COMMUNICATION STRATEGIES INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS USE TO IMPROVE THEIR LEVELS OF ATTRIBUTIONAL CONFIDENCE

Thesis

Submitted to

The College of Arts and Science of The

UNIVERSITY OF DAYTON

In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for

The Degree

Master of Arts in Communication

by

Eugenio Oblitas Diaz

UNIVERSITY OF DAYTON

Dayton, Ohio

May, 1995
APPROVED BY:

(Teacher Name)

(Faculty Advisor)

CONCURRED BY:

(Director of Graduate Studies)

(Faculty Reader)

(Faculty Reader)
ABSTRACT

COMMUNICATION STRATEGIES INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS USE TO IMPROVE THEIR LEVELS OF ATTRIBUTIONAL CONFIDENCE

Name: Oblitas Diaz, Eugenio
University of Dayton, 1995

Advisor: Dr. Teresa L. Thompson

The purpose of this study was to assess the different kinds of communication strategies international students use to improve their levels of attributional confidence and to attempt to discover the differential impacts of passive, active and interactive communication strategies on the level of satisfaction with the adapatation process to the U.S. culture. Seventy nine international students enrolled at the University of Dayton were included in the study. Current literature pertaining to intercultural communication and literature pertaining to uncertainty-reduction theory were reviewed.

The results of the study indicate that international students utilize passive, active and interactive communication strategies to varying degrees during their process of adapatation to the U.S. culture. The results also indicate that international students who utilize interactive communication strategies experience more succesful adaptation to the U.S. culture than those who use other types of communicative strategies. The results of
this study are consistent with Gudykunst's (1988) uncertainty-reduction theory. These results are encouraging because they further support the positive implications of the implementation of multicultural policies to facilitate international students' adaptation process to the University of Dayton.
I would like to express my appreciation to all those who contributed to this thesis, especially:

Anita, Magdalena, Francisca, Paulina, my loved women, and Lucas my little earthquake, who always offered their love, encouragement and unconditional support. Gracias por ser parte de mi familia. (Thank you for to be my family)

To Dr. Teresa Thompson, my advisor and friend. Thank you for your patience, knowledge, support and overall for accepting me as a human being.

To Dr. Louis P. Cusella, my friend, for being the way you are. I really appreciate your support and expertise.

To Dr. Don Yoder, my faculty reader, thank you for your time and assistance.

Dedicated to those Chilean students who encouraged me to participate in this adventure in Dayton, Ohio.
TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT ........................................... iii

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS ................................. v

TABLE OF CONTENTS .............................. vi

LIST OF TABLES ................................. viii

CHAPTER

I.- INTRODUCTION ............................... 1

Uncertainty-reduction Theory
Fundation of the theory
Summary of Gudykunst's Theory (1988)
Adaptation and effectiveness
Hypotheses and Research Questions

II.- METHODS AND PROCEDURES ............. 37

Subjects
Instrumentation
Procedure
Data Analysis

III.- RESULTS .................................. 40

Frequencies
Hypotheses and Research Questions
Open-ended Question
LIST OF TABLES

1. - Table 1.- Frequency table of Demographics ............... 41
2. - Table 2 - Frequency table of use of communication strategies ........................................ 43
3. - Table 3. - Descriptive data use of communicative strategies ........................................ 45
4. - Table 4 - Frequency table of satisfaction with living in the U.S. .......................... 50
5. - Table 5.- Descriptive data degrees of satisfaction living in the U.S. .......................... 51
6. - Table 6.- Content Analysis: comments about self adaptation to the U.S. ................... 58
COMMUNICATION STRATEGIES INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS USE TO IMPROVE THEIR LEVELS OF ATTRIBUTIONAL CONFIDENCE

CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION

In November 1991, The Center for International Studies of the University of Dayton presented to the United States Department of Education a proposal to obtain federal assistance to develop a plan to internationalize the University of Dayton. The document presented guiding this plan defined the internationalization process as follows: "Over the period... from 1991-1996, the University of Dayton has planned to advance the internationalization of the University through a coordinated strategy of faculty development, curriculum development, establishment of institutional ties with universities outside the United States, enhancement of academic supports, and service to the local community (p. 1)."

This plan follows the recommendations of the Task Force on International Programs organized by the President of the University of Dayton, which emphasized the importance of faculty development; curricular revisions aimed at incorporating more global and non-western dimensions into the
general education program; strengthening foreign language programs; expansion of international educational program opportunities for students (including study abroad, internships, service, and immersion); and enhanced services for international students and scholars.

In accord with this internationalizing process, many international students came to study at the University of Dayton during the last years, and more are to come in the future. Koester and Lustig (1991) found that the presence of international students in U.S educational institution increasing. A report published by the Institute of International Education in December 1993 indicates a 4.5% increase in foreign student enrollment in US colleges. The largest group was from Asia, which accounts for nearly 60 percent of the total number of foreign students; other students are from Europe, (13.2%); Oceania, (1.0%); Latin America (9.9%); Middle East (6.9%); Africa (4.7%) and North America, (4.9%) (Desruisseaux, 1993).

Are the University of Dayton and other universities involved in an internationalizing process prepared to face this new challenge? Traditionally, many universities involved in this type of process can be ethnocentric in their treatment
of newcomers from other cultures. Moghaddam, Taylor and Wright (1993) state that "Americans tended to believe... that all arriving immigrants will want to discard the 'primitive, old fashioned' ways of their country of origin, and 'become Americans' as quickly as they can" (p.150). These authors also argue that in many cases, this attitude of the host universities has resulted in prejudice and discrimination against the newcomers. This lack of respect for their cultural values and beliefs, and the resulting discrimination and rejection by the host, can be among the largest causes of adjustment problems for international students (Furnham, 1986; Furnham, 1987).

Assuming that the University of Dayton is interested in developing an internationalization process based upon a respect for international students' cultural values and belief, it becomes important to know the communication strategies international students use to adapt themselves to the new culture in order to develop policies to facilitate this adaptation. The purpose of this study is to investigate the communicative patterns followed by international students to reduce uncertainty and moderate the influence of cultural dissimilarities as students attempt to effectively adapt to the United States. Theory and research on communication constructs has, until recently, almost completely assumed that conceptualizations and operationalizations of
communication constructs done within the Anglo U.S. community apply universally to communication phenomena within all cultural groups. However, communication theories developed on and applied to members of the Anglo U.S. culture cannot be assumed to be universal (Koester & Lustig, 1991).

Even though communication theories have been developed within the Anglo culture, a theoretical framework for this study is needed. Consistent with several communication theories, this study will assume that uncertainty, defined as lack of information about how to behave in a strange setting, and anxiety reduction, reducing fear of negative evaluations by host nationals, is more a function of communication factors (Kim, 1988; Kramer, 1993; Douglas, 1991) than it is other factors. Most importantly, this study will investigate how international students seek information to gain attributional confidence (the inverse of uncertainty) and how this information is used in making prediction about the host culture and enhances international students' adaptation and effectiveness.

The proposed study is also based on the assumption that international students' adaptation and effectiveness is more a function of communication than it is other factors (Young, 1988; Collier, 1989). Adaptation will be examined as a part of the
interaction process between the newcomers and the host culture, and involves three elements: positive feelings and satisfaction with one's situation; the development of positive interpersonal relations with members of the host culture and the level of effectiveness in carrying out the necessary task at hand (Moghaddam, Taylor & Wright, 1993).

Many universities in the States assumed that international students had to come to the Unites States well prepared (e.g., good score in Toefel Test indicating language competence; Certificate of Eligibility for Student Visa based on economical support; Health insurance) to be assimilated as quickly as possible. Most of the past intercultural researches focused on the second language competence, health, homesickness, food, and worries about domestic problems of the international students (Zwingmann & Gunn, 1983). Most U.S. colleges and universities including those enrolling students from non-Anglo cultures typically offer some form of orientation for new students. The assumption undergirding these programs is that the probability of academic success increases if students are adjusted to and settled into the institution (Koester & Lustig, 1991).

The actual decision of the University of Dayton and a large number of universities to adopt policies of multiculturalism
instead of assimilation has important implications. Assimilation is based on the fundamental faith in the ideal that foreigners, given time, will ultimately change their original cultural traits to those of the American society (Kim, 1988). Multiculturalism necessitates that differences in attitudes and value be recognized, and the decision to support a multicultural approach would likely have a direct impact on every member of the host university. The proposed study attempts to help to fill the gap in the research by testing an Anglo communication theory in a broader cultural context, and to help develop appropriate policies of multiculturalism at the University of Dayton. Uncertainty-reduction theory offered by Gudykunst (1988) has been selected as a theoretical frame for this study.
Intercultural research indicates that Uncertainty Reduction Theory is useful in explaining communication between people from different cultures (Gudykunst, Chua & Gray, 1987; Gudykunst & Chua, 1986). One of the explications of an uncertainty-reduction-based theory has been offered by Gudykunst (1988). The theory attempts to explain interpersonal and inter-group communication, with intercultural communication being viewed as a special case of inter-group communication. Gudykunst also integrates cultural variability, thereby attempting to explain cross-cultural variations in communication and intercultural communication in the same theory.

Gudykunst (1988) argues that the focus of inquiry should be on explaining when interpersonal and inter-group factors are salient in reducing uncertainty (a cognitive process) and anxiety (an affective process). He contends that ethnolinguistic identity, expectations, group similarity, shared networks, interpersonal salience, second language competence, and personality factors (i.e. self monitoring, cognitive complexity, and tolerance for ambiguity) affect the reduction of uncertainty and anxiety. Reducing uncertainty and anxiety, in turn, influences interpersonal, intergroup adaptation and
effectiveness, and is a sufficient condition for intercultural adaptation.

