

**NEGATIVE ASSESSMENTS OF REFERENTS
IN CO-PARTICIPANTS' CULTURAL GROUPS AND
RESPONSES IN INTERCULTURAL ENCOUNTERS**

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Abstract

Encounters in cultural exchange programs have been consistently and thoroughly investigated in recent years and a range of interesting insights have been garnered in relation to participants' sensitivity to different cultures, difficulties that participants have encountered, and learning academic and interactional skills from the programs, among others (Anderson et al., 2006; Jackson, 2009). However, the bulk of research in this field has relied on retrospective data (e.g. interviews, questionnaires, and self-reported diaries) and, consequently, what occurs in participants' interaction in these exchange programs from an interactional perspective has been inadequately documented. This study seeks to contribute and augment this scantiness by examining this gap in this field of research. Specifically, the study focuses on interactional situations in cultural exchange programs where offence in interaction potentially threatens to develop, i.e. when negative assessments are made on artefacts, practices, or phenomena (e.g. food items, cost of living, and ways of eating) in particular countries to which the recipients might feel attached.

Adopting Goodwin and Goodwin's (1992) assessment framework and Schegloff's (1992) notion of 'procedural consequentiality' (i.e. taking into account both the speakers' turns and recipients' responses to the turns to provide for the constitution of assessments), this study investigates assessment sequences in talk in which speakers negatively assess referents (e.g. artefacts, practices, or phenomena) in the co-participants' home countries. Instances of assessment sequences were collected from ten hours of videotaped English interaction on short-term intercultural exchange programs in Southeast Asian countries. The interaction data was transcribed and two micro-analysis tools, Conversation Analysis (CA) and Membership Categorization Analysis (MCA), were employed to examine both the verbal and non-verbal elements of the sequences of interaction.

Analysis of assessment sequences in this corpus shows that when participants make what might be interpreted as negative assessments on artefacts, practices or phenomena from the recipients' home country, both parties of the conversation – the speakers of the assessments and the recipients – are observed to perform actions that contribute to making light of the situation. The analysis demonstrates that: 1) the speakers of the assessments produce the turns as dispreferred (e.g. employing turn design which is less direct and ambiguous, etc.), possibly as mitigating actions to soften the impact of the negative assessments; and 2) the recipients of the assessments do not appear to overtly disagree with

the assessments; rather, they tend to produce in-between responses in which both agreeing and disagreeing are displayed.

This study postulates that the participants' consideration of face in interaction (Goffman, 1967), sense of ownership of the referents being assessed, asymmetries of participants' epistemic status on the country-specific referents (Gunthner & Luckmann, 2000), as well as the setting of initial encounters (Hymes, 1974, 2009) – where it is likely that potential offensiveness can be withheld– may explain the provision of interactional work in this situation by the speakers and the recipients of the assessments.

This study provides insights into cultural exchange programs from an interactional perspective, demonstrating the interactional management attended by the speakers and the recipients of the assessments, which can result in making light of situations where offence is possible. The study also has implications for CA assessment studies by providing further insights into the constitution of negative assessment in this perspicuous setting.

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Chapter 1. Introduction

1.1 Background

Cultural exchange programs to other countries are organized for students at different levels worldwide. In Southeast Asia, this type of program is also popular and increasing in number due to two influential factors: 1) the globalization facilitated by advances in transportation and communication technology, and 2) the full implementation of Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), a coordinating association among 10 Southeast Asian nations, which supports various ways of cooperation and integration among its people. In fact, these cultural exchange programs can generally offer twofold merits to the students: 1) they are exposed to the culture and life beyond their own countries and 2) the opportunity is open for them to learn and practice their second and foreign language, when the target language is commonly spoken in the host country. These cultural exchange programs have been seen to offer many interesting phenomena for investigation. Researchers have conducted research, and findings have informed the area of cultural exchange programs, e.g. participants' challenges and adaptation (Cross, 1995; Ozturgut & Murphy, 2010; Russell et al., 2010), and what the participants learnt or gained when participating in cultural exchange programs (Anderson et al., 2006; Chieffo & Griffiths, 2003; Kokko, 2011; Jackson, 2009; Kraft et al., 1994; Scollon, 2002; Spencer & Tuma, 2002).

However, the majority of research relating to participations in cultural exchange programs has been conducted from a quantitative perspective, ascertaining the extent to which participants' competence has statistically improved or developed. Often, investigations into matters in cultural exchange programs have heavily relied on retrospective data such as interviews, questionnaires, and self-reported journals (Chen, 2002; Gudykunst, 1983; Lehto et al., 2014). While this retrospective data is useful to investigate some aspects of intercultural encounters which can be elicited or recalled (e.g. the difficulties, what they know or feel about other cultures), there are some phenomena which can be difficult to elicit, even hard for the participants themselves to recall, for instance building common ground, identity construction and other interactional competences (see Duranti & C. Goodwin, 1992; Psatha, 1990). These phenomena are often taken for granted and can go unnoticed by the participants, so it would be less likely that investigating those phenomena through elicited retrospective

data would be successful. Thus, it may be useful to examine the participant's participation in these programs from an interactional perspective.

Investigations into interactions outside the classrooms or core activities in the cultural exchange programs from the interactional perspective can be interesting as this site of interaction, like the participants' interaction inside the classroom, can provide opportunities for them to learn and develop their linguistic and interactional skills (Anderson et al., 2006; Jackson, 2009). This is in line with findings that learning occurs not only in the classroom, but also in the outside world (Kuh et al., 1991; Firth, 1996; Scollon, 2002). Besides, this interaction that occurs outside the classroom is still paid less attention by recent research. Investigating into the area of outside classroom interaction can add to what have been informed by studies investigating inside classroom interaction.

So far, a limited number of studies have investigated intercultural communication in cultural exchange programs from an interactional perspective to explore what is actually occurring in them. Among a handful of studies from an interactional perspective, Kidwell (2000) demonstrates resources the participants employ for understanding one another in intercultural encounters; Mori (2003) shows the construction of interculturality, and Jenks (2009) and Sprecher et al., (2013) reveal how participants get acquainted and self-disclose - how participants make themselves known to the other - in their interaction. Until recently, there has been very little research known to investigate the interactional moments in which challenges or offences in conversation are possible, in which the participants are assumed to deal with or manage these moments. This gap will be addressed in the present study.

This study explores one of the interactional moments when challenges or offences are possible—i.e. when speakers make assessments showing their negative assessments towards artefacts, practices, and phenomena in the recipients' home countries. Negative assessments to referents in the co-participants' countries can be one of the features that is characteristic to the interaction in this setting in cultural exchange programs in which participants are from neighbouring countries. This type of talk is possible because the participants share knowledge of the artifacts in the co-participants' countries. This knowledge allows them to talk about referents in other countries which sometimes involved with assessments, either positive or negative assessment. When negative assessments to the referents in the co-participants' countries are involved, it may create unease or offence in the interaction which the current study deems to be worth investigating about.

There are many possible consequences which might occur as a result of making negative assessments to the referents in the co-participants' countries as the referents being assessed might have some connection with the recipients and could possibly cause unease to either or both interlocutors. Firstly, it could be seen as an intrusion into the recipients' territory as cultural members of the referred countries. Second, the assessments can be heard as criticism of the country, in some fashion, for the members who might be emotionally attached to their home country. As far as the reviewed literature is considered, there are scant data on negative assessments in interaction occurring in cultural exchange programs informed in prior studies. Thus, an investigation into these assessments in this specific setting can be valuable addition to the body of research on assessments and interaction in intercultural communication.

1.2 Research Overview

This study investigates assessment sequences in interaction in cultural exchange programs, in which the participants produce assessments (which can be described as negative assessments; see Section 2.4.4) of artefacts, practices and phenomena in co-participant's countries (e.g. food items, practices, life styles, etc.), examining particularly how the assessments are produced and how those assessments are responded to by the recipients, who are members of the referred to countries. Utilizing two ethnomethodologically-rooted approaches, Conversation Analysis (ten Have, 1991; Heritage, 1984, 1988; Stivers & Sidnell, 2013) and Membership Categorization Analysis (Sacks, 1992; Silverman, 1998; Stokoe, 2009, 2012; Stokoe & Attenborough, 2015) as its methodologies, this study can demonstrate at a micro-level, from an interactional perspective, the sequential organization of negative assessments (i.e. the formulation and sequential position of assessments and responses to them), as well as whether and how participants' cultural identity (as members and non-members of certain countries) is invoked during the sequences.

Two key areas of literature which served as the framework for this study are presented in the next section.

1.2.1 Assessments in Social Interaction

Ground-breaking studies on assessments in interaction have been conducted on mundane conversations, looking at the organization of assessments (e.g. Antaki, 2002; Antaki et al., 2000; Goodwin & Goodwin, 1987; Pomerantz, 1984a). Moreover, assessments in different contexts have been investigated, such as in institutional/professional settings (Fasulo & Manzoni, 2009; Lindström & Heinemann, 2009; Mondada, 2009a); assessments in family settings (Mondada, 2009b; Raymond & Heritage, 2006); assessments in youth interactions (Goodwin, 2007); and assessments with the interplay of speakers' epistemics relative to the recipients (Heritage & Raymond, 2005; Raymond & Heritage, 2006).

As the literature has shown, assessment sequences have been extensively investigated in L1 communication in which the participants often share the same linguistic and cultural background. Examination of the assessments in different contexts can be useful, for example, in intercultural communication in which interlocutors are not members of the same cultural group and who may be aware of the boundaries between their cultural group and that of the co-participants. Assessment sequences in intercultural encounters can be one of the areas worth investigating to better understand the sequences occurring in different settings.

It seems to be the case that, in this line of research, more attention has been paid to assessments which display the speakers' positive evaluation of the referents. Most of the instances of assessment examined in prior research appear to be positive assessments, as presented below.

Extract 1.1: JS:II:28 (Pomerantz, 1984a: 59)

→ A1 J: T's- tsuh beautiful day out isn't it?

→ A9 L: Yehit'sjus' gorgeous

Extract 1.2: SBL-2-1-8:5 (Heritage and Raymond, 2005: 18)

1 Bea: hhhhhWe:ll, h Iwz gla:dshe c'd come toolas' ni:ght=

→ 2 Nor: =Sh[e seems such a n]ice little [lady]

→ 3 Bea: [(since you keh)] [dAwf'l] ly nice l*i'l

4 p*ers'n. thhhhhhWe:ll, I [: j's]

5 Nor: [I thin]k evryone enjoyed jus...

As informed by the literature of assessments in interaction, a large number of the previous assessment studies have focused on examination assessment instances that are

positive (i.e. assessments that are marked by positive assessment terms e.g. “*gorgeous*”, “*nice*”, “*very good*”), and there seems to be little attempt to distinguish negative assessments from positive assessments. This omission may lie in the fact that only a small number of instances of negative assessments were captured in the recordings of naturally occurring interaction. It is also not an easy, straightforward task to classify sequences of talk as negative or positive assessments as the boundaries between negative assessments and positive assessments are not always clear. An attempt to distinguish negative assessments from positive assessments and study them exclusively will be made in this study. To be able to sufficiently describe the turns as negative assessments, the analyst can be informed by the following benchmarks, i.e. speakers’ lexical items, the prosody used in the turns, the location of the turns, as well as the recipients’ responses. These features can provide for its description as a negative assessment (see also the distinguishable positive assessments and negative assessments in 2.4.4).

Among the very few CA studies on negative assessments, the sequences were examined in limited contexts in the previous studies in the form of self-deprecation (Pomerantz, 1984a) when the speakers talk about themselves in a negative way as presented below.

Extract 1.3: MC:1.-45 (Pomerantz, 1984a:84)

- 1 L: ... En I thought tun myself- ((with a gravelly yodel)) -gee
- 2 whi:z when do I get smart. I'm so dumb I don't even know it. hhh!
- 3 --heh!
- 4 W: Y-no, y-you're yer not du:mb, my God you- you hit it right on the
- 5 head, ...

Extract 1.4: (SBL:2.2.3.-40) (Pomerantz, 1984a:85)

- 1 B: And I never was a grea(h)t Bri(h)dge play(h)erClai(h)re,
- 2 A: Well I think you've always been real good,

The self-deprecating turn can be described as negative assessment as it is marked by a negative assessment terms “*I’m so dumb*” (Extract 1.3) and “*I never was a great bridge player*” (Extract 1.4). From the extracts, the recipients of the speakers’ self-deprecation proffer disagreeing responses, i.e. negation to the self-deprecation by using negative word “*not*” (Extract 1.3) and the second assessment that contrasts to the prior self-deprecation

(Extract 1.4). It can be noted that self-deprecation typically receives strong disagreements from others as a preferred response (Pomerantz, 1984a).

Apart from the negative assessment in the action of self-deprecation, Maynard (1989) examined the assessment sequences in another context in which the speakers display negative perspectives towards referents which were not likely to be attached with by the recipients (e.g., social objects). Some of the examples are presented below.

Extract 1.5: 2/15.092 (Maynard, 1989: 91)

- 1 John: So what do you THI::NK about the bicycles on campus?
→ 2 Judy: I think they're terrible
→ 3 John: Sure is about a MIL:LION of 'em

Extract 1.6: 22/2.275 (Maynard, 1989: 92)

- 1 Bob: Have you ever heard anything about wire wheels? [h h:h]
2 Al: [They can be a
→ 3 real pai:n. They- you know- they go outta II::Ne a[n'-]
→ 4 Bob: [Yeah]
5 (0.3)
→ 6 Bob: (Like) if you get a flat you 'afta take it to a special place ta
→ 7 get the fat- fla- the flat repaired?

Assessment instances above can be described as negative assessments because they are marked by the negative assessment terms (e.g., “*terrible*” and “*a real pain*”), and the turns are also treated as a negative assessment from the recipients. For instance, in extract 1.6 the recipient (Bob) shows that he treats the prior turn as a negative assessment through his offering a list of complaints about the referent after the speaker’s first assessment in Line 2-3.

It is also useful to note that, among a handful of CA studies on negative assessments, most of the previous studies have investigated negative assessments on absent referents or referents with no connection to the recipients, for example movies, TV programmes, absent friends (Ergul, 2014; Heritage & Raymond, 2005; M. H. Goodwin, 2007). Except for Raymond and Heritage (2006) and Fasulo and Monzoni (2009), in which the grandchildren of the recipients of assessments and the clothing items which were designed and to be re-designed by the recipients were assessed, very few studies have investigated assessments made on the referents with (assumed) attachment to the recipients of the assessments who are present in the conversation sites. Assessing the referents with potential attachments to the

recipients can possibly cause offence to the recipients, and these assessments may be performed in a different way from those which assess referents with no connection to the recipients. This under-described area will be explored in this study.

1.2.2 Interactions in Intercultural Encounters

The vast majority of studies of intercultural communication, especially those conducted in the 1980s and 1990s, have investigated the interaction of the participants from different nationalities and observed different communicative patterns from participants of different ethnic/national groups. Often, the studies demonstrated that certain conflicts, misunderstandings or non-understandings can occur between speakers who are from different backgrounds (e.g. Gumperz, 1982; Gunthner & Luckmann, 2000; Liberman, 1990; Tannen, 2005; Tyler & Davies, 1990). These studies have contributed greatly to the understandings of how participants from a particular country perform differently from others and the prediction (as well as prevention) of the possible problems/misunderstandings that can occur in the interaction of participants who may hold different norms/patterns of interaction (Kim & Hubbard, 2007). However, there seem to be two concerns in the field currently. First, the way researchers approach participants' cultural identity in interactions can be problematic (Brandt, 2008; Mori, 2003; Nishizaka, 1995). Secondly, quantitative analysis and retrospective data collection are dominant in this field of study; more intercultural communication studies of real-time interaction from an interactional perspective may be needed in order to inform findings to the field from different perspective.

Firstly, mainstream intercultural communication research has been criticized for the way the participant's identity has been approached, for only attending to information about participants' countries of origins and not taking the participants' own displayed categorization into account (Nishizaka, 1995). More current studies have suggested that individuals appear to hold multiple identities and can take on relevant different identities at different moments of their interaction (Antaki, Condor & Levine, 1996; Antaki & Widdicombe, 1998; Day, 1998; Hall, 1996; Handford, 2014; Meeuwis & Sarangi, 1994; Mori, 2007; Ryoo, 2007). Thus, the participants' identity should not be labelled by the researchers from the outset of the research mainly from the information of their country of origins (Brandt, 2008; Nishizaka, 1995). Nishizaka (1995) argues that in traditional studies "[I]t is the authors, and not the participants themselves, that attribute cultural differences to the participants" (p. 302), and that "[E]ven

though they (studies on intercultural communication employing traditional approach to participants' identity) may apply these categories correctly, they do not take into account the relevancy of these categories in each interaction" (ibid. p. 301). It is emphasized in this study that the participants' orientation to their cultural identity as well as the interculturality in interaction they involved should be displayed by the participants themselves; it is not only the information about the participants' country of origin was relied on, but more importantly their display of identities as members of a different cultural group while interacting.

Moreover, intercultural communication seems to be studied overwhelmingly by quantitative studies that employ retrospective data such as questionnaires, interviews, and self-reported journals, which can elicit what participants recall from their intercultural communication experiences. However, some phenomena in interactions can be difficult or almost impossible to recall as they seem to be taken for granted and unnoticed even for the participants involved in the interaction (Duranti, 1997). It is argued by C. Goodwin and Heritage (1990) that it is more appropriate to examine interaction from actual situations. This study investigates the interaction in intercultural encounters in cultural exchange programs from an interactional perspective in real time interaction. This investigation can demonstrate what is actually occurring from the participants' perspective and can add to the quantitatively-informed findings about the participation in these programs.

Talking about and assessing (sometimes negatively) referents in the co-participants' countries is said to be one phenomenon emerging in intercultural encounters such as cultural exchange programs. These assessments can occur as a result of a strong involvement in the topics, which may lead to an antagonistic mode of talking (Svennevig, 1999), e.g. when speakers compare things in one country to those in another and discursively include negative assessments. Also, these assessments can occur within the speaker's report of their participation (Pomerantz, 1984a), for instance their direct (negative) experiences in the co-participants' countries.

This phenomenon is worth examining in order to obtain a fresh understanding of how participants engage these in interactional moments, when the recipients' offense/unease is likely.

1.3 Research Objective and Significance of the Study

This study examines assessment sequences in interaction in cultural exchange programs at the micro-level, aiming to elucidate the interactional practices emerging in these assessment sequences in which the participants are involved in negative assessments of referents in the co-participants' home countries. These assessments may be displayed by the speakers and the recipients of the turn as negative assessments, for instance from the formulation of the turns and the recipients' responses to them. It is the aim of this study to investigate, in particular, these assessments in interaction with two sub-questions:

1. How are assessments which can be described as negative assessments towards referents in co-participants' countries produced by the speakers who are non-members of the referred to countries?

2. How are the assessments responded to by the recipients who are members of the referred to countries?

The assessment sequences in which the participants involved when assessing the artefacts, practices and phenomena in the co-participants' countries are worthy to be investigated as this action is still under-researched and are evident in interaction in cultural exchange programs or sojourns. The findings of the study will contribute to the two main disciplines—interaction in intercultural encounters in exchange programs/sojourns, and CA assessments.

The investigation into these assessment sequences, utilizing micro analysis approaches of Conversation Analysis (CA) and Membership Categorization Analysis (MCA) for the analysis, can shed light on how participants deal with these interactional moments in which challenge/offence in conversation possibly develops, from an interactional perspective. In these assessment sequences, it is possible that the recipients (i.e. members or representatives of the referred to countries) who might have a sense of attachment to the referents of the assessments feel uncomfortable or even offended listening to those negative assessments; they possibly interact in some ways to manage the interaction at those moments. Investigations into participants' actions can document how the participants discursively deal with or manage their interaction in such sequences in intercultural encounters from an emic perspective.

Additionally, employing MCA as a tool for analysing whether and how participants discursively invoke their identity within the examined sequences, this study contributes to the discipline of intercultural communication in relation to the ascription of the participants'

intercultural identity. The study pays attention to the categorization displayed from the participants discursively *by themselves* in the assessment sequences, refraining from labelling the participants' intercultural identity—i.e. relying mainly on the information about their countries of origin.

Secondly, this study investigates exclusively sequences of negative assessments to which little attempt has been made to distinguish from positive assessments in previous studies. Assessments in interaction in previous research have been studied mostly in the context where the majority of instances are positive assessments, e.g. “*the weather is beautiful*” or “*She is pretty*” (Heritage & Raymond, 2005; Mondada, 2009b; Pomerantz, 1984a; Ruusuvuori & Peräkylä, 2009). Even though negative assessments do occur in interactions, very few studies focus particularly on negative assessments as a central focus of study. Investigation into negative assessments in this study can inform the body of CA assessment research in relation to the production of the assessments and how they are responded to, which may be different from those of positive assessments which have been investigated intensively by previous studies.

Also, it can be argued that prior CA assessment research has heavily emphasised assessing absent referents (e.g. absent parties) or referents which have no link/connection to the present participants (Edwards & Potter, 2012; Ergul, 2014; M. H. Goodwin, 2007; Heritage & Raymond, 2005; Pomerantz, 1984a). Assessments of referents with the potential connection/attachment to the recipients (i.e. assessments of artefacts, cultural practices or phenomena of the co-participants' countries) will be examined in this study. The analysis can reveal the organization of those assessments and interactional practices in this perspicuous setting, which has been under-researched to date.

1.4 Organization of the Thesis

This section provides details about the structure of the thesis. The first chapter starts off by outlining the background of the study. Then the rationale of the study is described, followed by the focus and aim of the study, and finally the significance of the study.

Chapter 2 begins with Section 2.1, giving the overall view of the relevance of the study. Section 2.2 examines the trends of studies in intercultural communication, covering approaches to the construction of interculturality in intercultural interaction to gain a comprehensive overview of this discipline (e.g. from a variationist approach, which is

criticized for the practice of treating individual's identity as static and fixed, to the most recent one of the ethnomethodological approach to identity, which emphasises that an individual's identity can be dynamic and invoked in certain activities demonstrated by the participant's displayed orientation at the moment of the interaction). Section 2.3 reviews what previous studies have uncovered about encounters in cultural exchange programs. Section 2.4 covers the development of CA assessment studies, presenting relevant literature mainly about the recognition of assessments and responses to the assessments. Then, Section 2.5 describes the relevant notions of epistemics and epistemic asymmetries, which are revealed to come into play in the assessment sequence.

Chapter 3 introduces the methodology and design of the study. The two ethnomethodologically-rooted approaches—Conversation Analysis (CA) and Membership Categorization Analysis (MCA)—are described. Section 3.2 describes the emergence and core principles of CA, and Section 3.3 describes those of MCA. Section 3.4 describes the analysis of non-verbal conduct, together with talk. Section 3.5 provides specific details of how the study is conducted, concerning research context, participants, procedure of data collection, building collection, transcribing and analysis of the recorded interaction, as well as a number of concerns about research reliability, validity, and the limitations of the study.

Chapters 4 and 5 concentrate on the findings of the study, concerning the production and responses to assessments. In Chapter 4, the findings regarding how assessments are made from the speakers who are not members of the assessed countries are presented. Then, Chapter 5 demonstrates the ways the recipients who are members of the referred to countries respond to those assessments.

Chapter 6 discusses the findings presented in the two preceding chapters, relating the findings of the production and responses to assessments to theories and concepts in the literature of social interaction and intercultural communication, e.g. interactional management, preference organization, epistemic status, sense of ownership, considerations to face in interaction and the settings in which the conversation took place that may shape the way the participants interact (Section 6.2). Then contributions of the study and recommendations for further research are presented in Section 6.3 and Section 6.4 respectively.

This thesis is concluded by Chapter 7, which offers an overall view of the thesis, revisiting important sections of the thesis.

Chapter 2. Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

This study investigates assessment sequences in the socializing of participants in short-term cultural exchange programs. Coming from the intra-region countries (i.e. neighbouring countries), the participants seem to have known and experienced some phenomena in and about the co-participants' countries. When developing talk in the socializing, the interaction sometimes involves negative assessment of referents from the co-participants' home countries. This research aims to examine assessment sequences in which the speakers produce utterances which may be interpreted as displaying negative evaluations towards artefacts, practices and phenomena in the co-participants' home countries. For the purpose of analysis, the action will be described as negative assessment in this study. The features of the speakers' turn formulation as well as how the recipients respond to it can inform whether the turn is treated as assessments which display a speaker's negative evaluation towards the referents.

In this chapter, the relevant literature of assessments from the CA perspective will be reviewed in order to obtain sufficient background and explore relevant concepts related to the focus of the study: assessments in interaction. In Section 2.2, interculturality in interaction will be grounded. The following section, Section 2.3, will review the nature of interaction in short-term exchange programs, which are normally set up for the purpose of developing intercultural competence. In Section 2.4, the focus will be on assessments in the course of interaction in CA studies, mainly presenting the constitution of assessments and possible responses to the assessments. Finally, Section 2.5, epistemics in conversation, will be presented, stressing the contribution of epistemic asymmetries (knowledge imbalance) in conversation and in assessment sequences which are the focus of this study.

2.2 Intercultural Communication

The phenomena of interest in this study are assessment sequences that emerge in participants' interaction in cultural exchange programs. The study hopes to contribute to the body of research in the field of intercultural communication, especially from an interactional perspective. So, it is necessary for the researcher to review what has been done and how it has

been done in this discipline in order to establish understanding of the overall trends and current practices in intercultural communication research.

Studies in intercultural communication generally examine interactions between speakers of different backgrounds, i.e. different linguistic and cultural origins. The majority of the studies, especially the ones conducted in the 1980s and 1990s, have observed different communicative patterns from different ethnic/national groups (Gordon, 2013) and demonstrated that certain conflicts, misunderstandings or non-understandings may arise in interactions in which the participants come from different cultural backgrounds and presumably hold different norms of interaction, preferences and interpretation in talk (e.g. Gumperz, 1982; Gunthner & Luckmann, 2000; Liberman, 1990; Tannen, 2005; Tyler & Davies, 1990).

For instance, Gumperz (1982) studied Indian and Westerner interactions and observed that, in discussions in class, Western students tend to start talking before Indian students finish their utterances. This observation presumably resulted from the fact that the intonation used by Indian students in their utterances is very similar to what Western students use at the end of their turns. The different patterns of intonation relied on by Indian students and Western students are seen to explain the occurring problem. Likewise, in the workplace, Indian female servers' lack of rising intonation at the turn's final position while serving food to co-workers in the cafeteria was perceived as rude by the British co-workers, who expected a rising intonation at turn final position as a way of offering. Similarly, Liberman (1990) found that misinterpretation occurs between Aborigines and Europeans because of their different way of communication. The Aborigines speak in a way that can be characterized as avoiding asserting one's own opinions, which is different from Europeans', and they are misperceived as lacking understanding by European.

