patterns between SNS and FtF friendship networks of international students. First, students with more FtF co-national friends in Buenos Aires tended to have significantly less SNS host national/Argentine friends at the beginning and end of the semester. Second, students who reported more FtF multi-national friends in Buenos Aires reported

more SNS host national/Argentine friends at the end of the semester. Third, students with more FtF host national/Argentine friends in Buenos Aires reported more multi-national SNS friends at the end of the semester.

Table 16

Correlations between SNS Host National, Co-National, & Multi-National Friends and FtF Host National, Co-National, & Multi-National Friends at the Beginning of the Semester

Network Variables	1	2	3	4	5
1. SNS Host	-				
2. SNS Co	.01				
3. SNS Multi	-.01	-.16			
4. FtF Host	.01	.02	-.01		
5. FtF Co	-.35*	.20	.12	.09	
6. FtF Multi	.21	-.20	-.05	.38*	-.11

Note. *p < .006, two tailed

Table 17

Correlations between SNS Host National, Co-National, & Multi-National Friends and FtF Host National, Co-National, & Multi-National Friends at the End of the Semester

Network Variables	1	2	3	4	5
1. SNS Host	-				
2. SNS Co	-.01				
3. SNS Multi	.31*	-.02			
4. FtF Host	-.07	-.13	.36*		
5. FtF Co	-.31*	.20	-.21	.03	
6. FtF Multi	.31*	-.22	.07	.23	-.06

Note. *p < .006, two tailed

During in-depth interviews students discussed how their SNS friendship networks had evolved in Buenos Aires and compared these networks to their FtF networks. One student from Switzerland stated (Ref 10):

My Facebook friends have increased a lot, if you look at a statistic of my Facebook friends over the past 2-3 years, my friends have, I don't know [subject makes a hand gesture with gradual increase] but in the past 3 months [subject gives a hand gesture with his hand going straight up and laughs] here everyone uses Facebook a lot more.

A German girl discussed the difference between her FtF Argentine friends and SNS friends (Ref: 5):

I think I have like 50 more new friends. It's an interesting phenomenon, in Facebook I have a lot of Argentine friends but in reality, no. When I get back to Germany I'll have to delete people from the list because they're not....friends.

However, not all students reported this friendship pattern, another German girl at the same private university said that the Argentine friends that she had on Facebook were the same as her face-to-face Argentine friends (Ref 2). Indeed, not everybody uses Facebook the same way, nor has the same friending patterns (Brandtzaeg, 2012).

7.5. ICT and Friendship Network Formation Discussion

Results from both quantitative surveys and in-depth interviews show that online communication plays a persistent role not only in international students' communication with their distant families and friends, but also with their daily lives in Buenos Aires. Results did not show a relationship between SNS host national friends and FtF host national friends, although correlation analyses revealed several significant relationships between SNS friendship

networks and FtF friendship networks. The subsequent section discusses these findings and implications for social network theory and cross-cultural adaptation.

Findings from these data indicate no relationship between FtF host national friendship and SNS host national friendship, which is a complex finding with various approaches for its analysis. First, one limitation of this study's design is that these data do not distinguish between Facebook friends that students had before arriving in Buenos Aires and the friends that they added after arriving. Given this limitation it is difficult to explain any SNS co-national friendship patterns. However, given the average age (22 years) of the sample and number of semesters completed (5 semesters) this analysis assumes that participants likely added a high amount of their SNS host national friends after arriving in Buenos Aires. The number of SNS host national friends in the first 4.7 weeks was relatively large (109) however this number remained rather constant 3.7 months later when students reported (114). At the beginning of the semester international students reported an average of 4.29 FtF host national friends with the instructions of including both their strong and weak ties. Social network literature distinguishes between strong ties, weak ties, and latent ties (Haythornthwaite, 2002). This discrepancy in total SNS host national friends and FtF weak and strong tie host national friends could be attributed to the existence of many latent ties, ties that could technically be mobilized at any time. Ellison et al. (2007, 2011) argue that Facebook gives users the ability to convert latent ties into weak ties, however Stefanone et al. (2011) found mixed results regarding the ability to convert latent ties (discussed later in this section). Data from this research suggest that the conversion of latent SNS host national ties to FtF host national weak ties did not necessarily happen with the international students in this sample.

International students in this study reported having an average of 107 host national Facebook friends shortly after arriving in Buenos Aires. Over the next 3.7 months this number changed very little. International students did report an increase in face-to-face host national friends over time, this finding is

consistent with Kim's (2001) cross-cultural adaptation theory. However, data do not indicate that this change is related to the existence of or an increase in SNS host national friends, nor does it indicate that latent SNS ties converted into actual face-to-face host national friendship. This seems to indicate that the accumulation of latent ties in the form of SNS host national friends contributes little to FtF friendship with host nationals and subsequent social capital in the new cultural environment. Recent research regarding enacted social support also provides evidence for this argument.

Stefanone et al. (2011) conducted a study in which participants asked their Facebook friends, both strong and weak ties, to complete a 10 minute online survey for a class project. Findings revealed that a small minority, 25% of strong ties and 8% of weak ties responded to these requests. Given this low response rate the authors question the value of SNS friendship networks for instrumental mobilization. Results from the current study imply similar doubts. International students may very well have numerous SNS host national friends, but this does not mean that they have more FtF host national friends or that SNS host national friends will inherently lead to more FtF host national friends. Indeed, during in-depth interviews one student commented that she had 50 new Argentine friends on Facebook but no real Argentine friends. Although findings from this study do not indicate a relationship between SNS host national friends and FtF host national friends, they do not disregard the value of having SNS host national friends and participation in online communication with host nationals. Such activities may not inherently manifest in FtF friendship but they likely play an important role in the cross-cultural adaptation process.

International students can learn much about host national online communication behaviors and given the pervasiveness of Facebook in the everyday life of students, this knowledge is useful. Furthermore, online communication can lead to increased intercultural understanding (Ma, 1996). Research studies indicate that cultural differences exist in how individuals communicate online, specifically self-disclosure (Yum & Hara, 2005). Yildiz (2009) suggests that due to language anxiety Chinese international students in

the UK tended to self disclose more in online contexts than in face-to-face situations. During in-depth interviews a German international student commented on the difference between what her German counterparts disclose on Facebook and what her new Argentine friends share with the Facebook group. Other researchers noted cross-cultural differences in the tagging behavior of Flickr users (Dotan & Zaphiris, 2010). Finally, Kim's (2001) cross-cultural adaptation theory posits that an increase in both interpersonal and mass communication activities with host nationals will lead to host communication competence. Reading group messages and wall posts, receiving videos, and observing host national SNS communication behavior represents a fusion of host interpersonal and mass social communication activities. Through interaction with host nationals online, international students begin to understand and put host national communication behavior into context, eventually acquiring host communication competence. Further research is necessary in order to better understand host national online friendship and the role that it plays in the cross-cultural adaptation process.

Results did indicate several relationships between SNS friendships and FtF friendships when including co-national and multi-national variables in the analysis. This suggests that there is not a complete disconnect between online and offline friendship patterns. Students with more FfF co-national friends had fewer SNS host national friends, students with more FtF multi-national friends had more SNS host national friends, and students with more FtF host national friends had more SNS multi-national friends. Facebook is generally considered a social network site where individuals maintain contacts initially made in face-to-face contexts. Consequently, individuals with more FtF friends from their own country will likely have less contact with and participate in fewer communication activities with host nationals (Kim, 2001). Using this line of reasoning it makes sense that those who have more FtF friendship and contact with more others (host national or other countries), will display this tendency online. This finding might also speak to personality type or behavioral tendencies. One study analyzing the Facebook profiles of US Americans and

Germans found that profiles accurately reflected actual personalities (Bach, Stopfer, Vazire, Gaddis, Schmukle, Egloff, & Gosling, 2010).

Findings from this study also indicate that online communication plays a larger role for individuals living in a new cultural environment than in their home countries. This emphasis raises the question as to whether or not relationships with individuals in the home country suffer from, or are less satisfying due to the increased use of online communication. One study examining this question found that mediated communication through telephone and the Internet neither improved nor detracted relational satisfaction and closeness (Baym, Zhang, Kunkel, Lin, & Ledbetter, 2007). Haythornthwaite (2002) categorizes online exchanges as being as real as offline exchanges in terms of their impact on the tie. She argues that it does not matter if the tie is maintained face-to-face or online, the relationship is what is important; a principal argument that follows McLuhan and McLuhan's (1988) *Laws of Media* theory. SNS and Skype are mediums that enhance, intensify, and amplify human ability to maintain existing relationships. Pertinent to this discussion is the finding showing that international students significantly reduced the amount of Skype video chat calls they made per month and the amount of different people they called over the course of the semester. This indicates that over time international students began to maintain fewer distant relationships through video chat. It is possible that as they developed new ties in Buenos Aires they were unable to maintain as many previous ties with video chat, however, this explanation is speculative.

Finally, findings from this research illustrated the prominence of Facebook groups for international student organization and communication. Such behaviors indicate the potential utility of studying affiliation networks in better understanding the cross-cultural adaptation of international students. Membership in online collectives or groups brings individuals together at social events thus providing conditions for development of interpersonal connections (Rosen & Suthers, 2011). Analyzing an individual's group affiliation may be as useful as analyzing their ego-network, international students who are affiliated

with groups laden with host national/Argentines have the potential to develop relationships at FtF social events. Future research dedicated to understanding student's group affiliation and online communication with that group is necessary.

7.6. ICT Limitations & Directions for Future Research

One important limitation of the survey used in this study is that students only reported information for the SNS that they used most often. During in-depth interviews, Facebook was unanimously the site that most students used. However, SNS sites with other formats could potentially play a role in the friendship formation process. For example, Couchsurfing is a social networking site for travelers in which participants meet online for the purpose of facilitating offline interaction (Rosen, Lafontaine, & Hendrickson, 2011), whereas Facebook is generally used to maintain already established FtF relationships. One of the students interviewed for this study reported that his Couchsurfing host converted into his best host national friend in Buenos Aires (Ref 10). Thus, Couchsurfing directly influenced his FtF friendship network, although he reported to use Facebook approximately 50 minutes a day and answered the quantitative survey with Facebook in mind. It is likely that latent ties function differently for Couchsurfing members and for users of other SNS sites than for Facebook users. Future research is necessary to better understand latent ties in distinct online contexts.

The second important limitation in this study is that data does not indicate how relationships may have changed between the first day in Buenos Aires and the first time international students completed the online survey, approximately 4.7 weeks later. Evidence from this research presented in chapter 4 demonstrates that international students form their friendships fast, often within the first few days, and findings from this study do not indicate what influence SNS had during that time period. Research focused on how SNS function for relationship initiation within the first few weeks is unfortunately beyond the scope of this study.

7.7. ICT & Friendship Networks Conclusion

The current study describes how communication mediated by Social Networking Sites such as Facebook and video chat programs such as Skype influence friendship formation and the cross-cultural adaptation process. Findings illustrate the pervasiveness of online communication in the lives of international students both for communicating with distant family and friends and with those in the new cultural environment. One take away message from this study is that SNS friendship with host nationals does not inherently lead to more host national friendship, however it does potentially lead to the acquisition of host communication competence through participation in online communication with host nationals. Future research dedicated to understanding what online communication activities are related to FtF friendship with host nationals will deepen current scholarly understanding of the cross-cultural adaptation process.