Uncertainty reduction involves the creation of proactive predictions about others' attitudes, beliefs, feelings, and behavior, as well as retroactive explanations about others' behavior. Research also reveals that the theory can account for ethnic differences in initial interactions between blacks and whites in the United States (Gudykunst & Hammer, 1987). Intercultural research further indicates that uncertainty reduction theory is useful in explaining communication between people from different cultures, and also applies to intercultural adaptation and interethnic communication in the United States (Gudykunst, 1985; Gudykunst, Chua & Gray, 1987; Gudykunst, Nishida & Chua, 1986; Gudykunst & Hammer, 1988).

FOUNDATIONS OF THE THEORY

Gudykunst (1988) argues that communication can be viewed as varying along a continuum from involving total strangeness to total familiarity. "At the total strangeness... end of the continuum, individuals are communicating with strangers (an adult individual who tries to be permanently accepted or at least partially tolerated by the group which he/she
approaches. Schuetz, 1944) basing their communication on categorical (i.e., group membership) information. At the total familiarity end, in contrast, little categorical data is used" (p. 125).

Gudykunst (1988) based his theory on Berger (1979) and Berger and Calabrese's (1975) initial formulation of Uncertainty Reduction Theory (URT). Uncertainty Reduction Theory (Berger & Calabrese, 1975) was developed to describe the interrelationships between seven important factors to any dyadic exchange. The seven axioms offered in URT can be phrased as 'If...,then...' statements typical of the law-governed approach. The first axiom of the theory suggests that if uncertainty levels are high, the amount of verbal communication between strangers will decrease. Two other factors which reduce uncertainty between communicators are information-seeking behavior (axiom 3) and the degree of similarity individuals perceive in each other (axiom 6). When strangers first meet and interact, the amount of information they seek from each other is quite high. Axiom 5 states that high levels of uncertainty will produce high and about equal rates of information exchange between communicators. Under conditions of high uncertainty, such as when strangers meet, an imbalance in the exchange of information may create tension.
Nonverbal expressions of interest and attention increase as uncertainty decreases (axiom 2). As uncertainty decreases further, intimate messages may be exchanged (axiom 4). The final result of less uncertainty is that communicators will like each other more (axiom 7) because they feel they know and understand each other better.

According to Berger's (1979) approach, when people first meet they are motivated to reduce uncertainty to increase their ability to predict and explain how the other person will act and interact. In other words, uncertainty reduction involves the creation of proactive prediction and retroactive explanations about other's behaviors (Gudykunst, Chua & Grey, 1987).

People are especially motivated to reduce uncertainty when they anticipate further encounters with an individual, when an individual acts defiantly, or when an individual can meet some need or provide a reward (Berger, 1979). When uncertainty is reduced, or predicted power is increased, then changes in communication patterns result (Berger & Calabrese, 1975). Uncertainty reduction is not limited to initial interactions. Rather, it is a process that develops over the course of an interaction or several interactions that influences people's communication behaviors (Berger, 1979).
According to Gudykunst (1988) anxiety refers to the fear of negative consequences in a foreign cultural environment. Uncertainty reduction refers to the ability of individuals to predict and explain their own behavior and that of others during interaction. The increase in uncertainty reduction is labeled attributional confidence, which may be defined as the degree of certainty a person has in his or her ability to predict how the other person will act (Gao & Gudykunst, 1990).

SUMMARY OF GUDYKUNST'S THEORY (1988)

In order to provide a suitable framework for studying international students' uncertainty and anxiety in the process of adapting to a new culture, a summary of Gudykunst's theory (1988) is offered.

Assumptions:

1.- At least one participant in an intergroup encounter is a stranger (in the sense that Schuetz, 1944, used the concept) vis-a-vis the in-group being approached.

2.- Strangers' initial experiences with a new ingroup are experienced as a series of crises; that is, strangers are not cognitively sure how to behave (i.e., cognitive uncertainty) and they experience the feeling of a lack of security (i.e., anxiety).
Herman & Schield (1961) defined cognitive uncertainty, as "Ignorance of the potentialities... inherent in the situation of the means to reach a goal, and of the probable outcomes of an intended action which causes insecurity" (p. 165). Stephan & Stephan (1985) explain that "Anxiety stems from the anticipation... of negative consequences. People appear to fear different types of negative psychological consequences or behavior consequences for the self, and negative evaluations by members of the outgroup and the ingroup" (p. 159).

3.- Uncertainty and anxiety are independent dimensions of intergroup communication. It is possible for strangers to reduce uncertainty, but still have high levels of anxiety and vice versa.

4.- Strangers' behavior takes place at high levels of awareness.

Culture forms an implicit theory that individuals use to guide their behavior and interpret others' behavior. Much behavior in which individuals engage in their own cultures is habitual (the individual is not usually conscious of their habitual behavior sequences). Individuals become conscious of their habitual behavior when they enter new situations (e.g., interact...
with a member of another culture) because they are interacting with individuals who do not share their implicit theories.

5.- Both intergroup and interpersonal factors influence all communication.

Interpersonal and intergroup factors are both salient in every encounter, and therefore, two dimensions are needed: low-to-high intergroup salience and low-to-high interpersonal salience.

6.- Strangers overestimate the influence of group membership in explaining members of the other group's behavior.

Strangers' attributions during the process of intercultural adaptation are influenced highly by cultural differences and, therefore, the dispositional factor used to explain host nationals' behavior is often culture.

Gudykunst (1988) states that "To formulate the theory... axioms that state the relationship between primary variables were generated" (p.128), and cites Blalock's (1969) definition of an axiom as a proposition that implies direct causal links among variables. Uncertainty and anxiety reduction are influenced by the following variables: ethnolinguistic
identity, second language ability, expectations, group similarity, shared networks, interpersonal salience, self-monitoring, cognitive complexity, and tolerance for ambiguity. Uncertainty and anxiety reduction are also influenced by culture.

Axioms:

Several axioms based on the central assumptions of the theory are posited. Most of these axioms either have been tested empirically or are empirically testable hypotheses:

* Ethnolinguistic variable:

  1. An increase in the strength of strangers' ethnolinguistic identities will produce an increase in their attributional confidence regarding members of the other group's behavior and an increase in the anxiety they experience when interacting with members of the other groups. This axiom holds only when members of the group are perceived as "typical" and when ethnic status is activated.

  Gerard (1963) found that uncertainty produces a desire in individuals to compare themselves with others. It is also appears that ethnic identity influences the anxiety strangers experience in new cultures; the stronger the identification with the native culture, the more anxiety.
* Expectation variable:

2.- An increase in the strength of strangers' positive expectations will produce an increase in their attributional confidence regarding members of the other group's behavior and a decrease in the anxiety they experience when interacting with members of other groups.

Expectations involve looking forward or anticipating something (positive or negative) in the future. Expectations are a function of knowledge, belief/attitudes, stereotypes, self conceptions, roles, prior interaction and status characteristics (race, physical attractiveness, education, skin color, etc.).

Some researchers suggest that lack of knowledge of other groups is one of the major causes of intergroup anxiety (Stephen & Stephen, 1984). Also, ingroup attitudes toward strangers influence the degree of anxiety strangers experience (Dyal & Dyal 1981; Gudykunst, 1983).

Information used in making predictions about members of other groups is generated by inferences based on observations. When strangers deal with members of another group there is limited information available and many gaps must be filled: therefore, extreme inferences often are necessary.
Berger (1979) suggests that individuals use three strategies to gain information about others: passive (reading books, watching TV, and observing); active (asking other strangers about the group); and interactive (interrogation, self-disclosure).

* Group Similarity variable:

3.- An increase in the similarity between strangers' ingroups and other groups will produce an increase in their attributional confidence (the inverse of uncertainty) regarding members of those groups' behavior and a decrease in the anxiety strangers experience when interacting with members of other groups.

Stephen & Stephen's (1985) research revealed that the greater the perceived cultural dissimilarities, the more anxiety individuals experience during intergroup contact. Chance & Goldstein (1981) also found that individuals are more willing to draw inferences about subjective attributes of culturally similar others than they are for culturally dissimilar others.

* Shared Networks variable:

4.- An increase in the networks strangers share with members of other groups will produce an increase in their attributional confidence regarding those groups'
behavior and a decrease in the anxiety strangers experience when interacting with members of other groups.

Gudykunst's (1985) research indicated that attraction and shared networks are related to attributional confidence, even when the communicators are culturally dissimilar.

* Interpersonal salience variable:

5.- An increase in the interpersonal salience of the relationships strangers form with members of other groups moderates the effect of group dissimilarities and will produce an increase in their attributional confidence regarding the behavior of members of those groups.

The interpersonal salience of the relationships strangers develop with members of the other groups also moderates the influence of cultural dissimilarities on intergroup relationships. Prager (1986) states that research indicates that an increase in the intimacy of relationships leads to a decrease in anxiety.

* Second language competence variable:

6.- An increase in strangers' second language competence will produce an increase in their attributional confidence
regarding members of the other group's behavior and a
decrease in the anxiety experienced when interacting with
members of other groups.

Research indicates that second language competence
increases individuals' ability to cope with uncertainty
during intercultural encounters and further posits a direct impact
of second language competence on attributional confidence.
Stephen & Stephen (1985) stated that lack of knowledge of other
groups' subjective culture, which includes their language,
increases the anxiety associated with interaction with members
of those groups.