While this line of research has made a significant contribution to increasing understanding and awareness, as well as preparing speakers to deal appropriately with those possible troubles or conflicts in communication between different ethnic/national groups (Kim & Hubbard, 2007), the ways the researchers treat the speakers' ethnic/national identities can be problematic. Mainstream research in this field seems to take the participants' ethnic/national category for granted. Often, the participants' ethnic/national identities are assigned solely by researchers from the outset of the analysis, based on the information of their countries of origin, and its relevance for the participants involved in the interaction is

usually not taken into consideration (Nishizaka, 1995). This critique has encouraged researchers in the field to shift the way interculturality in interaction and participants' identity are treated in intercultural communication research. This shifting trend is described in the following section.

2.2.1 Interculturality in Interaction

Intercultural communication is generally defined by sociologists and anthropologists as “the communication in which participants have culturally different backgrounds” (De Fina, 2015, p. 46). Interactions are often labelled as intercultural ones based upon the fact that the speakers involved in the conversations are from different cultural backgrounds (Kim, 2001; De Fina, 2015). While the differences in participants' background can be applied to different types and layers of grouping, for example races, genders, generations, professions, geographical regions, sexual orientations (Kim, 2001; Bolden, 2014), national/cultural categories seem to be the dominant one in intercultural communication studies. Intercultural communication has been studied using different approaches, relying on the participants' culturally different backgrounds as an indication of interculturality of the interaction. However, the participants' national/cultural identities have been treated differently by different approaches.

Traditional approaches to identities, for example essentialists and realists, seem to hold a correlation between the individuals' social behaviors and their national/cultural category. These traditional approaches are described by scholars (i.e. (Widdicombe, 1998) to seek to “delineate the general principles by which society functions or social behaviour is brought about, and social identities are assumed to have an overarching relevance in this aspect” (p.194). Often, the speaker's identity, which is taken as a stable property that shapes how people communicate, is used to explain a range of social phenomena, such as social behaviours and communication problems (Gordon, 2013; Widdicombe, 1998).

While the contributions made by these studies are valuable in demonstrating what and how the characteristics of participants from different national/cultural categories affect their interactions from the analysts' perspectives, the way the research approaches the participants' identities can be problematic (Levine, Park, & Kim, 2007); how the participants themselves make relevant their cultural identities in their interaction may not be fully acknowledged (Nishizaka, 1995; Mori, 2003). Assigning cultural identities exogenously to the participants

by analysts and labelling the interaction as an intercultural one from the outset of the analysis may not be the ideal practice, as it is argued by Meeuwis and Sarangi (1994) that interculturality is a construct of reflexivity; it is constructed in the course of interaction.

The finding that individuals' cultural identities should be treated as dynamic entities that emerge in the course of interactions has been suggested by scholars (e.g. Antaki, Condor & Levine, 1996; Antaki & Widdicombe, 1998; Day, 1998; Hall, 1996; Handford, 2014; Mori, 2003; Nishizaka, 1995; Ryoo, 2007; Sarangi, 1994). Studies (e.g. Handford, 2014; Mori, 2003; Nishizaka, 1995; Ryoo, 2007) have shown that the participants can construct different identities while interacting (both social identities as customers, fathers, etc. and cultural identities such as Japanese and non-Japanese). This view on speakers' non-static identities has raised a growing concern in various fields of study, such as ethnomethodology. There is a shift regarding how researchers view speakers' cultural identity and its construction, favouring a search for how speakers invoke or orient to their cultural identities, as well as being culturally different, while interacting with other speakers in talk, rather than being assigned dominantly by researchers (see Attenborough & Stokoe, 2012; Stokoe, 2009). This awareness has led to the employment of alternative approaches to identities, for example the social constructivist approach and the ethnomethodological approach. These two alternative approaches to identities share the similar viewpoint that an individual's identity-social identity as well as cultural identity-is multiple and non-static. The social constructivist approach emphasises that speakers are assumed to hold and construct multi-identities that are dynamic, shifting and context-sensitive (e.g., Butler, 1999; Widdicombe, 1998), and the ethnomethodological approach views identities more as participants' phenomena—i.e. how the participants themselves demonstrate the relevance of those identities in interaction (Brandt and Jenks, 2011; Mori, 2003; Nishizaka, 1995; Widdicombe, 1998). The recognized difference between these two approaches is that ethnomethodology relies on the naturally occurring interaction data, while this reliance is not seen as necessary by the social constructionists.

2.2.2 Ethnomethodological Perspective on Interculturality

It is the emphasis of the ethnomethodological approach on exploring naturally occurring interaction and demonstrating whether, how and when the participants involved in interaction make their cultural identities relevant (Widdicombe, 1998). The main concern is placed on the

relevance of cultural identities displayed by the participants themselves in interaction. Thus, this gives the emic perspective the relevance of interculturality from the participants' displayed orientation, in which their identity is "treated as a resource for the participant rather than the analyst" (Widdicombe, 1998: 191).

Identities researchers, following the ethnomethodological approach, hold that participants' different cultural identities are made relevant as situated accomplishment in moments of interaction (Day, 1998; Mori, 2003; Nishizaka, 1995). They raise attention concerning how the participants' cultural identities are invoked through interaction among speakers, rather than being ascribed from the analysts only. Research following this approach (e.g. Antaki, 1998; Antaki & Horowitz, 2000; Antaki & Widdicombe, 1998; Benwell & Stokoe, 2006; Hua, 2010, 2015) has examined identities invoked in interactions by the participants, employing the methods of CA or MCA.

Research following the ethnomethodological approach has emphasised that intercultural identity can be discursively achieved and displayed in and through talk-in-interaction by participants (Nishizaka, 1995) and has provided clear evidence that speakers from different linguistic and cultural backgrounds do not always attend to the differences of their cultural identities (Day, 1998; Mori, 2003; Nishizaka, 1995; Ryoo, 2007; Zimmerman, 2007). This line of research shows that speakers make relevant their different cultural identities in some moments of talk but irrelevant in other moments.

It is suggested by the trend of studies in intercultural communication that interculturality is not a fixed, inherited outcome of participants' differing origins but something that participants construct and discursively achieve in their interaction, on a moment-by-moment basis (Hua, 2010, 2015; Levine, Park & Kim, 2007, 2012; Sacks, Schegloff & Jefferson, 1974). The ethnomethodological approach can be a very useful paradigm for this study's investigation into interculturality in interaction. To be able to claim whether interculturality—being culturally different among the participants (Nishizaka, 1995)—is oriented to by participants themselves in their interaction, this study follows the ethnomethodological approach to interculturality, employing Conversation Analysis (CA) and Membership Categorization Analysis (MCA) as frameworks for analysis to demonstrate whether, how and when the participants' invoke their different cultural categories and make relevant interculturality discursively in their on-going talk.

2.2.3 Constructing Interculturality in Interaction

This section reviews how the interculturality in interaction is invoked in and through the participants' talk-in-interaction. Ethnomethodologically-informed research has informed a range of actions and activities, e.g., category-bound activities by), that the participants perform in talk-in-interaction and work to display their orientation to the cultural differences between themselves and the co-participants. This line of research on interculturality in interaction is reviewed and how the participants make differing cultural backgrounds relevant in their interaction is outlined in the following paragraph.

Firstly, the speakers' invocation of the co-participants' alienation ('foreignness') to a particular national/cultural practice can display their orientation to the recipients as outsiders who do not belong to that national/cultural category. For instance, the Japanese host asks if the Chinese student is okay when drinking *maccha* (a Japanese green tea) "*Have you ever had maccha?*", and treats the cultural practice of drinking Japanese green tea as alien to him through some warning "*Hot, hot. It might be a little hot*". These actions from the host can show an orientation to the student as non-Japanese (Fukuda, 2006: 444-445). Secondly, topicalizing talk on the differences of national/cultural aspects or practices in speakers' and recipients' cultural groups (e.g. food items, food packaging and the use of chopsticks) can be an index of their orientation to the different cultural backgrounds among them (Brandt, 2008; Iino, 1996; Zimmerman, 2007). Thirdly, linguistic categorization through the invocation of the co-participants' levels of linguistic knowledge, low or high, of the language of a particular national/cultural group can display the speaker's orientation to them as a non-member of that cultural group, as shown in Nishizaka (1995: 308) interview data, in which the speaker's invocation of the ownership of the language through repair as well as questioning about the recipients' presumed difficulty involved in the use of Japanese— "*Well, what I definitely what to ask is:...*", "*then, sometimes don't you find what they are saying is difficult to understand? I wonder*"—can indicate the speakers' orientation to their recipients as non-Japanese. Similarly, Iino (1996) showed that giving compliments on the students' linguistic proficiency in Japanese—"*Excellent foreigner!*"—can display their orientation to the students as non-Japanese, as speakers rarely give compliments on native speakers' or national/cultural insiders' language use in general, except language in specific tasks, such as writing or giving presentations. Finally, asking about the co-participants' activities in a particular national/cultural group, e.g. "*Have you seen any Japanese movies?*" (Mori, 2003: 154), can

work to categorize the participants into non-members of the Japanese national/cultural group, as watching Japanese movies can be expected to be new and worth asking the outsiders but not to insiders.

As informed by the ethnomethodological approach, the examination of the participants' construction of interculturality in interactions can be less than straightforward. While speakers' invocations of interculturality through some activities (e.g. demonstration of expertise/higher epistemic knowledge in the cultural practices or matters of certain cultural groups) are employed and work successfully in many studies, caution should be taken that there is the possibility of a mismatch between the participants' cultural identities and their displayed expertise on matters that are strongly related to that cultural group. For instance, in Zimmerman's (2007) data where Korean participants who gain expertise (through studying) in Japanese geography can be seen to display a higher epistemic status on Japanese mountains, his higher epistemics on this matter in Japan does not index his cultural identity correctly. Thus, the invocation of cultural identity using the expertise or knowledge in matters of certain cultural groups which can be gained through studying/learning needs to be treated with caution. In some cases, ethnographic information about the participants can be helpful in analysis.

In addition to this, recent research (e.g. Brandt, 2008) has indicated that it is plausible in interculturality studies to examine how both parties involved in interaction—the speakers who ascribe and the ones who are ascribed—treat the categorization. Brandt describes that “in this conceptualization of interculturality, it seems that one party is being defined in terms of the other, rather than of what they are” (2008: 217). Antaki (1998) and other researchers have also pointed out that speakers may display their orientation to the recipient's cultural identity as a member or non-member of a particular cultural group, but the recipients do not always accept or align with the identity that is ascribed to them. The following section describes the participants' resistance to the identities ascribed to them.

2.2.4 Dismissal of the Relevance of Identities Ascribed by Others

It has been noted by a number social constructivist and ethnomethodological researchers that the individual's identity is negotiated and co-constructed (Aronsson, 1998; Bailey, 2000; Cutler, 2007; Jacoby & Ochs, 1995; Greer, 2005; Higgin, 2007); the participants negotiate the categories ascribed to them. Some studies have demonstrated that

the participants occasionally dismiss or resist the identities ascribed to them in the course of interaction—when one identity is ascribed to them by the co-participants but they treat the ascribed categories as not relevant for them at that moment of talk, they may work to dismiss or resist those identities. As a result, they do not make interculturality relevant in talk at that moment.

Dismissal and resistance to the ascribed categories have been demonstrated to be done through the recipients' actions: 1) providing minimal responses (Day, 1994) or not very clear uptake to the categorization (Fukuda, 2006), 2) reconstituting the category or reasserting a different category after one category is ascribed (Day, 1998; Fukuda, 2006), and 3) minimizing or blurring the invoked boundaries between categories (Day, 1998; Mori, 2003).

Some identity studies have provided possible explanations as to why the participants dismiss or resist particular cultural identities ascribed to them in talk, denying the relevance of interculturality, or being culturally different. In Day's (1998) Swedish interaction data, the ethnic identity of Chinese is invoked and ascribed to a participant through the suggestion of eating Chinese food during the discussion of party planning. The referred to participant takes up the turn to respond to the suggestion, denying the appropriateness of eating Chinese food, at the same time making interculturality or being culturally different irrelevant in the discussion. In this interaction, where the Chinese participant lives (and works) in the country and has known the other co-participants for some time, and additional identities (e.g. member of the workplace) other than cultural identity may be established; she has multi-identities that can be invoked. In this moment, other identities, rather than ethnic identity, may be more salient. Additionally, it is suggested by Day (1998) that the participant who is categorized as Chinese in this workplace (where the majority are Swedish) may view categorizing as a non-member as "casting doubt on his/her capacities to be a member of the social group pursuing the activity at hand (*in a work place*)" (1998: 151, italics added). This may explain why the participant who is ascribed as Chinese (who is a minority in that workplace) denies the relevance of interculturality or being culturally different from the majority.

In conclusion, while these studies are significant in showing that identities can be negotiated in talk, they also shed light on the fact that if the categorization of participants as non-members of a particular cultural category is resisted by the ascribed parties—denying the relevance of interculturality—it may not be appropriate to describe the interaction as an intercultural one.

2.3 Intercultural Interactions in Short-term Cultural Exchange Programs

In globalization, short-term exchange programs such as sojourns, cultural exchange programs and summer camps have increasingly been organized and offered to students at various levels worldwide and in Southeast Asia, where the ASEAN (The Association of Southeast Asian Nations) was fully implemented in 2015. These short-term programs are believed to open opportunities for the participants to be exposed to language in real use and to interact with speakers and peers from diverse national/cultural backgrounds. While it has been agreed that long-term exchange programs can develop high levels of intercultural competence (Engle & Engel, 2004), participants taking part in short-term intercultural experiences, ranging from three to seven weeks (Chieffo & Griffiths, 2003; Spencer & Tuma, 2002), are also believed to gain benefits, for example learning intercultural competence as well as language (Anderson et al., 2006; Jackson, 2009).

The bulk of research on short-term exchange programs shows evidence of participants' linguistic competence increasing after intercultural exchange experiences. For instance, Jackson (2009) found that participants taking part in short-term exchange programs, when developing relationships with intercultural members, become more comfortable and confident communicating in social situations. Similarly, research firmly indicates that participants can gain pragmatic ability in language use, for example leaving the conversation (Hassall, 2006) and addressing the co-participants (Barron, 2006), when they have been exposed to interaction with peers in intercultural encounters.

Short-term cultural exchange programs are also shown to benefit the participants in relation to the development of intercultural sensitivity and skills. Anderson et al (2006) found that short-term exchange programs are effective in improving participants' understanding of other cultures and becoming more willing to accept cultural differences. Jackson (2009) revealed that participants taking part in short-term exchange programs move from an ethnocentric, i.e. viewing that one's own culture is central to all reality, closer to an ethno-relative mind-set, the stage of development in which they become more comfortable with cultural differences. Jackson reported that participants with intercultural experience also become more realistic about their limitations and areas on which they need to improve.

While the mainstream investigation into cultural exchange programs is conducted quantitatively (i.e. statistically showing the participants' development of linguistic competence and intercultural skills based upon the data obtained via self-reported

instruments, questionnaires, journals, interviews, etc.), there is a growing amount of research set to explore what interactionally emerges in intercultural communication in different settings with different foci, for example service-encounters, a second language learning environment outside the classroom, and inside classroom interaction (Jenks, 2009; Kidwell, 2000; Mori, 2003; Sprecher et al., 2013; Victoria, 2011) to complement the findings of those mainstream quantitative investigations.

However, interaction in cultural exchange programs has not been investigated intensively yet from the interactional perspective. Until recently, scant research has investigated the participants' interaction when involving the moments in which the offence is possible (e.g. when the participant involved in negative assessments of artefacts, practices and phenomena in one co-participant's home country). This area of investigation will be addressed in the present study.

This study examines interactions occurring in short-term exchange programs among participants from intra-regional countries in Southeast Asian countries where English is spoken as a *Lingua Franca*, i.e. as a "contact language between persons who share neither a common native tongue nor a common national culture, and for whom English is the chosen language for communication" (Firth, 1996: 240). The interaction examined in this study involves sequences of talk in which the participants make assessments negatively assessing artefacts, practices or phenomena of the co-participants' countries. Investigating the assessment sequences in this interaction will add to the body of research on interactions in short-term exchange programs, demonstrating how participants deal with negative assessments about the referents which seem to connect to co-participants occurring in short-term cultural exchange programs. This investigation can provide extra insights into interaction in cultural exchange programs from an interactional perspective in the moments the challenge/offence can threaten to develop.

2.4 Assessments

Previous research on assessments in interaction (e.g. Goodwin & Goodwin, 1987; Pomerantz, 1984a) has demonstrated that by means of assessments, the speaker makes his/her affective involvement in persons, events, and objects public in interaction. These assessments can reveal how speakers see and perceive the referents in a particular way. Drew and Holt (1998) argued that "assessments convey a positive or negative value to be attached to the

circumstances that the speaker has described or assessed” (1998: 502). The term assessment in this study is used in the same sense as in Pomerantz (1984a), Goodwin and Goodwin (1987, 1992) and Drew and Holt (1998), i.e. to refer to an action in which speakers produce utterances or turns displaying their affective stance towards referents in their turn production, for example objects, persons, situations or ideas.

2.4.1 CA Studies of Assessments

Pomerantz’s (1984) ground-breaking and C. Goodwin’s (2007) more recent research in assessments have demonstrated that assessment is a common phenomenon in talk; the participants routinely generate assessments as part of participation or access to referents (e.g. the activities and events they jointly attended). Pomerantz (1984a) examined assessment sequences in which the participants assess the same referents as they take part in the activities, have access to the referents or indicate a sense of their experiences about the referents, as illustrated in the following extracts.

Extract 2.1: (1) (VIYMC 1:4)

- 1 J: Let's feel the water. Oh, it ...
2 R: It's wonderful. It's just right. It's like
bathtub water.

Extract 2.2: (VIYMC: 1.-2) (Pomerantz, 1984a: 60)
(J and R are in a rowboat on a lake.)

- 1 J: It's really a clear lake, isn't it?
2 R: It's wonderful.

It has been noted that assessments can be a production of participation (Pomerantz, 1984a). It has also been stated by other scholars (e.g. Edwards & Potter, 2012) that the speakers do not make assessments just for the sake of evaluation or to display a negative/positive stance alone. A large number of CA studies have shown that assessments can be produced as a second-pair part to respond to prior actions, such as story-telling, giving information, and announcement of accomplishments (Bilmes, 1988; C. Goodwin, 1986; Ruusuvuori & Perakyla, 2009; Schegloff, 1995). This line of research has shown that assessments as second pair-parts in talk (e.g. after noticing/partaking in events, or after receiving explanations/instructions) have various implications in the course of interaction. For instance, Mondada’s (2009a: 333) giving-receiving instruction data shows that assessments

are produced as part of the recipients' display of understanding of a prior explanation. Mondada claims from this set of data that this assessment "projects, and indeed preempts, the imminent completion of the explanation",

Extract 2.3: 288/5.04 (Mondada, 2009a: 332-333)

Dea: Car Dealer, Dia: Customer

- 1 Dea: I*CI:, (.) on part sur la gauche avec QUAtre vi*t'
 HERE, (.) we start on the left with FOUr windows
 dia *.....bends progressively over the button-- *
- 2 # élec|triques (.) auto*matiques. donc les quat', #
 electric (.) automatic. so all four,
 dia *looks to her right-->
 eve |windows go down->
- 3 (0.5)
- 4 Dea: mon*:tent, et de[scendent]* automa°tiquement°
 go up, and down automa°tically°
 dia ->* looks to her left —*
- ➔ 5 Dia: [supe:r.] *
 [great.]

In other cases, assessments have the function of stopping or interrupting potential arguments among the family during dinner conversation (Mondada, 2009b) and in a fashion atelier, they also have the function of proposing to change decisions on clothing items (Fasulo & Monzoni, 2009). Importantly, assessments have a sequence-closing implicative function. This closing implicative of assessments has been supported by Antaki et al., (2000), Drew and Holt (1998), Goodwin and Goodwin (1987, 1992), Jefferson (1993), Mondada (2009a), and Schegloff (2007), all of whom have found that the interactants employ assessments as a resource for closing an on-going episode/topic and moving from one episode/topic to another.

2.4.2 Recognition of Assessments

The literature on CA assessments (Edwards & Potter, 2012; C. Goodwin, 2007; Goodwin & Goodwin, 1987, 1992; Pomerantz, 1984a; Ruusuvuori & Peräkylä, 2009) has shown that utterances can be recognized as assessments by means of two main elements: their formulation (speakers' verbal turn production and non-verbal conduct in the turn formulation), and the recipient's uptakes/responses showing that they treat the turns as

assessments. Based on these two resources, it may be possible to classify assessments as positive and negative assessments as well as explicit and inexplicit assessments.

2.4.2.1 *Turn Formulation*

Regarding their formulation, assessments can be recognized as such through the use of assessment terms or descriptions that display the speakers' evaluation, for example “*good*”, “*bad*”, “*awful*”, “*enjoy*”, “*bastard*”, “*bitch*” (Edwards & Potter, 2012; M. H. Goodwin, 1980), often in the form of Subject + Proposition, as in “*it was so good*”, “*it was really sad*” etc. (C. Goodwin & Goodwin, 1987). Assessments can also be marked as such by some tokens, for instance the appreciatory token “*mmm*” (Golato, 2005; C. Goodwin, 2007), which are often followed by assessment terms, as in “*mmm good*”. Often, assessments incorporated by these assessment terms and descriptions can be formulated as object-side, as in “*nice T-shirt*” or subject-side, as in “*I love it*” (Edwards & Potter, 2012).

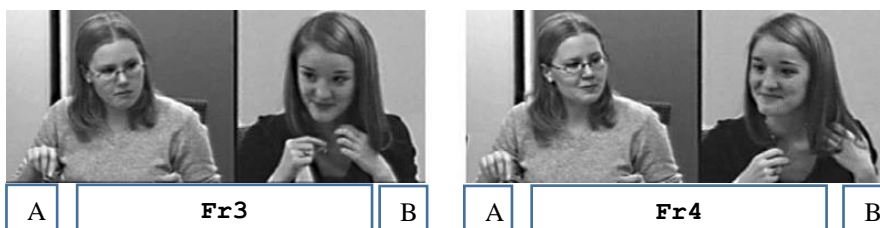
Additionally, assessments can be recognized as such based on many components of the turns: both verbal and non-verbal assessment. Goodwin and Goodwin's (1992) framework demonstrates that assessments can generally involve four levels of organization: assessment segment, assessment signal, assessment action and assessment activity. Assessment segment is used to describe “a structural unit that occurs at a specific place in the stream of speech” (p. 154), usually consisting of assessment terms such as “*beautiful*”, “*sad*”, “*good*”. It is useful to note that any intensifiers preceding the assessment terms can usually be counted as part of the assessment segment. Apart from using assessment terms in assessment segments, participants can be involved in assessments through non-segmental phenomena (e.g. intonation, volume and duration) and non-vocal displays (e.g. facial displays, gestures and body positions). This involvement is defined as assessment signal in Goodwin and Goodwin's framework. When participants take a stance (e.g. positive/ negative) towards the referents and, as a result, his/her assessment is displayed to the recipient (e.g. as a compliment), this is described as an assessment action. When one speaker makes public his/her stance towards the referent being assessed and the co-participant(s) engage in assessment by responding to it, this interaction constitutes assessment activity.

Goodwin and Goodwin's (1987, 1992) framework illustrated that assessment is conceptualized as an activity in interaction that encompasses both vocal and non-verbal conducts. That is, non-verbal conducts (e.g. facial displays, gestures and body movements) may accompany verbal assessments. For instance, in assessing or gossiping about absent

friends, a group of girls makes use of verbal conducts, e.g. “Quotation gesture or hopping movement of a small rabbit with their hand next to their face” (Goodwin, 2007: 357), to assign characterization of their absent friend’s relationship to the football team captain, adding to the verbal assessment which characterizes the relationship to the captain as “honey bunny”. In some cases, those non-verbal conducts can work to assess on their own in the absence of a verbal assessments (Fasulo & Monzoni, 2009; Ruusuvuori & Perakyla, 2009). For instance, the smiling face displayed after the introduction of an object (i.e. without the speaker’s production of verbal assessment) can convey the speaker’s positive stance/assessment towards the object, which can work to invite the recipient to evaluate the introduced object (Ruusuvuori & Perakyla, 2009).

Extract 2.4: Pendant (Ruusuvuori & Perakyla, 2009: 382–283)

01 (4.0)
 02 B: Nä:inpä.
 righ:t.
 03 (1.7) //Fr 1 ((B swallows, wipes her mouth))
 04 (1.5) ((B touches her pendant + opens her mouth to begin announcement))
 → 05 B: Ai niintämmönen // Fr2 >tääolitää< koru // Fr3
 Oh yeah this is // Fr2>what this< pendant was like // Fr3
 06 minkämääsain, // Fr4
 that I got, // Fr4



07 (0.4)
 08 A: Niijoo.
 oh right.
 09 B: mhh[e
 ...(15 lines of noticing and responses omitted)...
 25 A: [Joo (.) no se on tosikaunis.
 [yeah (.) well it’s really beautiful.
 26 B: .hhh £Mustaki se on kyllätösintäti£
 .hhh £I also think it’s really pretty£

To sum up, the assessment constitution of the turns can be indicated by the design of the turns (i.e. the verbal formulation and the prosody) and the non-verbal conduct that is incorporated into the turns or, sometimes, non-verbal conduct can be seen to display assessment on its own, without a verbal element. It is plausible to note that this line of research (e.g. Fasulo & Monzoni, 2009; C. Goodwin, 2007; M.H. Goodwin, 2007; Goodwin and Goodwin, 1992; Ruusuvuori & Perakyla, 2009) has portrayed the intertwining nature of verbal assessments and non-verbal expressions which work collaboratively to convey the speakers' affective stances. Ruusuvuori & Perakyla (2009) examined assessments produced in story-telling sequences and found that "facial expression worked alongside the lexical cues in giving hints of the speaker's stance towards the telling, and in assuring appropriate response" (p. 392) from the recipients.