Chapter 8: Conclusions

As the world becomes more globalized and interconnected, the ability to share information, discovery, and knowledge may be the key to one's personal, economic, and social success. One way to acquire this ability is by living and studying in a different culture. The interchange of individuals expanding their knowledge and understanding of the world and its people is not a new phenomenon and is certainly not a new occurrence in Argentina, whose university system has the reputation of being one of the best in Latin America and has historically attracted international students from throughout the region. This historical trend has evolved over the past 10 years with more and more international students from countries outside of Latin America choosing Argentina, and more specifically Buenos Aires as their place to study.

This investigation analyzed the complex study abroad experience of international students in Buenos Aires. Gaining a better understanding of these phenomena in this context is critical, considering not only the unprecedented growth of study abroad programming in Argentina but also the implications that findings potential carry for groups other than international students who find themselves crossing cultures. Kim's (2001) cross-cultural adaptation theory is extremely useful for explaining and predicting the international student experience, however the rapid development of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) is transforming the process in significant ways.

Using a multi-dimensional methodology this research contributes new knowledge to the cross-cultural adaptation and study abroad fields in four principal ways. First, findings verify that the problem, i.e., international student friendship networks tend to be composed of relatively few host national friends with an unbalanced ratio of co-nationals, does indeed exist in Buenos Aires. Second, findings illustrate that this problem is heightened for those students enrolled in US based study abroad programs and those who perceive difficulties speaking Spanish, but is alleviated for those students who participate in organized extra-curricular activities with Argentines and report satisfaction with tutor programs. Third, findings establish the time frame in which friendship

networks form and transform while enhancing scholarly understanding of intercultural friendship development. Fourth, findings reveal that the pervasive use of ICT is an additional communicative aspect that should be included in future theorizing related to the cross-cultural adaptation process. These findings, which are not without limitations, suggest implications for both study abroad programming, university administration, and cross-cultural adaptation theorizing.

This final concluding chapter contains three sections. The first section discusses implications related to the US study abroad industry, its relationship to the university, and the general attitude of US study abroad programming. The second section describes the limitations of this research and implications for future research. The third and final section discusses the implications of this research for cross-cultural adaptation theory extension.

8.1. Study Abroad and University Implications

Results from this investigation reveal that there is a sizeable difference between the study abroad experience of US international students and their European and Latin American counterparts in Buenos Aires. Students in US based study abroad programs reported twice as many co-national friends and discussed the pervasive role that their study abroad group played in their friendship network. On one hand this strong group force gives students the support that they lack upon arrival, however it makes it difficult to escape and develop friendships with other individuals. This finding likely comes as little surprise to anybody familiar with the study abroad industry; however, to the knowledge of the author no research has ever explicitly investigated these distinctions from the student level in Buenos Aires. This section discusses four main reasons for this sizeable dissimilarity and presents possibilities for shrinking this disparity.

8.1.1. Four Explanations for US Study Abroad Organization

First, Chapter 1 presented a history of the US study abroad industry and results from this research reveal that the basic structure, albeit more advanced and sophisticated today, has essentially changed very little over the past 100 years. Second, the US based model essentially circumvents organizational obstructions present during international education endeavors. Third, this structure effectively allows more US students to study abroad, specifically those who do not possess adequate language skills and cultural knowledge. Fourth, the existence of US based study abroad programs illustrates the general ethnocentric attitude embedded in the US academic system and in the country as a whole.

The first study abroad programs arose in the 1920s, followed by branch campuses and consortium agreements in the 1950s (Hoffa, 2007). Although many of the academic principles have evolved the basic contact that students have with the local culture remains the same. US Students take specialized courses and intensive language classes with each other in foreign countries. The majority of US students live with host families or in some cases together in student residencies. US students participate in group excursions to selected sites near the place of study. US students pay US prices and receive credit at their home university (Hoffa, 2007). This is the case with all three US based programs that participated in this research, as well as with several other programs in Buenos Aires that the author is familiar with. Woolf (2007) supports this model arguing that US students learn best under guided situations and that immersion into foreign campuses is not ideal. Pederson (2009) provides empirical evidence supporting her argument that through guided learning students acquire more intercultural competencies. Indeed, once an individual has learned to learn in a certain way it is difficult to go overseas and learn in a different way (Hall, 1959). However, findings from the research undoubtedly show that this model, intentionally or not, directs students into co-national groups and inhibits their ability to develop meaningful host national and/or multi-national friendships.

This historical model does offer practical benefits to universities, administrators, and students; however it creates a bubble and ultimately US American ghettos in other countries. Findings presented in chapter 5 illustrate this reality in Buenos Aires. Students in US based programs reported an average of 12 co-national friends upon arrival while students studying at Argentine universities reported an average of 6. The model forces students into a group dynamic that they can easily mold to, or if they choose, fight to avoid. However, it is difficult to not form friendships with individuals who you see and spend a considerable amount of time with everyday. Savicki (2010) suggests that it is more functional to rearrange study abroad programming than to blame students for retreating into these US American enclaves.

The second explanation for the status quo US study abroad model is related to the nature of organizations. Instead of working with universities in other countries US based programs have created their own institutions, thus evading organizational barriers. One of the most prominent factors shaping the academic profession and universities is the national context (Clark, 1986). Clark (1986) describes starkly different organizational models between universities in the United Kingdom, France, Germany, and the United States, although he insists that in all countries universities are divided by disciplines that inherently position themselves in a hierarchy. Additionally, countries differentiate in terms of who is in charge of the universities' administrative tasks. According to Nogueira and Góngora (2000) universities require bureaucracies with an administration that is highly professionalized and some countries do not satisfy this necessity, as they are plagued with administrators who have insufficient preparation to manage their tasks effectively. These national differences in university organization certainly make international education and study abroad administration an arduous task. The organizational structure of US based programs diminishes problems related to administrative tasks such as transferring credits, financial aid, and the visa process, along with the sensitive issue of student security abroad. In any case, organizational necessities directly affect the study abroad experience and the results from this

investigation highlight this reality.

Third, US based programs enable students with inadequate language abilities to study abroad. The reality is that in order to directly study, or more specifically, take classes alongside Argentines at an Argentine university, students must be able to speak Spanish at a relatively high level. Branch campuses and US based study abroad programs are attractive because they offer US students the opportunity to spend part of their undergraduate career abroad without having a high level in the target language. In terms of language acquisition this seems to be a positive aspect of the US study abroad model. Findings presented in Chapter 6 demonstrate that those students who perceived the most difficulties with the language upon arrival also reported the largest decrease in difficulties over time. Thus, US based programs give students who may not have had the chance to study a language before, or only at a beginner level, the opportunity to start learning and make significant advances in a new country. On the contrary, findings from this study also demonstrated that international students who study at Argentine universities have more Argentine friends and more friends from countries than students who study through US based programs. Thus, those students who may have adequate language skills miss the opportunity to study directly in Argentine universities. In short, these programs are a great disservice for those most capable students. During in-depth interviews many students in US based programs reported their desire to study directly at the university.

Fourth, the first three explanations for why US study abroad programs are structured in such a way are essentially reflections of the practical nature of US culture and institutions. Regardless of these logical and practical reasons, this structure largely reflects U.S. anthropologist Edward T. Hall's cultural writings, he states: "Americans in particular have too long assumed that the U.S. educational system represents the ultimate in evolution and that other systems are less advanced than our own" (Hall, 1959, p. 49). The reality is that western social science is plagued with bias, with the majority of ideas and concepts coming from European and US educational traditions (Wiarda, 1981).

International business researchers use the term “institutional ethnocentrism” to describe US firms that promote the home culture’s way of doing things by imposing structures, processes, and management mentalities on overseas affiliates (Johnson, Lenartowicz, & Apud, 2006). This ethnocentric attitude is arguably heightened in relation to Latin America. McPherson (2006) describes the historical US imagination of Latin America as a world “perpetually unable to achieve stability and prosperity without the help of a ‘higher’ civilization such as that of the United States” (p. 9). To be fair, this attitude has likely diminished since the late 1800s and certainly was not and is not shared by everyone. However, US campuses and study centers in Latin America and other regions of the world give the impression that the US educational system is superior and the mindset that although it’s important and desirable for students to study abroad and learn about other cultures, its better if students do so in a system, guided, controlled, and micro-managed from the United States.

This attitude of US superiority is fueled by Global university rankings that tend to place a majority of US universities at the top of the list (Gerardo, 2012). The top universities cost 40,000 US dollars per year and tend to be reserved for the elite. On the other hand, the University of Buenos Aires is free, open to everyone, and has a reputation for being the best in Argentina (QS, 2013); however it is off the register of Global rankings (Saavedra, 2011). Professors have incentives to publish in English in international journals, which ultimately compel investigators to conform and adapt to US publishing criteria. One obvious way for other ideas, methodologies, and practices to disperse is through study abroad, however few students are directly exposed to these different systems because the US academic structure dominates, even when they “study” in Latin America. Western social scientists must take ideas from other regions seriously and on their own terms while learning from others rather than trying to teach them (Wiarda, 1981).

This section offered four explanations for why the US study abroad industry is organized the way that it is and subsequent implications. These explanations simply provide the historical, organizational, and practical context.

The subsequent section takes these explanations into consideration while presenting several implications not only for university and study abroad administrators but also professors, scholars, and anybody interested in the study abroad field.

8.1.2. Implications for Study Abroad Administrators

Results from this investigation show a large disparity between US students and international students from other regions. The explanations for this disparity provided above offer a contextual framework and unless some drastic change or radical international political event occurs assume that this model will not disappear anytime soon. Indeed, the reality is that universities are satiated with hierarchical structures, committees, councils, divisional organizations, and administrative units which make it a difficult task to change existing policies or implement new programs (Nogueira & Góngora, 2000; Perrow, 1986). Nevertheless, there are directions that the industry could take that would insert the more capable US students into the Argentine university system. This section discusses three such directions for the US industry, one important direction for Argentine universities, and one strategy for US based programs operating in Buenos Aires.

8.1.2.1. Three Directions for the US Study Abroad Industry

One proven way to promote international student movement is through bilateral agreements (Fernández, Fernández, & Vaquero, 2007). This would give US students more options to study directly at Argentine universities instead of through US based programs. This would also benefit Argentine and other host country programs and initiatives. For example, in 2006 the Argentine Ministry of Education created the Program for the Promotion of the Argentine University with one of its main objections being an increase in the amount of international students in Argentina (MEA, 2010a). Furthermore, the city of Buenos Aires sees the arrival of international students as an opportunity to not only share its dynamic culture but also its social and academic life (Giavi et al.,

2008). Thus, an influx of US students studying at Argentine universities is both welcomed and encouraged. Moreover, bilateral university agreements create a more balanced relationship between the two regions. Study abroad administrators and their affiliated professors in Buenos Aires tend to work for the US based programs and not with them. Even though they live and work in Argentina they must conform to the US system and are dependent on them for resources.