* Personality factors variable:

7.- An increase in strangers' self monitoring will produce
an increase in their attributional confidence regarding
members of the other group's behavior and a decrease in the
anxiety experienced when integrating with members of other groups.

8.- An increase in strangers' cognitive complexity will
produce an increase in their attributional confidence regarding
members of the other group's behavior and a decrease in the
anxiety experienced when interacting with members of the other
groups.
9.- An increase in strangers’ tolerance for ambiguity will produce an increase in their attributional confidence regarding members of the other group’s behavior and a decrease in the anxiety experienced when interacting with members of the other groups.

Several personality factors influence uncertainty reduction processes, including self-monitoring, psychological differentiation, tolerance for ambiguity and cognitive complexity. Self-monitoring is characterized as self-observation and self-control guided by situational cues to social appropriateness. High self-monitors are better able to discover appropriate behavior and adapt to new situations.

Outcomes:
* Adaptation and Effectiveness

Two major outcomes of intergroup communication are adaptation to new intergroup situations and increased effectiveness of communication.

10.- An increase in stranger's attributional confidence regarding members of other group's behavior will produce an increase in their intergroup adaptation and effectiveness.
11.- A decrease in the anxiety strangers experience when interacting with members of other groups will produce an increase in their intergroup adaptation and effectiveness.

Gudykunst and Hammer (1988) assumed that uncertainty reduction and controlling/reducing anxiety are necessary and sufficient conditions for strangers' adaptation to a new cultural environment. If adaptation is defined as "a consequence of ongoing process in which a system strives to adjust and readjust itself to challenge changes and irritants in the environment" (Ruben, 1983, in Gudykunst & Hammer, 1988, p.108), then the affect of uncertainty and anxiety reduction becomes obvious.

* Cross-cultural variations:

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

13.- An increase in uncertainty avoidance will produce an increase in the anxiety strangers experience when interacting with members of other groups.

Individualism-collectivism is the major dimension of cultural variability isolated by theorists across disciplines
that influences intergroup process (Marsella, DeVos & Hsu, 1985; Triandis, 1986). In individualistic cultures, individuals take care of themselves, while in collectivistic cultures, the ingroup to which individuals belong take care of them in exchange for loyalty (Hofstede, 1980).

**ADAPTATION AND EFFECTIVENESS**

Gudykunst's theory provides a suitable framework for studying international students' adaptation and effectiveness. This perspective suggest that foreigners experiencing uncertainty (cognitive awareness) are motivated (affective awareness) to seek information (communication behaviors) to reduce uncertainty. (Gao & Gudikunst, 1990; Ruben, 1976).

International students are faced with a situation that is comparable to "global uncertainty" (Douglas, 1991) in which they must develop numerous new relationships and learn various new tasks as they move into a new environment. The stress associated with this uncertainty should motivate international students to seek information to reduce uncertainty (Berger & Calabrese, 1975; Jackson, Schuler & Vrendenburgh, 1987).

Berger (1979) states that strangers use three major strategies to gain information about others: passive, active, and interactive.
Passive strategies involve watching someone without being observed. Active strategies of uncertainty reduction require more effort to discover information, but there is still no direct contact between the observer and the observed. Interactive strategies include obtaining information directly through asking questions and offering personal information about yourself.

Gudykunst (1988) argued that observing members of other groups, either personally or through mass media, is one way of gaining information. The media provide strangers stereotypes which influence the way information is processed.

Much of the uncertainty reduction research has concerned behaviors during brief initial or hypothetical interactions, often outside long-term context. Such a narrow focus fails to recognize the broader application of the theory. The theory has implications for exploring communication as means for resolving incompatibilities between cognitive structures, experiences, and behaviors in various settings or during different interpersonal relationship phases (Berger & Calabrese, 1975) Through communication, individuals reduce the uncertainty aroused when experiences do not match expectations or when relationships change.
Gudykunst and Hammer (1988) extended uncertainty reduction theory, incorporating the concept of anxiety reduction, to explain intercultural adaptation from a communication perspective. They assume that during the interaction international students have in foreign cultures the students are not cognitively sure of how to behave (i.e., they have uncertainty) and they experience the feeling of a lack of security (i.e., they have anxiety). Gudykunst and Hammer (1988) go on to argue that reducing cognitive uncertainty or increasing attributional confidence, and reducing affective anxiety are sufficient conditions for intercultural adaptation. Therefore, their theory proposes that uncertainty reduction and anxiety reduction are the only variables related directly to adaptation. Other variables, such as social contact, perceived similarity, and cultural knowledge, affect uncertainty and anxiety, but do not exert a direct influence on adaptation.

A number of studies of adaptation suggest that Gudykunst and Hammer's (1988) assumption that only uncertainty and anxiety reduction directly affect adaptation is questionable. Research suggests that favorable social contact (e.g., Feather, 1980; Klineberg & Hull, 1979), perceived similarity (e.g., Stephan & Stephan, 1985; Torbiorn, 1982) and cultural knowledge (e.g., Hall, 1976) are also related directly to adaptation.
Nonetheless, uncertainty and anxiety do seem to be important variables.

Kramer's (1989) model of job transfer explains communication behavior changes during the adjustment process for people who transfer to new location. This model considers three phases in that process: Loosening phase, when transferees focus their attention on preparing to exit their native environments; Transition phase, when transferees face a new setting and seek information; and Tightening phase, when transferees tighten their communication links to the new environments. This model can be applied to the similar situation of adjustment of international students and we can assume that during the transition phase (when the international students, the transferees, assume new positions, Kramer, 1993) transferees are faced with situations of high uncertainty. Researchers (Frese, 1982; Louis 1982) suggest that transferees face four major tasks: (1) gaining sufficient information to perform appropriately; (2) developing relationships necessary to function; (3) building and clarifying role expectations and relationships, and (4) developing appropriate scripts and schemas to understand the social system they have joined.
Kramer (1993) states that "During the... transition phase, due to high uncertainty concerning task, roles and relationships, communication should be typified by exchanges of information" (p.180). Information reduces the stress associated with uncertainty. A stressful situation is one that makes you feel anxious or uncomfortable, either because you don't know what to do, or because you feel frightened, embarrassed or self-conscious (Bryant & Tower, 1974). A study conducted by Chataway and Berry (1989) on international students reported that the three most serious problems at a university are uncertainty for the future, academic difficulties and loneliness.

Other researchers have concentrated on the identification of clusters of skills that comprise international effectiveness. A series of studies (Abe & Wiseman, 1983; Hammer, 1987; Hammer, Gudykunst & Wiseman, 1978; Redmond & Bunyi, 1993) have identified three dimensions of intercultural competence, including abilities to deal with psychological stress, to communicate effectively, and to establish interpersonal relationships.

Kim (1988) argues that all stranger-host interaction occurs through communication, and that it is through
communication activities that individuals adapt to their host environment.

Previous research has shown that the development of closer communication relationships is associated with positive patterns of adjustment for newcomers (Jablin, 1984). This suggests that the development of closer relationships with advisors, professors and peers may have the potential for providing transferees with information related to understanding their roles, developing schemes and performing appropriately.

Gradually, strangers acquire increasing proficiency in the host communication system, becoming better able to express themselves and more effectively engage in spontaneous social transactions (Kim 1988). In many cases, strangers can also attempt to satisfy their needs by participating in the communication processes of their ethnic communities, where they are allowed to communicate in the familiar manner of their original culture.

Kim (1988) states that newcomers in particular tend to rely on their ethnic communication activities heavily for social support, although this will vary according to the extent that their ethnic communities are readily available and institutionally complete.
Kim (1988) argues that even those strangers who interact with the natives with the intention of confining themselves to only superficial relationships are likely to become at least minimally adapted to the host culture in time 'in spite of themselves' (p. 139). The individual rate of adaptation outcome has been assessed in research by a variety of measures including strangers' feelings of comfort, satisfaction, and happiness, and their attitude toward the host society (Berry et al., 1987; Gao & Gudykunst, 1990).

Gudykunst and Kim (1992) note that, when there is too little anxiety or uncertainty, people are not motivated to adapt or communicate effectively because the interactions are boring, tedious or unfulfilling. They argue that people need to have some level of interest in interacting with others. Gudykunst and Kim (1992) argue that too much uncertainty and anxiety prevent one from adapting or communicating effectively. The reason that adaptation cannot occur when a critical point is reached is because individuals begin to focus on controlling their anxiety (fear of negative consequences) and give up controlling their uncertainty (ability to predict behaviors).
Witte (1993) states that if attributional confidence is very high, and if anxiety is completely lacking, then no effort will be made to adapt, because the person feels no need or motive to do so. Witte (1993) states that "As anxiety increases... however, people will begin to adapt or communicate more effectively - as long as perceived attributional confidence exceeds perceived anxiety. When perceived attributional confidence is higher than perceived anxiety, then people are willing and able to think about how they might better adapt or communicate with strangers (or host nationals)" (p. 210).

One of the most critical factors that promote or deter foreigners' development of interpersonal relationships with the natives is host communication competence with members of the host country. Duran (1992) states that "The most basic form... of communication competence is fundamental competence: an individual's ability to adapt effectively to the surrounding environment over time" (p. 254). Specifically, adaptability is accomplished by perceiving contextual parameters and enacting communication appropriate to the setting and is one of the essential characteristics that enables a person to interact effectively with others (Duran, 1992).
Kim (1987) states that "There is simply... no better or more efficient way to acquire host communication competence than by engaging in communication activities with the natives" (p. 195). Indeed, the development of host communication competence and the cultivation of interpersonal relationships with the natives occur side by side in the ongoing process of foreigners' adaptation.