2.4.2.2 *Recipients' Uptake*

It is not only the verbal and non-verbal organization of the turn that can identify the turn as an assessment. The recipients' uptake of the turn can be crucial in determining whether or not the turn is treated as an assessment (Edwards & Potter, 2012). The constitution of the turn as an assessment may be projected by the speakers. It is also very important that the recipient understands the turn as an assessment and the orientation to such a turn as an assessment should be demonstrated in the next turn in the conversation, as supported by the classic next turn proof procedure in Conversation Analysis. For instance, the recipients' offering of agreement or second assessment on the same referents may display that the recipients treat the prior turns as assessments (Edwards & Potter, 2012). Without looking at the sequential environment of a turn, it cannot be clear whether or not the turn is performing or being treated as an assessment.

2.4.3 *Explicit and Inexplicit Assessments*

Examining how the assessing turns are formulated can also be useful; it may help to classify whether the turns are produced explicitly or inexplicitly to display the speakers' stance towards the referents. The formulation of the turn can give some clues on the possibility to distinguish the explicit assessments from the less explicit ones. In other words, the explicit use of assessment terms employed by the speakers can indicate how explicit the assessments are. Assessments that are explicit have been implied and described by Goodwin

and Goodwin (1992) and Edwards and Potter (2012) as the assessment in which the speakers explicitly use assessment terms (e.g. “*beautiful*”, “*interesting*”, “*horrible*” or “*bastard*”) in their turns. Two instances of assessments below can demonstrate the turns which can be classified as explicit and inexplicit assessments.

Extract 2.5: JK: 3 (Pomerantz, 1984a: 60)

- 1 C: ...She was a nice lady—I like her
2 G: I like her too.

The assessment constitution in this extract can be indicated by the explicit use of assessment terms (e.g. “*nice*” and “*like*”), directly displaying the speakers’ and the recipients’ positive stance towards the referents. On the contrary, the extract below shows an utterance which is not marked explicitly by any assessment terms. However, the recipient’s uptake can indicate its assessment constitution.

Extract 2.6: Sky Sports 1, 20.9.09 (Edwards and Potter, 2012)

- 1 AG: That was a chance.
2 JR: Great chance.

While the previous extract shows assessing turns that are marked by assessment terms (e.g. “*nice lady*” and “*like*”), the assessment appearing as “*That was a chance*” in this extract is less explicit regarding its formulation. Even though there is no expression in the turn which marks explicitly that the speaker expresses his/her turn as an assessment, Edwards and Potter (2012) suggested that the turn can be assessment-relevant due to the literal meaning of “*chance*” in the topical talk (i.e. watching TV football) which may have the literal meaning of “*opportunity or good opportunity*” to score. Additionally, the prosody (e.g. stress) marked in the turn can provide for the assessment relevance of the turn. Importantly, it is treated by the recipient as an assessment, who provides the second assessment in an upgraded form in the next turn.

In brief, for the purpose of analysis in this study, an explicit assessment can be described as one which contains assessment terms that clearly assess the referents in their formulation. The classification of turns as “explicit assessments” is used in this study in the same sense as what appears in previous studies (e.g. Uhmann, 1996; Waring, 2008), in which explicit assessments can be marked by the use of assessment terms or descriptions that assess,

for example “*good*”, “*bad*”, “*lovely*”, “*fantastic*” or “*bastard*”. In contrast, inexplicit assessments are the turns that do not express the speaker’s affective stance explicitly; there is no explicit use of assessment terms in their formulation, and the speaker’s affective stance does not seem to be brought into the open explicitly but is possibly produced by conveying, hinting, or alluding to. Inexplicit assessments may not be performed explicitly through verbal elements, but through non-verbal ones such as facial displays, gestures, and body conduct (Edwards & Potter, 2012; Goodwin, 2007; Goodwin & Goodwin, 1987; Hoey & Kendrick, 2018; Mondada, 2009a).

2.4.4 Positive and Negative Assessments

Distinguishing the turns as positive assessments and negative assessments may be possible and generally based on some constituents, for example turn formulation, the location of the turns as well as the recipients’ responses to the turns. The formulation of the assessing turns, for example, the employment of assessment terms together with the prosody (i.e. elongation and emphasis) can display the speakers’ stance towards the turn as positive assessment or negative assessment. For instance, assessment terms such as “*beautiful*” or “*like*” generally designate the speakers’ positive stance towards the referents, while other assessment terms, like “*hate*” or “*disappointed*”, may designate a negative perspective.

However, distinguishing the positive assessments from negative assessments cannot rely on turn formulation alone. Other useful considerations, such as location of the turns, can come into play and provide for the speaker’s stance towards the produced turns. The location of the turn (e.g. after a positive assessment) with a contrastive conjunction “*but*” may work to provide for the constitution of the turn as a negative assessment. Moreover, as informed by CA principles (e.g. next turn proof procedure), recipients’ responses to the turns can provide for the constitution of the turns, i.e. whether the recipients treat the turns as negative assessments. For instance, participants’ subsequent actions (e.g. adding more complaints about the referents after hearing an assessing turn) may display that they treat the turn as negative assessment (Maynard, 1989).

Positive assessments appear in several previous studies (e.g. Heritage & Raymond, 2005; Mondada, 2009a; Pomerantz, 1984a). Below is an instance of assessing turns which can be positive assessments, collected from speed dating interaction as discussed in Edwards and Potter (2012, 2017).

Extract 2.7: [Stokoe: SD-25] (Edwards and Potter, 2017:6)

1 M: I'm a - (.) I'm a:: (0.2) ↑physiotherapist.
2 (1.4)
→ 3 F: ↑Wo:::w.
4 (1.4)
5 M: It's just a jo:b,
6 (1.1)
7 F: ↑Yeh it ↑↑is jus' a job bu' hh (0.5)
8 I think it's quite a co:ol job.
9 M: Yeh it is.
10 (0.6)
11 M: I'm also trained in Thai body work.

Positive assessments in the extract may be marked by the employment of the elongated responsive token which is heavily loaded with the assessment “*wow*”. The appreciation token together with the prosody of its production (i.e. pitch and elongation) clearly display F’s strong positive assessment towards M’s professional occupation, a physiotherapist. The removal of positive assessment response “*It’s just a job*” can display that he treats the prior turn as positive assessment or compliment to him.

It can be noted that F’s assessing turn (Line 3) can be direct and explicit, regarding its structure. In contrast, the extract presented below, which can be classified as negative assessments, can be seen as more circuitous.

Extract 2.8: Negative assessments (Maynard, 1989: 93)

→ 1 Dr. E: What do you see as Donald's difficulty?
2 Mrs. C: Mainly his—the fact that he doesn't understand everything, and
3 also the fact that his speech is very hard to understand what
4 he's saying lots of time
→ 5 Dr. E: Right. . . okay I you know I think we basically in some ways
6 agree with you insofar as we think that Donald's MAIN problem
7 you know DOES involve you know language
8 Mrs. C: Mm hmm
9 Dr. E: you know both his being able to understand what is said to him
10 and also certainly to be able to express his thoughts.

The negative assessment presented above can be marked by the assessment terms “*main problem*”, which seems to be associated with a negative connotation. Besides, the turn is cautiously produced by the speaker. Maynard (1989: 93) pointed out that the assessing turns from Dr. E are not delivered “straightforwardly”, whereby he asks for an opinion/assessment from the mother of the child, and displays his negative assessing turns after the affiliative assessment displayed from the mother of the child. Noticeably, his assessment in the extract above (Lines 5-7) also contains hesitation and hedges in the turn initial position and intra-turn when he delivers his assessments, which are negative evaluation of the child’s performance.

2.4.5 Responses to Assessments

Goodwin and Goodwin (1992) have noted that assessment sequences are interactive in nature. That is, speakers of assessments need recipients, at least, to listen and respond to what they are expressing. The assessment in the first pair part needs the second pair part as a response; it can be noticed if there is no response coming after the first assessment. For example, the first assessment “*T’s-tauh beautiful day out isn’t it?*” needs a response from the recipient (Pomerantz, 1984a) such as “*Yeh it’s jus gorgeous ...*”, as one of many possible relevant responses.

Generally, recipients can show their agreement or disagreement as a response to the prior assessment. While agreement is often the preferred response to assessments, disagreement is also expected and preferred in some occasions, such as self-deprecation (Pomerantz, 1984a).

2.4.5.1 Agreeing Responses

Agreeing responses to the prior assessments can be in a range of forms. Agreeing responses can include agreement tokens, e.g. “*yes*”, “*yeah*” and sometimes be followed by expressions such as “*you are right*”. In other cases, the recipients may use different forms of agreeing responses. They may produce another assessment as a second assessment in response to the prior assessment. In order to be recognized as agreeing to the prior assessment, this second assessment must be performed in an upgrading manner (Pomerantz, 1984a). The upgrading may take the forms of prosody upgrading, for example elongation and loudness (Mondada, 2009a; Ogden, 2006) or lexical upgrading as presented in Pomerantz’s (1984a) data, “A: *Isn’t he cute?*” B: “*O::h he::s a::DORable*” (p. 61). It is important to note that the

agreeing responses (except for an agreeing response to a self-deprecation) tend to be produced without any delay in the next turn or even before the completion of the prior assessment turns, and are described as a preferred turn shape (Pomerantz, 1984a), as presented in the extract below.

Extract 2.9: G.50.03.45 (Goodwin and Goodwin, 1987: 24)

1 Dianne: Jeff made en asparagus pie
2 it wz s::so: [goo:d.
3 Clacia: [I love it.

Informed by preference organization (Pomerantz, 1984a; Sacks, 1987), Clacia's agreeing response to the prior assessment can be described as a preferred turn shape; it is performed without delay, and in fact overlaps with the turn final of the prior assessment, and the speaker's agreement is clear, without ambiguity. This response which is produced unambiguously and contiguously without delays and containing only agreeing components can be regarded as strong agreement (Pomerantz, 1984a; Sacks, 1987).

In contrast, weak agreement is often produced with minimal agreement tokens, for example, "*hm*", "*uh huh*". In many cases, weak agreement can lead to disagreement, as shown in the extract below.

Extract 2.10: Lunch (Liddicoat, 2011: 154)

1 Joy: the new paint job is an improvement isn't it.
2 Harry: yeh'tizb'd I don't really like the color.

As illustrated by this extract, weak agreement is produced with a minimal agreement token "*yeh*" and is followed by a disagreeing component. This minimal or weak agreement in the turn-initial position may be employed to delay the actual disagreement. Sacks (1987) argued that this action of displaying agreement before performing disagreement can be influenced by the preference for agreement and contiguity in conversation.

2.4.5.2 *Disagreeing Responses*

Sacks (1987) described disagreeing responses as those turns that show some disagreement to the prior action and its propositional content. They are formed distinctively from the turns that show agreement. Based on preference organization, scholars (e.g.

Pomerantz, 1984a; Sacks, 1987; Schegloff, 2007) have noted that disagreement is often produced with some delay (inter-turns or intra-turns) and often filled with pauses, or hesitations. Apart from that, Schegloff (2007) added that disagreement often involves more interactional work, for example account and “pro-forma” agreement (mere/minimal agreement that is often followed by disagreement), which may be incorporated as mitigation devices. Pomerantz (1984a) pointed out in her ground-breaking work on assessments that responses to assessments can be produced in distinguished turn shapes: preferred responses and dispreferred responses. Disagreements with the prior assessment are often produced hesitantly, are less than straightforward, are complicated, and are often prefaced or mitigated in many ways. These are described as dispreferred responses, in contrast to preferred responses, which are usually produced with minimal delay and unambiguity. The extract below shows the speaker producing a disagreeing response which is less than an explicit disagreement and is produced with a pro-forma agreement component.

Extract 2.11: MC: 1.-13 (Pomerantz, 1984a: 73)

- 1 L: I know but I, I-I still say that the sewing machine's quicker.
- 2 W: Oh it c'n be quicker but it doesn' do the job,

Disagreeing with the prior assessment can be produced as a form of downgrading (Pomerantz, 1984a). The extracts below show speakers producing a downgrading assessment as a response to the initial assessments. This can be seen as a disagreement, and it makes it relevant for the speakers of the initial assessment to produce another assessment in an upgraded manner in the third turn.

Extract 2.12: AP:1 (Pomerantz, 1984a: 69)

- 1 G: That's fantastic (Initial assessment)
- 2 B: Isn't that good (Downgraded second assessment)
- 3 G: That's marvellous (Upgraded assessment)

Strong disagreement to the prior assessment is described by Pomerantz, (1984a: 73) as a disagreement that “is directly contrastive with prior assessment” and is formulated in “turns that contain exclusively disagreement components”, without display of any agreeing component. The extract below shows a mother (MO) disagreeing with her child (C2), which

can be described as strong disagreement as the turn clearly shows a disagreeing response and contains only a disagreeing component.

Extract 2.13: 3dagr (Keel, 2016)

1 C2: All dirty
2 0.3
3 C2: All Dirty,
4 1.2
5 MO: No, it's the other end that is dirty=
6 MO: = this one is all clean.

As noted at the beginning of this section, speakers' epistemic access to the referents is a crucial element for the legitimacy or acceptability for speakers to make any assessments towards those referents. The significance of speakers' epistemics in general and in production of assessments will be reviewed in the following section.

2.5 Epistemics in Conversation

Epistemics has long been given attention to by social psychologists and sociolinguists, who have recognized that mutual action and understanding in interaction both rely on the speakers' and recipients' abilities to recognize what they know about the world (Clark, 1996; Heritage, 2013; Stivers et al., 2011; Tomasello, 2008). Heritage (2013) and other scholars (e.g. Enfield & Stivers, 2007; Sacks & Schegloff, 1979) have emphasised that without recognizing the knowledge held by the other and distinguishing it from one's own, it would be impossible for the interlocutors to sufficiently understand the talk (e.g. the use of referents of persons, places and things) and engage in a range of activities in conversation.

Researchers in epistemics in conversation have agreed that speakers' epistemics involves what is known, how it is known to them, their rights, responsibilities and obligations to possess and articulate what they know (Heritage, 2013; Kamio, 1997; Stivers et al., 2011). Speakers' epistemic status can be closely related to their social identities or roles. Individuals' identities can allow the interlocutors to assume what individuals know and the degree of knowledge they have in a particular domain.

In conversations, it is evident that speakers hold differential degrees of epistemic status in certain domains of knowledge, which will be described in the following section.

2.5.1 Epistemic Asymmetries in Conversation

Epistemic asymmetries are grounded on the observation that there is a distinction in the speakers' and recipients' epistemic status related to certain domains of knowledge or topics of talk in interaction. The notion of epistemic asymmetries can be traced back to Labov and Fanshel's (1977) work, which informs the distinction between A-event (known to speaker A, but not to B) and B-event (known to speaker B, but not to A). The notion was further developed by Kamio (1997), who described how both speaker A and speaker B hold their own territories of information. Speakers are expected to know matters about themselves and their close family members better than others. Heritage (2013) also addressed that specific domains of knowledge can fall into speaker A's and speaker B's territories of epistemic gradients, often to different degrees. As a result, speakers hold different epistemic statuses (K- or K+ position) on a particular topic relative to the other.

Drawing upon Kamio's notion of territory of information, Heritage (2013) explained that topics of talk or domains of knowledge can be stratified within the speaker's territory relative to the recipient's. He demonstrated that in a phone call conversation in which Emma calls and says to Nancy that "*Your line has been busy.*", this domain of knowledge (i.e. "*Your line has been busy.*") is closer to the recipient (Nancy) relative to the speaker on a continuum from 0 (knowing nothing about it) to 1 (knowing everything about it), as can be illustrated in the diagram below.

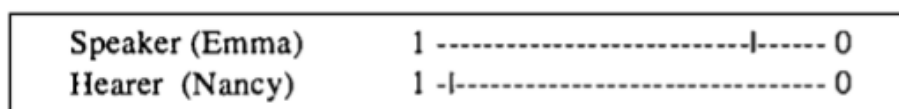


Figure 1: Information domain for "Your line has been busy." (Heritage, 2013: 375)

Gunthner and Luckmann (2000) advocated that epistemic asymmetries exist in all communication, not only in lay-professional interactions in many institutional settings in which the differential levels of knowledge on certain domains can be apparent, for example therapist-client interaction (Weiste et al., 2016); tourist-guide interaction (Mondada, 2013a); classroom interaction (Koole, 2010; Sert, 2015), but also in mundane conversations, such as in question-answer sequences in which the questioner seeking information from the co-participant is assumed to hold lower epistemic status (K-) on certain topics than the answerer who provides the information and is usually considered to hold a higher epistemic status (K+)

(Heritage, 2012b), and in intercultural interactions between members and non-members of a culture when talking about phenomena of one particular cultural group, the cultural members are generally assumed to know more (K+) in the domain than the non-member (Gunthner & Luckmann, 2000).

Heritage (2012b), the current dominant researcher in epistemics in conversation, argued that epistemic asymmetries are significant in interaction as a force driving interactional sequences. He has reviewed the previous research and agrees that “the driving force...(in interaction)...is epistemics” (2012b: 30). He presents two lines of initiation in talk which are warranted by speakers’ consideration of epistemic asymmetries presumably existing between themselves and the recipients. Talk can be initiated from K+ speakers, as in pre-announcements (e.g. to tell stories or events to K- recipients), and talk is initiated from K- speakers, as in requesting information (e.g. requesting information from K+ recipients). Following this notion of driving force in interaction, epistemic asymmetries can have a role in a sequence moving to closure when the epistemic gap is filled or equalized (e.g. requested information is supplied) and the topic is not advanced.

The speakers’ epistemic status (as K- or K+) is also considered a crucial element in intersubjectivity in a conversation and in the recognition of the social actions of the produced turns. Heritage concluded that “the organization of social action itself is profoundly intertwined with epistemic considerations” (2013: 386); the epistemic status of the speaker relative to the recipient can determine the social action of their turn-at-talk, for example as asserting or requesting information. Even though the actions of the turns (e.g. as questions or declarative turns) are strongly associated with their morphosyntactic construction, Heritage (2012a) pointed to the significance of a speaker’s epistemic status in conversation, in that it takes precedence over the turn design (e.g. morphosyntactical formulation) in the constitution of the turn’s action. For instance, he shows that the speaker’s epistemic status takes precedence over morphosyntax and intonation for determining the action of the turn “*You’re divorced (°currently,°)*” as requesting confirmation, not conveying information. The turn speaking about the information in the recipient’s territory (who is likely to know more about it) can be heard as seeking confirmation even though the turn is formulated in declarative syntax and not in a rising intonation.

2.5.2 Epistemics in Assessment Sequences

Speakers' consideration and display of their epistemic status or authority relative to the other can have certain implications in talk-in-interaction, for example, a speaker's display of his/her higher epistemic status of events or a domain of knowledge, and this permits him/her to initiate telling (Heritage, 2012b), or speakers display epistemic access to the event to assist telling the story or even to abort the proposed telling (Terasaki, 2004). When talk involves making assessments, epistemic access or authority is also a crucial part of the turns; it is a salient element for speakers' ability to offer assessments towards those referents (Pomerantz, 1984a). Their epistemic access and authority of the referents needs to be recognized by the co-participants for the speakers to be able to make proper assessment towards them.

Studies in CA assessments (e.g. Heritage & Raymond, 2005) demonstrate that speakers usually assess the referents which they have epistemic access to or their epistemic access is witnessed or recognized, as shown in the following extract.

Extract 2.14: (VIYMC 1:4)

- 1 J: Let's feel the water. Oh, it ...
2 R: It's wonderful. It's just right. It's like bathtub water.

R's assessment "*It's wonderful*" is derived from her access to (i.e. feeling) the water. Pomerantz (1984a) emphasised that speakers' ability to assess a referent is connected to their access to or knowledge of such a referent. Pomerantz (1984a) also pointed out that the salience of epistemic access or authority in assessment sequences is obviously visible when speakers, in some cases, claim no or insufficient access to the referent as a warrant for their not giving assessment when it is relevant. The extract in Beach and Metzger's (1997) study presented below shows a speaker claiming that the referent is not in his/her territory and declining to produce an assessment about the referent.

Extract 2.15: SDCL: Blaming: 102-109 (Beach and Metzger, 1997: 572)

- 1 T: = I think he likes you.
2 C: He's cu::te
3 (2.0)
4 C: He's hot=
5 T: = I don't know=
6 C: = He's s:exy=
7 T: = As so:on as like you start getting out of liking
8 into should we have a relationship

T claims insufficient knowledge (i.e. “I don’t know”) as a warrant for the absence of a second assessment of the person in discussion in response to C’s prior assessment of a person. This can support that epistemic access to the referent being assessed is generally fundamental for speakers to make an assessment about it. Put simply, assessments cannot be made properly without the speakers’ access to or knowledge of what they are assessing.

Heritage and Raymond (2005) argued that epistemic access to the referents being assessed is ranked between the interlocutors. This rank can matter when speakers are assessing the same referent. There is evidence that speakers negotiate their epistemic primacy in assessment sequences. Speakers are observed to show their superior epistemic status or greater authority in making assessments of the same referent to index their independence and greater epistemic status in assessing it, for example through the use of the oh-preface before the second assessment. Heritage (2002: 199) showed that speakers frequently employ the “oh” prefaced second assessment (e.g. “*Oh it does German does*” as a response to the initial assessment: “°*Gosh° it goe:s (.) goes on’ n on*”) to convey that the assessment of the German telephone numbers which comes in the second position is independent (i.e. having been achieved earlier) and carries the speaker’s greater epistemic status with regard to the referent being assessed.

2.6 Summary

The literature on assessments in interaction, which will be examined in this study, and the related areas (e.g. interculturality and epistemics in interaction) has informed trends in conducting research in this field. In section 2.2, studies in intercultural communication have informed different research foci in the field, and demonstrated how participants’ identities have been approached by different traditions. Participants’ identities are shown by the ethnomethodological approach to be invoked or displayed by the participants themselves, rather than being assigned by the analysts mainly for the purpose of the analysis. Reviewing the relevant literature on interculturality construction in talk-in-interaction has led this study to adopt an ethnomethodological approach to participants’ identities to inform how they ascribe and are ascribed in interaction as members or non-members of a particular cultural group, while they are engaged in making and responding to assessments of referents in particular countries.

In Section 2.3, the literature of relevance to interaction in short-term exchange programmes has shown what has been done in the area and how. While previous interaction studies in this area have investigated such actions as self-presentation and initiation of topical talk as foci of the studies, this study moves to investigate the underexplored assessment sequences occurring in interaction in cultural exchange programs in which participants assess artefacts and practices in the others' countries.

As discussed in Section 2.4, CA studies on assessments in conversation have informed 1) the constitution of assessments (e.g. how the utterances are recognized as assessments), 2) the assessments that are produced in interaction with different potential functions/implications (e.g. closing the sequences or proposing changes), and 3) agreeing and disagreeing responses that recipients make relevant as responses to assessments. The preference organization of the agreeing and disagreeing responses can be a crucial concept that grounds the analysis of responses the recipients produce following assessments of artefacts and practices in their countries. Importantly, the literature shows the tendency for the examination of assessments in interaction to incorporate speakers' bodily conduct into the analysis, which will be adopted in the analysis of this study.

Finally, Section 2.5 reviewed epistemics in interaction in general and specifically in assessment sequences. The ground-breaking work on assessments (e.g. Pomerantz, 1984a) argued that assessments are possible by virtue of the speakers' partaking in or accessing events, persons, items, or ideas they are assessing. They cannot make assessments of referents of which they lack epistemic access. This literature demonstrates the salience of epistemic access to the referents in assessment sequences; it can legitimate the speakers' assessments. Thus, this notion of epistemic access will be carefully attended to in the analysis.

Chapter 3. Methodology

3.1 Introduction

This chapter will clarify the rationale for choosing the two ethnomethodologically-rooted research methods, Conversation Analysis (CA) and Membership Categorization Analysis (MCA) in the study of the action of assessments in interaction. This study aims to investigate interaction in which the participants are involved in assessments of artefacts, practices and phenomena in particular countries by speakers who are not members of those countries, occurring in cultural exchange programs. Production and responses to the assessments can be systematically dealt with by Conversation Analysis (CA), which has aptitude in making visible the taken-for-granted sequential organization of social actions and the participants' orientation in accomplishing those actions. Assessments of referents in the others' countries in the setting of intercultural encounters (such as in cultural exchange programs) seem to intertwine with intercultural identity in interaction. The participants' orientation to their own cultural identities as well as others' can be best examined through the use of Membership Categorization Analysis (MCA) (Stokoe, 2009, 2012; Stokoe & Attenborough, 2015; Watson, 1997).

This study is concerned with both the sequential organization (i.e. how assessments are accomplished and responded to) and the participant's categorization while engaged in these moments of talk. Thus, it is advisable to employ both CA and MCA as tools of analysis, ascertaining the invocation of categories within the sequential organization of assessments. Hester and Eglin advocated that "both the sequential and categorizational aspects of social actions inform each other" (1997: 2). This is the reason behind the choice of CA and MCA as the main research tools for the research procedure and analysis.

This chapter starts off with an introduction to Conversation Analysis (CA) as a research tool with the recognized aim of demonstrating the sequential organization of a diverse range of social actions. Then, Membership Categorization Analysis (MCA), a research method which emphasises the participants' invocation of the categories of self and others in interaction (and can be considered a concept central to the interculturality), will be described. This is followed by specific information about this study, including research context, participants, data collection, and the procedures involved in transcribing and building

collections of the phenomena of interest. Then, how CA and MCA methods used in this study will be presented. Finally, the concerns of the study in relation to questions of reliability, validity and limitations will be covered.

3.2 Conversation Analysis

3.2.1 Introduction to Conversation Analysis

Conversation Analysis (CA) is a research methodology which examines talk-in-interaction. A clear description of CA is provided by Stivers and Sidnell (2013), who noted that CA is a research methodology which:

seeks to describe and explain the structures of social interaction through a reliance on case-by-case analysis, noticing of patterns using a combination of distributional regularities, commonalities in contexts of use, participant orientations and deviant case analysis (p. 2).