Second, when students study abroad through US based programs or under bilateral university agreements they are generally eligible for federal student loans. However, if a student wants to directly enroll in a foreign University, which would be a more economical option at Argentine universities and for most Latin American Universities in general, in most cases they are not eligible for federal student loans. This is especially problematic for US students who wish to undertake postgraduate studies. Currently 454 foreign universities are part of the US federal student loans program, i.e., students may enroll directly and receive federal loans. The majority of them are in Canada, the United Kingdom, and Australia. There is a selection of universities in Latin America, including 5 in México, 4 in the Dominican Republic, 3 in Costa Rica, and 2 in Nicaragua² (US Department of Education, 2012). There are no universities in South America that participate in the federal loans program. Thus, if a US student wants to enroll directly they are neither eligible to receive federal student loans nor eligible for in-school deferment on already existing loans. Thus, the federal government gives little to no incentive for students who wish to study abroad independently in South America.

Along with making student loans more accessible for students to study independently, US Universities and their respective study abroad offices could not only give students the option of studying at local campuses but to also

² México: El Centro de estudios universitarios, CETYS Universidad, Instituto Tecnológico de Monterrey, Universidad De Guanajuato, Universidad De Monterrey. Dominican Republic: el Instituto Tecnológico de Santo Domingo, Pontificia Universidad Católica Madre y Maestra, Universidad Central Del Este, Universidad Iberoamericana. Costa Rica: Instituto Centroamericano de Administración, Universidad De Iberoamerica, Tropical Agricultural Research and Higher Education Center. Nicaragua: Instituto Centroamericano de Administración, Ave Maria University Nicaraguan Campus.

encourage this practice and to give incentives for those students who do break the mold and directly enroll. Incentives could come in the form of more flexibility in terms of accepting transfer credits from foreign universities or direct foreign enrollment scholarships. In order for these industry shifts to realistically transpire, the local university structure may also need to undergo changes.

8.1.2.2. Argentine Universities and Internationalization

The principal means for internationalizing higher education is through international student mobility (Luchilo, 2006). One potential way for Argentine universities and their respective international education offices to attract more international students from other countries is by offering classes in English for international students (Altbach & Knight, 2007). Specialized university institutes catering to international students are deep-rooted in the history of study abroad and international education. Chapter 1 describes the emergence of these types of institutes over 100 years ago. It is true that several of the private university study abroad programs that participated in the current study offer specialized classes for international students, sometimes in English. However, simply offering specialized courses in English to international students might not be enough. Findings from this research demonstrate how specialized courses potentially intensify the parallel university lives that international and local students lead. Several students in this research who took specialized courses discussed their lack of classroom contact with local students. This suggests that university administrators and specific department chairs must collaborate with the international office to make specialized, mixed classes, part of the regular curriculum so that Argentine students can participate. Granted this is easier said than done considering that universities have large internal discrepancies between colleges, departments, investigation centers, and institutes (Nogueira & Góngora, 2000). Each sector has distinct internal processes, procedures, and resource priorities and universities tend to have a bottom heavy organizational structure whereby innovation comes from

students, professors, and investigators who ultimately determine the university's basic attributes (Nogueira & Góngora, 2000). However, Nogueira and Góngora (2000) insist that the conceptions of university administration are changing and administrators must have the capabilities and skills to perform in a context of more interdependence between countries.

The inclusion of mixed classes into university curriculums is an excellent way for Universities to internationalize (Altbach & Knight, 2007), receive and cater to international students, and give their own students the opportunity to learn with students from around the world without leaving their home campus (Soria & Troisi, 2013). Yum (2001) argues that close, personal relationships with foreigners are an important factor in changing one's international perceptions. Other research shows that interacting and developing friendship with international students leads to development of global and intercultural competence (Soria & Troisi, 2013). The reality is that the majority of university students around the world and in Argentina do not have the resources to engage in international mobility activities such as study abroad; however by interacting with international students on their home campus they can experience intercultural learning which leads them to identify themselves as global citizens, just as much as those who study abroad (Killick, 2012). Montgomery and McDonnell (2009) go so far as to argue that the opportunity for interaction with international students is more beneficial for local students than for the international students. Local students can benefit from international students in many ways as they increase their cultural awareness, desire to travel, appreciation for other perspectives in terms of business, and opportunities for language learning (Peacock & Harrison, 2009). One potential place for Argentines to develop these relationships is in the classroom.

Argentine Universities that offer classes in English for international students certainly make them an interesting option for US universities and study abroad programs who are seeking between university agreements. It is important to note that findings from this research did not indicate a significant relationship between more classes with Argentines and increased host national

friends. Analyses from student interviews partly attribute this finding to the cohortive nature of the Argentine university structure. In many cases Argentine students have classes with the same cohort starting from the first year and form quite cohesive groups with them. Thus, creating specialized mixed classroom situations with international students and local Argentines, who would not only be separated from their cohort but are also arguably the more curious individuals interested in developing relationships with international students, may provide a context for intercultural friendship to develop in the classroom. Additionally, educators could facilitate interaction by incorporating group work and class projects into the curriculum (Bennett et al., 2013; Peacock & Harrison, 2009). In support of this argument, recently published, and compelling, research findings demonstrate the potential impact that in-class group work has on friendship formation between international and home students (Rienties et al., 2013). However, it should be noted that students often prefer to work in non-diverse groups (Kimmel & Volet, 2012), thus undermining an educator's effort to incorporate group work. The organizational structure and features of the specific learning context certainly affect students' experiences and educators must carefully design and monitor group and class project initiatives (Kimmel & Volet, 2012). Indeed, friendship development is influenced by both personal and contextual factors and the classroom presents a context for intercultural friendships to develop (Bennett et al., 2013); however educators at all levels must play a role in facilitating interaction. Pozzo (2013) conducted a case study of international high school exchange students in Rosario, Argentina. Teachers in her study not only recognized the educational benefits of having exchange students in class but also emphasized the role that schools and other institutions must play in fostering interaction between exchange students and local students.

In conclusion, specialized mixed classes create situations in which international students may not experience complete integration into the local university; however international students do study on a local campus, with

local professors, alongside local students, and in a language that they are comfortable communicating in.

8.1.2.3. US Based Study Centers, Community Participation, & Tutor Programs

Along with Argentine universities offering English courses for international students and Argentine students, US based study abroad programs could open their doors to the host country and offer classes to Argentines as well. One reason why programs exist in their form is due to practicality. These programs give US students who lack foreign language skills the opportunity to take classes in English while learning the local language and culture. In these cases, universities and programs could invite and encourage local students to participate in these classes. Williams (2005) insists that those who create study abroad programs must find ways to facilitate interaction with people from the host culture. Another way to make interaction possible would be to invite community members and local students to participate in activities outside of the classroom (Gresham, 2003). Cross-cultural interaction schemes organized by international student offices can bring international students and host nationals together (Pritchard & Skinner, 2002). Furthermore, inviting local students or community members would not only give US students the chance to study, interact with locals, and increase intercultural contact but also service the community in which they operate. This might also encourage community members to reciprocate and invite students to participate in their lives.

Researchers evaluating a project in New Zealand found that through community volunteers international students experience important intercultural contact by participating in everyday activities such as shopping and cooking with host nationals (Gresham, 2003). It is possible and desirable to bring community volunteers together with international students to foster closer ties between cultures and many of those in the field encourage institutions to encourage these connections between local and US students (Brebner, 2008; Campbell, 2012). Another way to facilitate interaction between international

students and host national individuals is through formally organized tutor programs.

In many cases tutor programs are developed for the benefit of international students, however they also provide local students with a meaningful intercultural experience that they otherwise would not have had (Campbell, 2012). Host students who participate in peer tutor programs can increase cross-cultural awareness and sensitivity by confronting cultural stereotypes and becoming aware of their cultural biases and perspectives (Geelhoed et al., 2003). In general, tutor programs facilitate intercultural contact by assigning a local individual to an international student. However, this arguably forced and unnatural contact potentially creates uncomfortable interactions (Geelhoed et al., 2003) and does not inherently lead to friendship. Furthermore, findings from this research and other studies (Stone, 2000) show that in many cases students never even meet. To address this issue Campbell (2012) designed and evaluated a tutor program that was an obligatory element of an intercultural communication class in which students received credit for participation. In this case, tutor programs provided host students with the push they needed to interact with international students (Campbell, 2012). Local students may not realize that international students, although they appear to have many international student friends, do indeed want to make local friends. Whether programs are obligatory or not, tutor programs can play a role in the friendship network formation of international students. Findings from this research highlight this and give implications for tutor program administration, specifically timing.

Campbell (2012) states that the lasting effects of tutor programs can be best maximized during initial stages, i.e. when students first arrive in a new country. Friendship formation findings from Chapter 4 highlight Campbell's (2012) insistence on intervention during the initial stages. Students formed their complex friendship networks rather quickly and in some cases began the friendship search before arriving. Campbell (2012) asserts that intervention activities such as tutor programs are necessary to build local contacts and

recommends that projects begin before classes begin. Findings from this research uphold this recommendation and suggest that this intervention happen immediately, before students have established their friendship networks. Campbell (2012) discusses the advantages of tutor programs as well as the challenges administering them. Findings from this research highlight the potential that tutor programs have in facilitating host national friendship and suggest that more research examining ways to maximize their benefits is certainly necessary.

8.1.3. Implications for Administrators Concluding Thoughts

This research argues that study abroad organizational models play an influencing role in the friendship networks and cross-cultural adaptation of international students in Buenos Aires and define the experience that students have in another culture. US based private study abroad programs and University branch campuses circumvent the complexity of national university contexts and cater to the specific needs of US American students. Consequently, these models sacrifice valuable intercultural contact with the host culture. A strong argument exists that these models are better because the majority of US American students just cannot do it on their own (Vande Berg, 2007); however results from this research suggest that this position is misguided and that study abroad models which do not involve the local university or at least local students stray far from the original ideal of international education. Complete immersion into an unfamiliar university setting may not be the answer; however complete isolation from local universities and students should also not be the norm. Findings from this investigation demonstrate that students who study abroad with these models have an overwhelming amount of contact with co-nationals, and this lack of interaction with the host university results in less meaningful contact with host culture individuals. Very few study abroad professionals would deny the importance of developing host national relationships, however facilitating these relationships often gets lost in the shuffle of complex university organization,

historical pretexts, and practicality. The subsequent section discusses four research limitations and their implications for future research.

8.2. Four Research Limitations

As with all research this investigation is not without its limitations and weak points. The objective of this section is to recognize the main limitations that directly affect research questions and hypotheses and briefly discuss the generalizability of the results. The first two limitations are related to sample size and group comparisons. First, the sample size objective for the public university was not met, thus analyses from the university comparison section should be read with caution. Second, between region comparisons are problematic considering the small amount of participants from Latin America. The third limitation is related to the a priori research design and variable choice. This research did not directly examine the influence of previous study and living abroad experiences, which is a potentially influencing variable regarding friendship network formation, but only surfaced during in-depth interviews. Finally, caution should be taken in generalizing findings to international students living abroad on a long-term basis. This was not a stated research goal, however in light of the current boom of international students completing their entire undergraduate or postgraduate careers in Buenos Aires (Smink, 2013), a deeper understanding of the social impact of this phenomenon is critical. This section discusses the implications of these limitations and the potential for future research endeavors.

8.2.1. Group Comparison Sample Size

One objective of this investigation was to compare the experience of international students studying under a variety of study abroad models in order to understand the cross-cultural adaptation process in different contexts. The first research phase involved interviews with study abroad directors. Findings from these interviews revealed noteworthy differences between private universities, public universities, and US based study abroad programs. Chapter

5 includes the public university as an independent variable in the program comparison analysis, however due to the small number $n = 9$, of participants no concrete conclusions can be statistically inferred. This information would be useful for foreign universities and study abroad programs looking to make international agreements with universities in Argentina. It would also be beneficial information for Argentine study abroad administrators interested in better understanding the intricacies of the industry in Argentina.