Adaptation, then, can be viewed as occurring through a process of individual transformation toward an increasing level of host communication competence and of relational development with natives. Not all international students begin the process of adaptation with the same degree of preparedness and receptivity. Previous studies have identified a number of background characteristics that tend to prepare the foreigners with greater adaptative potential. These background factors include the similarity between the original culture and the host culture, a higher educational level, and younger age at the time of coming (Fiske & Maddi, 1961; Johnson & Sarason, 1978). As such, individuals begin the process of adapting at different starting points and with varying personal challenges. They all share a challenge to maximize their chance in the new environment by increasing their communication effectiveness and developing supportive ties with natives.
HYPOTHESES AND RESEARCH QUESTION

In accord with the theoretical framework provided by this literature review, international students' adaptation process to the American culture should be an important issue for those host universities involved in an internationalization process. This study focuses on the process being developed by the University of Dayton, the host university for an increasing number of foreign students. The study also attempts to test whether or not some communication constructs developed on and applied to members of the Anglo U.S. culture apply more universally. More importantly, the present study attempts to understand the communication strategies international students at the University of Dayton use to adapt themselves to the host culture.

Essentially, the basic purpose of this investigation is to understand how international students communicate to create new relationships during the transition phase of adaptation. Specifically, three research questions and an hypothesis will be offered:

RQ1: What kinds of communication strategies do international students use to improve their levels of attributional confidence?
Berger (1979) isolated three major communication strategies individuals use to gain attributional confidence about others: passive, active, and interactive. Foreigners can use all three strategies after arrival in the host culture to gain information about host nationals.

The passive strategies include, but are not limited to, reading books, brochures, fliers, bulletin boards, and advertisements; watching television or movies; and observing host nationals interacting with each other. These strategies assume little contact with host nationals.

The active strategies include, but are not limited to, asking other strangers about host nationals or seeking information among fellow immigrants within their ethnic community. These strategies assume strong ties within a community of individuals from the same ethnic origin.

The interactive strategies include interrogation, self disclosure, and developing friendship networks with host nationals. These strategies assume the development of interpersonal ties with host nationals.

Attributional confidence has been defined as uncertainty reduction, that is, increases in information of how to behave in a
new context or situation (Herman & Schiell, 1961).

H1: International students who utilize interactive communication strategies during the transition phase experience more successful adaptation to the host culture than do those who develop active and passive communication strategies.

Kim (1987) defined cross-cultural adaptation "as a process of... individual transformation toward an increasing level of host communication competence and of relational development with natives" (p. 197).

Host communication competence refers to an immigrant's overall capability to decode and encode messages effectively in interacting with the host environment (Kim, 1987). Competence, therefore, is the foundation for mediating environmental conditions through adaptation of an individual, and thereby enabling the individual to manage a given situation with more certainty.

Kim (1988) stated that a consistent conceptual and operational definition of effectiveness (communication competence) has not yet been developed. On the other hand, Gudykunst, Hammer, & Wiseman (1977) assessed sojourners' subjective
ratings of comfort and satisfaction with life in the other
culture as a predictor of overseas effectiveness.

In the present study, adaptation is operationally defined
as international students' self-reported satisfaction with
their stay in the United States and academic success, measured
by grade point average (GPA).

Gudykunst and Hammer (1988) stated that an increase
in newcomers' knowledge of the host culture will produce an
increase in the accuracy of strangers' predictions (reducing
uncertainty) and explanations of the behavior of host nationals
(reducing anxiety) by using the appropriate strategies of
interaction. Gao and Gudykunst (1990) argued that an increase
in the intimacy of the relationship between strangers and
members of the host culture will exert a direct influence on
adaptation. This suggests that increased involvement of
international students in interactive communication activities with
host nationals will lead to a better adaptation to a new culture.

In addition to the variables mentioned above, other
demographics such as age, gender, geographic area of home country,
time living in the States, and time enrolled at the University of
Dayton have been measured in order to examine the influence of
these variables in the process of adaptation of the international students. Because these variables may impact the satisfaction level of international students with living in the host culture, a second research question was offered:

RQ2: What impact do GPA, age, sex, time in the USA, time attending at the University of Dayton, and geographical area of home country have on the level of satisfaction international students report with living in the States?

Finally, since it is likely that length of time at the University will impact reliance on the various communicative strategies, one last research question will be asked:

RQ3: Does length of time at the University of Dayton impact reliance on the use of passive, active, and interactive strategies?
Subjects

Participants included all 202 international students enrolled at the University of Dayton. Subjects were told they were taking part in a study about communication strategies used in the adaptation process to a new culture. They were assured anonymity.

Instrumentation

To assess the types of communication strategies international students use to gain attributional confidence during their transitional phase of adaptation to the U.S. culture, an original questionnaire was developed by the researcher using a 5-point Likert-type scale (1 = never; 5 = very frequently).

The items addressed the following issues:
- From whom and how often do the international students receive information regarding what to do in the American culture from:
- Printed Materials
- Media
- Members of their own culture group
- Other international students
- American students
- Advisors of the university
- Members of the faculty

- Where and how often do they seek information to know what to do at the university from:

  - Printed materials (books, brochures, bulletins)
  - Personal observations on what natives do
  - Members of their own cultural group
  - Other international students
  - American students
  - Advisors
  - Faculty members

From the original questionnaire developed, questions 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 9, 10, 11, 14 and 19 asked about interactive communicative strategies; questions 8, 16, 17, 18 and 20 asked about active communicative strategies, and questions 12, 13, and 15 asked about passive communicative strategies. A complete version of the questionnaire is in Appendix A.
The three types of approaches were scored by summing up the scores of group of items related to each strategy.

A convenient sample of six foreigners was first selected to test a pilot questionnaire in order to determine the comprehensibility of the questions, noting that respondents were not Americans. Based on their input, the format of this questionnaire was revised. These individuals did not participate in the actual study. A copy of this questionnaire may be found in Appendix A.

In order to assess the variable of adaptation, a version of Gao and Gudykunst's (1990) questionnaire was used. This questionnaire asked respondents about their overall experience in the U.S. The items assessed the degree to which the international students feel comfortable or satisfied with living in the U.S., using a five-point scale (5 = extremely; 1 = not at all).

The items were as follow:

1. - How comfortable do you feel living in the United States?
2. - How satisfied are you with your academic studies in the United States?
3. - How comfortable do you feel interacting with Americans?
4. - How satisfied are you with living in American culture?  
5. - How well have you adapted to the American culture?  
6. - How enjoyable is life in the United States?  

All these items were summed together to score international students' satisfaction with living in the U.S. Gao and Gudykunst (1990) reported an alpha of .88 for these items.

The questionnaire also requested factual data in regard to the student's academic standing by asking for his or her Grade Point Average (GPA), age, sex, time in the U.S., time attending the University of Dayton, and geographical area from which they came.

Procedure

A list of all international students enrolled at the University of Dayton was provided by the Center for International Studies at the university. A self-administered questionnaire was mailed to the respondents, including a self-addressed and pre-stamped envelope to facilitate gathering data. A letter explaining that the survey was part of a class project for a Master's degree, and stressing the importance of support from international students in this task, was included in the
questionnaire. Based on past experiences reported by the Director of the International Service related to the reluctance of international students to answer questionnaires, and considering that more than 60% of them are coming from cultures (Middle East and South Asia) where surveying is not a common practice, the questionnaire may be considered an invasion on personal privacy. Thus, particular emphasis was placed on assuring anonymity and requesting their help. A copy of the full questionnaire can be found in Appendix A.

Data Analysis

To determine which communicative strategies and demographic data were significant predictors of international students' satisfaction with living in the U.S., a series of regressions were run. Correlation coefficients were computed to further examine relationships within the data. In addition, to look at further information about the effect of communicative strategies, as well as demographic data, on the level of satisfaction of international students with living in the U.S. a series of ANOVAs was computed. T-tests were conducted to examine gender differences. The apriori significance level was $p = .05$. 
CHAPTER 3
RESULTS

Of the 202 international students enrolled at the University of Dayton who were mailed the questionnaire, 79 (39.1 %) returned the questionnaire. Respondents were predominantly male (75.9 %), young (Mean= 26.38, sd = 7.3)( Minimum= 19; Maximum= 44), good students (GPA, Mean= 3.01, sd = 1.18), and predominantly from Asia (61.5 %). Frequency of these demographics can be found in Table 1. The other students came from Middle East, (16.5 %); Africa (7.6%); Europe (5.1 %), Latin America (7.6%), and Canada (1.3 %). Some of the respondents had been living in the States for less than a year (32%); between one year and two years (27%), and for more than two years (41%). Almost 18% (17.7%) have been enrolled at UD for one semester, 21.5% for two semesters, 12.7% for three semesters, 26.6% for four semesters, and 21.5% for more than five semesters.