Examining the granular details of interaction, CA has been described by scholars (e.g. Heritage, 1988; ten Have, 1991) as an inductive approach which seeks to build an understanding of regularities in the way talk is organized from the study of actual instances of interaction. In relation to this, Heritage (1984) described the goal of CA as:

the description and explication of the competences that ordinary speakers use and rely on in participating in intelligible socially organized interaction. At its most basic, this objective is one of describing the procedures by which conversationalists produce their own behaviour and understand that of others. (p.1)

Originally, CA grew out of Ethnomethodology, a field of sociology developed by Harold Garfinkel (1964, 1967, 1988), who aimed to develop an understanding of “how the structures of everyday activities are ordinarily and routinely produced and maintained” (Garfinkel, 1967: 35-6), and gave prominence to participants’ understanding of the social actions in which they are involved, viewing the participants as knowledgeable agents who hold the meaning of the actions in their talk and determine the subsequent actions in the unfolding course of interaction (Boden, 1991; Clayman & Maynard, 1995). Garfinkel (1967:

pp. vii-viii) advocated that ethnomethodology examines “the objective reality of social facts as an ongoing accomplishment of the concerted activities of daily life”, and the field aims at “discovering the formal properties of commonplace actions from within’ actual settings, as ongoing accomplishments of those settings.”

The focus of ethnomethodology is placed on studying the body of common sense knowledge through which ordinary members of society make sense of the circumstances in which they find themselves, its central claim being that the orderliness of human interaction should not be analysed by applying rules outside the actual setting itself (Garfinkel,1984,1986). This work in ethnomethodology is significant in the history of CA, in that Harvey Sacks took the notion from Garfinkel’s view and developed it into a specific methodology, namely Conversation Analysis (CA), to investigate how order was achieved in social interaction.

By the late 1960s and early 1970s, CA had emerged from the work of Harvey Sacks and his colleagues, Emmanuel Schegloff and Gail Jefferson (1974) as an approach to understanding the organizational structure of talk, in reaction to the quantitative methodology dominantly applied in the field at that time (Lerner, 2004). CA’s interest is in studying how participants do things with words and other embodied actions, providing descriptions of the organization of social actions and making visible the common sense or phenomena which are taken for granted by participants participating in socially organized interaction, for example how people deal with ambiguity and how it may arise (Schegloff, 1984); how people respond to compliments (Pomerantz, 1978); how people tell one another their troubles (Jefferson, 1988, 2015); and how people offer and refuse invitations (Davidson, 1984; Drew, 1984).

Following the ethnomethodology framework, CA provides some standard practices for practitioners to work and comply within the discipline. For instance, it is necessary for CA researchers to record various kinds of naturally occurring talk and analyse them to find the organization of talk that the speakers orient to (Hutchby & Wooffitt, 1998; Sacks, 1984). Goodwin and Heritage (1990) advised CA practitioners, during the analysis, to pay attention to:

- 1.) How parties to talk-in-interaction analyse an emerging course of action, continuously using the parts of it that have become visible to project what it might become; 2.) how such analysis is embodied in participation displays of various types; 3.) the ways these participation displays are taken into account by others; and, 4.) the consequences of all this for the further development of the action (p. 294).

Specifically, there are some concerns the practitioners should bear in mind while conducting CA research. The following section addresses a number of assumptions that are advisable for CA practitioners to follow prior to collecting the data and while doing the analysis.

3.2.2 Core Principles of CA

3.2.2.1 Naturally Occurring Data

Conversation Analysis (CA) is a method to study the details of ordinary actions in naturally occurring interactions. Heritage (1995) emphasised that the data aimed at for the study must be talk that occurs naturally in actual contexts. As noted by Lynch and Bogen (1994), the term *natural* can be linked to Sacks' references to a notion of natural observation which was his original interest. This has an important implication for CA practitioners, namely to collect naturally occurring interaction data from actual non-prearranged settings without the intervention from researchers' setting the tasks or topics for participants to talk about (Mondada, 2013b). In other words, the interactions occur whether they are set to be studied by researchers or not (Brandt & Mortensen, 2016). According to Heritage and other CA scholars (e.g. C. Goodwin & Heritage, 1990; Liddicoat, 2007; Mondada, 2013b), the examination of naturally occurring talk allows for the possibility of an examination of what speakers actually do moment-by-moment and sequentially when interacting; they assert that only naturally occurring instances of talk can provide the information necessary for understanding and allowing the development of a real account of what occurs in talk.

3.2.2.2 Participant-Relevant

CA principles demand that analysts stick closely to the granular observations of what is hearable and visible from the interaction, rather than bringing external information into the analysis (see Schegloff, 2005). Thus, conversation analysts are responsible for analysing and describing the interactional observations (e.g. sequential organization, turn construction, turn-taking, and repair) that the participants orient to through their talk and other conduct (Drew & Heritage, 1992; Schegloff, 1996a). To provide a detailed description of social interaction, conversation analysts are encouraged to show that what is reported by the analysts is relevant

for the participants in the interaction; that is, it is also *displayed* by the participants themselves.

In other words, CA encourages analysts to observe the interactional matters from an insider's perspective—from the participants who are engaged in the interaction, making visible what is attended to by them. Wong and Waring have described this practice of the analysis as “stepping inside the shoes of participants to understand their talk and actions” (2010: 6), when the analysts rigidly describe the interaction from the perspective of the participants who are involved in the events in which the talk occurs. They try to “trace how participants analyse and interpret each other's actions and develop a shared understanding of the progress of the interaction” (Seedhouse, 2005a: 166). In this way, CA can be described as the approach of an emic perspective.

3.2.2.3 *Turn-by-turn Basis*

This principle of turn-by-turn analysis is one of the basic tools adopted by CA practitioners. To analyse the organization of social actions in interaction, conversation analysts focus on the turn-by-turn analysis of talk in order to understand the participants' procedures for accomplishment of actions from their conversational contributions and what is demonstrably relevant for them (Schegloff, 1991). By systematically making use of turn constructional units (TCUs) and turn-taking systems that are oriented to by the participants, the turn-by-turn analysis can display to the analysts how the initial or prior turn is understood by the participants in the ongoing interaction.

Schegloff (2007) explains in his *Conversation Analysis* publication that CA is principally concerned with the sequential organization of talk, how the meaning of an utterance is shaped by previous utterances and how this current utterance will shape the following turn. Hutchby and Wooffitt (2008) also stressed the salience of employing CA turn-by-turn analysis when the previous turn is considered as the basis for the subsequent turns: “any next turn in a sequence will display its producer's understanding of the ‘prior’ turn” (p.14). It is appropriate to note that this means of analysis can show how participants make sense of each other's contributions in talk.

3.2.2.4 *Context Sensitivity*

Schegloff (1992) has pointed out that contexts involved in interaction can be divided into two layers—internal context and external context. Internal context usually refers to the talk that immediately precedes the current turn, to which the current turn responds, and the talk that follows the current turn. The relationship between the current talk with the preceding ones and the following ones was described by Heritage (1984) as context-shaped and context-renewing, in that the current talk is said to be shaped by the preceding talk, and the current talk creates the context for the co-participant's contribution/response in the following turn.

For the external context (e.g. settings of the talk), the interaction can largely be regarded as insensitive to this type of context as it is not always the case that the participants make relevant the larger context in their talk. Lerner's (1996) study found that whatever the larger context is (e.g. gender, cultural identity, social relationship, the setting of the talk) can be relevant only if it is recognized in the ongoing talk. Schegloff (1996a) concurred when discussing the insensitivity to large contexts in talk (i.e. whether the speakers make relevant the external context in the ongoing talk) in that the sensitivity to the external context is omnirelevant and dynamic.

This is the reason ethnomethodologically-rooted CA rejects the consideration of external context-sensitivity in talk from the outset of the analysis. That is, the external features (e.g. participants' social identity or cultural identity) have to be demonstrably displayed in talk in order to be claimed to be relevant to the participants.

3.2.2.5 *Unmotivated Looking*

CA is an analytical method which favours examining the interaction, for example actions being done in the talk and the procedures through which the action is accomplished, from "unmotivated looking", being open to noticing every detail of the talk-in-interaction, without researchers' pre-assumptions from the beginning of the analysis (Heritage, 1984; Psathas, 1990b; Schegloff, 1996b; Seedhouse, 2004b). Conversation analysts are encouraged to repeatedly look and listen to the same data in order to discover what is happening in the talk-in-interaction, rather than having assumptions in mind and searching for a particular phenomenon that is pre-identified by some theories. CA empirical principles analyse the phenomena that emerge from the data without any intervention from the theoretical constructs and assumptions, but to determine the organization, actions and procedures of action that are oriented to by the participants (Liddicoat, 2007).

For some authors, this practice is favourable as it allows the analysts to obtain reliable findings driven mainly by the participants' displayed conducts in the naturally occurring interaction, which permits researchers to describe and explicate participants' actions that are "achieved incrementally and collaboratively, with the participants mobilizing a range of vocal, verbal, visual and embodied resources" (Mondada, 2013b: 33).

3.2.3 CA in Applied Linguistics

Conversation Analysis, since its emergence in the late 1960s and early 1970s, has been applied and expanded into uses in different types of interactions. That is, CA was originally developed and used to analyse mundane conversations in the discipline of sociology. It was used mainly to analyse English interaction as the most accessible language to the developers of the methodology—Sacks, Schegloff and Jefferson. Jefferson and Schenkein (1978) as well as Firth (2013) presumed that conversation analysts at that time used the knowledge of the language as well as the norms of interaction which are accessible to them as a tool to recognize and describe the examined English interaction, firstly in the United States and then in the United Kingdom. Subsequently, interest in employing CA to study interactions expanded wider into the investigation of interactions in different languages, as well as diverse types of interaction.

CA is now employed to investigate interactions in different languages, including Japanese (Hosoda, 2000), Finnish (Hakulinen, 2001), Danish and Turkish (Steensig, 2001), Thai (Moerman, 1988), among others. Equally, CA is employed to examine second language interaction i.e., interaction between native speakers and non-native speakers (Kuhnila, 2006), and second language learning (Markee, 2000), where both classroom interaction and outside classroom interaction have been examined making use of CA methodology. Markee (2000) reflects that CA methodology is excellent for the field of second language learning in that the methodology can add to the mainstream theory-driven and experimental approaches, empirically demonstrating how speakers understand and use the new language in their actual events of language use. In the same way, CA has also been applied to study Lingua Franca interaction, where the language used by the participants is native to none of the participants (e.g. Firth, 1996; Mauranen & Ranta, 2009; Kuar, 2010).

The application of CA to the analysis of new and different types of interaction, rather than just native-native English interaction, as it was meant to be employed from its

emergence, has been questioned by several practitioners (e.g. Wagner, 1996). However, Seedhouse (1998) asserted that CA, by its principles (e.g. demonstrating the participants' orientation, etc.) is capable of handling interaction beyond native-native English. Importantly, increasing amounts of research employing this methodology have shown that CA works successfully in different types of interaction, for example dominant English interaction, other languages in different parts of the world, second language interaction, as well as Lingua Franca interaction, whether the interaction is mundane or institutional. This increases the confidence of the researcher to employ CA in the analysis of interaction in intercultural encounters where English is used as a Lingua Franca.

3.2.4 Critiques of Conversation Analysis

CA methodology has been recognized for its unique strength regarding the close examination of naturally occurring interaction. Heritage (1984) and other scholars have seen CA as a powerful microscope for studying interaction granularly. This micro-level examination permits analysts to portray the organization of interaction which is often taken-for-granted and can be “seen but unnoticed” by participants in interaction (Garfinkel, 1967; Seedhouse, 2004b: 10) and can demonstrate that the interaction can be more complex and sometimes understood differently from its initial appearance.

However, CA has been questioned in some areas. One major critique of CA methodology has been made in relation to the lack of consideration of the external context in the analysis of the interaction. Duranti (1997) and Wetherell (1998) pointed out that CA focuses mainly on details of interaction and explains what is going on in those interactions without consulting larger contexts (e.g. social context, participants' social identities) to understand the examined interaction. For instance, the view of labelling participants as anonymous entities, isolated from their identities and statuses, is seen as problematic, as some view that this context can be relevant to and helpful for the analysis but is nevertheless discarded by CA. Wetherell (1998) viewed that this way of analysis may not result in “complete or scholarly analysis (as opposed to a technical analysis)” (p. 388).

This was responded to by Schegloff (1997, 1999a, 1999b, 2005), who argued that CA does not completely discard the consideration of context and its influence on interaction; it needs to be demonstrably made relevant by participants in the interaction, then conversation

analysts bear the context in mind to understand the interaction, rather than being assumed prior to the empirical analysis.

Employed in intercultural communication studies, CA has offered valuable findings to the field, such as providing a way to unpack whether the examined interaction can be described as intercultural from the micro-level based upon the participants' making relevant the interculturality in interaction (i.e. the fact of being culturally different among the speakers) from the participants' own point of view.

3.3 Membership Categorization Analysis

Participants' cultural identity is taken as a discursive phenomenon in this study. What category identity the participants ascribe to themselves and others can be seen a matter of what they are attending to in their interaction. The investigation into the ascription of participants' identity in interaction is supported by Membership Categorization Analysis (MCA), which was introduced by Sacks (1972, 1979, 1992). MCA is employed in this study to portray how the participants orient to their identities; whether and how they make relevant their cultural identity (i.e. categorization of selves and others as members of different countries) in their interaction in the examined assessment sequences.

3.3.1 Introduction to Membership Categorization Analysis

Similar to CA, MCA is also ethnomethodologically-rooted; however, the two methods have developed in different trajectories and focused on different aspects of talk-in-interaction (Plunkett, 2009). MCA is concerned with the commonsense knowledge of the members of society and primarily deals with the way people use categories to make sense of and for each other (Day, 2013).

MCA is a tradition that was developed by Sacks (1992), who was interested in describing the process through which the participants themselves make their identities relevant interactionally. He describes MCA as "the process of organizing and reorganizing people into categories or groups" (p. 40). This method of investigation of people's membership categories is presumably derived from the observation that people are seen to construct and use categories to display who they are and who the others are in their

conversation and utilize these categories to deal with one another and accomplish interactional goals (Antaki & Widdicombe, 1998; Day, 2013; Stokoe, 2009).

Sacks' work on MCA has provided the foundation for more recent examinations of membership categories as a means for showing how participants orient to their various identities in talk, for example Hester and Eglin (1997) and Antaki and Widdicombe (1998), resulting in important findings that speakers' identities are locally managed and dynamic entities in that the participants are found to invoke different identities relevant in different moments of talk; they are not treated as having one fixed identity, as demonstrated by subsequent studies (e.g. Day, 1994, 1998; Zimmerman, 2007). These MCA-informed observations have provided enlightening insights into intercultural communication studies, as well as interaction studies in different settings.

3.3.2 Discursively Categorizing Self and Others in Interaction

The majority of intercultural communication research labels the participants' identities according to their nationality/country of origin from the outset of the study. This practice can involve imposing the researchers' view, rather than taking into account what the participants themselves do and orient to in their interaction (Brandt, 2008), and is seen as potentially problematic by many contemporary researchers, especially by micro-analytic researchers (Brandt, 2008; Mori, 2003; Nishizaka, 1995, 1999).

MCA can be said to hold a different stance regarding participants' identity from the mainstream intercultural communication studies. Its interest is to examine how participants' identities are used, invoked and inferred by the participants who are engaged in interaction, making use of the ways people position themselves through discursive practices, particularly with regard to membership categorization devices and category-bound activities, terms which will be unpacked in the following sub-sections.

3.3.2.1 Membership Category Devices

MCA utilizes the notion of categorization devices that serve to characterize a participant as a member of a certain group. Sacks (1972) described Membership Category Devices (MCDs) as "any collection of membership categories, containing at least a category, which may be applied to some population containing at least a member" (p. 32), with some rules of application, for example when a category is made relevant by a participant, a whole collection

of related categories is subsequently made relevant (Sacks, 1992). An example of MCDs is ‘the family,’ which might include the categories mother, grandmother, niece and sister. In fact, an individual can hold different identities; thus, a person can be correctly described as being a member of different collections, and a particular category may be made relevant by the speaker or by his/her co-participants at a particular moment in the course of interaction. Employing this means of analysis, Sacks made use of emic categories which were attended by the participants themselves in their interaction to inform the analysts about their identity from their own perspective.

It is useful to note that categorization of self and others can be done explicitly or inexplicitly in the course of interaction. Antaki and Widdicombe (1998: 10) found that participants can display the categorization by methods of “labelling” (i.e. the categorization of self and others is produced explicitly for individuals) or “description” (i.e. speakers allude to category terms through referring to characteristics or activities that can be related to certain categories without the explicit category being found within interactions). In the latter case of categorization, the notion of category-bound activities can be employed for analysis.

3.3.2.2 *Category Bound Activities*

The notion of category-bound activities is a way to describe the participants’ categorizing self and others by referring to typical activities that are associated with certain categories. In other words, these referred activities imply the identities of the person, for example mothers will take care of their babies, students will take classes, police will arrest. Sacks (1992) and others (e.g. Hester and Eglin, 1997) have suggested that there are some kinds of activities which are expected to be done by certain people who are incumbents of particular categories. Sacks noted that...

Many activities are taken by Members to be done by some particular or several particular categories of Members where the categories are categories from membership categorization devices (1992: 249)

Supporting this, Sacks (1992), Silverman (1998) and Day, (2013) each pointed out that the notion of category-bound activities can provide for inferences concerning the category identity of the person who is engaged with the activities. Silverman (1998) noted that by

identifying the activities with which a person is engaged, what that person's identities are likely to be indicated.

Informed by previous MCA studies' finding that speakers' category identities are not static or fixed but are multiple and contestable (Antaki & Widdicombe, 1998; Benwell & Stokoe, 2006) and Schegloff's (1972) and Sacks' (1992) observation that there are many identities that can correctly describe the persons (though only one will be made relevant at the particular moment of interaction), this study adopts MCA to explore whether and how the participants enact cultural differences in their talk. This research demonstrates the participants' own orientation to the cultural identities as they are engaged within the course of interaction, rather than being labelled from the outset of the study.

3.4 Multimodal Analysis in CA and MCA

This study considers talk as multimodal interaction, taking into account both verbal and non-verbal elements of talk into analysis. It is advised by current micro-analysis research to study interaction in combination with both speech and other resources, for example bodily conduct, facial configuration and projection (C. Goodwin, 2000b; Hazel, Mortenson, & Rasmussen, 2014). This section describes the emergence of the incorporation of non-verbal conduct and demonstrates the benefits of the incorporations of non-verbal conduct into analysis.

3.4.1 CA and Analysis of Non-Verbal Conduct

Participants' non-verbal conduct was not incorporated into analysis in the initial CA studies (e.g. Sacks et al., 1974), while talk and actions of talk (e.g. emphasis, speed, simultaneity) were mainly included. As the recording technology has advanced and allowed non-verbal conduct in interaction to be captured, the CA analysis system has evolved and incorporated non-verbal conduct into its analysis. This evolution of the analysis system is significant as it presumably contributes to a proper understanding of the ways interlocutors manage and sustain their face-to-face interactions. These evolved analysis systems have been favored by many researchers, including Hazel, Mortensen, and Rasmussen who asserted that "interaction as the primordial site for human sociality is always multimodal" (2014: 3), and

Kendon (1990: 3) who strongly encouraged analysts to take into account the analysis of “concrete observable behaviors” occurring in talk-in-interaction.

Conceptualizing interaction as multimodal is so important to the field that the number of CA studies that incorporate non-verbal conduct has increased significantly. One of the earlier CA works that included non-verbal conduct into analysis is the work of Charles Goodwin (e.g. C. Goodwin, 1979, 1980, 1981), who started to analyze interaction as multimodal, examining participant’s verbal production, together with their eye gazes in interaction. It has been shown by later studies that analysis of talk as multimodal (e.g. including non-verbal conduct into the analysis) enables a better understanding of talk-in-interaction. For instance, analysts (e.g. M. H. Goodwin, 1983; M. H. Goodwin & C. Goodwin, 1986; C. Goodwin, 2000a; Gullberg, 2006) have demonstrated that the non-verbal conduct speakers produce during their talk has impact on their interaction, for example in selecting next speakers, delivering the talk and displaying understanding.

This trend of analysis is adopted by this study, considering talk as multimodal and incorporating talk and the non-verbal conduct of the speakers in the analysis.

3.4.2 MCA and Analysis of Non-Verbal Conduct

The incorporation of non-verbal conduct into CA and MCA analysis can be said to share the same trajectory. Technologies have advanced to capture both audio and video in the recordings, and this permits the incorporation of non-verbal conduct produced by the participants into analysis. Taking into account embodied actions in interaction in the analysis not only contributes to understanding the systematic organization of talk, for example turn completion, turn taking and the construction of action (C. Goodwin, 2000b; Goodwin et al., 2002; Mondada, 2007) as described in the previous section, but also contributes to understanding the self and others’ categorizations of the participants. Recent research into multimodality (e.g. Markaki & Mondada, 2012; Mondada, 2012) has clearly demonstrated the interplay of multimodal resources in understanding participation, as well as categorization in face-to-face interaction.

It can be crucial to pay attention to the participants’ non-verbal conduct along with their talk to examine at micro-level their categorization in talk-in-interaction. Impacts of the incorporation of embodiment into analysis are clearly illuminated in Markaki and Mondada’s studies, which have investigated the resources of interactional participation in multinational

group meetings. They demonstrate that the analysis of verbal conduct, together with non-verbal elements (e.g. the action of mentioning the name of a country accompanied by bodily orientations and gaze directions towards particular participants) can portray how speakers make relevant the specific cultural identities of the co-participants in interaction. Markaki and Mondada (2012) emphasised that “categorization practices are essentially achieved through bodily conducts that anticipate the selection of speakers and are often concurrent with other verbal conducts” (p. 49).

Accordingly, this study follows the previous studies which have demonstrated that categories are oriented to in an embodied way and embodiments during the interaction, which can be important for understanding how participants make relevant their category identities (Ford, 2008; Housley, 2003; Markaki & Mondada, 2012; Mondada, 2012), bringing participants’ non-verbal conduct during interaction into analysis in order to comprehend the participants’ own categorization that discursively occurs in talk-in-interaction.

3.5 The Study

This study adopts principles of CA and MCA in analysing the naturally occurring interaction of participants on short-term exchange programs, particularly describing how negative assessments of artefacts and practices in the co-participants’ countries are dealt with in their socializing. CA is a powerful tool to reveal the sequential organization of the actions produced within the assessment sequences in interaction, while MCA can reveal the categorizations that are oriented to by the participants themselves. The principles of CA and MCA, as well as the incorporation of non-verbal elements into analysis employed in this study, were described above (Section 3.2, 3.3 and 3.4, respectively). This section will describe the context from which the interaction data was collected, the procedure of data collection, the data management and data analysis, as well as a number of other concerns of the study, for example validity, reliability, and the limitations of the study.

3.5.1 Research Context

The interaction data examined in this study was collected from several short-term exchange programs, for example language and cultural exchange programs, summer camps, intensive language courses, and exchange student programs organized in Thailand and

Malaysia, which were attended by university students mainly from Southeast Asian countries (with a small number of international students from The Middle East who have spent a semester in Malaysia-based universities). These exchange programs share a common aim: to expose the participants to intercultural experiences and benefit the participants academically and culturally, providing them with a better understanding of the increasingly intercultural world in which they live and an open opportunity to be aware of and develop the skills necessary to succeed internationally. The universities consider intercultural experiences gained from cultural exchange programs to be so crucial that they offer them to students annually.

3.5.2 Participants

The participants in this study were 56 students from different countries, mainly from Southeast Asia, who were taking part in short-term exchange programs which were organized in Thailand and Malaysia. The researcher travelled with the participants throughout the programs, so some of the participants' information was accessed and can be deemed sufficient to give an overall view of this group of participants. Some of the participants may have a shared history of interaction, but the majority of the participants were unacquainted with one another (see Maynard & Zimmerman, 1984; Svennevig, 1999), and thus their common experiences were limited. Moreover, even though they spent some time together during the program, they did not get to know one another very well. For instance, they did not appear to know the personal information/background of the others (e.g. exact name, year (s) in university, or hometown).

However, as demonstrated from their interaction in the recordings, the participants had direct or indirect experience of the co-participants' countries, for example what is well known in the co-participants' countries, or what the participants had heard from sources about the co-participants' countries and cultures (e.g. tourist places, acceptance of transgender, etc.).

A summary of the numbers of the participants based upon their countries of origin is presented in Table 1 below, as an overview showing the numbers of the participants involved in this study. The information given at this stage is not intended to be employed as core information for the analysis of the participants' identity occurring in each extract.

Table 1: Summary of Numbers of Participants and Their Countries of Origin

Country of Origin	Numbers
Malaysia	14
Thailand	27
Indonesia	7
China	2
Saudi Arabia	2
Burma	1
Bangladesh	1
Nigeria	1
Libya	1
Total	56

3.5.3 Data Collection

This study is grounded in an ethnomethodological framework, which aims to study “the body of commonsense knowledge and the range of procedures and considerations by means of which the ordinary members of society make sense of, find their way about in, and act on the circumstances in which they find themselves” (Heritage, 1984: 4). Thus, it is imperative for CA practitioners to collect the naturally occurring interaction data that occur in actual, non-prearranged interactions.

Interaction data was collected from four types of exchange programs: Summer Programs, Intensive English Courses, Language and Cultural Exchange Programs, and Exchange Student Programs. These programs are sketched below.

Firstly, the Summer Program in question has been organized annually in universities in Asia where the universities in the region take turns to host the event. It was the 3rd time the program had been held when the data was collected in 2014, hosted by a university in Malaysia. The host university invited lecturers from universities around Asia to organize courses and offered those courses to university students, who were invited mainly from Asian countries to join the program. The program lasted for two weeks.

The Intensive Language Courses were organized by a language institution and opened to students or anyone who was interested, and they were accommodated by agencies in

different countries (with the main institution located in Malaysia), and were attended by students from Thailand, China, Malaysia, Indonesia, among others. These courses are generally one-month long.

The Language and Cultural Exchange Program was a week-long program co-organized by a university in Thailand and a university in Malaysia. This program was attended by students from both universities. In the program, the students were offered opportunities to meet and learn from one another.

Finally, the Exchange Program was organized as part of the co-operation among universities in three countries (Thailand, Malaysia and Indonesia) and was participated in by students from those three countries. The recordings were made from the interaction between the students who had chosen to study a semester in a Thai university and the host students.

The interaction of the participants from all programs was video-recorded while they were gathering together and talking in casual conversations after the core activities of the programs, for example when they met after classes.

3.5.3.1 *Video Recording*

In this study, the naturally occurring interaction data of the participants' gathering and socializing during short-term exchange programs was recorded. Groups in the conversations were formed by the participants themselves as they sat together during breaks from the core activities of the programs. Their interaction is considered a mundane conversation in which "the order, length, and contents of turns of the conversation are not controlled by the prior arrangement" (Wilson, 1991: 22-23). They were also free to initiate any topical talks in interaction, take turns in the conversation and select any participants as a next speaker, etc.