Additionally, there is certainly an ideological debate in Argentina and other countries as to the value of both public and private universities (Saavedra, 2012). Results from study abroad director interviews and student interviews suggest that students at the public university are more independent than those at the private university, moreover the quantitative survey data, albeit with a small sample, indicate that students at the public university had more host national friends. However, the magnitude of this independence distinction and its influence on host national friendship formation is not clear. Unfortunately, this research cannot contribute to the ideological debate and draw concrete conclusions as to which context provides international students with conditions that lead to a more successful adaptation. Future investigations aimed at understanding these distinctions are necessary considering the tendency for international students to study at Argentine private universities (Universia, 2007), despite the fact that three of the top four ranked universities in Argentina are public (QS, 2013).

This research did allow for fruitful comparisons between the private university and US based programs. Although, larger sample sizes from each institution would have also presented the opportunity to compare individual universities and US based programs. This information would be useful for study abroad administrators in private universities looking to compare their specific program specifics with those using similar models. Furthermore, the three US based programs who participated in this study, despite sharing the same basic structure, do vary considerably in terms of integration activities. A comparison of US based programs would help administrators understand which

models are related with more local friendship and host interpersonal communication.

The second research limitation concerns the small number of participants from Latin America, despite this group being the majority in Buenos Aires (Smink, 2013). Chapter 6 presents findings related to predisposition to adapt and in considering the ethnic proximity variable compares Latin American, European, and North American participants. This analysis is purposely brief and makes no concrete conclusions regarding regional differences other than the role that shared language plays in the friendship formation process. The majority of students from all countries who participated discussed the open reception that they receive in Argentina; however, a more representative sample of Latin Americans would contribute more to future theorizing related to the role of ethnic and cultural proximity in the cross-cultural adaptation process. Study abroad administrators might also benefit from knowing how students from different countries undergo cross-cultural adaptation in Buenos Aires.

8.2.2. A Priori Research Design for Predisposition Variables

The third research limitation is also concerned with predisposition. This analysis examined three predisposition elements that influence the cross-cultural adaptation process (Kim, 2001); including perceived language ability (preparedness for change), national origin (ethnic proximity), and ethnocentrism (adaptive personality). During interviews several students discussed their previous study abroad experiences ranging from a complete high school year abroad, 6-week summer programs, and prior participation in semester long programs. One particular fourth year Spanish student (Ref 11) mentioned that he had studied abroad on three previous occasions in the Czech Republic, France, and Mexico. Kim (2001) suggests that those with prior foreign experiences are better prepared for a new cultural move, while Savicki (2010) found that students who had fewer weeks of study abroad experience had more contact with co-nationals from their study abroad program.

Unfortunately, the current research did not distinguish between those students who had previous experience studying, living, or traveling abroad. Understanding the differentiating impact of a complete high school or university experience abroad, or a brief 6 week summer program on future adaptation would contribute greatly to current scholarly understanding of the adaptation process. One question that arises is the potential similarity between the cross-cultural adaptation process and the language acquisition process. The adaptation process may be much like the language learning process. Students with experience learning foreign languages predicts language gains during study abroad (Brecht et al.,1995) and research shows that Bilingual individuals have an easier time learning a third language than monolinguals do learning a second language (Abu-Rabia & Sanitsky, 2010; Magiste, 1984). Skills in one language and knowledge of the language learning process assist in the acquisition of more languages. Thus, lessons learned and growth acquired in from previous experiences abroad can aid students in future experiences crossing cultures. However, examining the specific effects of previous experiences on future adaptation and the similarities with language acquisition would require a quite complex and challenging research design and is unfortunately out of the scope of the current investigation.

8.2.3. Generalizability to Long-Term International Students

The goal of this research was to examine elements that influence the adaptation process and friendship network formation over the first several months that students spend in a new cultural environment. The findings revealed very distinct patterns for initial friendship formation and the relationship with subsequent transformation. However, this research does not consider students who study long term, an entire undergraduate or post-graduate career for example. This investigation uses the general term international students, although the adaptation process is certainly different for students with long-term aspirations. Future research investigating long-term adaptation and also post studies plans would put cross-border education in a

larger context and help to better understand the social impact of international students in Buenos Aires.

This section described the four principal limitations of this investigation. Although these limitations reduce the generalizability of this investigation they do present avenues for future research and theory building. The subsequent section discusses the implications that findings have for further intercultural communication related theorizing.

8.3. Theoretical Implications

Chapter one described the history of the study abroad field and its intertwining relationship with the intercultural communication field. Researchers use international students and examine their experiences to better understand intercultural communication processes. Likewise, study abroad professionals incorporate research related to intercultural communication processes into their programming. The previous section provided practical implications from this research for study abroad professionals. This section summarizes the theoretical advances stemming from this research.

Results from this research extend cross-cultural adaptation theory in several important ways and to a lesser extent social network theorizing. First, Kim (2001) describes the evolution of social communication patterns in a new cultural environment. This research examines exactly how this evolution occurs during a given time period, a time period which is arguably the most formidable. Findings also indicate that multi-nationals friends, a group largely considered to be solely recreational in nature, can play a bridging role in the adaptation process. Second, this research identifies two noteworthy situations – extra-curricular activities and satisfaction with tutor programs– which facilitate an increase in host national friendship. There is no shortage of literature that describes and documents the problems that students have making host national friends. This finding suggests potential solutions. Third, findings identify a link between perceived difficulties speaking Spanish and fewer host national friends and, although not an explicitly stated research goal, give implications for

student perceptions of language acquisition in a study abroad context. Fourth, Kim (2001) describes host social communication in terms of mass and interpersonal. This research proposes that host ICT mediated communication is a third element that exposes international students to host social communication patterns. This element blends host interpersonal communication and host mass communication in a unique way.

8.3.1. Friendship Network Development and Evolution

Intercultural relations scholars have examined cross-cultural contact between international students and host nationals in a variety of contexts using an assortment of methods. The major problem emanating from the majority of investigations, and is also evident in the current research, is the lack of meaningful contact between these groups. In order to better understand the underlying mechanisms of this problem, the current research examined the formation and transformation of international student friendship networks over an initial 3.5 month period. In doing so, this research confirmed several of Kim's (2001) theorems while identifying specific characteristics of intercultural friendship development.

First, in terms of international student psychological indicators the beginning stages of the study abroad experience tend to be the most impactful due to the anxiety and stress related to language difficulties and academic cultural differences (Brown, 2008). The initial stages of a sojourn are a time of upheaval and intense emotion when students lack communication competence in both academic and everyday settings (Brown & Holloway, 2008). Often time administrators focus on alleviating stress during the initial stages (Campbell, 2012). Furthermore, the first few weeks of the study abroad experience have the biggest impact on students' perceptions and values (Shaftel, Shaftel, & Ahluwalia, 2007). This research adds friendship network formation to this list of characteristics of the initial study abroad stage. As illustrated in Chapter 4 one important predictor of host national friends at the end of a study abroad experience is the amount of host national friends at the beginning. Furthermore,

enduring friendships tend to form early (Peacock & Harrison, 2009). The individuals who international students are exposed to during the first two weeks are likely those who will be their strongest ties several months later. In the case of US based programs these individuals were almost exclusively co-nationals and in the case of those studying at Argentine universities these were multi-nationals as well as co-nationals. Following Kim's (2001) theory international students do incorporate more host nationals over time, albeit these friendships are of weaker strength. Additionally, friendship network analysis findings indicate that multi-nationals can play a role in the adaptation process.

Montgomery and McDowell (2009) suggest that students can acquire social capital from multi-national friends in the form of academic, social, and emotional support. They insist that multi-national friendships prepare students to live and work in a community with a global perspective and provide other international students with adaptation information tips (Montgomery & McDowell, 2009). These authors even suggest that in terms of developing a global perspective, integrating with host nationals is unnecessary. Findings from this research do not corroborate the latter affirmation; however they do suggest that multi-national friendships are more than a recreational group. Through interaction with multi-nationals, students can develop intercultural communication skills and in the case of friendship with non-Argentine Spanish speakers students communicate in the local language. Students can compare, contrast, discuss, and adapt to the communication patterns of those from other cultures. Despite these positive contributions to adaptation, findings from this research do indicate that multi-national friends indeed inhibit students from making local contacts. At the end of the day, international students necessarily need to develop new friendship networks and it is unrealistic to expect these networks to be composed mainly of host nationals. Findings from this research suggest that multi-nationals contribute more to a successful adaptation than co-nationals. Along with distinguishing the complex nature of friendship network formation this research also identified situations in which students increased host national friendships.

International students who participated in organized extra-curricular activities with host nationals reported an increase in host nationals over the course of the semester. Many researchers and practitioners recommend this activity as a means for students to develop host national relationships (Dewey et al., 2013; Allen & Herron, 2003). This research directly examined and found a significant relationship between extra-curricular activities and friendship change over time. Participation in extra-curricular activities puts students in contact with individuals outside of their university student group and with groups whom they would otherwise not be affiliated with. Furthermore, extra-curricular activities present contexts that satisfy the appropriate conditions for prejudice reducing intercultural contact. Using the case of the student in Chapter 5 who attended a weekly martial arts class as an example the logic is as follows; individuals have contact with those who share similar interests, during extra-curricular activities individuals must cooperate and work together, in these contexts individuals typically have more or less equal status, the activity and contact is sponsored and encouraged by an institution, and due to the weekly, or sometimes bi-weekly, nature individuals meet often, which presents a context where there is friendship potential (Allport, 1954; Pettigrew, 1998). Pettigrew (1998) discusses the importance of this latter condition. Extra-curricular activities also put students in contact with host nationals in the community who might not otherwise have contact with international students. Montgomery and McDowell (2009) insist that learning stems from full participation in the social and cultural practices of a community and consider social activity to be an integral part of the learning experience. Findings from this research highlight the role and positive impact that participation in organized extra-curricular activities with host nationals has on the adaptation process, and suggest that these activities should form part of all study abroad programming.

Findings from this research also highlight the role of tutor programs in the friendship formation process and suggest that tutors are potential social network connectors or hubs (Barabási, 2003). Campbell (2012) recommends

that tutor programs be dynamic and organized in dyad relationships, small groups, and also large groups. Findings from this research suggest that this strategy would put international students in contact with not only their host national tutor but also local hubs, individuals with many social ties (Goldenberg, Han, Lehmann, & Hong, 2009). The influential role that hubs play in social networks is important and may be the key to building more intercultural friendship. In marketing, a product's success is often dependent on hubs adopting new products (Goldenberg et al., 2009). Using this logic, it is possible that hubs could potentially influence other host nationals to become more active in developing relationships with international students. Future research could identify hubs or connectors on university campuses or in the community and recruit these individuals to form part of peer tutor programs. Some students feel they lack the ability to manage their social needs independently without external help (Bartram, 2007), thus putting students in contact with host nationals who tend to be the most connected individuals could be a solution.

This research examined friendship network formation patterns of international students in Buenos Aires and identified micro environmental situations that influenced both this formation and transformation. Distinct patterns across groups emerged and offer implications for cross-cultural adaptation theory development; however each individual is distinct with certain particularities that make their experience unique. Chapter 6 takes three of these particularities into account by examining individual predisposition.