Communication strategies used by international students were measured with an scale of 20 Likert-type items, for which reliability using Cronbach's alpha = .85. Adaptation and satisfaction of living in the States was measured with a modification of the Gudykunst's Adaptation scale (1990). Although Gudykunst reported an original Cronbach's alpha of .88, reliability in the present study was .67 using Cronbach's alpha.
### TABLE 1

#### FREQUENCY TABLE OF DEMOGRAPHICS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GENDER</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>MALE:</td>
<td>75.9 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FEMALE:</td>
<td>24.1 %</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GPA</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.00 - 2.88</td>
<td>10.0 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.89 - 3.43</td>
<td>37.1 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.44 - 4.00</td>
<td>11.4 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean:</td>
<td>3.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Std. dev.:</td>
<td>1.18</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GEOGRAPHICAL AREA</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ASIA:</td>
<td>53.8 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SOUTH ASIA:</td>
<td>7.7 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MIDDLE EAST:</td>
<td>16.7 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AFRICA:</td>
<td>7.7 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EUROPE:</td>
<td>5.1 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LATINAMERICA:</td>
<td>7.7 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CANADA:</td>
<td>1.3 %</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TIME IN THE USA</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>00 to 11 months</td>
<td>31.6 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12 to 24 months</td>
<td>26.6 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More than 25 months</td>
<td>41.8 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean:</td>
<td>2.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Std. dev.:</td>
<td>.86</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TIME ENROLLED AT UD</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 semester</td>
<td>17.7 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 semesters</td>
<td>21.5 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 semesters</td>
<td>12.7 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 semesters</td>
<td>26.6 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More 5 semesters</td>
<td>21.5 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean:</td>
<td>3.12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Std. dev.:</td>
<td>1.44</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>AGE</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>19 - 23</td>
<td>32.9 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24 - 29</td>
<td>38.0 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30 - 44</td>
<td>29.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean:</td>
<td>26.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Std. dev.:</td>
<td>7.26</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Research Question One:

RQ1: What kinds of communication strategies do international students use to improve their levels of attributional confidence?

Results examining the kinds of communication strategies international students use to gain attributional confidence indicated that some reported talking frequently to very frequently to their advisors about course assignments (25.3%), course projects (24%) or problems (25.4%). Also, some of them reported frequently to very frequently sharing their ideas with faculty outside the class (31.7%) or during the class (29.1%). Additionally, some reported talking frequently to very frequently to their American classmates about problems in class (32.9%), course assignments (39.3%) and course projects (40.5%). Although, the percentages for the frequency, mean and standard deviation of the use of all other communicative strategies can be found in Tables 2 and 3, in this section only the sum of the percentages of "frequently" and "very frequently" will be mentioned because the goal of the present study is to compare the variables to ascertain which strategies used by at least some students.

Respondents reported enjoying frequently to very frequently making American friends (41.8%) but some reported studying
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>never</th>
<th>very frequently</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I talk to my advisor about course assignments.</td>
<td>31.6</td>
<td>17.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I talk to my advisor about course projects.</td>
<td>33.3</td>
<td>17.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I talk to my advisor about problems in class.</td>
<td>36.7</td>
<td>20.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I talk to my American classmates about course assignments.</td>
<td>10.1</td>
<td>25.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I talk to my American classmates about course projects.</td>
<td>11.4</td>
<td>29.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I talk to my American classmates about problems in class.</td>
<td>16.5</td>
<td>25.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I enjoy making American friends.</td>
<td>8.9</td>
<td>21.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I evaluate my problems in class at the university based on other</td>
<td>26.3</td>
<td>17.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>foreigners' advice</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I share my ideas with members of the faculty outside of class.</td>
<td>24.1</td>
<td>22.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I share my ideas with faculty during class.</td>
<td>20.3</td>
<td>22.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I participate in social activities with American students.</td>
<td>25.3</td>
<td>27.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I seek information about social activities on bulletin boards at the</td>
<td>20.3</td>
<td>21.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>university.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I imitate behaviors of my American classmates to accommodate myself</td>
<td>34.2</td>
<td>22.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>to the university.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Activity</td>
<td>never</td>
<td>very frequently</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-------</td>
<td>-----------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I exchange experiences about the university with American students.</td>
<td>15.2</td>
<td>30.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>25.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>22.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>6.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I watch TV to understand the American culture.</td>
<td>17.7</td>
<td>26.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>22.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>19.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>13.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I talk to other international students to understand the American way of life.</td>
<td>17.7</td>
<td>21.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>19.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>26.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>15.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I gather information about the university from the International Service.</td>
<td>26.9</td>
<td>29.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>12.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>19.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>11.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I study with other international students</td>
<td>17.7</td>
<td>13.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>26.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>25.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>16.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I study with American students</td>
<td>24.1</td>
<td>19.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>25.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>20.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>11.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I participate in social activities with other foreigners.</td>
<td>15.2</td>
<td>20.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>26.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>21.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>16.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Statement</td>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>Std. Dev.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>------</td>
<td>-----------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I talk to my advisor about course assignments.</td>
<td>2.51</td>
<td>1.29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I talk to my advisor about course projects.</td>
<td>2.50</td>
<td>1.36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I talk to my advisor about problems in class.</td>
<td>3.37</td>
<td>1.30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I talk to my American classmates about course assignments.</td>
<td>3.10</td>
<td>1.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I talk to my American classmates about course projects.</td>
<td>3.08</td>
<td>1.32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I evaluate my problems in class at the university based on other foreigners' advice.</td>
<td>2.75</td>
<td>1.38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I share my ideas with members of the faculty outside of class.</td>
<td>2.68</td>
<td>1.28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I share my ideas with faculty during class.</td>
<td>2.76</td>
<td>1.26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I participate in social activities with American students.</td>
<td>2.68</td>
<td>1.40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I seek information about social activities on bulletin boards at the university.</td>
<td>2.85</td>
<td>1.32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Statement</td>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>Std.dev.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-------</td>
<td>----------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I imitate behaviors of my American classmates to accommodate myself to the university.</td>
<td>2.47</td>
<td>1.40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I exchange experiences about the university with American students.</td>
<td>2.75</td>
<td>1.16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I watch TV to understand the American culture.</td>
<td>2.85</td>
<td>1.31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I talk to other international students to understand the American way of life.</td>
<td>3.00</td>
<td>1.35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I gather information about the university from the International Service.</td>
<td>2.59</td>
<td>1.37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I study with other international students.</td>
<td>3.09</td>
<td>1.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I study with American students</td>
<td>2.76</td>
<td>1.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I participate in social activities with other foreigners.</td>
<td>3.04</td>
<td>1.31</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
frequently to very frequently with American classmates (31.7%); participating frequently to very frequently in social activities with Americans students (32.9%), and exchanging frequently to very frequently experiences about the university with American students (29.1%). Most respondents reported studying frequently to very frequently with other international students (41.8%), talking frequently to very frequently to other international students to understand the American way of life (41.8%), and participating frequently to very frequently in social activities with other foreigners (37.0%).

Respondents also reported they frequently or very frequently evaluate their problems in class at the university based on other foreigners' advice (31.6%); frequently to very frequently seek information about social activities on bulletin boards (34.2%); frequently to very frequently imitate behaviors of American classmates to accommodate themselves to the university (25.4%), and frequently or very frequently watch television to understand the American culture (32.9%). Some respondents (39.7%) reported gathering frequently or very frequently information about the university from the International Service.

As Table 3 indicates most of the communication strategies were not very commonly used. For instance, talking to the advisor about
course assignments (Mean: 2.51); talking to advisor about course projects (Mean: 2.50); sharing ideas with members of the faculty outside of the class (Mean: 2.68); participating in social activities with Americans students (Mean: 2.68), and imitating behaviors of American classmates to accommodate to the university were the strategies less used. On the other hand, the most frequently communicative strategies used were talking to the advisor about problems in class (Mean: 3.37); enjoying making American friends (Mean: 3.25); studying with other international students (Mean: 3.09); participating in social activities with other foreigners (Mean: 3.04); talking to American classmates about course assignments (Mean: 3.10), and talking to American classmates about course projects (Mean: 3.08).

The active communicative strategies were the most relatively used by the international students (Mean: 3.60), meanwhile passive communicative strategies (Mean: 2.72) and interactive communicative strategies (Mean: 2.77) were less used by the international students to gain attributional confidence.

Hypotheses

H1: International students who utilize interactive communication strategies during the transition phase experience more successful adaptation to the host culture
than those who develop active and passive communication strategies.