The recording was made using a digital camcorder and a voice recorder, recording the participants' interaction. Recordings are of great value for detailed analysis as they allow the researcher to examine the interaction repeatedly. This can also enhance the precision of the analysis. Heritage and Atkinson (1984) highlighted the advantages of video-recorded interaction data:

The availability of a taped record enables repeated and detailed examination of particular events in interaction and hence greatly enhances the range and precision of the observations that can be made. The use of such materials has the additional advantage of providing hearers and, to a lesser extent, readers of research reports with direct access to the

data about which analytic claims are being made, thereby making them available for public scrutiny in a way that further minimizes the influence of individual preconception. (p. 4)

Three assistants helped with the video-recording; they were present at the scenes and made the recording of the interaction as much as what was allowed by the participants. The recorded interaction is diverse in length of time, ranging from 1 minute to 70 minutes, making up an estimated 10 hours in total of recordings, as shown in Table 2.

Table 2: Date, Length of Time and Numbers of Participants in Each Interaction

Recording	Length (mins)	Numbers of Participants
1. 21/08/2014 (1)	23	4
2. 21/08/2014 (2)	4	3
3. 23/08/2014 (1)	1	4
4. 23/08/2014 (2)	13	2
5. 24/08/2014 (1)	1	2
6. 24/08/2014 (2)	8	6
7. 24/08/2014 (3)	3	4
8. 24/08/2014 (4)	3	5
9. 18/09/2014	30	5
10. 29/09/2014	66	4
11. 02/10/2014	67	5
12. 12/10/2014	29	4
13. 14/10/2014	70	5
14. 15/10/2014	52	3
15.05/11/2014 (1)	29	6
16.05/11/2014 (2)	70	3
17. 08/11/2014	32	4
18. 14/11/2014	30	4
19. 16/11/2014	40	3
20. 17/12/2014	13	3
21. 19/12/2014	14	2
Total	10 hrs	56* Participants

3.5.3.2 *Ethical Considerations*

To comply with the research ethics required by Newcastle University and the statement of ethical practice for the British Sociological Association (BSA, 2002), this study follows the procedures that agree to the standards of conducting research in relation to recording and storing the participants' interaction data, i.e. video and transcripts.

Prior to the recording, permission from the participants was sought for the recordings to be made. The students were informed about the purpose of the recordings, which is solely for research purposes. The students were also assured that the recordings and the information would be kept confidential. Only the researcher could access the video recordings and the collected data would not be disclosed without the participants' permission. Then, each participant was asked to present their written consent form. The participants were all notified that they had the right to stop the recording at any time should they so desire.

Anonymity was also kept when presenting information and images of the participants. Their identities, for example names and appearances, were anonymized, i.e. pseudonyms were given to identify the participants in the transcripts and the participants' photographs were kept anonymous.

3.5.4 Building Collections, Transcribing and Data Analysis

This section presents how the interaction data were approached, starting from the same recordings being examined multiple times in order to get the overall view of the recorded interaction. Following this, the interaction involving assessment sequences was collected and compiled into collections and the data were transcribed and analysed, as described in the following section.

3.5.4.1 *Building the Collection*

Building collections of instances of a particular phenomenon of interest is an important stage for analysis as it allows the systematic examination of the phenomenon in different sequential environments and across participants. Sidnell (2010) emphasised that building the collections of instances across sequential contexts is of great importance in that "different cases reveal different aspects or features of a phenomenon" (p. 31). Another advantage of building collections of the phenomenon of interest was raised by Liddicoat (2007), who

argued that analysis of collections of instances can permit the researcher to test the robustness of a particular action of interest by examining it in repeated instances.

Building the collections generally involves the process of identifying the phenomenon that is centrally examined in the study: assessment sequences, described in this study as talk and the embodiments which are produced by the participants and appear to display (and are treated to display) their negative stance or evaluation towards artefacts and practices in the co-participants' countries (see the detailed description of negative assessments in Section 2.4.4). Once the phenomenon of interest has been described and located, the possible instances can be gathered into a collection.

The building of collections involves examining recordings for all candidate cases of the phenomenon (i.e. negative assessments). With a preliminary description of the negative assessments, the recordings were examined to build a collection of assessment sequences. It is suggested by CA guidebooks (e.g. Sidnell, 2010) that the instances of the phenomenon of interest should be gathered widely and generously; everything that seems to satisfy the description can be collected, so the range of variation in the phenomenon of interest will be included for analysis. Hoey and Kendrick (2018) echoed this generous collection of instances, claiming that this action can help resist the researcher's rigid labelling of the phenomenon before its nature becomes clear and possibly help refine the description or criteria of the phenomenon of interest once the collection is expanded, covering it in a range of different environments of interaction.

Following the above guidelines for the collection building, assessments that can be describable as negative assessments were collected. Both turns that clearly include assessment terms (e.g. "*not good*", "*so small*") displaying speakers' evaluation towards the referents and the turns which are potentially assessments (e.g. without the use of assessment terms but are treated by the recipients as such) were included into the collections. That is, the identifying process goes beyond a simple search for the use of assessment terms. Additional cues (e.g. prosodic contours, facial display) as well as the recipients' responses which potentially indicate the turns as negative assessments were taken into account and come to have a role here in identifying the instances of assessment sequences.

3.5.4.2 *Transcription*

A transcript, in conjunction with the recordings, is the basis for doing the analysis (ten Have, 1999). The salience of the transcript was described by ten Have (2007) as "the timeline

of the interactional stream” (p. 32) that researchers can present to the audience about the contribution of each participant in relation to the others in interaction, noting interaction phenomena such as pauses, laughter, overlapping, speech rate and intonation. In this study, a version of transcription convention originally developed by Gail Jefferson (2004) will be followed (see Appendix D). This transcription convention is commonly used by conversation analysts, and it allows the delivery of the talk details to be presented to an audience, delivering many details of the talk by incorporating not only what is said but also how the utterance is said.

It is useful to note that the transcript is not a replacement, but a representation of the actual interaction data (Heritage, 1984; Psathas & Anderson, 1990), which is used as a tool for presentation of the analysis, allowing the analyst as well as the audience to see the details of live talk that are captured in a written static format which is more convenient to follow (Liddicoat, 2007; ten Have 2007). Two digital transcribing software tools - Audacity and CLAN - were utilized in doing the transcription. These software tools allowed the researcher to complete the transcription process faster and in a more valid manner. Audacity is used mainly to listen to the sound files at lower rates of speed when needed, while CLAN allows transcripts to be digitally aligned to the video files. This helped the researcher to easily access the video data immediately from the transcript at a later point after transcription.

The first step in developing the transcript is to capture the verbal interaction that is produced by the participants, but it is not only words that are transcribed. Details of how words and utterances are produced are also put in the transcript, including other phenomena in talk (e.g. stress, intonation, lengths of sounds, speed of delivery, overlap) as these features can be interactionally important for the participants as well as for the analysts (Liddicoat, 2007). For instance, intonation can distinguish between questions and declaratives while stress can be used to communicate contrast and emphasis. Similarly, other characteristics of speech production, for example elongation of sounds, pauses, contiguous talk, and overlap have implications in understanding the turn production. Thus, it is crucial to represent these communicative features in the transcripts. Information, such as the date and places of the recording and nationalities of the participants is also provided in the transcripts. Additionally, non-verbal elements of talk that are relevant to the actions are also included in the transcripts. The embodiments produced by speakers (e.g. mutual gaze and body movement) which seem to make meaning for the speakers and recipients were included in the transcripts, illustrating

what are produced by the speakers and when they are produced. To be specific, description and/or screen shots of the actions were provided another line along the verbal production.

It needs to be emphasised that the recordings were re-visited and repeatedly transcribed in order to add granular details and obtain a good informative transcript. Later, the transcripts were cross-checked by a colleague who was also doing conversation analysis research. Moreover, presentation in data sessions in the Micro-Analysis Research Group (MARG), in which some of the transcripts were commented on by CA colleagues, is believed to have helped improve the quality and validity of the transcription.

3.5.5 Data Analysis

This study examines the specific moments in which participants make assessments, displaying their negative evaluations towards referents (e.g. food items, infrastructure and cultural practices) in the co-participants' countries. These assessments and the responses were particularly examined. The most appropriate research method in investigating this action in interaction would be CA, looking at sequential organization of the action in naturally occurring interaction. When the participant's identities appear to be made relevant and have impacts for the action, MCA can be an appropriate tool to shape understanding and inform what identity category the participants bring into their interaction. These two micro-analysis methods were employed to investigate how the action of assessments was accomplished and responded to.

The following section describes the essence of CA and MCA, the understanding of embodied actions in interaction, and the commonsense knowledge which can be crucial in developing the analysis in this study.

3.5.5.1 Fundamental Knowledge of CA and MCA

Knowledge of CA and MCA methodologies is relied on when analysing the assessment sequences, particularly in describing how the assessments are accomplished and responded to by the recipients and demonstrating whether and how the participants invoke interculturality (i.e. the fact of being culturally different) during these moments of interaction. CA reveals the sequential matters and MCA reveals the categorical matters. These two emphases of examination are believed to be related and inform each other (Hester & Eglin, 1997; Stokoe, 2009; Stokoe & Attenborough, 2015), or, as Silverman (1998) put it, the two

methodologies need each other. For instance, knowledge of CA and MCA methodologies is needed in analysis of the invocation of a certain category (e.g. a single mother) occurring in a particular action (e.g. a complaint about a neighbour's unbearable noise during the night), which can demonstrate that the invocation of a particular identity can be used by the speaker to reach some achievements (Stoke, 2009).

Basic knowledge of CA (e.g. adjacency pair, turn-taking, next positioning, next turn proof procedure) has been used by analysts to inform how participants analyse and understand the utterances of one another (C. Goodwin & Heritage, 1990; Schegloff, 2007; Seedhouse, 2005a, etc.); the responses to the other's utterances can be used as a basis to display the recipient's understanding of the turn. Moreover, some questions are useful for the analyst to bear in mind while doing the analysis—'Why that now?'—asking why the speakers say that at this moment and asking what the turn has as its outcome. Also, important findings from CA research have been consulted while doing the analysis, for example the selection of next speakers, repair, pursuing of responses.

The participants' orientation to their and others' categorization during the interactional moments were also examined in this analysis. For the analysis on these categorical matters, MCA's guidelines for analysis were consulted. The analysis of participants' categorization relies on the key concepts of Membership Category Devices and Category-Bound Activities that the analyst used to unpack how the participants invoke their identity discursively in interaction. The position, turn design, as well as the action in which the categorization is invoked were also examined, as such examination is suggested by Stokoe (2012) for analysts who employ MCA to examine identity in talk to follow.

3.5.5.2 *Inclusion of Multimodality into Analysis*

To examine what is occurring in talk-in-interaction, it is crucial to pay attention to the participants' non-verbal conduct along with their talk. Schegloff (1984, 1998, 2009) and other scholars who investigate interaction (e.g. Bolden, 2003; Hazel et al., 2014; Norris, 2004) have advocated that it is necessary to look at the details of the interaction, including non-verbal elements, to understand what the interactants made relevant in their talk. This trend of investigation has emphasised the salience of the incorporation of non-verbal conduct into the analysis as these non-verbal elements during talk can convey meaning and have an impact on talk-in-interaction (e.g. C. Goodwin, 2000; M. H. Goodwin, 2007; Markaki & Mondada, 2012).

As previous research has demonstrated, investigation into non-verbal conduct in talk can contribute to understanding the nature of the participants' interaction in certain aspects, for example the participants' accomplished actions (Aoki, 2011; M. H. Goodwin et al., 2002; Mondada, 2011), participation framework (C. Goodwin, 2007; Tulbert & M. H. Goodwin, 2011) as well as the discursive invocation of their categorization (Markaki & Mondada, 2012; Mondada, 2012).

As has been informed by studies in assessments in interaction (e.g. Ogden, 2006; Ruusuvuori & Peräkylä, 2009), non-verbal elements, such as facial display, prosody and embodied actions, seem to be necessary to understand the conduct of the action. For instance, when a participant displays a smiling face while he shows the object to the interlocutors, this non-verbal display permits the interlocutors to know his/her evaluation of the referred to object (Ruusuvuori & Peräkylä, 2009). The analysis in this study was carried out by paying attention not only to verbal interaction but also to the non-verbal elements of talk, which are described by Goodwin and Goodwin (1992) as non-vocal displays (e.g. facial display, gestures and body positions) produced by the participants during their talk.

3.5.5.3 *The Role of Commonsense Knowledge*

Not only the knowledge of the basic organization of interaction (e.g. adjacency-pairs, action formation, repair and turn-design) and the invocation of categories, but also the commonsense knowledge as a member of society has a role in developing analyses in this study, particularly in understanding the referents (e.g. indigenous groups or places) to which the participants usually refer by proper names in the assessment sequences.

It is important for the researcher to bring the commonsense knowledge as a member of the same culture as the participants to bear in the analysis (in this case the context in Southeast Asia). This commonsense knowledge makes it possible for the referents being referred to by the participants to also make sense to the researcher. In other words, the researcher needs to have some access to the referents referred to by the participants and the interpretive or inferential resources which the participants are possibly relying on (Hutchby & Wooffitt, 1998) as a basis for shaping the analysis. To analyse assessment sequences where the referents of specific places, indigenous groups of people, as well as other proper names are mentioned, it can be said that commonsense knowledge of the analyst as a member of the cultural group where the interaction is taking place is considered essential for the analysis.

On this matter, Hutchby and Wooffitt (1998) asserted that “it is absolutely necessary that conversation analysts are either members of, or have a sound understanding of, the culture from which their data have been drawn” (p. 113). Moerman (1988), who employed CA to study interaction in a community of which language and norms is less familiar to him, also argued that conversation analysts should become more aware of the culturally contexted nature of all talk-in-interaction.

3.5.1 Reliability

Research reliability is described by Bryman (2008) as the concern of “whether the results of a study are repeatable or replicable” (p. 31). In other words, the study can be conducted or the data analysed by other researchers and the same findings will occur.

This study employed ethnomethodological CA and MCA as analysis tools. Thus, by the principles of the employed methodologies, research reliability can be assured. The employment of ethnomethodologically-rooted methodologies is claimed to provide analysis that is transparent, offering the possibility for audiences to re-analyse the data, and open to debate by others. That is, when presenting the transcript as a representation of the examined interaction in a publication, CA research is open for the readers to analyse for their own observations, as well as scrutinize the analysis made by the researcher (Seedhouse, 2004a, 2005b). Allowed by the audience’s access to the data, the reliability of CA research can be satisfied. Importantly, in CA research it is common practice to present their primary data to the other conversation analysts in data session(s) before submission for publication. The data of this study has been presented in data sessions five times; this can be seen to strengthen the reliability of the research.

3.5.2 Validity

Generally, research validity can be described as “the degree to which an instrument measures what it is intended to measure” (Polit & Hungler, 1995: 656). Two types of validity for research are discussed in this section: internal and external validity. Internal validity is concerned with the plausibility and credibility of the findings; external validity is concerned with generalizability and applicability of the research findings (Hammersley, 1992).

Regarding internal validity, research by other approaches, such as quantitative research, has pursued statistics and quantitation to indicate the research's validity. The claim of internal validity for CA research is not derived from these statistics and quantitation as the method refrains from quantification. Psathas (1995) argued that the claim of validity in CA research is supported by the practice in which the actions or phenomena described by conversation analysts are demonstrated by the participants who are engaged in the examined interaction; the findings of CA research are not made beyond what is displayed by the participants, who are considered as knowledgeable actors in their interaction.

Regarding the external validity of the research (i.e. the extent to which the findings can be generalized), it should be emphasised that it is not a primary aim of CA research to generalize the findings to other settings (Seedhouse, 2005b). However, the findings of CA research can be generalizable for the interaction in settings that are similar to the one originally examined. For instance, the description of the organization of negative assessments provided by this study (in which the referents being assessed are assumed to have some connection with the recipients of the assessments) can be generalizable to the organization of the action in the setting where the attachment between the referents being negatively assessed and the recipients of the assessments are assumed to exist.

3.5.3 Limitations of the Study

No research is without flaws or limitations, and this is the case for this study. This section acknowledges and outlines the two main shortcomings of the study.

One important limitation of the study concerns the access to clear utterances of the participants while interacting with one another. Some recordings of interaction were made in a busy university cafeteria during class breaks, filled with people and surrounded by a variety of noises, as they usually were held during lunch-breaks. It was necessary for the recordings to be made during this time slot as it was an opportunity for the participants to interact outside the core classroom-based activities. These nuisances unavoidably made it difficult and sometimes impossible for the researcher to access the participants' utterances at some moments of their talk. These inaccessible utterances were presented in transcripts as "inaudible utterances". Technically, this limitation constrained the researcher from having full access and producing convincing claims from those data.

Another limitation was the limited numbers of instances of the negative assessments collected for the analysis. Altogether, 17 instances of negative assessments were collected from 10 hours of recorded interaction. This limited number of the sequences may be due to the less frequent occurrence of this type of sequences in the setting in which the interaction was set to examine, in participants' socializing in cultural exchange programs. This limited number of instances may affect the analysis in some ways. For instance, the more instances included in the analysis can generate more valid findings of this type of interaction that occur in the examined setting. A new study aiming to study negative assessments in interaction may collect more data, for example more hours of real time interaction.

3.6 Summary

This chapter has offered an overview of the methodology employed by the study in investigating the sequential organization of making and responding to negative assessments and the invocation of participants' categorization in their interactional moments involved with assessment sequences. CA and MCA were employed in this study. Employment of CA together with MCA has been agreed by scholars of interaction studies (e.g. Antaki & Widdicombe, 1998; Day, 2013; Hester & Eglin, 1997; Sacks, 1992; Stokoe, 2012) to be a powerful analytical tool-kit to examine interaction in which categorization and sequential organization are brought into play.

CA as a methodology was introduced in Section 3.2, outlining the aims and origins of CA methodology, core principles which the researcher adopts, the application of CA methodology into a diverse range of interaction types, and, lastly, the main critiques of CA were raised. MCA was introduced in Section 3.3, in which the development of the method was outlined and followed by the description of two main principles (i.e. Membership categorization devices, and Category-bound activities) that guide the analysis of participants' categorization. Then, the analysis of non-verbal conduct in CA and MCA analysis was presented in Section 3.4, describing trends and the incorporation of non-verbal conduct into the analysis and the impacts of this practice in the better understanding of actions and the participation framework, as well as the discursive invocation of participants' categorization.

After that, the details of the context and participants of the study were presented, followed by procedures of data collection, building collections of the assessment sequences, transcribing, data analysis, and the research concerns of reliability, validity and the limitations of the research.

Employing the two methodologies of CA and MCA to examine the sequential organization of the actions and categorization in the moments of making and responding to assessments, the findings of how participants produced negative assessments are presented in Chapter 4, and the recipients' responses to those assessments is presented in Chapter 5.

Chapter 4. Production of Negative Assessments

4.1 Introduction

The focus of this study is to investigate interactions involving participants making negative assessments towards artefacts, practices and phenomena in co-participants' home countries during their socializing in cultural exchange programs. Employing the research methodology of CA together with MCA, the current study examines and describes how such assessments are produced and responded to by the recipients, members of the referred to countries, who are present at the conversation sites. When such assessments occur in interaction, speakers of the assessments may involve a variety of considerations (e.g. knowledge, rights, acceptability and consequences of making such assessments). The main observation from the data is that speakers who categorize themselves as non-members of the cultural group being assessed produce their assessments in ways that reflect their considerations of those concerns.

This chapter presents how negative assessments were produced by the non-member speakers by examining the features and actions of talk-in-interaction in the production of assessments, for example turn formulation, the position of the assessments in talk, the invocation of participants' categories as well as the display of epistemic access to the referents. The findings concerning assessments that were produced in different conditions are presented, ranging from the production of assessments with mitigation (Section 4.2), the production of explicit assessments in certain environments (Section 4.3), utterances (without the assessment terms) that are treated as assessments by the recipients who are members of the referred to countries (Section 4.4), showing subordination while making assessments (Section 4.5), and claiming epistemic access to the referents as part of the assessment turns (Section 4.6), followed by a summary of the findings of assessment production in the context of these socializing occasions (Section 4.7).

Transcripts of interactional moments that involve negative assessment sequences were employed, presenting the course of interaction in which the participants were involved in making negative assessments. Information about the participants' countries of origin is given here (i.e. under the extract title) for the benefit of the readers. Regarding the participants'

category, it is more important to examine in the course of their interaction whether or not they attend to their identities, for example member or non-member of a certain cultural group.

4.2 Production of Negative Assessments with Mitigation

This section illustrates a range of interactional work, specifically the means that the speakers of assessments employ in their production of negative assessments of referents in the others' countries, possibly to soften or reduce the potential impacts of their assessments and render their assessments less explicit for the recipients who are members of the referred to countries and might have an attachment to their cultural group. Producing these negative assessments without consideration of the possible threat to the members of the cultural group may result in undesired consequences. The following section shows that the speakers of negative assessments are observed to perform some interactional work (i.e. mitigation), presumably to reduce the harshness of their negative assessments.

4.2.1 Withholding an Articulation of Negative Assessment Terms

The conversation in the extract below took place in a gathering of four exchange students (WAH, AHM, ZOD, and TAN) in a university in Malaysia. WAH, who is originally from Kuala Lumpur (KL, the capital city of Malaysia), learned that AHM (who is from Indonesia) was interested in finding a job in Malaysia after his graduation. WAH did not suggest that KL as a good place to work since it is a very crowded city. AHM disagreed, responding that the traffic in KL is acceptable for him as it is not as bad as the traffic in Jakarta, the capital city of his home country Indonesia. Then, WAH developed a topical talk on Jakarta, sharing what he knows about the city of Jakarta, and projected to make an assessment towards the traffic in the city of Jakarta.

The extract below demonstrates that WAH initiated and trailed off his assessing turn before its grammatical completion (Schegloff, 2005), displaying hesitation in the production of negative assessments of a phenomenon in the co-participant's home country.

Extract 4.1: Traffic in Jakarta

(12-10-2014: 21.00-22.09)

WAH: Malaysian, AHM: Indonesian, TAN: Thailand, ZOD: Thailand

1 *AHM: but¹kay ale# is more better than ²Jakarta.

Fig.1



Fig. 1: AHM directs gaze to WAH

2 (0.7)

3 *WAH: [(°really°)]

4 *AHM: [jakarta] isvery crowdedalways traffic everywhere⁷

5 *WAH: everywher|e.

|((AHM nods))

6 (0.4)

7 *AHM: everywhere.

8 *WAH: wow (.) its- I just (0.5) er::: read the news (0.3) maybe (0.6)

9 ah: (.) one year or two years ago that (0.8) what they ca-(0.4)

10 people that work in the corporate company they prefer to use

11 bicycle

12 (0.4)

13 *AHM: yah [thecapi] tal (0.2) so many cars (0.3) °in road°

14 *WAH: [to jakarta]#

#Fig.2

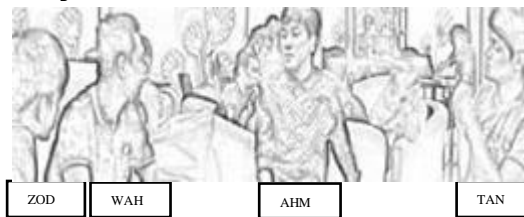


Fig. 2: WAH articulates the city name and looks at AHM

¹ Kay AI (KL) stands for Kuala Lumpur, the capital city of Malaysia

² Jakarta, the capital city of Indonesia

15 *TAN: and so many horns#

#Fig.3



Fig. 3: TAN describes traffic in the city and looks at AHM

16 (0.2)

17 *AHM: uhm

18 *TAN: they always [horn]

19 *WAH: [I just](0.3) I just ah: get a new- got a news from
20 my friend(0.3) even just(0.3) the distance between (0.4) his
21 home and his campus just around maybe(0.5)one kilometer right =

22 *AHM: = uhm

23 *WAH: but(0.8) one kilo meter if we (0.6) by bike it's just maybe
24 take around (0.7) five to seven minutes maybe you just you can
25 just reach that place (0.4) but he says wowit's (0.5) it's
26 jammed and it gonna take around half an hour (0.2) even you're

27 using bike ah: motorcycle (0.6) **so:↑ I can't imagine how come**
28 **jakarta is: = #**

Negative
Assessment

Fig.4

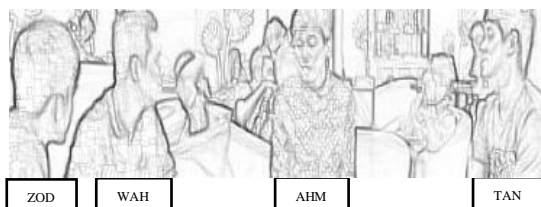


Fig. 4: WAH projects assessment and looks at AHM

29 *AHM: = yah

30 (0.9)

31 *AHM: °very: very bad°

In the extract, AHM (a participant who is originally from Indonesia) offers an assessment that the traffic in Kuala Lumpur (KL), the capital city of Malaysia, is better than Jakarta, the capital city in his home country “*but KL is better than Jakarta*” (Line 1). While articulating the city name, his gaze is at WAH (who is from KL), possibly attending to WAH’s cultural identity as a member of the city he is referring to (Figure 1). There is a 0.7 second pause following his assessment, without any explicit response from WAH who is oriented to as a member of the referred to cultural group. This possibly makes relevant for

AHM to describe the traffic in the city of Jakarta that “*Jakarta is very crowded always traffic everywhere*” which elaborates on what he raises in his prior assessment, and partially overlaps with WAH’s confirmation seeking “*really*” (Line 3).

AHM elaborates the congestion in the city in his home country, and his elaboration is followed by WAH’s repeating part of the turn “*everywhere*” (Line 5). This repetition is treated as seeking confirmation from AHM, who holds higher epistemic status with regard to the referent, to which he confirms through nodding (Line 5) and the verbal repeat “*everywhere*” (Line 7). In doing so, AHM orients to himself as the member or someone who is more knowledgeable on matters in the cultural group being referred to (Indonesia in this case). WAH shows his surprise at this fact and makes it relevant to share what he has read about the city (i.e. Jakarta) that people prefer to use bicycles, a result of the heavy traffic (Line 8). The fact regarding Jakarta shared by WAH is confirmed by AHM (Line 13). AHM’s confirmation on Jakarta traffic can be seen to invoke his self-categorization as a member of the city who thus holds higher epistemic status (K+) in the matter being discussed.