8.3.2. Predisposition Element Implications

This investigation incorporated Kim's (2001) cross-cultural adaptation theoretical framework and examined three specific predisposition elements that play a role in an individual's ability to participate in host social communication processes and friendship network formation. In reality, there are numerous predisposition elements and individual differences that potentially influence the cross-cultural adaptation process. Due to the variety of individuals who

participated in this study it was unrealistic and impossible to analyze every predisposition element; however this research does not discount their importance.

Researchers have identified an assortment of constant demographic type variables that affect adjustment including age, gender, marital status, field of study, length of stay, academic level, community of origin, i.e. from an urban or rural community, country and region of origin, and parents' educational background (Wang, 2009). Researchers have also examined adjustment influencing variables related to personality and ability that may change or not during the study abroad experience such as attitudes toward the host culture, communication ability, organizational ability, ability to deal with stress, language ability, patience, tolerance, courtesy, ethnocentrism, persistence with flexibility, energy, maturity, self-esteem, perfectionism, rigidity, dogmatism, dependent anxiety, task oriented behavior, narrow-mindedness, self-centered role behaviors, prior experience abroad, and resiliency (Wang, 2009). This list, which is not exhaustive, demonstrates the variety of individual characteristics and the manner in which they influence the cross-cultural adaptation process. This subsequent discussion considers the findings related to predisposition in light of this variance.

This research examined the relationship between host national friendship formation and perceived Spanish language difficulties, national origin, and ethnocentrism. These variables represent the three predisposition elements presented by Kim (2001). Chapter 6 examines these variables in detail and sheds light on their specific role in the friendship formation process, however the intertwining relationships between predisposition and individual variables makes this aspect of understanding the cross-cultural adaptation process complex. Findings demonstrate four main patterns: First, a correlation between perceived difficulties speaking Spanish and host national friendship upon arrival and at the end of the semester. Second, individuals perceived less difficulties speaking and understanding spoken Spanish at the end of the semester. Third, individuals from Latin America reported more host national

friends than those from North America; however attributing this difference to national origin is potentially misguided considering they don't have difficulties speaking the language and all study at a local university. Fourth, there were no significant relationships between ethnocentrism and host national friendship.

In terms of ethnocentrism students tended to report low levels on the quantitative scale and, with the exception of a few blatantly ethnocentric comments, showed low ethnocentrism levels during interviews. Other researchers analyzing post study abroad student reflection papers noted that even though students tended to write from an ethnocentric perspective they did not make overtly prejudice comments (Root & Ngampornchai, 2012). This observation and results from the present research could be partly attributed to social desirability bias, personality characteristics of international students, and/or the complexities of the ethnocentrism construct. Future research concerning the role of ethnocentrism in the cross-cultural adaptation process would not only help researchers better understand the construct but give directions for ways international students can acquire more intercultural sensitivity, a stated study abroad learning objective described in Chapter 1. Although findings from this research are inconclusive regarding any changes in the predisposition element of ethnocentrism, they do shed light on reductions in perceived language difficulties, also a stated study abroad learning objective.

Findings from this study corroborate previous research findings, which show that students' perceptions regarding language difficulties change significantly while studying abroad. Research also indicates that interaction with host nationals is important for language acquisition in the study abroad context, specifically in terms of perceptions (Pellegrino, 1998). For example, Pellegrino (1998) reports a strong relationship between perceived language use while studying abroad and perceived language gain. Thus, the more students perceive that they are using the language the more improvement they will perceive. However, findings from the current study do not indicate a direct relationship between increases in host national friends and reductions in perceived language difficulties. This non-relationship is understandable

considering three important and related findings. First, there was a significant relationship between perceived speaking ability upon arrival and host national friends. Second, students who perceived more difficulties upon arrival also perceived more reduction in difficulties speaking over time. Third, there was a strong correlation between host national friends upon arrival and at the end of the semester. Thus, Students who perceived fewer difficulties speaking Spanish made more host national friends upon arrival and thus had more friends at the end of the semester as well, however as they already spoke well upon arrival they did not perceive as much improvement over time. Students who perceived more difficulties speaking upon arrival subsequently had more trouble making friends, but as their levels were so low, simply being in Buenos Aires using the language led to more perceptions of improvement.

These findings coupled together give research implications for examining the relationship between perceptions of language ability and host national friendship formation. Basically, when comparing the two constructs researchers must understand that the starting points affect their subsequent evolutions differently. Perceptions of improvement in a language are highly dependent on an individual's initial level while end of the semester host national friends depend highly on friends at the beginning. Future research examining this relationship should consider these complexities. The final section discusses the implications that this research has for ICT and the cross-cultural adaptation process.

8.3.3. Host ICT Communication

Results from this research demonstrate the pervasive role that ICT plays in international students' communication with both their existing networks and new friendship networks in Buenos Aires. Findings suggest that SNS host national friends are not necessarily an indicator of or lead to the development of FtF host national friends; however participation in communication activities with host nationals via ICT represents a form of host social communication. By using ICT to communicate with host nationals, individuals gain access to

resources and new cultural information which potentially helps them integrate and “to connect with the culture at large” (Mikal & Grace, 2012, p. 301). This investigation proposes that a new element of host social communication, *Host ICT communication*, should be included in future international student theorizing. This communication activity combines the host social communication and host mass communication elements described by Kim (2001) and provides strangers with an additional medium for learning the communication patterns of the host culture. In some cases ICT mediates host interpersonal communication, i.e. personal facebook messages. In some cases ICT functions as mass communication, for example Facebook group posts that offer invitations to local gatherings, share cultural events, and/or advertise products and ideas. In both cases international students have the opportunity to not only observe the online communication patterns of host nationals but also acquire new vocabulary.

Kim (2001) poses 21 theorems to explain the rate of cross-cultural adaptation across individuals and environments. Findings from this research suggest that the following theorem could also be included in her theory: The more international students participate in ICT communication activities with host nationals the more host communication competence they will acquire and the more intercultural transformation they will undergo. This hypothesis is of course tentative; however findings from this investigation and previous research (Mikal & Grace, 2012) imply that it would indeed be supported. This investigation does not advocate or suggest that using ICT will lead to new relationships in the host culture; this activity does however provide individuals with information regarding host social communication patterns and likely plays a role in the cross-cultural adaptation process.

8.4. Final Conclusion

There is little research examining the cross-cultural adaptation process of international students in Buenos Aires. This dissertation is important as it not only builds the foundation for future research examining international students’

adaptation to Argentine culture but also advances theoretical understanding of intercultural friendship development while providing specific, practical implications for study abroad programming and administration. In short, international students form friendship networks mainly composed of co-national and multi-national individuals rapidly upon arrival and through participation in extra-curricular activities and satisfaction with tutor programs these networks transform with the inclusion of more host nationals. This finding implies that in order to maximize effectiveness of integration activities study abroad administrators must incorporate them immediately upon student arrival. Furthermore, identifying ways to put students in contact with local connectors or hubs enhances the possibility that they have contact with more host nationals.

There is no shortage of research describing the lack of friendship formation between international students and host nationals. Regarding this problem, this dissertation is beneficial not only for those working in US based study abroad programs whose students have a strong tendency to form co-national groups but also local university administrators. This dissertation provides empirical findings pointing to two situations in which international students make host national friendship. Every year thousands of international students arrive in Buenos Aires, Argentina with the hopes of augmenting their academic studies while undergoing an unforgettable, career shaping experience. This dissertation advances theory that explains and predicts their experience while providing implications for those committed to improving international education initiatives.

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Appendix A

Email Soliciting Interview with Study Abroad Program Directors

Estimada/o _____,

¿Cómo está? Mi nombre es Blake Hendrickson y estoy haciendo mi doctorado en ciencias sociales en FLACSO y soy docente en la UBA laboratorio de idiomas. Mis investigaciones tratan de la adaptación entre culturas de los estudiantes internacionales en Buenos Aires, enfocando en sus redes sociales y los programas de intercambio en que están inscritos. He tenido varias entrevistas con directores de programas de intercambio en Buenos Aires y algunos han mencionado algo de su programa. También, mi director de tesis, Pablo Forni, siempre habla de ustedes. Me pregunto si es posible hacer una reunión con usted un día para hablar sobre su programa. Sé que usted está muy ocupado y entendería si no tuviera tiempo. Adjunto un artículo que hice para darle una idea de mis investigaciones. Mi mail es blakeh@hawaii.edu y número es (15) 5667-6087. ¡Muchas gracias!

Saludos Cordiales,
Blake Hendrickson

Appendix B

Study Abroad Director Interview Questions

1. ¿Cuántos estudiantes extranjeros se encuentran estudiando en su Universidad? ¿Ese número aumentó recién?
2. ¿Tienen convenios con otras universidades o los estudiantes estudian de manera independiente?
3. ¿Dónde vienen los estudiantes? ¿Cuándo vienen? ¿Por cuánto tiempo quedan?
4. ¿Dónde viven en Buenos Aires? ¿Con quién viven? ¿Es el programa a cargo de su alojamiento?
5. ¿Cómo son sus clases? ¿Quiénes son sus profesores? ¿Cursan con estudiantes argentinos? ¿Tienen clases en inglés o castellano?
6. ¿Qué actividades extra-curriculares organiza el programa para los estudiantes?
7. ¿Tienen un programa tutor para los estudiantes?
8. ¿Cómo describirías sus redes sociales en Buenos Aires?
9. ¿Cómo describirías su actitud general a la cultura argentina?
10. ¿Qué piensa usted de su integración a la cultura Argentina? ¿Quieren hacer amigos locales?
11. ¿Qué opinión tienen los profesores de los estudiantes internacionales?
12. ¿Qué opinión tienen los estudiantes locales de estudiantes extranjeros en sus clases?
13. ¿Cómo usan la tecnología para mantener comunicación con sus existentes redes y con su nueva red aquí?
14. ¿Cómo es su programa en relación a otros programas en Buenos Aires?
15. ¿Conoce otros investigadores haciendo algo parecido a mi investigación?
16. ¿Me permite acceso a los estudiantes para administrar una encuesta 2 semanas después de llegar y otra antes de irse?

1. How many international students are studying at your university? Has this number increased recently?
2. Do you have agreements with foreign universities or do the students enroll independently?
3. Where do the international students come from? When do they come? How long do they stay?
4. Where do they live? Who do they live with? Is your program in charge of their housing?
5. How are their classes? Who are their professors? Do they have class with Argentines? Do they study in English or Spanish?
6. What type of extra-curricular activities does the study abroad program organize for them?
7. Do you have a tutor program for the students?
8. How would you describe their social networks in Buenos Aires?
9. How would you describe their attitude about Argentine culture?
10. What do you think about their integration into Argentine culture? Do they want to make local friends?
11. What feedback do you get from professors concerning international students?
12. What feedback do you get from Argentine students concerning international students?
13. How do they use information technology to maintain communication with their existing networks and with their new network Argentina?
14. How would you compare your program to other study abroad programs in Buenos Aires?
15. Do you know any other researchers conducting similar studies?
16. Would you be willing to give me access to the students in your program to administer a survey two weeks after arriving and again before they leave?