Results examining the degree to which the international students feel comfortable or satisfied with living in the United States indicated that some reported feeling "almost extremely" to "extremely" comfortable living in the U.S. (57.7%). Also, some of them, reported "almost extreme" to "extreme" satisfaction with their academic studies in the U.S. (74.4%). Additionally, some reported feeling "almost extremely" to "extremely" comfortable interacting with Americans (47.4%). Respondents also reported they had been "almost extremely" to "extremely" satisfied with living in the American Culture (46%). Some reported that life in the United States had been an "almost extremely" to "extremely" enjoyable experience (28.6%), and some respondents rated that their adaptation to the American culture from "almost a great deal" to a "great deal" (50.0%). The percentages and the frequency of all of degrees of satisfaction, mean and standard deviation can be found in Tables 4 and 5. As these means indicate, respondents were satisfied with their academic studies in the U.S. (Mean: 3.95); they felt less comfortable living in the United States (Mean: 3.62); quite adapted to the American culture (Mean: 3.46); almost comfortable interacting with Americans (Mean: 3.39); less satisfied with living in the American culture (Mean: 3.36), and they didn't enjoy life in the States (Mean: 2.75)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>not at all</th>
<th>extremely</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>How comfortable do you feel living in the United States?</td>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>3.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>35.9</td>
<td>44.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>12.8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How satisfied are you with your academic studies in the U. S.?</td>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>3.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>19.2</td>
<td>44.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>29.5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How comfortable do you feel interacting with Americans?</td>
<td>5.1</td>
<td>11.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>35.9</td>
<td>34.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>12.8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How satisfied are you with living in the American culture?</td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>15.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>39.8</td>
<td>33.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>10.3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How much is life in the States an enjoyable experience?</td>
<td>15.3</td>
<td>30.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>25.3</td>
<td>22.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>6.3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How much have you adapted to the American culture?</td>
<td>3.8</td>
<td>11.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>34.6</td>
<td>34.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>15.4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### TABLE 5
DESCRIPTIVE DATA: DEGREES OF SATISFACTION LIVING IN THE U.S.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Dev.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>How comfortable do you feel living in the United States?</td>
<td>3.62</td>
<td>.86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How satisfied are you with your academic studies in the U.S.?</td>
<td>3.95</td>
<td>.94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How comfortable do you feel interacting with Americans?</td>
<td>3.39</td>
<td>1.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How satisfied are you with living in the American culture?</td>
<td>3.36</td>
<td>.91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How much is life in the States an enjoyable experience?</td>
<td>2.75</td>
<td>1.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How much have you adapted to the American culture?</td>
<td>3.46</td>
<td>1.01</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
To determine which type of communication strategies were significant predictors of the level of satisfaction of the international students living in the United States, a multiple regression was computed. Results indicated overall significance when passive, active and interactive strategies of communication were used as predictors of level of satisfaction of living in the United States (F= 4.64, R squared= .13, p=.0051), so individual effects were examined. Interactive communication strategies were the only variable to have a significant effect on the level of satisfaction living in the States. (Beta= .34, p= .0045).

To further explore the data some additional analyses were computed. A 2 X 2 X 2 Analysis of Variance was computed for satisfaction with living in the United States, using as a source of variation the variables passive communicative strategies used, split by the mean (mean= 8.16) into two groups: low and high frequency of use; active communicative strategies used, split by the mean (mean= 14.38) into two groups: low and high frequency of use; and interactive communicative strategies used, split by the mean (mean= 33.25) into two groups: low and high frequency of use. Since means, medians, and modes of all the independent variables were virtually identical, mean splits were discerned appropriate. Results of the ANOVA indicated that there was only one significant main effect, which was based on level of interactive communicative
strategies used as it impacted level of satisfaction (F= 8.59, R square=.156, eta square=.115, p=.005). Thus, there was a significant difference between the group that uses high levels of interactive communicative strategies (Mean= 22.3) and the group that uses low levels of interactive communicative strategies (Mean= 19.7) on level of satisfaction. There were no significant differences by passive communicative strategies (F= 1.71, p=.195, power=.250), by active communicative strategies (F=.03, p=.875, power=.039), or by the interactions of any of these variables. Observed means for these variables revealed there were no significant differences between the groups.

Research Question Two

RQ2: What impact do GPA, age, sex, time in the U.S., time attending at U.D., geographical area of home country, and communicative strategies have on the level of satisfaction international students report with their stay in the United States?

In order to determine the effect of age, GPA, geographical area of home countries, time living in the States, time enrolled at the University of Dayton, as well as communication strategies on the level of satisfaction of the international students living in the States, a multiple regression was computed. Results indicated
the overall effect of these variables was a significant predictor of the level of satisfaction (F= 2.93, R square= .18, p= .0075), but interactive communication strategies was once again the only variable in the equation (B = .32, p= .0076).

Correlation coefficients were computed to determine relationships among the demographic variables, communication strategies and satisfaction. There was a significant, positive, moderate relationship (r= .40, p= .0001) between using interactive communication strategies and level of satisfaction. Also, there was a significant, positive and weak relationship (r= .28, p= .012) between time enrolled at UD and satisfaction with living in the States. There was a significant, positive and moderate (r = .40, p=.001) relationship between using passive communication strategies and using active communication strategies. Additionally, there was a significant, positive moderate relationship (r= .40, p= .0001) between time enrolled at UD and GPA. Also, there was a significant positive and moderate relationship (r= .38, p= .001) between time living in the States and GPA.

A second 3 x 3 x 5 ANOVA was computed for satisfaction of living in the U.S. using as a source of variation the variables grade point average (GPA), split by GPA values into three groups: low level (1.00 - 2.8); middle level (2.89 - 3.4), and high level
(3.44 – 4.00); time living in the States, split by the categories of responses into three groups: 0-11 months, 1-2 years, and more than 25 months; and time enrolled at UD, split by the categories of responses into five groups: one semester, two semesters, three semesters, four semesters, and more than five semesters. Results of the ANOVA indicated that there were no significant differences by level of GPA (F= .72, p= .491, power=.16), time living in the States (F= 1.25, p= .30, power=.256), and time enrolled at UD (F= .77), p= .552, power=.23).

T-tests were computed to examine differences in usage of communication strategies by sex. Results indicated that there were no significant differences.

Research Question Three

RQ3: Does length of time at the University of Dayton impact reliance on the use of passive, active, and interactive communicative strategies?

A series of one way ANOVAs was computed for each communicative strategy (passive, active, and interactive) by time studying at U.D., split by the categories of responses into five groups: one semester, two semesters, three semesters, four semesters, and more
than five semesters. Results of these one way ANOVAs indicated there were no significant differences by time enrolled at U.D. in the use of passive strategies (F= 2.14, p= .084, power=.607), active strategies (F= .55, p= .70, power=.175), and interactive strategies (F= .57, p= .99, power=.061)

**Open-ended Question**

The final question on the questionnaire read: "Please write in the space below any comments you consider of interest about your adaptation to the U.S."

Content analysis of responses (one comments for each respondents, n=27) to an open-ended question at the end of the questionnaire indicated four general areas: (1) comments of easy adaptation and enjoyment of life in the States; (2) comments about feelings of discrimination; (3) comments about difficulties in adaptation, and (4) complaints about International Services of the University of Dayton. Reliability for this analysis was tested asking a graduate student in Communication to code these responses to ascertain agreement with the researcher. Results indicated a 90 percent agreement.

The responses indicated that some respondents considered it hard to adapt to the US (37.0%). Some comments in this area were
"I consider myself like a fish out of water", "UD sucks!", and "It is hard to adapt. I don't really like it here, but I glad to came". Others felt that they were discriminated against because they are foreigners (18.6%). Some of the comments were "Discrimination still over America even in classroom", "I think Ohio (or midwest) is still not very open to immigrant. People make you feel you are unwanted here". A few offered complaints about the International Services (7.4%). Comments were "International Service is not good at all", and "The international office doesn't conduct frequent meeting. They help whenever we need but it is not enough". Some respondents reported that they had never had any problems adapting to and communicating with Americans (37.0 %). Comments in this area were "I think the atmosphere in UD is ideal for studies", "I have enjoyed myself here in the States and I will continue to do so", "Americans are not different from you and me". A complete list of comments can be found in Table 6.
Comments about difficulties in adaptation

- "It is hard to adapt. I don't really like it here, but I glad I came".
- "Sometimes, I had a hard time to tide over because I don't know the American's way of thinking".
- "I understand American culture but I don't like to be part of it".
- "My only goal is to finish my studies and go back home. Most of Americans are not interested in other people's culture. I don't want to be americanized".
- "So so".
- "I consider myself like a fish out of water".
- "UD sucks! ".
- "At times I have been upset by the fact that American students sit next to you in class never talk to you".
- "It is hard to fit it".
- "I think the biggest problem is language"

Complaints about the International Service

- "International Service is not good enough".
- "The international office doesn't conduct frequent meeting. They help whenever we need but it is not enough".
Comments of easy adaptation and/or enjoyment of life in the U.S.
- "I have enjoyed myself here in the States and I will continue to do so".
- "Strong support from ethnical groups will be of great help in adaptation to the U.S.. Nevertheless, excessive closeness to the group does not really help a newcomer".
- "Adaptation to the U.S. culture is easier for student from English speaking countries".
- "I've never really had any problems communicating with Americans. I speak English very fluently".
- "I don't really have any difficulty in adapting myself here in the USA".
- "People here are more free to talk to. They are basically very nice people".
- "I think the atmosphere in UD is ideal for studies".
- "I did not have culture shock and I adapted very easily and fast".
- "Americans are not different from you or me".
- "My adaptation was kind of easy. American friends made my adaptation easy and fun".

Comments about feelings of discrimination
- "I think Ohio (or midwest) is still not very open to immigrant. People make you feel you are unwanted here".
- "Discrimination still over America even in classroom".
- "Sometimes, my professors don't like the International Students. I don't know why".
- "It is the little difference that is hard to get over!".
- "It is difficult to make American friends. Sometimes I found that they didn't try to understand us".
The purpose of this study was to assess the different kinds of communication strategies international students use to gain attributional confidence and to attempt to discover differential impacts of passive, active and interactive communicative strategies on the level of satisfaction with and adaptation to the U.S. culture. Survey data were collected from 79 international students enrolled at the University of Dayton and were then analyzed through multiple regression analysis, factorial ANOVAs, Pearson Product Moment Correlations, and t-tests. Open-ended responses were content analyzed.

The results of the study indicated that international students utilize passive, active and interactive communication strategies to varying degrees during their process of adaptation to the U.S. culture, and more precisely, to the University of Dayton. The results also indicated that international students who utilize interactive communication strategies experience more successful adaptation to the U.S. culture than do those who use other types of strategies.