After confirmation of the congested traffic in Jakarta by a member of the country (AHM), TAN also joins to offer his experience in the city of Jakarta; that drivers always honk their horn at one another (Line 15), which is also confirmed quietly by AHM, the member of the cultural group being discussed.

In Line 18, WAH makes it relevant to share more on aspects he had heard about Jakarta’s congested traffic, probably as a way of showing what he knows about the co-participant’s country, which might facilitate the establishment of common ground between newly made friends (Svennevig, 1999). WAH tells AHM that he has heard about the congestion in Jakarta. First, he refers to the source of this knowledge (i.e. from the news). Talking about Jakarta this way, WAH displays that he holds a lower epistemic status, relying on indirect knowledge to talk about the place. Equally, this reference to the source of knowledge can portray his cultural identity as a non-member of Jakarta who needs a source of knowledge to support any description/assessment he may make about the city. Then, he describes what he had heard from his friend about travelling for 1 km, which normally takes 5-7 minutes travelling on a bike elsewhere, but it takes half an hour to travel the same distance in Jakarta even using a more powerful vehicle (i.e. a motorcycle). He also reports what his friend assessed regarding the traffic in the city “*he says wow it's (0.5) it's jammed*”, followed by his personal view, which is possibly produced as a closing sequence of his telling

“so:↗ I can't imagine how come jakarta is:” (Line 27-28), elongating the turn element “is”, with the assessment term being withheld. Even though the assessment term is withheld from his turn, the produced turn units, together with turn composition (e.g. intonation and elongation), can project roughly what form the complete turn will take (Sack, Schegloff & Jefferson, 1974).

It can be seen that the projected turn is clearly treated as negative assessment by the speaker of assessment (WAH) in that he puts more interactional work in order to accomplish the assessing turn, i.e. referring to the source of knowledge from reading, reporting the absent party's utterance, and withholding from the production of negative assessment term, which is treated as necessary for turn completion (i.e. the assessment is later completed by the co-participant in Line 31). This less than immediate production of the assessment with the additional work from the speaker's side can indicate that he treats the on-going assessment as a negative assessment.

WAH's hesitation in producing the negative assessment of congestion in Jakarta may result from the consideration not to make the negative assessment of the artefact which belongs to the co-participant's home country too overt (Brown & Levinson, 1987; Fraser, 1996) and to reduce the tendency to be challenged by a member of the referred to cultural group.

4.2.2 Indirect Addressivity

In the following extract, two exchange students from Indonesia (THO and HED) and two host students (JAY and NAS) bought food from nearby stalls and eat together on a beach in a Thai province. Some food came in plastic bags, and this way of eating is negatively assessed by THO (a participant from Indonesia). In his production of negative assessment of the eating practice that occurred in the co-participants' country, THO performed some degree of indirect addressivity (Lempert, 2012) in which he made it less clear in the turn design regarding who produces the assessment and for whom the assessment was intended. His indirect addressivity can be seen through 1) his verbally selecting a non-member of the assessed country as a direct addressee of his assessment, while directing his gaze to a member of the referred to country, 2) making it explicit that he speaks out the other's idea, and 3) using the hypothetical syntax “if”, suggesting that the assessment targets the occurrence elsewhere, not the immediate occurrence he is facing. The employment of this indirect

addressivity may benefit the speaker in that it may create a distance between the speaker and the assessment he is articulating.

Extract 4.2: Food in plastic bags

(02-10-2014:49-94; 14.40-15.39)

JAY: Thailand, NAS: Thailand, HED: Indonesia, THO: Indonesia

1 *THO: ³mum# (.) do you know my biology teacher said that (0.4)

Negative Assessment

#Fig.1

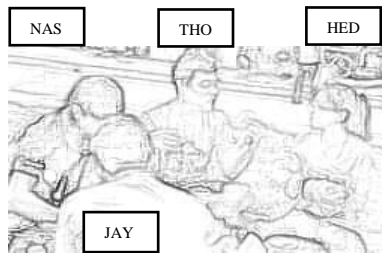


Fig. 1: THO addresses turn to HED

2 if# (.) the: food:: (0.4)

Negative Assessment

#Fig.2

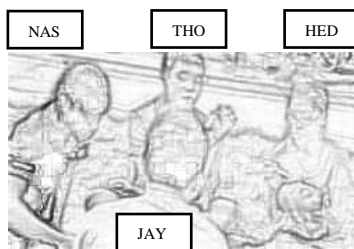


Fig. 2: THO directs a brief gaze to JAY

3 *THO: °er° take (.) in plastics not good for °health°

Negative Assessment

4 *JAY: [why::]

5 *HED: [oh::]::

6 (0.3)

7 *THO: [but why]

8 *HED: [then why-] (.) why do you keep eating\=

9 *JAY: = >but< in: so many Thai people eat

10 | (0.7)

| ((JAY takes the food bag and prepares to display it to THO))

³ Mum is HAD', a created name sometimes used by THO in this conversation and elsewhere.

THO makes an assessment of the way they are currently eating food from plastic bags on a Thai beach “⁴*mum (.) do you know my biology teacher said that if food taking in plastics bag not good for health*” (Line 1-3). It is notable that his assessment of the eating practice he is facing in a Thai city can be described as negative assessment as displayed by the employed assessment terms (i.e. “*not good for health*”).

Notably, THO’s assessment of the way of eating in Thailand is filled with displays of hesitation through the marker “*er*”, a pause and the use of a quieter voice when articulating the assessment turn (as in “^o*er*^o *take (.) in plastics not good for health*” in Line 3). Apart from that, he appears to be indirect in many ways regarding the addressivity of his turn. Firstly, THO uses additional effort to position himself as not addressing the assessment directly to the members of the Thai cultural group (JAY and NAS); he summons HED, a non-member of the assessed cultural group, to explicitly select her as a direct recipient of this assessing turn. Noticeably, he also displays his acknowledgement of the presence of the country member, JAY, who is engaged with food at that moment (i.e. through his brief gaze towards JAY at the initial unit of his assessment). Upon THO’s completion of the turn assessing this way of eating in the Thai cultural group, JAY takes the assessment even though the other co-participant (HED) is explicitly selected as the direct recipient; he turns away from the activity he is doing and engages in giving a response to the assessment even though he is not explicitly selected. In doing so, JAY displays his orientation to his cultural identity as a member of the cultural group, who has rights to respond to the assessment about his country.

Secondly, THO overtly claims at the surface that the assessment is not directly his own thought. His reference to a third party (i.e. his biology teacher) as an external source of the assessment results in a form of indirectness, creating a role for himself as someone who just invokes what was said by others; he is not the one who originally assessed such an occurrence. By doing this, it can be possible that THO borrows the utterance of his biology teacher in order to communicate his own idea, as it is argued by Tannen (2007) that framing utterances as a report of what others say can be a way for speakers to express their own thoughts. His reference to his teacher as the source of the assessment can be seen to accomplish two possible actions here: the teacher’s higher epistemic status can substantiate his claim, and by virtue of the indirectness of the turn, he clearly distances himself from the assessment which is possibly now treated as a negative assessment of the way of eating in the

⁴ From the ethnography information, THO is sometimes called HED by “mum” as a created name, rather than her real name.

co-participant's country. This may allow him to disclaim direct responsibility for the assessment.

Finally, THO uses the hypothetical formulation “*if*” to portray that he does not directly assess the currently occurring way of eating. Through this hypothetical syntax, THO appears to be assessing the eating situation in general, rather than the currently occurring one in front of him. This action can also be seen to create a level of distance from the cultural practice that is actually being assessed.

As illustrated in the extract, the speaker of the assessment has employed forms of indirectiveness during the production of negative assessments of the way of eating in the co-participant's country, i.e. formulating the turn indirectly to the member of the cultural group, positioning himself as someone who just quotes an external authority's comment, and framing the utterance as appearing to be assessing the occurrence in general, rather than assessing the one immediately occurring, etc. The employment of these actions of indirectness may have the effect of mitigating his negative assessment of the co-participant's cultural practice.

4.2.3 Incorporating Both Positive and Negative Stances in Assessments

The conversation below took place in a socializing among three exchange students (i.e. MIS, AHM and KHI). It occurred after AHM, a participant from Indonesia, shared his direct experiences from his visit to Thailand, which provided him with good experiences in many ways. Then, he shared that he loves Thailand despite some aspects which he does not like. He began the assessing turn with the positive assessment in the initial TCU, followed by the opposite in the forthcoming TCU. This formulation can be seen to provide the impression that he does not seem to be one-sided, displaying that he holds positive and negative stances towards the referred to country. This may have the effect in increasing the acceptability/credibility of his negative assessment.

Extract 4.3: So many gender

(05-11-2014(2): 3702-3766; 65.40.901-66.28.813)

AHM: Indonesia, MIS: Thailand, KHI: Myanmar

1 *AHM: **I still love (0.5) Thailand#** (0.3) uh::: (0.3)

Fig.1

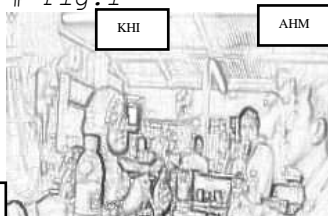


Fig. 1: AHM articulates country name and looks at MIS

Positive
Assessment

2 **altho- although they have** | (1.2)

| ((AHM looks away))

3 **so many::gender.**

4 # (1.0)

#Fig. 2



Fig. 2: MIS focuses gaze at AHM

Negative
Assessment

5 *AHM: [°right°]

6 *MIS: #[what do] you [mean?]

#Fig.3



Fig. 3: MIS smiles while tilting her head

7 *KHI: [haha]

8 *KHI: °so many [gender°] ((Smile Voice))

9 *AHM: | [so man]y gender^((With mitigating laughter))
| ((AHM directs his gaze to KHI))

10 *KHI: ((Laughing))

11 *AHM: you know: # [right?]

#Fig. 4



Fig. 4: AHM focuses gaze at MIS

12 *MIS: ha ha ha haha .hh

AHM shares with the co-participants that he still loves Thailand even though there is something about the country that he does not agree with “*I still love Thailand although they have so many gender*” (Line 1-3). While articulating “*Thailand*” he focuses his gaze on MIS, possibly displaying his orientation to MIS’s category as a member of the Thai cultural group at that moment (Figure 1). He shows in his assessing turn that he holds both positive and negative stances towards the co-participant’s country. The issue around transgender as formulated in his turn is characterizable as a negative in his viewpoint, and he treats it sensitively when negatively assessing the occurrence in the co-participant’s country. Particularly, he produces the positive stance first. Then, the negative stance follows. Noticeably, the negative assessment is not explicitly produced, but is rather projected by the contrastive conjunction “*although*” after the production of the positive assessment, signalling that the opposite assessment will follow. In addition to that, his turn is filled with pauses, hesitation markers and elongation before the initiation of the second unit of assessment, and this could be indicative of his orientation to the assessment as negative assessment and a sensitive issue. In a sense, the incorporation of the positive assessment, together with the hesitation in production, shows his consideration not to make the assessment too explicit and possibly soften the tone of his assessment.

There is a macro pause of 1.0 seconds after AHM’s assessing turn and AHM focuses his gaze on MIS during this pause (Figure 2), but there is no verbal response from MIS. This lack of response from MIS, a member of the cultural group who is assumed to have higher epistemic status in the matter in her country (Thailand), seems to trigger AHM’s seeking confirmation of his assessment from her through his softened “*right?*” (Line 5), in overlap with MIS’s clarification request of a trouble source in his assessing turn. Her request for clarification seems to mark her puzzlement and insufficient understanding of the turn, in which she does not identify the specific source of the trouble, only tilting her head while asking for clarification. Notably, the clarification request is produced with a smile voice and a smiling face which can demonstrate some level of her understanding of AHM’s turn. The understanding may not be very clear that it makes relevant for her to initiate the repair. However, the turn does not seem to be troublesome for the other co-participant, KHI, who laughs as a response to the turn, displaying that she understood the turn.

To respond to the clarification request from MIS, AHM treats the description “*so many gender*” as the trouble source; he repeats it with a rising intonation in Line 9 and directs his

gaze towards KHI, who shows some understanding of the turn. Receiving a laugh response, which could be considered as a sign of understanding from KHI, AHM then turns to MIS and explicitly elicits confirmation of understanding from her “*you know right?*” (Line 11), rather than providing a resolution for her. This demonstrates his expectation that MIS knows what he means by the utterance “*so many gender*”. MIS does not provide any verbal response to this elicitation but a series of laughter overlapping with the turn final of AHM’s elicitation, which, again, can display some of her understanding of the turn.

In the extract, the speaker offers both a positive stance and a negative stance as parts of the assessing turn, with the positive assessment prior to the negative counterpart; his putting forward that “*he still loves Thailand*” before the negative assessment may have an effect to mitigate or soften the harshness of his forthcoming negative assessment.

To sum up, it can be seen that the speakers of negative assessments display an effort to minimize the explicitness and directness of their assessments. Through less explicit production (e.g. withholding the negative assessment term), and other forms of hesitation, the speakers seem to show consideration to mitigate and avoid making negative assessments that are too overt. Through indirect addressivity (e.g. positioning so that the assessing turn is not directly from the speaker himself), the speaker seems to display a consideration to distance himself away from the produced negative assessment. Finally, through incorporating both positive and negative stances in the assessment turn, the speaker’s turn can appear moderate and more acceptable as it shows that the speaker holds both affective stances towards the country, not only a negative stance. All the mitigation employed by the speakers of assessments can show that they treat negative assessment of referents in the co-participant’s countries as delicate, and display their consideration to soften the explicitness of those assessments, presumably to avoid the offence that may result from those explicit negative assessments.

4.3 Explicit Assessments upon the Displayed Agreement of Prior Similar Assessments

As presented in many extracts in the previous section, the participants were observed to make assessments, which may be negative, of referents in the co-participants’ countries with mitigating actions. Often, those assessments were produced less explicitly and less directly. This section demonstrates another case in which the negative assessments are produced explicitly with the overt use of assessment terms (e.g. “*weird*”, “*expensive*”, “*not delicious*”).

It has been observed that negative assessments with the explicit use of assessment terms (e.g. “*Malaysia expensive everything*”, “*Malaysian food is not delicious*”) are less frequent in the data. When these assessments occur, they are produced in certain environments. That is, they appear to come incrementally or develop upon some agreement on similar assessments produced earlier, as shown in the extract below.

This conversation took place in a socializing of three language students: GEM and HAN from Thailand and ZON from Malaysia. They were attending intensive English classes in the same language institution in Malaysia. After ZON, a participant from Malaysia, learned about GEM’s hometown in Thailand, he informed GEM that he used to visit GEM’s hometown in the past. In his sharing of his experience in GEM’s hometown in Thailand, ZON expressed what he likes about the city (i.e. the inexpensive price of beer). ZON’s positive assessment about the price of beer in his hometown can be seen to set the foundation for GEM to reciprocally assess the price of the same item in the co-participant’s hometown in Malaysia.

Extract 4.4: But in Malaysia

(10-15-2014: 675-717; 15.12-15.40)
 ZON: Malaysian, GEM: Thai, HAN: Thai

1 *ZON: Hat Yai# (0.6) I like the beer man.
 # Fig. 1



Fig. 1: ZON articulates city name and looks at GEM

2 (0.2)
 3 *GEM: [hahuhuhu ha ha ha]
 4 *HAN: [hahahahahaha]
 5 *GEM: in Thailand it’s (0.4) °many° (0.4) so expensive
 ...(*Eight lines of repair activity is omitted*)...
 14 *GEM: yesyesyes ((*Smiling voice*))
 15 *ZON: the beer so cheap
 16 *GEM: yes =
 17 *HAN: =so cheapo
 18 (0.6)

19 *GEM: but | in Malay #
| ((GEM shakes his head))

Negative
Assessment

#Fig. 2



Fig. 2: GEM articulates country name and looks at ZON

20 (0.2)

21 *ZON: malay I think in malaysia it's expensive

22 | (1.1)

| ((ZON looks away and shakes his head))

23 *HAN: <malaysia:># **expensive everything**

Fig. 3

Negative
Assessment



Fig. 3: HAN and ZON's mutual gaze after HAN articulates the country name

24 | (0.9)

| ((ZON focuses his gaze at HAN and smiles))

25 *ZON: what ((Smile voice))

26 | (0.6)

| ((ZON leans closer to HAN as if to listen to him))

27 *HAN: Malaysia expensive everything ((Speaking louder))

In this extract, ZON proffers an explicit positive assessment on “*Hat Yai*”, the co-participant’s hometown city in Thailand which he visited. He shares what he liked in the city, “*Hat Yai I like the beer man*” (Line 1). His articulation of the city name and gazing towards GEM during the articulation (as shown in Figure 1) may display his orientation to the association between the referred to city and the co-participant (GEM); presumably the category of GEM as a member of the city he is talking about is treated as relevant here.

ZON’s telling that he likes beer in the city triggers joint laughter from GEM and HAN. Then, GEM initiates a turn by saying that beer is cheap in Thailand possibly as an account of why ZON likes the beer there (in his hometown), but he appears to make the wrong word choice, picking up “*expensive*” rather than “*cheap*”. From the projected meaning of the surrounding talk, his turn should have been “*in Thailand it’s so cheap*”, rather than “*in*

Thailand it's so expensive" as is produced in Line 5. The repair sequence, in which the repair is other-initiated and the candidate repair (i.e. cheap) is proffered by the co-participants, is not presented in the extract for the reason of space. The trouble is solved in Line 14 when GEM strongly confirms the candidate repair "yes yes yes". Then, the repair of the trouble source turn is restated in full sentence by ZON with a smiling voice "*the beer is so cheap*" (Line 15). Following this, GEM proffers an assessment on the price of the same item in ZON's country "*but in Malay*" (Line 19), strongly projecting an assessment that beer is (more) expensive in Malaysia. Notably, while specifying the country name "*Malay*", GEM directs his brief gaze to ZON (Figure 2). GEM's gaze towards ZON during his specification of the country name (Malaysia) can possibly display his orientation to the association between Malaysia and ZON as a member of the country.

GEM's gaze at ZON during the turn "*but in Malay*" may work to select ZON as a recipient of the assessing turn and legitimize him to respond to the turn. However, it seems that ZON does not have access to GEM's gaze as he is engaging with his phone at this moment. Upon the completion of the articulation of the country name, ZON disengages from his phone and re-engages in talk. In this case, specifying the country name in the assessing turn can operate for the selection of the respondents (Mori, 2003). As a response to the turn assessing the artefact in his country, ZON displays some agreement through his verbal expression "*Malay I think in Malaysia it's expensive*" (Line 21). As a member of the country who has knowledge of the price of the item both in his home country (Malaysia) and in Thailand during his visit, the matter of the price of beer in his home country is in his epistemic territory to be firmly commented on. However, the agreeing response displayed by ZON can be characterizable as a weak agreement, marked by the qualified "*I think*".

In Line 23, HAN produces a negative assessment towards the country "*Malaysia expensive everything*". He specifies the country name "*Malay*" and looks at ZON, resulting in a mutual gaze after the articulation of the city name (Figure 3). HAN's gaze towards ZON while articulating the country name in this moment may display his orientation to ZON's cultural identity as a member of the country he is referring to. HAN's assessment can be characterizable as explicit, using the assessment term "*expensive*". The explicitness of the assessment is also displayed by the prosody of the production, in which he produces the turn in a way that shows no hesitation with a quick tempo at the turn initial position. Moreover, his

assessment seems to be somehow upgraded in that he expands on the assessment of one item (beer) into a mass assumption of “*everything*”.

Interestingly, his assessment which is explicit is seen to appear upon some agreement to the prior similar assessment (“*But in Malay*” by GEM in Line 19) in the prior turns. His explicit negative assessment is possibly warranted by his observation that a similar negative assessment “*but in Malay:*” produced earlier by a co-participant (GEM) receives some agreement by the member of the cultural group being assessed (ZON). In other words, the displayed agreement to the similar assessment in the previous turns may license his production of a more (explicit) assessment (Eder et al., 1995).

4.4 Utterances that are Treated by Recipients as Assessment-Relevant

There are cases in which utterances regarding referents in one particular country produced by non-members are treated by the member of the country as an assessment. It is not clear that the utterances are produced as assessments by the speaker since there are no assessment terms (e.g. “*bad*”, “*horrible*” or “*expensive*”) explicitly produced in the turns. However, the recipient’s uptake in the next turn (e.g. a laugh response) can provide for the assessment relevance of the utterances. This is the next turn proof procedure principle of CA that informs the constitution of the assessment of utterances. These utterances can be described as assessment-relevant (Edwards & Potter, 2012; Hoey & Kendrick, 2018) for the purpose of the current analysis. This section demonstrates utterances (e.g. questions and descriptions) of artefacts or practices in the co-participant’s countries by non-member speakers, which can be treated as negative assessments by the members of the cultural group.

4.4.1 Questions that are Treated as Assessment-Relevant

The conversation below took place among three exchange students (MIS, KHI and AHM) who were eating and socializing in a cafeteria at a university in Malaysia. KHI, who is originally from Myanmar, was taking food without asking the present male participant, (AHM), whether he needed to take the food or not. It appeared later in the conversation that in her country (Myanmar) KHI was supposed to ask AHM first, as a male participant, before she takes the food. If AHM showed the need to take the food, the priority is AHM. In the extract, KHI realizes her violation of her cultural practice and made it relevant to share the practice of

the male's priority at the dining table in her country to the co-participants. After KHI's sharing of the cultural practice, MIS (a Thai participant) asked a question which potentially has more than one implication: that is, the question can appear to ask for information as a genuine question and at the same time the question seems to be embedded with evaluation, treating the cultural practice in discussion as beyond her expectation in some fashion (i.e. unusual or unbelievable). The extract below shows how a question from a non-member speaker, concerning a practice in the co-participants' country, is possibly treated by the member of the country as an assessment-relevant question.

Extract 4.5: Taking rice

(05-11-2014(2):2788-2819; 50.39-51.6)

AHM: Indonesia, MIS: Thailand, KHI: Myanmar

- 1 *KHI: oh yes: we are not ((Addressing MIS))
 2 (0.3)
 3 *KHI: you know↑# in my country↑

#Fig.1



Fig. 1: KHI addresses to AHM

- 4 *AHM: ((AHM slightly nods and fixes his gaze at KHI))
 5 *KHI: if you want to take the rice (0.9) er: we have to give
 6 you first (0.6) the boy: (0.4) we have to give you
 7 [first but now]
 8 *MIS: **[ah#still these]day?**

Negative
Assessment

#Fig.2



Fig. 2: MIS addresses turn KHI

- 9 *KHI: a huh huhhuh
 10 (0.3)
 11 *MIS: is it okay ↗
 12 *KHI: [yah::]
 13 *AHM: [it is a] culture?
 14 (0.6)
 15 *KHI: uh yah
 16 (0.6)
 17 *MIS: oh:::

In the extract, KHI initiates the telling by a form of preface presumably to get attention from the co-participant “*you know in my country*” (Line 3), focusing her gaze at AHM as the direct addressee (Figure 1). The telling can be relevant to AHM as he is the only one male participant to whom KHI needs to offer the priority of taking food. By her specification “*in my country*” in the preface of telling a practice of her country, KHI seems to orient to the co-participants as non-members (outsiders) of her cultural group: that is, this preface also signals to the co-participants that she is going to share the practice as a defining characteristic of her country and worthy to be shared with someone who is a non-member, who is assumed to have insufficient knowledge about it. AHM’s slight nod (Line 4) shows his alignment with the telling sequence, at the same time aligning with KHI’s categorizing him as a non-member of her cultural group. KHI tells AHM that if he needs food at the same time she is taking food, she needs to give it to him, as a male participant, before taking it herself (Line 5-7).

In Line 8, MIS, the co-participant, who is not selected as a direct recipient at this moment, asks a question “*ah still these day?*”. MIS’s rising intonation at the turn final position can clearly mark the utterance as a question and at the same time it marks her affective stance of surprise towards the cultural practice in KHI’s country that is being shared with her, and she directs her question to KHI as the answerer (Figure 2). MIS’s questioning turn can possibly be interpreted with more than one meaning, as a genuine question asking about the current existence of the referred to cultural practice, taking yes/no as a relevant answer, or it can be taken as a question loaded with an evaluation of being old-fashioned/undeveloped of the cultural practice under discussion, as the idea of men’s first priority can be seen to be associated with practices in traditional (pre-modern) societies. It can be argued that this question, by its formulation “*Ah still these day?*”, can work to assess. This is similar to a case in Fukuda’s (2006) data in which the utterance formulated as a confirmation seeking such as, “*Oh, so you can farm there*” (P. 436) can be regarded as an assessment as it signifies the speaker’s surprise and unexpectedness towards what she/he has been told, and in Hoey and Kendrick’s (2018) data in which a question (as they put it “assessment-implicative interrogative”) does not request information per se, but rather implicates an assessment of the object under discussion.

This interpretation is confirmed by the response from the recipient of the turn in the next turn, in which KHI produces a bout of laughter as a response to the question. By her laugh response, rather than providing the relevant answer to the question whether the practice

survives until today, KHI demonstrates that the question is treated by her as assessment-relevant or embedded with assessment of the cultural practice in her country in discussion. Her laughter is produced here possibly as a way to defuse the situation in which a potentially negative assessment towards the practices of her country has occurred.

4.4.1 Descriptions that are Treated as Assessment-Relevant

The conversation in the following extract took place among the same group of three exchange students (MIS, KHI, and AHM) as they were eating and socializing in the cafeteria of a university in Malaysia. This conversation occurred immediately after KHI had shared the cultural practice of male participants' first priority at the dining table in Myanmar (presented in Extract 4.5: "Still these day?"), which appeared to be treated by participants as an unusual characteristic practice in Myanmar. The cultural practice "*serving food and drink in Thai restaurants*" in the extract below is shared in the ongoing talk as another story of a distinct practice at the dining table in different countries (in Thailand). In the extract, AHM (an Indonesian participant) shared what he found in Thailand during his visit, which might share the same characteristics of unusual practice at the dining table as the one occurs in Myanmar. AHM described how food and drink were served to him when he ate in restaurants in Thailand, the home country of a co-participant (MIS). The extract illustrates that descriptions regarding others' cultural practice produced in some manner (i.e. multiple repetition) can be treated as assessment-relevant by members of the referred to cultural group despite the absence of assessment terms in the turns.