Appendix C

Official Research Proposal Email

Mi nombre es Blake Hendrickson y estoy haciendo mi doctorado en ciencias sociales en FLACSO Argentina. Mis investigaciones enfocan en los estudiantes internacionales con el objetivo principal de desenterrar patrones de la adaptación entre culturas, mejorar su comprensión del nuevo entorno cultural y fomentar mejores relaciones y entendimiento intercultural con la gente del país anfitrión. Específicamente investigo el papel que juegan las redes de amistad en la adaptación. El estudio actual intenta dar respuestas a tres preguntas. ¿Cómo cambian las redes de amistad de los estudiantes internacionales a través del tiempo? ¿Qué relación tiene este cambio de su actitud frente a las otras culturas? ¿Hay características de programas de intercambio que impactan en la formación de redes sociales y actitudes de la cultura?

Solicito que los estudiantes internacionales de su universidad participen en esta investigación. Quiero que hagan una encuesta en línea dos semanas después de su orientación y otra encuesta dos semanas antes de terminar las clases, y si ellos me permiten algunas entrevistas en profundidad en la mitad de su estadía. Estoy recopilando datos en varias universidades en Buenos Aires, cada universidad puede sumar preguntas específicas de su programa a la encuesta. Le garantizo que toda la información sería confidencial y anónima y que no hablaré de los programas o nombres específicos, ni valorar un programa sobre otro. Usted sabe cómo administradora que no es fácil hacer un estudio como este, con lo cual solicito formalmente ayuda, aunque entiendo si esto no fuera posible. Para tener un alto grado de participación propongo presentarme ante los estudiantes unos minutos en su orientación o en su clase, o tal vez pueda dejarles un flyer en su paquete de orientación, y ofrecería un sorteo para alguna actividad social (ej. una noche en una casa en Tigre con 10 amigos). Aquí puedan ver las encuestas en español e inglés.

<http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/estudiantesinternacionalesversionespanol>

<http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/buenosairesinternationalstudentsenglishversion>

[n](#)

Le agradezco por su tiempo y espero que acepte formar parte de mi investigación.

Saludos Cordiales,
Blake Hendrickson

Appendix D

Email Request for Student Survey Participation

¡Hola! Mi nombre es Blake Hendrickson y soy estudiante internacional haciendo mi doctorado en FLACSO Argentina (Facultad Latinoamericana de Ciencias Sociales), también enseño inglés en el laboratorio de idiomas de la UBA Filo. Mis investigaciones se enfocan en los estudiantes internacionales en Buenos Aires, y su programa de intercambio me permitió invitarlos a participar en mi proyecto de estudio. Les pido que completen una encuesta breve que dura de 15 a 20 minutos y otra encuesta dos semanas antes de terminar las clases. Las respuestas son confidenciales y anónimas. Si participan en las dos fases tienen la oportunidad de ganar un premio que es una noche con tus amigos en una casa en Tigre. Es muy difícil hacer este trabajo de investigación y recopilar los datos, y les pido por favor que me ayuden con estas encuestas para continuar. Es muy difícil hacer este trabajo de investigación y recopilar los datos, y les pido por favor que me ayuden con estas encuestas a continuar con mi tesis doctoral. La encuesta está en inglés y castellano. Por favor elige el idioma en el que sienta que tiene el nivel más alto de lectocomprensión. ¡Gracias! ¡Gracias! ¡Gracias!

Eng: <http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/buenosairesinternationalstudents>

Span: <http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/buenosairesestudiantesinternacionales>

¡Hola! My name is Blake Hendrickson and I am an international student doing my PhD at FLACSO Argentina (Latin American Social Sciences Institute). My research focuses on international students in Buenos Aires and your study abroad program has agreed to let me invite you to participate in my research project. I ask that you complete a short, 15-20 minute, online survey 2 weeks after you start classes and again 2 weeks before you finish studying. Your answers are confidential and you will remain anonymous. If you participate in both phases of the study you will have a chance to win a night with your friends in a house in Tigre. It is incredibly difficult to conduct research of this nature and I will be eternally grateful for your participation as it will help me finish my dissertation and graduate. The survey is in English and Spanish. Please choose the language in which you feel you have the highest reading comprehension. Thank you! Thank you! Thank you!

Appendix E

Email Request for In-Depth Interview

Hola _____,

¿Cómo estás? Mi nombre es Blake Hendrickson y estoy haciendo mi doctorado en Buenos Aires con estudiantes internacionales. Hace un par de meses participaste en mi investigación sobre tus redes de amistad y experiencias aquí. ¡MUCHAS GRACIAS! Ahora estoy haciendo entrevistas en profundidad y me pregunto si estarías interesado/a en reunirnos? Solamente quiero charlar tranquilamente sobre tu vida y experiencia en Buenos Aires. Esta semana estoy pensando en ir a tu universidad el miércoles y el jueves por la mañana hasta las 16hs y la semana que viene el martes y jueves por la mañana hasta las 16hs. También, podemos juntar por otro lugar, lo que te conviene. Entiendo si no sea posible y no hay problemas. Gracias de nuevo, qué tengas una linda semana!

Muchos Saludos,
Blake

Hola _____,

¿Cómo andas? I hope all is well and groovy in Buenos Aires. My name is Blake Hendrickson and I'm doing my PhD in Buenos Aires focusing on international students. When you arrived in March you participated in my study. ¡MUCHAS GRACIAS! Next Tuesday May 22nd, I'm doing in-depth interviews with a couple of students at your school and was wondering if you'd be interested in participating? It would take between 45 minutes and an hour. If you're interested, let me know what time works the best for you, if not, no worries! Also, if you don't plan to be at your school on Tuesday we could meet up another day somewhere else. Thanks again!

Muchos Saludos,
Blake

Appendix F

Script for In-Depth Interviews with International Students

Fecha:_____ Tiempo de la entrevista:_____ Lugar de la entrevista: _____

Nombre:_____

Introducción

¿Nombre? ¿Edad? ¿País? ¿Universidad? ¿Estudio?

Condiciones de contacto

¿Me puedas describir tus clases? ¿Profesores? ¿Otros estudiantes? ¿Difícil?
¿Mucha tarea? ¿Tienen proyectos en grupos? ¿Tienes amigos de tus clases?
¿Qué te parece de la organización de tu programa de intercambio? ¿Preferías estudiar directamente en la universidad? ¿Cómo compararías tu experiencia con los demás estudiantes? ¿Me puedas describir dónde vivas? ¿Con quién vivas? ¿Qué pienses del lugar? ¿Barrio? ¿Conociste Argentinos dónde vivas?
¿Qué sería un alojamiento ideal? ¿Qué haces en tu tiempo libre? ¿Tienes actividades organizadas? ¿Conociste Argentinos participando en esas actividades? ¿Qué te parece del programa Tutor? ¿Tu tutor es tu amigo?
¿Conociste otros amigos a través de tu tutor?

Red de amistad

¿Cómo describirías tus amistades aquí? ¿De dónde son tus amigos? ¿Quién es tu mejor amigo? ¿Cuándo/dónde lo conociste? ¿Te parece difícil hacer amistad local? ¿Sientes como que tengas suficientes argentinos en tu vida? ¿Dónde conociste tus amigos argentinos? ¿Cómo ha cambiado tu red de amistad?

Uso de ICT

¿Cómo usas Facebook y Skype para mantener contacto con tu país de origen?
¿Cambiaste tu uso desde llegaste a Buenos Aires? ¿Cómo usas Facebook y Skype para construir tu red social aquí? ¿Cambiaste tu uso desde llegaste a Buenos Aires?

Uso de Español

¿Tu nivel de español ha mejorado? ¿En que contextos lograste el mejor avance?
¿Qué te parece de la forma de hablar español aquí en Argentina?

Percepción de la cultura y etnocentrismo

¿Cómo te trata la gente? ¿Te sientes discriminado? Te gusta tu país? ¿Qué te gusta/no te gusta de tu país? ¿Qué te gusta/no te gusta de Argentina? ¿Qué puede Argentina aprender de tu país? ¿Qué puede tu país aprender de Argentina? ¿Te gusta la comida? ¿Qué te parece de la moda argentina? ¿Qué te parece de la vida nocturna? ¿Qué te parece de la calidad de vida en Argentina? ¿Qué te parece del sistema educativa en Argentina? ¿Cómo es el nivel académico aquí en la ____? ¿Qué te parece de la política? ¿Qué te parece de los relaciones entre hombres y mujeres?

Date: _____ Time of Interview: _____ Place of Interview: _____
Name: _____

Introduction

Name? Age? Country? University? Major?

Contact Conditions

What are your classes like? Who are your professors? Who are the other students in your class? Are your classes difficult? Do you have much homework? Do you have group projects? Are you friends with any of your classmates? What do you think about the study abroad program/office? If you could choose to study directly at the university or with this program what would you prefer? How would you compare your experience with other international students? Can you describe where you live? Who do you live with? What do you think about your neighborhood? Have you met other Argentines through your housing situation? What do you think would be the ideal housing situation? What do you do in your free time? Do you participate in any organized extra-curricular activities? Have you met any Argentine friends through participation in these activities? Do you participate in the tutor program? What do you think of the tutor program? Are you friends with your tutor? Have you made other friends through your tutor?

Friendship Networks

How would you describe your friendship network here in Buenos Aires? Where are your friends from? Who is your best friend? When/where did you meet them? Do you have difficulty making local friends? Do feel like you have enough Argentines in your life? Where did you meet your Argentine friends? How has your friendship network changed?

Technology Use

How do you use skype and Facebook to communicate with back home? Has this changed since arriving here? How do you use Facebook in your daily life here? Has your Facebook use changed since arriving in Buenos Aires?

Language Use

Do you feel as if your language ability has improved? In what situations do you feel you have improved the most? What do you think about Argentine Spanish? What do you think about the way they speak here?

Perception of the culture and Ethnocentrism

How do people treat you here? Do you ever feel discriminated? Do you like your country? What do you like/dislike about your country? What do you like/dislike about Argentina? What could your country learn from Argentina? What could Argentina learn from your country? What do you think about the food in Argentina? What do you think about Argentine fashion? What do you think about Buenos Aires nightlife? What do you think about the quality of life in Argentina? What do you think about the Argentine Educational system? How would you rate the academic level of the ____? What do you think about Argentine politics? How do you feel about male/female relations in Argentina?

Appendix G

Email Requests and Reminders to Participate

Hola_____,

¿Cómo andas? Espero que estés terminando tu semestre con éxito. Mi nombre es Blake Hendrickson y estoy haciendo mi doctorado en Buenos Aires con estudiantes internacionales. Cuando llegaste a BA participaste en la primera parte de mi investigación (¡GRACIAS!) y ahora hago la segunda parte para ver cómo tu experiencia cambió a través del tiempo. Me ayudarías mucho si pudieras hacer otra encuesta muy parecida a la primera que dura 15 minutos. Te mando suerte con tus proyectos y finales, cualquier cosa me avisas. ¡Gracias de nuevo!

<http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/estudiantesparte2>

Muchos Saludos,

Blake

Hola_____,

What's up! I hope your finishing up your semester on a high note. My name is Blake Hendrickson and I'm doing my PhD in Buenos Aires with international students. When you arrived in August you participated in the first part of my investigation (¡MUCHAS GRACIAS!). Now I'm doing the second part to see how your experience has changed over time. It would be a huge help if you could complete this survey that's very similar to the first one. It takes about 15 minutes. Good luck with your final projects and exams, let me know if you need anything. Thanks again!