The results of this study are consistent with Gudykunst's (1988) Uncertainty-reduction theory and past research findings,
which have indicated that people use three major communicative strategies, passive, active and interactive, to gain attributional confidence about others (Berger, 1979). Even though, results of this study showed that international students didn't do this frequently or very frequently. It is possible to assume that due to the high percentage of international students from Eastern cultures, theoretical western assumptions of Uncertainty Reduction theory do not explain entirely the phenomena in this case. Future investigation may study other sources of information about host culture international students use to gain attributional confidence. As suggested by Frese (1982) and Louis (1982), international students need to develop relationships necessary to function in the host culture. This study found that active communication strategies were more frequently used to gain sufficient information to perform appropriately, although none of the strategies were used with the intensity suggested by the Uncertainty Reduction theory. Consistent with Jablin (1984) findings, this study found that those international students who developed closer relationships with professors and American peers reported more adjustment to the American culture.

Past research has defined cross-cultural adaptation as a process of increasing the level of host communication competence to
manage the adaptation to host culture (Gudykunst, Hammer & Wiseman, 1977). Gao and Gudykunst (1990) argued that an increase in the intimacy of the relationship between strangers and members of the host culture will exert a direct influence on adaptation. This study has examined adaptation of international students by focusing on their communicative strategies with host nationals at the University of Dayton, with other foreigners, and by using intermediated communication. Researchers may find these results provocative and should consider further investigation of the impact of other variables such as cultural knowledge, social contact, perceived similarity and involvement of international students to improve adaptation to the U.S. culture.

**Research Question One**

The first research question inquired into the type of communication strategies utilized by international students to gain attributional confidence. As expected, most of the respondents used the three major communicative strategies: passive, active and interactive, described by Berger (1979), but the results did not indicate a particular tendency or preference in the frequency of use of these strategies by the respondents, even though active communicative strategies showed a higher level of preferences.

In fact, an average of one third of all responses indicated that international students utilized frequently or very frequently
interactive communication strategies, which included developing relationships with members of the faculty and friendship networks with American classmates. It is possible to assume that this kind of communicative strategy enables international students to acquire high levels of increased information about how to behave at the University and helps them to adapt to the U.S. culture, thereby facilitating satisfaction with the host culture. Some comments given by the respondents at the end of the questionnaire indicated that those students who have developed friendship networks with Americans reported productive and easy adaptation to the University and to the U.S. culture.

Of interest is the fact that international students were more inclined to develop relationships with American students in order to gather information about assignments, projects or problems in class, and less inclined to contact members of the faculty for the same reasons. Results indicated that 43.1% of the respondents reported they "never" or "occasionally" participated in class; 46.9% reported they "never" or "occasionally" meet members of the faculty outside the class; 49.3% informed they "never" or "occasionally" talk to their advisors about course assignments; 51.2% reported they "never" or "occasionally" talk to their advisors about course projects; and 57% reported they "never" or "occasionally" talk to their advisors about problems in class.
One possible explanation for these results is the lack of experience of the professors in managing international students in class. Thus, they may not have applied any particular pedagogical strategies to facilitate international students' participation. Based on some of the comments given by the respondents, the lack of interaction with professors may be perceived as being caused by a lack of interest in foreign students. Further research should consider investigation of the causes and the impact of this misinteraction, not only on the adaptation process, but also on the international students' academic success. It is possible that low levels of interaction between students and faculty would demand a greater effort in accommodation to academic life.

An average of another third of all respondents reported frequently or very frequently using active strategies. These strategies included seeking information about the University and the U.S. culture among other international students, and developing ties within a community of students from the same ethnic origin. Respondents in this case gathered information from and developed relationships with other foreign students. It is possible to speculate that this is considered easier for them because of increased accessibility and perceived trustworthiness. Frequencies of responses indicated that international students talked "frequently" to "very frequently" to other international students.
to understand the American way of life (29.2%), and studied more frequently with other international students (41.8%) than with American classmates (31.7%). However, 43.4% of the respondents reported that they "never" or "occasionally" evaluated their problems in class based on other foreigners' advice.

Finally, another third of all respondents reported that passive communicative strategies were used frequently or very frequently. These included gathering information about the U.S. culture and about the University in particular by reading bulletin boards, watching television or observing host students interacting with each other. Based on this result and noting that 53.1% of the respondents reported "never" or "occasionally" participating in social activities with American students, it is possible to assume that some respondents are relatively isolated, having little or no contact with Americans. Almost 36% indicated that they "never" or "occasionally" participated in social activities with other international students. In fact, 37% of the comments to the open-ended question on the survey were about difficulties in adaptation, most of them expressing feelings of isolation or lack of understanding of the host culture. These comments are consistent with other findings from this research project. Summed frequencies indicated that 32% of the respondents reported "occasionally" using active or interactive communicative strategies (combined), and 36% doing so on the "average".
It is also important to notice that 56.4% of the respondents reported never or occasionally gathering information about the university from International Student Services, which means that more than half of the all respondents did not utilize this office as a source of information in their process of adaptation. One possible reason for this may be understood by looking at the two complaints about the International Service reported by the respondents which focused on inadequate services both in quantity and quality. Thus, it may be appropriate to extend the services offered to newcomers. Such extension could include services such domestic orientation, emotional support, and organizing more meetings. Another possible explanation may be found by investigating the way that the international student community perceived this office, which may be seen as bureaucratic or powerless in the structure of the university. Based on this perception, one may speculate that students avoid the mediation of International Student Services and seek information in a more direct form.

A final factor may lie in the lack of training in the field received by personnel of the International Student Services, related to foreign languages, costumes, cross-cultural communication, and management of newcomers. Future research should consider investigation of the causes for this lack of communication between
Hypotheses

This study hypothesized that international students who utilized interactive communication strategies during the transition phase would experience more successful adaptation to the host culture than would those who relied upon active and passive communication strategies. As expected, a multiple regression analysis indicated that interactive communication strategies were the only variable to have a significant effect on the level of satisfaction with living in the States, although it did not account for much variance (13%). Also, the results of Pearson Product Moment Correlations indicated some moderate positive relationships between the use of interactive communicative strategies and level of satisfaction.

These results were consistent with Gudykunst's theory (1988). The low amount of variance accounted for reported by the multiple regression was expected based on Gudykunst's theory, which posits other variables which also account for gains in attributional confidence. But these variables, such as ethnolinguistic identity, second language ability, group similarity, self monitoring,
cognitive complexity and tolerance for ambiguity were not part of the present study.

It is important to point out the impact of interactive communicative strategies on the adaptation process of the newcomers, because this may help the authorities at the university to implement policies concerning internationalization process that go far beyond the traditional ones (e.g. language competence; health insurance). Host professors and students should learn how to integrate international students into every day university life and give them support to adapt to the university. The development of positive interpersonal relations between members of the host culture and foreigners facilitates the carrying out of the current task in hand, in this case academic success (Moghaddam, Taylor & Wright, 1993). On the other hand, interactive communicative strategies facilitate adaptation, because interaction with host nationals increases the level of host communication competence, and thereby enabling international students to manage the new context with attributional confidence (Kim, 1987).

Research Question Two

Research Question Two asked what impact demographic variables have on the level of satisfaction international students report with their stay in the U.S.
Considering that more than half of the respondents (50.7%) reported being "almost extremely" to "extremely" satisfied with living in the States, as indicated in Table 3, and the low to moderate percentage of variance accounted for by interactive communicative strategies, other variables beyond types of communicative strategies may also impact this level of satisfaction. Thus, a multiple regression analysis was computed of age, GPA, geographical area of home countries, time living in the States, time enrolled at U.D., as well as Communication Strategies on the level of satisfaction. Results of this test indicated once again that interactive communication strategies was the only low to moderate (B= .32) significant predictor of satisfaction.

A possible explanation for these results is the fact that level of satisfaction with living in the States could be influenced by other factors. For instance, the fact of having reached America could be by itself an important cause of satisfaction for international students, as it may be perceived as being likely to improve their future quality of life; the contact with high levels of technologies and scientific knowledge, and the prestige acquired by international students among their families and friends, caused by being in America.
In reviewing the frequency data, it is obvious that there was a difference in satisfaction and comfort reported and enjoyment with living in U.S.. Respondent were "almost extremely" or "extremely" comfortable living in the State (57.7%); "almost extremely" or "extremely" satisfied studying in the U.S. (74.4%); "almost extremely" or "extremely" comfortable interacting with Americans (47.4%), and "almost extremely" or "extremely" satisfied with living in the American culture (43.6%), but only one third of the respondents (29.1%) reported living in the States was an enjoyable experience. One possible reason for this apparent contradiction is that it is not necessary for those international students who were satisfied with their experiences with living in the States to enjoy them. In fact, some of the comments given on the survey, like "It is hard to adapt, I don't like it here, but I glad I came" or "I understand American culture but I don't like to be part of it", explained the distinction implicit between the two concepts: satisfaction and enjoyment.

The results of Pearson Product Moment Correlations indicated a positive and weak relationship between the length of time at U.D. and satisfaction. This indicated that the more time international students attended the University of Dayton, the more adapted they were to the host culture. This is consistent with the past research findings, which have indicated that adaptation is a process of
individual transformation toward an increase in information about how to behave in a new context (Herman & Schiell, 1961). Additionally, there was a positive moderate relationship between time enrolled at the university and GPA. Also, there was a positive, moderate relationship between time living in the States and GPA. This indicated that international students improved their grades as time at U.D. and in the States increased. This result supported previous research, which suggested that adaptation is an ongoing process that occurs across time by increasing the level of communication competence with host nationals (Kim, 1987; Gao & Gudykunst, 1990). It is possible to speculate that the more time people live in a host culture, the more comfortable they feel with that culture.