Extract 4.6: Serving food and drink

(05-11-2014 (2): 2839-2901; 51.6.961-51.59.737)

AHM: Indonesia, MIS: Thailand, KHI: Myanmar

1 *AHM: Thailand↑# also I think. (0.3) Thai culture↑
#Fig. 1



2 (0.4) **Fig. 1:** AHM articulates the country name and looks at MIS

3 *AHM: when I:: go Thailand↑ (.) [they always] when eat

4 *MIS: [uh huh↑]

5 *AHM: | (0.3) they:
| ((AHM holds a bottle and performs pouring action))

6 *MIS: °uh hm°

7 *AHM: °wa: ter°
.....**Five lines of MIS's explanation is omitted**.....

13 *AHM: = the waiter↑ always like that.
14 (0.8)

15 *MIS: uhm[: :]

16 *AHM: |[some] people like (0.2) stand up (0.5) here: (0.3)
| ((One hand allocates a place beside his seat))

17 *AHM: **when: (0.2) my:: (0.5) drink:: (0.3) finish (0.3)**
18 **they put they put** Negative Assessment

19 *KHI: OH: [hhhhuhu] huhuhu

20 *MIS: [huhuhuhu] huhuhu

21 *AHM: **[they put like that.]** Negative Assessment

22 *MIS: [huhuhu] huhu

23 *AHM: [yeah↗]

24 *MIS: that's the service .hhhh ah: in the restaurant like =

25 *AHM: = oh::

AHM states that there is a cultural practice in the co-participant's country (Thailand) that he is going to share "*Thailand also I think. (0.3) Thai culture*" (Line 1). He specifies the country name and fixes his gaze on MIS (Figure 1), possibly displaying his orientation to MIS as a member of the country he is talking about. He informs the co-participants that he has direct exposure to one Thai cultural practice, possibly claiming the sufficient knowledge to talk about or display any stance towards that practice of the co-participant's country, "*when I go Thailand*" (Line 3), and, equally, displaying his self-categorization as a non-member of Thailand. Then, he describes how customers are treated in restaurants in Thailand: while customers are eating, the waiters keep filling their drinking water (Line 3-7), enacting the action of pouring when he cannot supply words to deliver his turn. In describing how waiters refilled his drinks for him, there are many actions possibly showing his stance towards the referred to practice as excessive. He describes how often he experienced this practice "*the waiter always like that*" (Line 13), and repeats the action of refilling drinks "*they put they put*" (Line 18) and "*they put like that*" (Line 21). This multiple verbal repetition is also shown to be produced in combination with his repeated gesture of pouring, describing how frequent and possibly persistent the waiter fills up his drink.

AHM's descriptions of serving food and drink in restaurants in Thailand can be seen to be more than a genuine description of the serving of food and drink. His verbal repetition of "*they put they put*", "*they put like that*", along with his repeated gesture of filling-up water can

possibly convey his evaluation towards the action of filling-up drink (and food) in Thai restaurants as possibly excessive and persistent. This evaluation towards the practice is also seen to be perceived as assessment-relevant by the co-participants, who produce a joint laughter response (Line 19-20) after the turns. Later, after the laugh response, an account of the referred to practice is provided by the member of the country “*that’s the service .hhhh ah: in the restaurant*” (Line 24).

To conclude, without producing utterances as assessments overtly with assessment terms, the utterances can work and be treated as assessments. Talking about a cultural practice of others’ cultural group in some fashion (e.g. asking a question that signals that the practice in discussion is beyond the speaker’s expectation in Extract 4.5: “Taking rice” and the employment of multiple repetition of verbal expression and gesture in describing a practice in the co-participant’s cultural group in Extract 4.6: “Serving food and drink”), can be interpreted as an assessment, or embedded with the speaker’s evaluation; the utterances are not simply asking or describing. As noted by Sacks (1992: 516), by naming or describing the setting without the explicit use of assessment terms, for example “*This is, after all, a group therapy session*”, in the context of a group therapy session, can work as an assessment, invoking the recognition of appropriate action in the setting and stopping interlocutors from performing actions not considered appropriate according to the norm of the setting.

4.5 Showing Subordination while Making Assessments

This conversation took place between three participants (GEM, HAN and ZON) who were attending different language courses at a language institution in Malaysia. They were gathering for dinner after their classes. In this conversation, ZON (a participant from Malaysia) shared his experiences in the co-participants’ hometown city (i.e. the city of Hat Yai in Thailand). During the sharing, he appeared to assess negatively some aspects of the city’s infrastructure, which can fall closer to the co-participants’ territory of knowledge as a member of the referred to country. The extract below shows that the speaker of the assessment displays his subordination in making an assessment of the artefacts in the co-participants’ home country.

Extract 4.7: Hat Yai the road is so small

(15-10-2014: 614-654; 14.7.642-14.54.135)

ZON: Malaysian, GEM: Thai, HAN: Thai

1 *GEM: yes (1.0) many: department store.

2 (1.1)

3 *ZON: department.

4 *GEM: yes.

5 (0.5)

6 *ZOM: yah yah

7 (1.1)

8 *ZOM: **but (0.4) Hat Yai the:: when? in you in the town? (0.4)**

Negative
Assessment

9 **the: road is so small #right? | (.) but [it's]**

#Fig.1 | ((GEM slightly nods))



Fig. 1: ZON initiates assessment segment and looks at GEM

10 *GEM: [yes]

11 | (1.0)

| ((ZON looks away and display thinking face))

12 *ZON: [it's]

13 *GEM: [be]cause it's (0.2) old city I [I think.]

14 *ZON: [>yah yah<]

15 it's old city (0.3) and the electric wire?

16 | (0.7)

| ((ZON points to the cable in the restaurant))

18 *HAN: yeah:

19 *ZON: the electric↑ (0.2) [cable?]

20 *GEM: [ah:: ah] (.) ah ah:

21 (0.5)

22 *ZON: it's very: (0.3) at (0.3) it's not at the high:

23 le [vel] right?

24 *GEM: [yes]

25 (0.2)

26 *GEM: yes

27 *ZON: it's very short (1.1) it's very: many (0.4) right(0.4)the wire

28 (0.5)

29 *GEM: °yeah°

The participants seem to initially be talking about Hat Yai, a tourist city in Thailand. GEM, a participant from Thailand, appears to address one positive aspect of the city as a popular shopping centre for tourists and locals “*yes (1.0) many many department store*” (Line 1). Later, ZON (the participant from Malaysia) offers an assessment towards an aspect of the city’s infrastructure “*but (0.4) Hat Yai the:: when? in you in the town? (0.4) the: road is so small right?*”(Line 8-9). He uses a contrastive conjunction “*but*”, signalling the contrasting assessment towards the city. He specifies the area of the city upon which he is going to comment “*when you are in the town*”. This narrowing the location of the city can work to highlight that his forthcoming assessment is specifically about the mentioned location of the city, not the whole city. The specification of the location, then, is followed by an assessment turn “*The road is so small right?*”. At the end of the assessing turn, ZON appears to seek confirmation from GEM, who had revealed that he is from the referred to city in the prior course of the conversation. ZON directs his gaze towards GEM (as shown in Figure 1) and produces a conformation-seeking token “*right?*”. GEM nods slightly, then offers a verbal agreeing response “*yes*” in Line 10.

After the first assessment “*The road is so small right?*” (and the confirmation is displayed from the co-participant), ZON seems to continue to talk about the referred to city, showing an attempt to make another assessment of it, namely, he initiates a turn initial unit “*but it’s ...*” and trails off when he engages in word-searching to find the word to supply his turn. His engagement with the word search is ostensibly observed from his looking away and thinking face display (Goodwin & Goodwin, 1986) and try-marked intonation for the word that he is looking for, “*the electric cable*”, which appears in Line 19 (Sacks & Schegloff, 1979). It is possible that the turn initial unit “*it’s*” that appears repeatedly in Lines 9 and 19 is part of ZON’ attempt to accomplish another assessment “*it’s very: (0.3) at (0.3) it’s not at the high: level right?*” (which is accomplished in Line 22), but he gets to engage with the word-search and the account “*because it is old city*” that is provided by GEM (Line 13).

It can be seen that ZON, a non-member of the referred to country, makes an assessment of road condition in the co-participants’ home country and seeks confirmation from the co-participant who is a member of the country in which the referent belongs to. In this extract, he appears to show subordination, which forms the action of seeking confirmation in assessment sequences (Heritage, 2012b), for example “*the: road is so small right?*” (Line 9), “*it’s very: (0.3) at (0.3) it’s not at the high: level right?*” (Line 22-23), and “*it’s very short (1.1) it’s very: many (0.4) right?*” (Line 27). The speaker’s use of the question tag “*right?*” at the turn final position of assessing turns (Line 9, 22-23, and 27) can clearly project his lower epistemic status relative to the co-participant as well as his identity as non-member of the referred to country.

This extract demonstrates that the speaker who is a non-member of the referred to country appears to show subordination/lower epistemic status through the question tag while assessing the referents which appear to associate to the co-participants, i.e. falling within the co-participants' territory. Talking about the domain, which can be regarded as within the co-participants' territory (i.e. with or without the use of the question tag at turn final position), is often treated as seeking confirmation from those who have a comparatively greater knowledge of the referents (Labov & Fanshel, 1977; Heritage, 2010, 2012b, 2013). This employment of a question tag in assessments can serve to downgrade the speaker's assertiveness, projecting the speaker's consideration of the co-participants' approval or alignment to his assessments. This concurs with what was found in Raymond and Heritage's (2006) data, in which a speaker approaches the turn production with caution (i.e. using a question tag to downgrade her assertion) when commenting on her friend's son in her friend's presence.

4.6 Claiming Epistemic Access to the Referents

This section presents a conversation between three exchange students (WAH, AHM and TAN) who were socializing in the common room of university accommodation. They initiated and developed talk about a matter in Jakarta, and appeared to involve a negative assessment of an artefact of the city. Interestingly, a speaker who is a non-member of Indonesia and has no direct experience of that city is seen to attempt to invoke his sources of information or knowledge about the city prior to his production of assessment of the city in the co-participant's home country.

Extract 4.8: Traffic in Jakarta

(12-10-2014: 21.00-22.09)

WAH: Malaysian, AHM: Indonesian, TAN: Thai

- 1 *WAH: not not just(0.4)focus on ⁵kay-al because (0.2) kay-al is (0.2)
 2 REALLY REALLY crowded.
 3 (0.3)
 4 *AHM: °uhm° ((AHM slightly nods))
 5 (0.2)
 6 *WAH: and:(0.9)for ah: staying in kay-al for ah since I was a child
 7 °wow°
 8 (0.4)

⁵ Kay Al (KL) stands for Kuala Lumpur, the capital city of Malaysia

9 *AHM: but kay ale is more better than jakarta.
10 (0.7)
11 *WAH: [(°really°)]
12 *AHM: [jakarta] is very crowded always traffic everywhere[^]
13 *WAH: everywhe|re.
|((AHM nods))
14 (0.4)
15 *AHM: every where.
16 *WAH: wow (.) its- I just (0.5) er::: read the news (0.3) maybe
17 (0.6) ah: (.) one year or two years ago that (0.8) what they
18 ca- (0.4) people that work in the corporate company they
19 prefer to use bicycle
20 (0.4)
21 *AHM: yah [thecapi] tal (0.2) so many cars (0.3) °in road°
22 *WAH: [to jakarta]
23 *TAN: and so many horns.
24 (0.2)
25 *AHM: uhm
26 *TAN: they always [horn]
27 *WAH: [I just]((Blowing his nose)) (0.3) I just ah: get a
28 new- got a news from my friend(0.3) even just(0.3) the distance
29 between (0.4) his home and his campus just around maybe(0.5)
30 one kilometer right =
31 *AHM: = uhm
32 *WAH: but(0.8) one kilo meter if we (0.6) by bike it's just maybe
33 take around (0.7) five to seven minutes maybe you just you can
34 just reach that place (0.4) but he says wow it's (0.5) it's
35 jammed and it gonna take around half an hour (0.2) even you're
36 using bike ah: motorcycle (0.6) **so:↑ I can't imagine how come**
37 **jakarta is:=**
38 *AHM: = yah
39 (0.9)
40 *AHM: °very: very bad°

Negative Assessment

The extract shows that two participants (WAH, a participant from Malaysia, and AHM, a participant from Indonesia) are engaged in talk about Kuala Lumpur (KL) prior to AHM initiating talk about Jakarta, a capital city in his country, in which he compares it with KL “*but kay ale is more better than Jakarta.*” (Line 9) and brings one aspect of the city relevant to the talk here possibly to support his prior assessment “*Jakarta is very crowded always traffic everywhere.*” (Line 12). Then, the participants develop their talk about Jakarta.

After AHM, a member of Indonesia, provides an assessment of the capital city in his home country that it is very crowded with congestion everywhere, a confirmation is sought by WAH, a non-member of the country (Line 13). Once the assessment of Jakarta as a very

crowded city is confirmed by AHM, a member of Indonesia, TAN and WAH seem to provide some aligning assessments towards the city. TAN proffers assessments about people honking car horns on the road (Line 23 and 26), without invoking his knowledge/access to the city. On the contrary, WAH appears to make relevant the invocation of his sources of knowledge/access to the city of Jakarta prior to his assessing turn, first in Line 16-19 “*I just (0.5) er::: read the news...*” and then in Line 27-36 “*I just ah: get a new- got a news from my friend...*”. After the extended turns of invocation of his indirect experiences (i.e. from the news and the hearsay from his friend about congestion in Jakarta), he finally starts to make an assessment about the city in his own words in Lines 36-37 “*so:↗ I can't imagine how come Jakarta is:*”. His assessment is produced here possibly as closure-implicative of telling sequences of what he has heard about Jakarta. This assessment is marked by “*so*” and seems to be left incomplete as the assessment term is being withheld. The additional actions WAH incorporates when assessing Jakarta i.e. referring to sources of information and withholding the assessment term from the turn, can indicate that he orients to this assessing turn as a negative assessment. Importantly, the turn is also perceived as negative assessment by the recipient (AHM) who supplies the negative assessment term “*very very bad*” in Line 40.

It is revealed in this extract that the three participants who hold differential epistemic statuses—a member of Indonesia (AHM), a non-member of the country who has visited the city (TAN), and a non-member who does not have direct experience of the referred to city (WAH)—approach differently to proffer assessments towards Jakarta in their course of interaction. AHM provides confirmation of any confirmation requests or assessments towards the city made by others (Line 13, 15, 21, 25, 38, 40) and explicitly articulates the assessment, which is alluded to by the co-participant (Schegloff, 1996b) in Lines 21 and 40. These actions can indicate, discursively in course of interaction, his identity as a member of the country of Indonesia, and so a person who knows better and comments directly towards matters in Indonesia. TAN, another participant, has invoked his direct experience of/access to the city in the prior conversation. Possibly, his access has been recognized by the co-participants from that moment and may permit him to acceptably assess the referred to city at a later point in the conversation. Finally, WAH, the non-member speaker who has no direct experience of/access to the city, is observed to explicitly refer to sources of indirect knowledge towards the city as part of his assessing turn.

It needs to be highlighted from this extract that the invocation or claiming of some forms of knowledge/access (i.e. indirect experience or second-hand knowledge (Pomerantz, 1980) to the referred to city) is made relevant by the speaker of assessments who has no direct experience of/access to the referent, i.e. in this case, congestion in a city in the co-participant's home country. The speaker is seen to invoke multiple sources of knowledge about the referred to city, i.e. from his reading and from hearsay. This invocation of (indirect) knowledge can be used by the speaker to prepare the ground for the forthcoming assessment towards the referent, which can be within the co-participants' territory of knowledge as well as presumably emotionally attached to by the co-participants.

4.7 Summary

The analysis in this chapter has shown that negative assessments of artefacts and practices in the co-participants' cultural groups are produced in some conditions. First, interactional work has been put into the production of negative assessments on the speakers' part; assessments are seen to be produced with mitigation (e.g. caution, indirectness, and incorporation of both positive and negative stances in assessing turns). The employment of interactional work may have the effect of mitigating or softening the tone of their negative assessments and displaying the speakers' consideration to avoid overtly producing assessments which can presumably displease the members of the referred to cultural groups. Second, negative assessments which are explicitly produced (e.g. with overt use of negative assessment terms) are observed to be produced in a position that is likely to be acceptable, for example after the co-participants' displayed agreements with similar assessments which are produced in the previous turns. It is also found that some utterances are produced without overt assessment terms to mark the turns as assessments; however, they can be interpreted by the cultural members as assessing artefacts or practices in their cultural group. Occasionally, the speakers of assessments are observed to display his/her subordination or lower epistemic status as parts of their assessing turns. This display of subordination or lower epistemic status from the speakers of assessments can form their action of seeking confirmation from the co-participants who are members of the referred to countries. Finally, the speakers of assessments are seen to invoke their access to the referents that are located in the co-participants' home countries. Their claim of access/knowledge may work to support the entitlement of their assessments and possibly make them more acceptable and less likely to be challenged by the cultural members.

Chapter 5. Responses to Negative Assessments

5.1 Introduction

In this setting of interaction in cultural exchange programs, negative assessments of artefacts, practices and phenomena in particular cultural groups can provide the relevance of agreement and disagreement (confirmation or denial) from members of the referred to cultural groups in the next turn. Their higher epistemic status on matters in their own cultural groups and possibly the sense of belonging to their cultural groups may make relevant for them to produce some kind of responses (e.g. agreement or disagreement) towards the assessments (Pomerantz, 1984a). While several extracts that were examined in the previous chapter will be revisited in this chapter, it should be noted that these extracts are examined in this chapter with different analytic focus. The focus in this chapter is placed on how negative assessments of artefacts, practice or phenomena in particular countries are responded to by the members of the referred to countries.

It has been observed that negative assessments of referents in a particular country are always responded to by members of that country either directly or indirectly. In some cases, the co-participants who are non-members but have access to the referred to countries join to respond to the assessments, together with members of the country. The analysis shows that the participants who are members of the cultural group provide different forms and degrees of agreeing responses, while disagreement is never produced explicitly. This section illustrates participants' responses, ranging from agreeing responses (i.e. only an agreeing component is produced), not fully agreeing responses (i.e. exhibiting both an agreeing component and a disagreeing component), and a lack of explicitly displayed agreement/disagreement, but engaging in other kinds of activities.

5.2 Agreeing Responses Followed by Accounts

Agreeing responses to assessments in socializing in these short-term cultural exchange programs appear to carry some characteristic forms. For example, the agreement is displayed and accounts explaining the existing characteristics of the referents being assessed are provided after the displayed agreements.

The following extract shows a conversation between three students (GEM and HAN from Thailand and ZON from Malaysia), who participated in intensive English courses in the same language institution in Malaysia and were socializing in a cafeteria after their classes. ZON shared with the co-participants his experiences visiting a city in Thailand, Hat Yai, saying what he liked and noticed in this city. As part of his sharing of his experience in the co-participants' home city, ZON proffered an assessment of the road conditions. GEM, the cultural member of Thailand, responded to the assessment with an agreement token. Additional to the agreement token, he also provided a description of the city as an old city, bringing in the status of the city as being built long ago at a time when large roadways were not required, possibly as an explanation of the narrow roads of the city being assessed.

Extract 5.1: Hat Yai the road is so small

(15-10-2014: 614-654; 14.7.642-14.54.135)

ZON: Malaysia, GEM: Thailand, HAN: Thailand

Negative Assessment	1	*ZON: but (0.4) Hat Yai the:: when↑ in you in the town↑ (0.3)
	2	the: road is so# small right?#(.) but[it's]

#Fig. 1



Fig. 1: ZON initiates assessment segment and looks at GEM

#Fig.2



Fig. 2: ZON seeks confirmation from GEM after the assessment produced

Response	3	*GEM: [yes]
	4	(1.0)
		((ZON looks away and displays thinking face))
	5	*ZON: [it's]
Response	6	*GEM: [be]cause it's (0.2) old city I [I think]
	7	*ZON: [>yah yah<]
	8	it's old city (0.3) and the electric wire?
	9	(0.7)
		((ZON points to the cable in the restaurant))

ZON shares what he notices in the city of Hat Yai during his visit, “(in) Hat Yai when you in the town the road is so small right?” (Line 1-2). He seems to look away from the co-participants as if he is thinking in the turn-initial unit. Immediately after the production of the

assessment segment “*so small*”, assessing the road conditions in the referred to city, he attends to GEM (Figure 1). At the turn-final unit of his assessment, he uses the tag “*right?*” (Figure 2) to seek confirmation from GEM on the propositional content of his assessment. ZON’s attending to and seeking confirmation from GEM while talking about the city can display his orientation to GEM’s cultural identity as a member of that city, whose greater knowledge on matters in the city may be assumed.

GEM responds to ZON’s confirmation seeking regarding the propositional content of the assessment with an agreement token “*yes*” (Line 3). His agreement can be described as less than strong agreement in that the agreement token is not emphasised in respect of its prosody nor elaborated in any fashion during the one second pause which follows.

ZON seems to continue producing another turn of talk after receiving confirmation from GEM. He initiates a turn initial “*but it’s*” (Line 2) and displays a thinking face, withholding the production of the rest of the turn. After a one second pause, during which ZON displays a thinking face, possibly looking for a word to complete his turn, GEM offers an account of the status of the referred to city “*because it’s old city I think*” (Line 6), providing an account based on his personal subjectivity why such a characteristic (i.e. roads are so small) exists in the city. By offering the account of city status (i.e. as an old city) as an explanation of the existence of narrow roads in the city, GEM can be seen to invoke and make relevant his cultural identity as a member of the cultural group who can provide an explanation for the characteristics of the referred to city.

5.3 Not Fully Agreeing Responses

When negative assessments of artefacts, practices or phenomena in the co-participant’s home countries occur in socializing in short-term cultural exchange programs, it is observed that the participants who are members of the referred to countries do not show strong agreements with those assessments; they appear not to deliver their agreement quickly, strongly and explicitly. Rather, they are seen to show mere or weak agreement with those assessments. These weak agreements are expressed through agreement expressions which can be considered minimal or less than fully agreeing, such as “*yeah*”, “*yah*”, “*uh huh*” or other kinds of actions which can display the speakers’ agreement, to some extent, but not strong agreement.

The following section presents the ways in which the recipients show their agreements which can be described as less than entire agreements with the negative assessments of

referents in their cultural groups, through the use of laughter, hesitation markers, and giving additional and contrasting information on the referents being assessed after some agreement is displayed.

5.3.1 Minimal Agreement Tokens Followed by Laughter

The extract below shows a conversation among students attending an intensive English course at a university in Malaysia. During their talk, MOD (a participant from Libya) made relevant an assessment of a phenomenon in the Thai cultural group as part of his response to NAT's (a Thai co-participant's) information directed to him on what it will be like for Arab tourists like him to travel in her country (Thailand). Based on what he is informed, both from the immediate prior turns and hearing from friends (which is not shown in the transcript), MOD made an assessment that the food as well as other items sold for Arabic customers in Thailand were always expensive, to which the Thai cultural members responded with weak agreement tokens, showing their agreeing responses but not in a strong agreement, followed by a laugh response, possibly showing the midrange characteristics of their responses.

Extract 5.2: For Arab people always expensive

(05-11-2014 (1): 819-828; 16.57.773-17.10.173)

NAT: Thai, JUB: Thai, MOD: Libyan, PUT: Indonesian

	1	*NAT:	in: in the mall maybe have like (0.8)
	2		um:: [like halal] food [too.]
	3	*MOD:	[xxxxxxxxxxxx] [really?]
	4		(0.3)
	5	*NAT:	but: it's for Arab and it's TOO: expen[sive.]
Negative Assessment	6	*MOD:	[°ex]pensive° I
	7		know: Arab [always expen]sive.
Response	8	*JUB:	[°h ya(h)h °]
Response	9	*NAT:	[uhm:]
Response	10	*JUB:	[.hh]ha haha =
	11	*PUT:	= °yah°
	12		(1.0)

In this extract, NAT gives information about where halal food (i.e. food production conforming to Islamic rules) can be found in Bangkok to MOD who, in the many previous turns, has asked for this relevant information when travelling to Thailand. Doing so, NAT

appears to enact her cultural identity as a member of Thailand. NAT informs MOD about the place where he can find halal food, “*in the mall may be have like halal food too*” in the first turn (Line 1-2), to which surprise is shown from MOD (Line 3). After a short pause of 0.3 seconds, NAT continues to inform him about the disadvantage of the place she mentioned in her prior turn, “*but it’s for Arab and it’s TOO: expensive*” (Line 5). She stresses the segment telling the price through the prosody of the production of the assessment segment (i.e. in an elongated and louder voice in “*TOO: expensive*”), probably highlighting the highly expensive price of halal food there. MOD is seen to hear the assessment before the assessing turn reaches its completion, probably the assessment is conveyed by the intensifier “*too*” and its prosody (i.e. loudness and elongation); he produces a receipt, “*I know (for) Arab always expensive*” (Line 7) in overlap with the assessment term “*expensive*” in NAT’s turn. The stressed and elongated “*I know*”, together with the addition of “*always*”, in MOD’s response can display that he has an expectation to receive the same information about the expensive prices for Arabic tourists that he has received before.

JUB, a Thai participant, shows an agreeing response to MOD’s commenting of more expensive items for Arab tourists in her home country with a minimal agreement “*yah*” (Line 8) in overlap with MOD’s comment. However, the agreeing token from JUB is produced in a softened voice and loaded with laughter particles, which may show her less than full agreement with MOD’s comment. NAT also shows an agreeing response to the comment through a minimal agreement token “*uhm:*” (Line 9). This agreement is joined by PUT’s, an Indonesian participant, agreement token “*yah*” (Line 11), which is noticeably produced in a softened voice after the agreements from the members of the cultural group (JUB and NAT).

In this case, laughter after weak agreement (in the case of JUB’s response) may have a closure implicative since it does less than add something to the sequence. The same can be seen in Svennevig’s (1999) and Glen and Holt’s (2013) data. Providing laughter, which can carry midrange equivocal responses (Holt, 2012; Lavin & Maynard, 2001) and no other kind of response added to the minimal agreement, the speaker does not seem to show preference or enthusiasm to develop talk on the on-going topic of “*Always expensive for Arab*”. Their weak agreements and laughter are followed by a one-second pause, and there is no comment added on this topic. Then, the topic is shifted to another question concerning the price tourists have to pay for transportation (not presented in the transcript).