<http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/studentsPart2>

Muchos Saludos,

Blake

Hola_____,

¿Cómo estás? Te escribo brevemente solo para acordarte de la segunda parte de mi investigación, sé que estas muy ocupado con exámenes y finales y no quiero molestar. Espero que encuentres un tiempito en los próximos días para participar por segunda vez, lo cual me ayudaría un montón! Gracias de nuevo!

<http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/estudiantesparte2>

Muchos Saludos,

Blake

Hola,

¿Cómo estás? I just wanted to give you a little reminder about my investigation, I know that you're super busy right now with finals and saying good bye to BA and I hate to bother. I hope you find a few minutes before you leave to participate the second time, it would help me a lot! Thanks again!

<http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/studentsPart2>

Saludos,

Blake

Appendix H

Email Thanking Participants

Hola _____,

¡Feliz Friday! Te quería agradecer por participar en mi investigación la segunda vez. Ayer llegué a casa un poco cansado del proceso de hacer un doctorado y cuando vi que vos ya habías participado me hizo muy feliz, Gracias:) Tienes karma de investigación para tu futuro! Qué disfrutes tus ultimas dias en BA!

Muchos Saludos,
Blake

Hola _____,

I wanted to thank you for completing my survey the second time and participating in my investigation. The most precious thing that we have is our time. I know you're super busy right now and likely experiencing strong emotions as your time in Buenos Aires winds down. When I have some kind of finished product I will share the findings with you if you're interested. Thanks again! ¡Buen viaje!

Abrazo,
Blake

Appendix I

Friendship Network Grid & Definitions

For this section please think very hard about all the individuals who you consider to be your **friend in Buenos Aires** and then identify **two** things about each friend. (Feel free to use anything that may help you remember friends; cell phone, address book, etc.) Their names will not be documented. The column is provided simply for your reference. You may delete them when finished.

First: Indicate where they are from

- 1= an individual from your own country (eg. if you're from Spain, somebody from Spain)
- 2= an individual from another country (eg. if you're from Spain, somebody from Japan)
- 3= an individual from Argentina

Second: Indicate the strength of this friendship by choosing the appropriate number on the 10- point scale below. Three Reference Points are provided to give you a basis for your analysis.

10. You could count on this person for anything at anytime. Activities are more enjoyable when spent with this person. You share intimate information with this person. You accept and appreciate this person for who they are. This person understands you and you have a great deal of respect for them. You are comfortable being together through interactions in multiple social contexts. There is a sense of mutuality in the relationship, with each partner's needs known and supported. You will for sure remain in contact with them after your stay in BA.

9.

8.

7.

6.

5. If you passed each other on campus, you would stop to say hello. You may or may not have their phone number and would consider inviting them over if you were having a big party. They know very little about you interpersonally but you definitely have a friendly relationship with them. You enjoy having a conversation with them. They are more than a mere acquaintance from class, work, or housing. It's possible that you'll remain in contact with them after Buenos Aires but not certain.

4.

3.

2.

1. Individuals that you know from class, work, housing, or other mutual groups. If you needed basic information about class assignments, job duties, or housing issues you could go to them. Unless the relationship changes in some major way you will not see them after BA.

En esta sección, le pedimos que piense cuidadosamente acerca de a quién considera su **Amigo/a** en **Buenos Aires** y que luego identifique dos cosas acerca de cada persona. (puede ayudarse a recordarlos de cualquier modo: celular, lista de contactos, etc.) Los nombres no serán documentados y podrá borrarlos al terminar. Son sólo para su referencia.

Primero: Indique su procedencia

1= una persona de su propio país (ej. Si fuese de España, alguien de España)

2= una persona de otro país (ej. Si fuese de España, alguien de Japón)

3= una persona de Argentina

Segundo: Indique cuán fuerte es su vínculo en esta escala de 10 puntos. Le proporcionamos tres puntos de referencia en los que basar su análisis.

10. Usted puede contar con esta persona para cualquier cosa y en cualquier momento. Las actividades son más agradables cuando las comparte con esta persona. Usted le cuenta sus temas personales a esta persona. Usted acepta y aprecia a esta persona tal cual es. Esta persona lo entiende y usted la respeta mucho. Están cómodos juntos en interacciones en contextos sociales múltiples. Hay un sentido de ida y vuelta en la relación, lo que permite que se reconozcan y apoyen las necesidades de cada persona. Es seguro que estará en contacto con ellos después de su estadía en B.A.

9.

8.

7.

6.

5. Si se cruzaran en la universidad, pararía a saludarlo/a. Puede que usted tenga (o no) su número de teléfono, y consideraría invitarla/o a su casa si tuviera una fiesta grande. Ellos saben muy poco de usted en el aspecto personal, pero definitivamente tiene una relación agradable con ellos. Disfruta al tener una conversación con ellos. Son más que un simple conocido de la clase, trabajo, o alojamiento. Es posible que quede en contacto con ellos después de Buenos Aires, pero no es seguro.

4.

3.

2.

1. Individuos que conoce de su clase, trabajo, alojamiento, u otros grupos mutuos. Si necesitara información básica sobre tareas académicas, actividades del trabajo, o problemas de alojamiento podría consultarlos. Si la relación no cambia de modo significativo, no tendrá contacto después de B.A.

Name of friend	Where friend is from	Strength of friendship
Nombre del amigo	Procedencia	Fortaleza de la amistad
1.	1 2 3	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
2.	1 2 3	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
3.	1 2 3	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
4.	1 2 3	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
5.	1 2 3	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
6.	1 2 3	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
7.	1 2 3	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
8.	1 2 3	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
9.	1 2 3	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
10.	1 2 3	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
11.	1 2 3	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
12.	1 2 3	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
13.	1 2 3	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
14.	1 2 3	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
15.	1 2 3	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
16.	1 2 3	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
17.	1 2 3	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
18.	1 2 3	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
19.	1 2 3	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
20.	1 2 3	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
21.	1 2 3	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
22.	1 2 3	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
23.	1 2 3	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
24.	1 2 3	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
25.	1 2 3	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
26.	1 2 3	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
27.	1 2 3	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
28.	1 2 3	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
29.	1 2 3	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
30.	1 2 3	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
31.	1 2 3	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
32.	1 2 3	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
33.	1 2 3	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
34.	1 2 3	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
35.	1 2 3	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
36.	1 2 3	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
37.	1 2 3	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
38.	1 2 3	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
39.	1 2 3	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
40.	1 2 3	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
41.	1 2 3	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
42.	1 2 3	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
43.	1 2 3	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
44.	1 2 3	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
45.	1 2 3	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
46.	1 2 3	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
47.	1 2 3	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
48.	1 2 3	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
49.	1 2 3	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
50.	1 2 3	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Appendix J

Contact Situation Measures

Housing (All Universities)

In one or two sentences describe where and who you live with.

Eg. I live with an Argentine family, mom, dad and 2 teenagers.

Eg. I rent an apartment with a girl from France and 2 guys from the US.

Eg. I live in a student residence where I share a kitchen, bathroom, and living area with Argentineans and other international students.

Classroom Makeup (All Universities)

How many regular classes with Argentine students did you take this semester?

How many classes did you take with just international students?

Extra-Curricular Activities (All Universities)

In one or two sentences please describe any group or organized extra-curricular activities in which you participate and with whom.

Eg. I play futbol every Monday with some local guys.

Eg. I go to tango classes every Tuesday with other international students.

Eg. I am part of a service learning group where I work with local NGOs.

Eg. I meet with a local church group on Wednesdays

Tutor Programs (4 universities)

1. Do you participate in the tutor program? Yes/No

If yes, please indicate the degree to which you agree or disagree with each item concerning the program.

1. I am satisfied with the person that the tutor program assigned to me.

strongly disagree *disagree* *neutral* *agree* *strongly agree*

2. My expectations about participation in the tutor program have been met.

strongly disagree *disagree* *neutral* *agree* *strongly agree*

3. I am looking forward to spending more time with my tutor. (Phase 1)

strongly disagree *disagree* *neutral* *agree* *strongly agree*

3. I plan to stay in contact with my tutor. (Phase 2)

strongly disagree *disagree* *neutral* *agree* *strongly agree*

4. Please leave any additional comments that you have about the tutor program.

Alojamiento (Todas las universidades)

En una o dos frases describa dónde vive y con quién.

Ej. Vivo con una familia argentina: madre, padre y dos adolescentes.

Ej. Alquilo un departamento con una chica de Francia y dos chicos de EEUU.

Ej. Vivo en una residencia de estudiantes donde comparto la cocina, baño y living con argentinos y otros estudiantes internacionales.

Aula, clases con Argentinos (Todas las universidades)

¿Cuántas clases regulares tomó con Argentinos?

¿Cuántas clases tomó sólo con estudiantes internacionales?

Actividades extracurriculares (Todas las universidades)

En una o dos frases por favor describa las actividades extracurriculares organizadas o grupales en las que participas, y con quien.

Ej. Juego al fútbol todos los lunes con chicos del lugar

Ej. Voy a clases de tango todos los martes con otros estudiantes internacionales

Ej. Formo parte de un grupo de aprendizaje de servicio donde trabajo con ONG del lugar.

Ej. Me reúno con un grupo de una iglesia del lugar todos los miércoles.

Programa Tutor (4 universidades)

1. ¿Usted participa en el Programa Tutor? Si/No

Por favor indique el grado en que está de acuerdo o en desacuerdo con cada frase acerca del programa.

1. Estoy satisfecho con la persona de que el Programa Tutor me asignó.
muy en desacuerdo en desacuerdo neutral de acuerdo muy de acuerdo

2. Mis expectativas sobre la participación en el Programa Tutor han sido satisfechas.
muy en desacuerdo en desacuerdo neutral de acuerdo muy de acuerdo

3. Tengo ganas de pasar más tiempo con mi Tutor (Fase 1).
muy en desacuerdo en desacuerdo neutral de acuerdo muy de acuerdo

3. Planeo estar en contacto con mi Tutor después de irme de Buenos Aires (Fase 2).
muy en desacuerdo en desacuerdo neutral de acuerdo muy de acuerdo

Si tuviera comentarios adicionales acerca del Programa Tutor, por favor déjelos aquí.

Appendix K

Ethnocentrism Scale

This section contains questions that relate to the cultures of different parts of the world. Please indicate the degree to which you agree or disagree with each item.

1. Most other cultures are backward compared to my culture.

strongly disagree *disagree* *neutral* *agree* *strongly agree*

2. My culture should be the role model for other cultures.

strongly disagree *disagree* *neutral* *agree* *strongly agree*

3. Lifestyles in other cultures are just as valid as those in my culture.

strongly disagree *disagree* *neutral* *agree* *strongly agree*

4. Other cultures should try to be more like my culture.

strongly disagree *disagree* *neutral* *agree* *strongly agree*

5. People in my culture could learn a lot from people in other cultures.

strongly disagree *disagree* *neutral* *agree* *strongly agree*

6. Most people from other cultures just don't know what's good for them.

strongly disagree *disagree* *neutral* *agree* *strongly agree*

7. I respect the values and customs of other cultures.

strongly disagree *disagree* *neutral* *agree* *strongly agree*

8. Other cultures are smart to look up to our culture.

strongly disagree *disagree* *neutral* *agree* *strongly agree*

9. Most people would be happier if they lived like people in my culture.

strongly disagree *disagree* *neutral* *agree* *strongly agree*

10. People in my culture have just about the best lifestyles of anywhere.

strongly disagree *disagree* *neutral* *agree* *strongly agree*

11. Lifestyles in other cultures are not as valid as those in my culture.

strongly disagree *disagree* *neutral* *agree* *strongly agree*

12. I do not cooperate with people who are different.

strongly disagree *disagree* *neutral* *agree* *strongly agree*

13. I do not trust people who are different.

strongly disagree *disagree* *neutral* *agree* *strongly agree*

14. I dislike interacting with people from different cultures.

strongly disagree *disagree* *neutral* *agree* *strongly agree*

15. I have little respect for the values and customs of other cultures.

strongly disagree *disagree* *neutral* *agree* *strongly agree*

Por favor indique el grado en que está de acuerdo o desacuerdo con cada frase.