**Research Question Three**

Research question three inquired into the impact of length of time at U.D. on the use of passive, active, and interactive strategies, thereby a series of one way ANOVAs were computed for each type of communicative strategies. The results of these tests did not show any meaningful significant findings.

One possible reason for this lack of change in the international students communicative strategies across time may be explained by the fact that these students perceive themselves as a
minority not well accepted by the current population of the university, and they tend to use those strategies that they know well instead of adventuring into a new experiences. Thus international students communicative strategies are likely to remain the same because there is no reason to expect changes in them, until some new policies of integration can be developed by the authorities of the host university.

**Open-ended Question**

A total of 27 comments given by respondents to the open-ended question were content analyzed. Almost fifty six percent of these comments expressed discomfort either with the process of adaptation or with interacting with host nationals, and 37.0% of these comments expressed satisfaction. These 27 statements should be studied carefully, because of their negative trend and the fact that they involve more than a half of the responses given to this part of the survey. The internationalization process at the University of Dayton has been established based upon policies of multiculturalism, which implies recognition of differences in attitude and values of the newcomers, thereby it may be important to know why these international students felt anger, or rejection by American culture after their experiences at U.D. One explanation for these is a possible lack of information about the process of internationalization all over the university, which means that U.D.
is not yet prepared to face this challenge or intensive training programs are needed to overcome this type of ethnocentric treatment perceived by some of the newcomers.

The future recruitment of new international students depends among other variables on the image that U.D. projects abroad. Comments given by the current students to their relatives, friends and acquaintances in their native countries about their experience at U.D. provide important information that impacts image formation overseas about the university and influences future decision regarding where to study for those who intend to come to America. In a very competitive market, a high percentage of negative comments from the international students with their experience at U.D. could be a significant future disadvantage in the market of higher education all over the world.

Limitations

One uncontrolled limitation to the study, but a factor that always affects the analysis, is the size of the sample. One private and small university was not enough to gain a large sample. Since the results indicated some interesting findings for international students' adaptation, it should be beneficial to have more international students from other universities, especially from larger and state owned ones. This is not to imply that the size of
the sample of this study invalidates the findings, but future researchers could target international students from different types of universities in size and property to increase generalizability.

A second limitation was the unequal number of questions in each category of communication strategies asked in the questionnaire, but the domain of each strategy is different in extension which led to lists unequal amount of items. Use of proper statistical procedures avoided this as a serious limitation, however, since standardized betas rather than understandarized beta values were reported.

A third limitation was a wording problem. The use of the word "advisor" instead of the word "teacher" or "professor" in the questionnaire could make the questions confusing for the respondents, especially graduate students who don't have advisors at the university. However, the general context of the questions made it easier to identify the intention of utilizing this word for professors. This is indicated by the relatively frequency with which respondents reported such discussions. Another limitation was that satisfaction scale was related to living in the States not living or studying at UD. However, international students are full time students at the University (9 credits per semester) because of
immigration requirements, and thus, one can assume that most of their experiences in living in the States are related to the university where they expend most of their daily time.

A fourth limitation to the study was the impossibility of directly measuring communicative strategies used by international students. Measuring these variables through self reports could involve some limited validity. However, we attempted to minimize this limitation by asking the appropriate questions about the variables being investigated; explaining clearly the purpose and significance of the study; and assuring confidentiality to the respondents. Reliability of the communication strategies portion of the questionnaire was acceptable.

Finally, the fifth limitation was the reliability of the modified Gudykunst scale utilized in this study. This relatively low reliability may have been caused by cultural variations in meanings for terms such as satisfaction and enjoyment. However, considering the results uncovered here, the use of the survey was, from an overall standpoint, a benefit to the study.

Future Research

After considering the findings of this study, there are many directions for future research. Future researchers should
consider isolating the other communication variables that influence adaptation and categorize them in a new system. One possibility is to continue to divide the strategies in three (passive, active, and interactive) but also consider categorizing the type of communication by intensity, length, and competence. Comments given by the respondents revealed that those who reported friendliness and longer relationships with Americans felt more satisfaction with their experiences in the host nation.

Future researchers should also try to discriminate more adequately between satisfaction and enjoyment, and examine the relationship of both with communication strategies used by international students to adapt to the host culture. It is probable that this difference in perception affects the way that international students evaluate their adaptation to the host culture, as well as the way they interact with the host nationals. Those who were satisfied living in the U.S. did not necessarily enjoy staying in the States.

Another possibility for future research is to study the relationship between international students' host language proficiency and the type of communication strategies they use to adapt to the host culture. Language competence may be an important factor determining the intensity, quality and length of the
international students' communication with the host environment.

Implications and Conclusions

The results of this study indicate that interactive communication strategies are related to international students' process of adaptation to the American culture, and those foreign students who use these strategies experience more successful adaptation to the U.S. Those international students who interact with Americans feel more satisfaction with living in this country than those who remain isolated or most frequently interact with other co-nationals.

These results also suggest that international students do not change their communicative strategies during their stay at the university, and perceive that it is difficult to interact with host nationals. This suggests that the authorities of the university may consider implementing policies to better adapt international students to the host culture, and promote welcoming attitudes among professors and national students. Feelings of discrimination expressed by the international students must be considered a red alert, indicating the need for change in the relationship between host nationals and foreigners at the University of Dayton, not just a consequence of cultural shock. Further investigation on the
causes of these feelings should be conducted in order to implement the new policies suggested above.

The findings of this study also indicated a possible contradiction between the official discourse of a Catholic university which supports especial attention to supportive learning environments and respect for human rights, and the every day attitudes and facts some international students perceive. This is an important ethical issue and demands urgent attention. According with this study, almost 60% of the international students are far away from developing strong ties with the university, and infrequently communicate with those from the host culture.

Finally, results of this study suggest that uncertainty is a limited explanatory mechanism that explain motivation international students have to develop different communicative strategies during their adaptation to the host culture. Further studies may consider the concept of inclusion as an important variable that may explain communicative strategies developed by the new comers.
BIBLIOGRAPHY


**SURVEY**

**Dear Friend:**

I'm an international student at the University of Dayton. My name is Eugenio Obitas, and I'm conducting research to assess the communication strategies used by international students during their adaptation to the U.S. culture. This is a class project for my Master degree and the work must be completed during this winter term. I would appreciate your help by responding the following questionnaire. I can assure you that your answers will be totally anonymous.

Enclosed you will find an envelope. After filling out the survey, please IMMEDIATELY put it in a mailbox. Thank you very much.

Please respond to the list of statements in terms of what you believe you do when looking for information to reduce uncertainty in the new culture. Rate your answers on your typical day-to-day activities.

For each statement, please circle the number corresponding to your choice of the five possible responses given below:

1. **NEVER**: If you have NEVER (or very rarely) observed yourself doing what is described in the statement.

2. **OCCASIONALLY**: If you have observed yourself OCCASIONALLY doing what is described in the statement; that is, less often than most other people involved in a similar situation.

3. **AVERAGE**: If you have observed yourself doing what is described in the statement about an AVERAGE amount; that is, about as often as most other people who are involved in a similar situation.

4. **FREQUENTLY**: If you have observed yourself doing what is described in the statement FREQUENTLY; that is, more often than most other people involved in a similar situation.

5. **VERY FREQUENTLY**: If you have observed yourself doing what is described in the statement VERY FREQUENTLY.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>never</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I talk to my advisor about course assignments.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I talk to my advisor about course projects.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I talk to my advisor about problems in class.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I talk to my American classmates about course assignments.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I talk to my American classmates about course projects.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I talk to my American classmates about problems in class.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I enjoy making American friends.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I evaluate my problems in class at the university based on other foreigners' advice.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I share my ideas with mentors of the faculty outside of class.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
I share my ideas with faculty during class.
I participate in social activities with American students.
I seek information about social activities on bulletin boards at the University.
I imitate behaviors of my American classmates to accommodate myself to the University.
I exchange experiences about the University with American students.
I watch TV to understand the American culture.
I talk to other international students to understand the American way of life.
I gather information about the University from the International Services.
I study with other international students.
I study with American students.
I participate in social activities with other foreigners.

Please, respond to the following items in terms of how comfortable or satisfied you feel with living in the U.S.

For each question, please circle the number corresponding to your choice:

1.- How comfortable do you feel living in the United States? 
1  2  3  4  5 
2.- How satisfied are you with your academic studies in the United States? 
1  2  3  4  5 
3.- How comfortable do you feel interacting with Americans? 
1  2  3  4  5 
4.- How satisfied are you with living in the American culture? 
1  2  3  4  5 
5.- How much is life in the United States an enjoyable experience? 
1  2  3  4  5
6.- How much have you adapted to the American culture? 
1  2  3  4  5
Which is your numerical Grade Point Average? _____

AGE: _____ SEX: M ____ F _____

Geographic area of your home country: (please circle the best answer)
ASIA _____ SOUTH ASIA _____ MIDDLE EAST _____ AFRICA _____
EUROPE _____ LATIN AMERICA _____ OTHER: _______ 

How long have you been in the U.S.A.?
0 - 11 months _______
1 - 2 years _______
more than 25 months_____

How long have you been at UD?
1 semester _____
2 semesters_____
3 semesters_____
4 semesters_____
more than 5 semesters_____

Please write in the space below any comments you consider of interest about your adaptation to the U.S.