1. La mayoría de las otras culturas son retrógradas en comparación con mi cultura.

Muy en desacuerdo En desacuerdo Neutral De acuerdo muy de acuerdo

2. Mi cultura debe ser el modelo para las otras culturas

Muy en desacuerdo En desacuerdo Neutral De acuerdo muy de acuerdo

3. Los estilos de vida en otras culturas son tan válidos como los de mi cultura.

Muy en desacuerdo En desacuerdo Neutral De acuerdo muy de acuerdo

4. Las otras culturas deberían intentar ser más como la mía.

Muy en desacuerdo En desacuerdo Neutral De acuerdo muy de acuerdo

5. La gente de mi cultura podría aprender mucho de la gente de otras culturas.

Muy en desacuerdo En desacuerdo Neutral De acuerdo muy de acuerdo

6. La mayoría de la gente de otras culturas simplemente no sabe lo que les conviene.

Muy en desacuerdo En desacuerdo Neutral De acuerdo muy de acuerdo

7. Respeto los valores y costumbres de otras culturas.

Muy en desacuerdo En desacuerdo Neutral De acuerdo muy de acuerdo

8. Sería bueno para las otras culturas admirar a la mía.

Muy en desacuerdo En desacuerdo Neutral De acuerdo muy de acuerdo

9. La mayoría de la gente sería más feliz si viviera como la gente en mi cultura.

Muy en desacuerdo En desacuerdo Neutral De acuerdo muy de acuerdo

10. La gente de mi cultura tiene simplemente el mejor estilo de vida del mundo.

Muy en desacuerdo En desacuerdo Neutral De acuerdo muy de acuerdo

11. El estilo de vida de las otras culturas no es tan válido como el de la mía propia.

Muy en desacuerdo En desacuerdo Neutral De acuerdo muy de acuerdo

12. No coopero con la gente que es diferente.

Muy en desacuerdo En desacuerdo Neutral De acuerdo muy de acuerdo

13. No confío en la gente que es diferente.

Muy en desacuerdo En desacuerdo Neutral De acuerdo muy de acuerdo

14. No me gusta interactuar con la gente de otras culturas.

Muy en desacuerdo En desacuerdo Neutral De acuerdo muy de acuerdo

15. Tengo poco respeto por los valores y costumbres de otras culturas.

Muy en desacuerdo En desacuerdo Neutral De acuerdo muy de acuerdo

Appendix L

Information and Communication Technology (ICT) Use Measures

Social Networking Site (SNS) Usage

1. Do you use a social networking site? (eg. facebook, myspace, cyworld, Orkut, couchsurfing)
2. If Yes, In the past week, on average, approximately how many minutes per day have you spent on your SNS?
3. For the site that you use most often, how many total friends do you have?
4. Approximately how many are friends are from your home country?
5. Approximately how many are friends from other countries?
6. Approximately how many are friends from Argentina?

Video Chat Usage

10. Do you use a video chat service such as Skype or Ichat to keep in contact with individuals not in Buenos Aires?
11. If Yes, approximately how many calls do you make per month?
12. How many different people do you call?

Sitios de Redes Sociales

¿Utiliza una red social? (ej. Facebook, MySpace, Cyworld, Orkut, Couchsurfing) Sí/No

Por favor responde a las siguientes preguntas sobre su uso de sitio de red social Durante la semana pasada ¿cuántos minutos, en promedio, aproximadamente por día dedicó a su red social?

En el sitio que utiliza más frecuentemente, ¿cuántos amigo/as tiene en total?

¿Aproximadamente cuantos son de su país?

¿Aproximadamente cuantos son de otro país? (ni de su país ni de Argentina)

¿Aproximadamente cuantos son de Argentina?

Video Chat

¿Utiliza servicios de video chat tales como Skype o Ichat para mantener contacto con individuos que no están en Buenos Aires? Sí/No

¿Aproximadamente cuántas llamadas hace por mes?

¿A cuántas personas diferentes llama?

Appendix M

Demographic Information and Confound Measures

1. What country/nationality do you most identify with?
 2. Gender? 3. Age?
 4. How many total semesters of University education have you completed?
 5. How long have you lived in Argentina?
 6. English may not be your first language so some of the previous questions may not have been clear. Please indicate the number that best indicates your understanding of the questions asked on this survey.
Did not understand anything 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Completely understood everything
 7. How much difficulty do you have understanding spoken Spanish?
 8. How much difficulty do you have speaking Spanish?
(1 = extreme difficulty; 7 = no difficulty).
 9. If you could give one piece of specific, practical, advice to other international students coming to Buenos Aires what would it be? Eg. Find housing close to a subway station, read Mafalda, visit other universities, etc.
1. ¿Con qué país/nacionalidad se identifica más fuertemente?
 2. ¿Género? 3. ¿Edad?
 4. ¿Cuántos semestres universitarios ha completado en total?
 5. ¿Cuánto tiempo ha vivido en Argentina? (si es menos de dos meses, indique cuántas semanas)
 6. Es posible que el español no sea su primer idioma, por favor marque el número que mejor describa su comprensión de las preguntas en esta encuesta.
No entendí nada 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Entendí todo completamente
 7. ¿Qué grado de dificultad tiene para entender el español oral?
 8. ¿Qué grado de dificultad tiene para hablar español?
(1= Dificultad extrema; 7 = Ninguna dificultad)
 9. Si pudiera dar un consejo específico y práctico a otros estudiantes internacionales viniendo a Buenos Aires, ¿Cuál sería? Ej. Busque alojamiento cerca de un estación de subte, lea Mafalda, visite otras universidades, etc.

Appendix N

Interview References

Ref	Country	Age	Gender	University	Language
1	USA	21	Female	Private	Spanish
2	Germany	21	Female	Private	Spanish
3	Colombia	21	Male	Private	Spanish
4	Brazil	22	Male	Private	Spanish
5	Germany	23	Female	Private	Spanish
6	USA	21	Female	Private	Spanish
7	Finland	23	Female	Private	English
8	Germany	25	Male	Private	Spanish
9	Colombia	20	Female	Private	Spanish
10	Switzerland	26	Male	Private	Spanish
11	Spain	24	Male	Private	Spanish
12	USA	20	Female	Private	Spanish
13	USA	20	Female	Private	Spanish
14	Canada, Quebec	21	Female	Private	Spanish
15	Austria	23	Male	Private	Spanish
16	Czech Republic	22	Female	Private	Spanish
17	USA	20	Female	US Program	Spanish
18	USA	20	Female	US Program	Spanish
19	USA	20	Male	US Program	Spanish
20	Mexico	25	Female	Private	Spanish
21	France	22	Female	Private	Spanish
22	Spain	21	Female	Private	Spanish
23	Spain	22	Female	Private	Spanish
24	France	23	Male	Public	Spanish
25	USA	20	Male	US Program	English
26	USA	20	Female	US Program	English
27	USA	19	Male	US Program	English
28	USA	20	Female	US Program	Spanish
29	USA	21	Male	US Program	Spanish
30	USA	21	Female	US Program	English
31	USA	21	Male	US Program	English
32	Norway	25	Female	Public	Spanish
33	Germany	24	Female	Public	Spanish
34	Brazil	32	Female	Public	Spanish

Appendix O

Student Comments Regarding Tutor Programs

<p>I have more contact to a tutor of a friend of mine, my tutor is not really interested in having contact with me, I never met her, we're friends on Facebook, she wrote me a couple of messages (eg. for my birthday) but that's all</p>
<p>At first my assigned tutor was very helpful, but after two weeks she no longer contacted me despite my efforts to stay in contact with her. The other tutors, however, seem very nice and are great about organizing tons of fun events for us.</p>
<p>Nice idea, depends a lot of the person assigned. Helped me a lot.</p>
<p>My tutor did write me a lot before I came here, but since I arrived I haven't met him. I tried to do it but he didn't seem that interested</p>
<p>I haven't done much with my specific tutor, but I have spent a fair amount of time with the main leaders of the tutor program.</p>
<p>He has been very nice to me, he has helped me a lot, I am very happy with this programme.</p>
<p>I asked for a tutor and they didn't give me one. I know some of the tutors though and still go to their programs.</p>
<p>I never met the tutor that was assigned to me. He sent me one email before the semester, added me on facebook, and that was all. I asked if he would like to get together (for my benefit, really!) to chat and ask questions about the university, argentina, etc. and he never responded. So I can't really answer for him. But there were 2 tutors that planned everything we did, were always there for us, and are truly amazing people. They were always glad to help and I really appreciated their hard work. I will definitely remain in contact with them.</p>
<p>I only wrote on facebook with my tutor and never met her. For me it was totally disappointing.</p>
<p>I think that we need more girl tutors</p>
<p>I don't have much free time and my tutor doesn't either so we've never met in person in Buenos Aires.</p>
<p>My tutor, a girl, was never interested in getting to know me or helping me.</p>
<p>There are a small number of really active tutors that do a lot for us, curiously guys and my tutor, who is a girl, doesn't really hang out with them .</p>
<p>I haven't met my tutor, I don't know who he/she is. But, I have met other tutors that have "adopted" me as their tutor. I like all the things that the tutors organize. It helps us to get together and not be so alone in this big city. The tutor service is SUPER!</p>
<p>I think that my buddy and I could have been closer if we had reached out to each other. She is very nice but I did not push any activities nor did she.</p>
<p>My buddy is amazing. She is giving me tips and inviting me and my friends out. My friends are now friends with her friends. I'm looking forward to have her over in my country (she was there on exchange)</p>
<p>Maybe better to assign people from the same gender for friendship.</p>
<p>I like the idea but it's hard to make a friendship out of an assignment. So far we have gotten along but have not spent a whole lot of time together. My buddy showed virtually no interest in me and didn't even acknowledge my presence when we saw each other in the street. I hope I get a different one next semester so I can meet more Argentines.</p>

<p>The tutor programme didnt work, never met him, never heard of him, but I do not completely disagree, because I had no expectations (or really low) that could not have been met</p>
<p>More scheduled events for students and tutors would be nice</p>
<p>I wish me and my buddy would connect more with each other. There should be more events/parties for the buddies.</p>
<p>I did not participate in the tutors program but wish that I had. The tutors that I have met seem very helpful and fun.</p>
<p>I hoped for more activities with everybody together, the truth is that there was very Little organization from the tutors, only like 3 activities, it would be good to organize events like a day in Tigre all together for example!</p>
<p>My tutor never contacted me, but I met the tutor of another person and she seems really nice and open minded.</p>
<p>The tutor assigned to me lives in the Pilar campus which makes it difficult to meet up with her.</p>