5.3.2 Laugh Responses

The previous section demonstrates the participants' agreement followed by laughter as a response to the negative assessment of a phenomenon in their cultural group. This section shows that assessments can be responded to by a laugh response alone, with neither the production of explicit agreement nor disagreement. In the literature, recipients' laughter alone, without other verbal production, can work as a response to the co-participants' prior turns (Jefferson, 1993; Jefferson et al., 1987; Holt, 2012), for example frequently as a response to joke-telling. This section demonstrates that when negative assessments of phenomena in a particular cultural group occur in conversation, a laugh response is sometimes employed by recipients who are members of the referred to cultural group to respond to assessments. This laugh response can probably display that they take the turn non-seriously, which can result in defusing situations where there is potential offence/unease.

The use of laugh responses to respond to negative assessments is demonstrated in the extract below, in which three exchange students (KHI, MIS and AHM, participants from Myanmar, Thailand and Indonesia respectively) were socializing in a cafeteria in a university in Malaysia. KHI shared with the co-participants information about the practice of giving priority to male participants at dining tables, which she believed is specific to her country (Myanmar). After KHI's sharing, MIS asked a question, probing the survival of such an traditional practice in the modern world. This questioning on the survival of this cultural practice seemed to be understood by the cultural member as assessment-relevant. The extract below shows that a laugh response is employed to respond to the assessment as a way to show that she treats the assessment-relevant turn as non-serious.

Extract 5.3: Taking rice

(05-11-2014(2):2788-2819; 50.39-51.6)

AHM: Indonesia, MIS: Thailand, KHI: Myanmar

1 *KHI: you know↑# in my country↑

#Fig.1



Fig. 1: KHI addresses to AHM

2 *AHM: ((AHM slightly nods and fixes his gaze at KHI))
 3 *KHI: if you want to take the rice (0.9) er: we have to give
 4 you first (0.6) the boy: (0.4) we have to give you
 5 [first but now]
 6 *MIS: **[ah# still these]day?**

Negative
Assessment

#Fig.2



Fig. 2: MIS addresses her turn to KHI

7 *KHI: **a huh huhuh**
 8 (0.3)
 9 *MIS: is it okay?
 10 *KHI: [yah::]
 11 *AHM: [it is a] culture?
 12 (0.6)
 13 *KHI: uh yah
 14 (0.6)
 15 *MIS: oh:::

Response

KHI initiates the sharing of her country's cultural practice (in Myanmar) of males having priority at the dining table by using the preface "*you know in my country*", apparently getting attention and proposing to tell about the cultural practice in her country, which can be tellable to the co-participants who are non-members. She selects AHM, the only male participant at this moment, through her gaze, as the direct recipient. AHM responds by a slight nod, which can work to confirm the reportability and the continuation of the proposed telling. Seeing that the co-participants are allowing her to continue, KHI shares this cultural practice with the co-participants. In overlap with KHI's sharing of the cultural practice, MIS (a Thai participant) asks a question enquiring about the survival of the cultural practice in question, "*Ah still these day?*" (Line 6), addressing her question directly to KHI, who is sharing the cultural practice in discussion (Figure 2).

MIS's question on the survival of this cultural practice in the co-participant's home country (Line 6) is produced in a way that shows her enthusiasm to know about its survival. It is produced before the information about the cultural practice is completely delivered, and in overlap with the turn final unit of KHI's sharing of the cultural practice. MIS's questioning about the survival of the referred to cultural practice, produced with enthusiasm, seems to display her stance towards the cultural practice as unusual or beyond her expectation.

Questioned on the survival of the practice of “giving food to the male member first” in her cultural group, KHI responds to it with laughter, rather than providing other forms of relevant response, such as yes/no responses, further explanation of the practice, or challenging the questioner. This is possibly because she does not understand the turn as a question looking for information about the survival of the cultural practice in discussion but as an assessment-relevant question, attached with the speaker’s evaluation of the cultural practice in discussion.

Through her laugh response with no other answer to the prior turn that assesses the cultural practice of her home country, KHI may be seen to express that she takes the assessment as non-serious. At the same time, her laugh response may show her disengagement with the action of assessment, without explicitly disaffiliating (Glenn, 2003; Holt, 2012), in that the laugh response alone (i.e. without any other response) can have an implication for sequence closure (Holt, 2012; Jefferson, 1993). This implication is also seen to be oriented by MIS, who produces no further pursuit for a response to the assessment-relevant question, but moves on to another question, “*is it okay now?*” asking about the acceptability of the dining manner they are currently doing.

By providing a laugh response to the assessment-relevant question, KHI can be seen to display that she does not fully agree with the assessment-relevant utterance. Informed by CA research, a laugh response is known to display midrange responses (Holt, 2012), probably from not fully agreeing to not fully disagreeing. The equivocal characteristics of a laugh response may allow the speaker to provide an ambiguous response to the prior assessment-relevant question without displaying her agreement or disagreement explicitly. Equally, the laugh response in this extract can display the speaker’s orientation to this assessment-relevant turn as non-serious, and this can possibly invite the co-participants to take the same non-serious stance towards the sequence of talk, contributing to making light of the conversation in which offence/unease is potentially developed (Heritage, 2011).

5.3.3 Minimal Agreement Followed by Giving Further Contrasting Information

The following conversation took place among six exchange students (NAT, JUB, AHM, FAZ, PUT, and MOD) who were socializing while waiting for the next session of an intensive course at a university in Malaysia. MOD, a Libyan participant, shared his upcoming plan to visit Thailand and enquired about finding halal food in the Thai cities he wanted to visit. In this question-answer sequence, AHM, who had experienced visiting Thailand, gave information, which conveyed a negative assessment of the country, i.e. a food item that is

supposed to be halal (chicken) is not always guaranteed in Thai tourist-destination cities. The extract below shows that when the utterance that seems to negatively assess a phenomenon in a cultural group occurs, it is responded to by the member of that cultural group, who provides a weak agreement and moves to provide further contrasting information which appears to deny the “so true quality” of the prior assessment.

Extract 5.4: Even though you order chicken, it's not halal

(05-11-2014 (1):1187-1215)

AHM, PUT and FAZ: Indonesia, NAT and JUB: Thailand, MOD: Libya

1 *MOD: is halal food manyma[ny.]#

#Fig. 1



Fig. 1:MOD addresses his question to AHM

2 *AHM: [yo-] although- even that you
 3 or[dered chicken]
 4 *MOD: [fish fish] yeah [fish].
 5 *NAT: [yah]
 6 *AHM: **or even you order chicken I think it's notharal halal.**
 7 *PUT: **too difficult to be th[ere] to eat food ha[lal].**
 8 *NAT: [yeah]
 9 *AHM: [yeah]
 10 *NAT: **yeah**
 11 *JUB: **maybe big city yeah you can (xxxx)**
 12 *AHM: yeah the same similar. ((Address directly to MOD))
 13 *NAT: ha hahaha
 14 *PUT: [ha huhuhu]
 15 *FAZ: [XXXXXXXX]
 16 *NAT: no, it have: halal ehmm.[food in]:: mall for A:rab.
 17 *JUB: [it have but]
 18 *AHM: but in::
 19 *NAT: [and:]
 20 *PUT: [xxx] xx

- Negative Assessment
- Response
- Response
- Response
- Response

21 *AHM: Hat Yai[xxxxxxxx] ⁶halal food=
 22 *NAT: [expensive.]
 23 *NAT: = but in: Bangkok# have too many Arab too.

Fig. 2



Fig. 2: MOD attends to NAT

24 *MOD: krab- krabi?
 25 *NAT: I don't know.
 26 *JUB: have have Krabi have.

MOD, who is looking for information on the availability of halal food in Thai tourist destination cities, asks the question, “*Is halal food many many (in Thailand).*” (Line 1), directly addressing his turn to AHM, who is recognized in the current talk as someone who has recently visited Thailand. AHM’s knowledge from his experience in Thailand as a tourist can be relevant here, and he answers MOD’s enquiry. NAT, a Thai cultural member, seems to be engaged in talking to FAZ at this moment, so she does not join the talk. MOD selects AHM, who used to visit the country and can be entitled to give information based on his direct experience (not presented in the transcript) to answer his question.

To respond to MOD’s enquiry, AHM does not provide a direct yes or no answer, but provides the comment, possibly based on his trip experience, that “*if you order*” (Line 2), “*even that you order chicken*” (Line 4) and “*or even order chicken I think it's not halal*” (Line 6), conveying the idea that food which is expected to be appropriate for Muslims may not be the case in some tourist areas. This assessment is supported by PUT, an Indonesian participant who also has experience of visiting Thailand. She proffers the assessment around halal food which is alluded to in AHM’s turn, that “*too difficult to be there to eat halal food*” (Line 7), to which NAT shows her mere agreement “*yeah*” (Line 8), followed by AHM’s agreement “*yeah*” (Line 9) and again by NAT’s “*yeah*” (Line 10), without any other supportive addition on the shortage of places to eat halal food in Thai cities at this moment.

⁶ Halal stands for the type of meat that is permissible to be consumed by Muslims on account of the fact that it has been slaughtered according to Islamic rules.

The assessment of the phenomenon in the Thai cultural group is then responded to by JUB, who provides further contrasting information about places where AHM can find halal food in the tourist cities of the country, “*maybe big city yeah you can*” (Line 11), clarifying that it may be difficult to find halal food to eat in small towns, but it is not so in big cities. Her provision of further information can work as a disagreeing component to the prior assessment in some fashion. A few turns later, NAT provides additional information aligning to JUB’s disagreeing turn by producing a disagreement token and adding information on the place that halal can be available in the country “*no, it have halal ehm food in mall for Arab*” (Line 16), which contrasts and may work to disagree with the assessment that it is difficult to find halal food in Thai tourist cities.

By giving more depth and breadth of information on the phenomenon (i.e. finding halal food in Thailand), JUB and NAT appear to display their higher status regarding the knowledge of the Thai cultural group; they can talk about the matter of halal food in many places, not only in Hat Yai (which was visited by every participant except MOD) but also other places (i.e. Bangkok and Krabi). Their cultural identity as members of the cultural group is thus invoked in this action.

In Line 21 (even though part of his turn cannot be heard clearly), AHM, who has visited Hat Yai, is heard talking about the halal food in Hat Yai in competitive overlap with NAT’s informing of the availability of halal food in malls. At the moment of talk where AHM and NAT give information in overlap to each other, MOD’s attention has turned completely to NAT (as shown in Figure 2) as she specifies that she is giving information for other cities, not only Hat Yai (Line 23). The breadth of information in her turn may work to get attention from MOD and at the same time may work to invoke her cultural identity as a member of the Thai cultural group who can give more (and more credible) information about the country.

In this extract, the assessment of a phenomenon in the Thai cultural group is responded to by both the members and non-members of the country. However, the depth and breadth of their responses can be noticeable. The member of the cultural group can be seen to give information with depth (i.e. giving further information that can clarify the question) and information with breadth (i.e. giving information about the phenomenon in discussion in many cities). This manner of giving information can invoke their cultural identities as members of the cultural group who have a more sophisticated knowledge about the cultural group than the non-members who have mere access (i.e. have visited for a short time) to the

cultural group. To respond to the assessment which negatively assesses a phenomenon in Thai tourist cities, the members of the Thai cultural group are seen to respond as not fully agreeing to the prior assessment: first by showing some agreement through a minimal agreement, and then a disagreeing component through giving further contrasting information on the phenomenon in discussion, which can work to disagree with the prior assessment.

5.3.4 Less than Strong Agreement through Hedging

This section describes the responses involving the use of hedges, for example “*I think*”, which can mark the epistemic status of the speakers on the referent being referred to (Bybee et al., 1994; Coates, 1990; Karkkainen, 2003) as well as showing his/her stance as non-committal on the propositional content of their turns. In assessment sequences in this study, the speakers’ use of forms of hedging in their agreeing responses can suggest their less than strong agreements to the prior assessments.

The conversation presented in the extract below occurred during the socializing of three interlocutors (GEM and HAN from Thailand and ZON from Malaysia) attending extensive English courses in a language institution in Malaysia. The conversation took place after ZON shared his experiences visiting Thailand and stated that he liked the beer there because of its inexpensive price. Then, GEM made a reciprocal assessment that beer is more expensive in Malaysia, possibly to account for why ZON likes the item in Thailand, where beer is generally sold more cheaply. GEM seemed hesitant in producing the negative assessment of the price being higher in Malaysia, the home country of the co-participant. The hedging employed by GEM in the production of a negative assessment (e.g. withholding from articulating the assessment term) was described earlier in Section 4.2.1. The agreeing response to the assessment of a higher price for the same item in Malaysia which is produced in hedging by ZON is described in this section.

Extract 5.5: But in Malaysia

(15-10-2014: 689-698)

ZON: Malaysian, GEM: Thai, HAN: Thai

- 1 *ZON: the beer so cheap
- 2 *GEM: yes =
- 3 *HAN: =so cheapo
- 4 (0.6)

5 *GEM: **but** | **in Malay**#
 | ((GEM shakes his head))

Negative
Assessment

#Fig. 1



6 (0.2) **Fig. 1:**GEM articulates country name and looks at ZON

7 *ZON: **Malay I think in Malaysia it's expensive.**

Response

8 | (1.1)
 | ((ZON looks away and shakes his head))

Developing talk about the beer item, GEM appears to proffer an assessment of expensive beer in the co-participant's country "but in Malay" (Line 5), as a reciprocal assessment after the co-participant's comment about the cheaper price of the item in Thailand. While articulating the country name "Malay", GEM fixes his gaze at ZON, displaying his orientation to ZON's category as a member or representative of the country he is talking about (Figure 1). After a short pause of 0.2 seconds, ZON takes up the assessing turn and provides a relevant response, "Malay I think in Malaysia it's expensive." (Line 7). Notably, the response is produced as a second assessment on the same referent in question. The non-upgrading manner of ZON's second assessment in his response can portray some lessened certainty on the fact of the artefact in discussion. The marker of hedging "I think" shows the quality of his agreement to the prior assessment; his response can be characterized as non-committal and less than strongly agreeing with GEM's assessment.

Even though ZON's response to the assessment appears as an agreeing response, it is not strongly agreeing in that he appears to produce his response in a dispreferred turn shape (Pomerantz, 1984a); he produces it after a pause and does not express explicitly or directly that he agrees with the prior assessment. His employment of the epistemic stance marker "I think" marks his uncertainty and non-commitment regarding the fact "the beer item is more expensive in Malaysia", which can be within his territory of knowledge to confirm or deny.

His lack of commitment to his second assessment "Malay(sia) I think in Malaysia it's expensive" (Line 7) as a response to the prior assessment can suggest his favour that the current assessment sequence does not continue. He displays his favour to bring the current talk to closure at a later point in the interaction. That is, after his non-committal second assessment, "Malay(sia) I think in Malaysia it's expensive", he does not provide any other verbal response to it but another 1.1 second gap (Line 8), in which he looks away and shakes

his head, possibly displaying his preference not to develop talk on this topic of a more expensive item in his country compared to the co-participant's country.

In this extract, an assessment of a phenomenon in Malaysia is responded to by a member of the country whose cultural identity is oriented to through the gaze of the speaker of the assessment when he articulates the country name in the assessing turn. The member of the Malaysian cultural group (ZON) is seen to provide a non-committal second assessment as a response to the prior assessment. ZON's employment of the epistemic stance marker "*I think*" showing his uncertainty in his response, "*Malay I think in Malaysia it's expensive*" although it can be seen to be within his territory and knowledge to do so. This can be seen as way to provide a less than strongly agreeing response to the prior negative assessment of the higher price of an item in his cultural group.

To conclude, the extracts above (Extract: 5.2, 5.3, 5.4 and 5.5) show that participants produce less than strongly agreeing responses to the prior assessments assessing negatively referents in their cultural groups. For instance, they produce a laugh response or an agreement followed by laughter, which can indicate the mid-range/in-between characteristics of their responses (Holt, 2012; Pomerantz, 1978). Their agreeing responses are sometimes followed by a disagreeing component (i.e. further information that somehow contrasts to the prior assessment) or showing non-committal to the content that supports the prior assessment. This lack of explicitness in agreement in their turns can mark the dispreferred organization of their responses (Pomerantz, 1984a; Sacks, 1987), in which they do not make an explicitly agreeing response. These responses may be influenced by what the facts are in a particular cultural group. Apart from that, their responses may partially be influenced by the conflict between the two incongruent preferences: preference of agreement in talk (Sacks, 1987) and agreeing/accepting the negative assessments of artefacts or practices in one's own cultural group. This may lead the participants to produce responses which appear to be agreeing but not overtly agreeing.

5.4 Agreement is Not Shown but Engaging with Other Activities

When negative assessments towards referents in a particular cultural group are made, members of that cultural group are normatively responded to in some forms. The previous sections have demonstrated the production of less than fully or strongly agreeing responses to the prior assessments, describing cases where members of the referred to cultural group produce agreeing responses in which other components are produced to show they are not

fully or strongly agreeing with the prior assessments that negatively assess referents in their own cultural group.

However, it also appears to be the case that participants make relevant of other actions as a response to the prior assessments. This section presents assessment sequences in which neither an agreeing response nor a disagreeing response is produced from members of the cultural group. The speakers are observed to perform other activities rather than showing agreeing or disagreeing responses to the prior assessments. However, this lack of displayed agreeing responses from the speakers may have the implication of their disagreement to those assessments.

5.4.1 Questioning the Prior Assessments

This section demonstrates that speakers can produce the action of questioning the prior assessments as a relevant response to the assessments which negatively assess artefacts or practices in their cultural groups. The conversation occurred among four exchange students (JAY, NAS, HED and THO) while they were eating and socializing in a recreational place in Thailand. The newly cooked sticky rice was served in plastic bags and THO, a participant from Indonesia, made a negative assessment on this practice in the Thai cultural group. THO was seen to produce his assessment cautiously, with hesitation and indirect addressivity, explicitly addressing HED, who is not a cultural member of the Thai country in which the eating practice takes place, as the direct recipient of his assessment. However, the assessment was also taken up by JAY, a Thai participant, who appeared to question and project a challenge to the prior assessment, as seen in the following extract.

Extract 5.6: Food in plastic bags

(02-10-2014 (1) :49-94;14.40-15.39)

JAY: Thai, NAS: Thai, HED: Indonesian, THO: Indonesian

1 *THO: **mum do⁷ you know⁷ (.) my biology teacher said that (0.4)**

2 **if: #the: food:: (0.4) °er° take (0.2) in plastics**

Fig.1

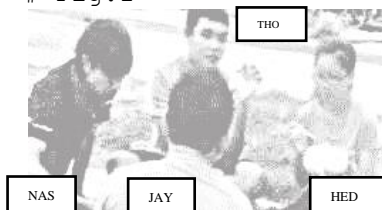


Fig. 1: THO attends to JAY when initiating assessment

Negative Assessment

Negative Assessment

3 not good for °health°

4 *JAY: [why::]

5 *HED: [oh::]::

6 (0.3)

7 *THO: [but why↑]

8 *HED: [then why-] why do you keep eating\ =

9 *JAY: = >but< in: so many Thai people eats.

10 | (0.7)

 | ((JAY takes the food bag and prepares to display it to THO))

 |Three Lines of Code-Switching Omitted

14 *JAY: yo- |you↗ you can try this.

 | ((JAY shows sticky rice squeezed in his hand to THO))

15 (0.5)

16 *THO: hah:↗

17 | (0.4)

 | ((JAY shows food in his hand to THO))

18 *NAS: [Ni GooJaYibNum Hai Gin] ((Speaking Thai: Drink this))

19 *JAY: [xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx] (.)

20 *JAY: try (0.3) like me.

21 | (0.8)

 | ((JAY shows how to eat the food))

22 *THO: aha↗

23 *HED: oh:::

24 (0.4)

25 *THO: °oh:↗ like that°

26 (0.4)

27 *HED: xxxxxxxxxxxx ((Speaking Indonesian))

28 (0.7)

29 *JAY: should try.

30 | (1.7)

 | ((JAY takes the food bag and looks at THO))

31 *THO: °I don't like it° |amm::

 | ((THO takes food into his mouth))

32 *JAY: | (1.1)

 | ((JAY puts back the food bag))

33 *THO: ha ha↑ ha

34 (0.6)

35 *JAY: my culture lah::↗

36 (0.6)

Negative Assessment

Response

Response

About to take the food, THO, an Indonesian participant, makes a negative assessment of the food packaging in Thai cultural group (i.e. cooked sticky rice that is packaged in plastic bags), addressing his assessing turn to HED, “*mum do↗ you know↗ (.) my biology teacher said that (0.4) if: the: food:(0.4)°er° take (0.2) in plastics not good for °health°*” (Line 1-3). He produces his assessment with hesitation and indirect addressivity, which is described in the previous section (Chapter 4.2.2). The focus now is on how a member of the cultural group responds to the assessment.

Immediately upon the completion of the assessment, JAY, a Thai participant, takes the turn and asks a question requesting clarification of why such a way of eating is not healthy, “*why*” (Line 4), questioning the assessment and JAY’s immediacy of taking turn can be seen to challenge the assessment. JAY’s questioning and challenging of the assessment seems to make it relevant for THO, as the speaker of the assessment, to provide some explanation. He initiates a response in Line 7, “*but why*”, before giving up his turn as it is produced in overlapped with HED’s disagreement with his assessment, “*then why do you keep eating.*” (Line 8). No response is given from THO at this moment. Then, JAY continues to inform THO that such a way of eating is common in Thailand, “*but so many Thai people eat*” (Line 9), as a justification for such a practice of eating, possibly implying that the practice is part of the Thai culture. At this point, JAY can be seen to show disagreement non-overtly to THO’s assessment in that he does not show an agreeing or disagreeing response to his assessment.

Then, JAY moves to show THO the usual way of taking and eating sticky rice from a plastic bag. He takes the sticky rice out of the bag and squeezes it in order to make a bite-sized lump before dipping it into a kind of sauce (Line 10-14). Then, an invitation is made for THO to try eating in the host culture’s way, “*try (0.3) like me.*” (Line 20). At a later point, he wraps up his explanation and demonstration by explicitly referring to such practice as part of his culture, “*my culture lah*” (Line 35), as a justification of the eating practice.

It appears in the extract that assessment that negatively assesses a practice of eating in Thai cultural group is taken and responded to by a member of the Thai cultural group. In this extract, two speakers take their turn to respond to the assessment in overlap with each other: one is selected explicitly as the direct recipient of the turn (HED), and one is a cultural member of the referred to country who self-select to respond to the turn (JAY). His self-selecting to respond to the assessment may display his orientation to his cultural identity as a member of the cultural group at this moment. The extract also shows that rather than showing disagreement explicitly, JAY appears to first question the prior assessment and then provides a justification for the practice in question as normal in the country. Through these actions, his disagreement with the negative assessment on the way of eating in his cultural group can be

implied. That is, even though he does not produce any disagreeing response explicitly, his lack of agreement itself can have the implication of disagreement (Mori, 1999).

5.4.2 Initiating Repair of the Assessing Turns

The extract below shows another case in which the participants do not explicitly show an agreeing or disagreeing response to the negative assessments but make other actions relevant as a response, which, in a way, can be seen to disengage from the assessment sequences.

The conversation took place among three participants (GEM, HAN and ZON), who were attending intensive language courses at the same language institution in Malaysia. They were eating and socializing in the evening after their classes. In the course of interaction, ZON (a participant from Malaysia) shared with the co-participants what he experienced in Thailand, the co-participants' home country, saying that he likes the beer there, and GEM (a Thai participant) offered a possible account of why ZON liked the beer in the country, commenting on the price of the item in Thailand (his country) and then the price of the item in Malaysia (ZON's home country), as shown in Extract: 4.4. This extract shows that, after GEM's assessment of the price of beer in Malaysia, HAN (a Thai participant) makes another assessment which is more explicit and assesses that everything in Malaysia is expensive. It can be relevant that ZON, the cultural member of the Malaysian cultural group, shows some agreeing or disagreeing response to this assessment, but he seems to make relevant other action, as seen in the extract presented below.

Extract 5.7: But in Malaysia

(10-15-2014: 699-711; 15.12-15.40)

ZON: Malaysian, GEM: Thai, HAN: Thai

1 *HAN:<Malaysia:> expensive everything#

#Fig.1

Negative Assessment



Fig. 1: ZON attends to HAN upon the completion of assessment

2 | (0.9)
| ((ZON focuses his gaze at HAN and smiles))

3 *ZON: what((Smiling voice)) Response
 4 | (0.6)
 | ((ZON leans closer to HAN as if to listen to him))#



Fig. 2: ZON smiles and leans towards HAN.

5 *HAN: Malaysia expensive everything ((Speaking louder))
 6 (0.3)
 7 *ZON: |everything expensive||
 | ((ZON smiles and looks at HAN))
 | | ((ZON slightly nods))
 8 *HAN: yeah:: (0.2) er:: (0.2) °tam nun lae°
 ((Speaking Thai: Up to you, whatever you like to put it))

An assessment is made explicitly towards price of things in the Malaysian cultural group, “*Malaysia expensive everything*” (Line 1) by HAN, a participant from the Thai cultural group. While talking about the phenomenon in the Malaysian cultural group, HAN looks at ZON, at the same time ZON looks at him, resulting in a mutual gaze upon the completion of the assessment (Figure 1). ZON has his gaze fixed on HAN after the production of the explicit assessment and initiates the repair using an open-class initiation “*what*” (Drew, 1998) in Line 3, with a smiling face and leaning towards HAN as if to listen to him (Figure 2).

Notably, ZON’s initiation is produced with a smiling voice and in a playful manner. He leans closer to HAN as if to listen to him more carefully, claiming not to have heard what HAN has said and treating the trouble as a hearing one. Smiles, as well as other embodiments such as laughter, as a response to the prior turns can be seen as a way of demonstrating his understanding. However, he chooses to make an initiation of repair relevant at this moment while it seems that the assessing turn is, to some degree, understood by him. This repair initiation may be employed as a strategic use. ZON may rely on the Open Class Repair Initiation “*what*”, which can be one of the easiest types of initiation (e.g. Pomerantz, 1984b; Svennevig, 2008) together with the body conduct (i.e. leaning towards the trouble source speaker) to signal the problem as a hearing one, the kind of problem which can be regarded as less sensitive than the problem of understanding or acceptability.

After the other-initiation, HAN treats the initiation as a hearing problem and repeats what he has said with a louder voice in the next turn. However, ZON does not explicitly

demonstrate understanding of the repair offered by HAN's repetition, which may support the interpretation that he might have achieved some understanding of HAN's assessing turn earlier, even before HAN's repeat to repair.

There are two possible phenomena happening simultaneously in HAN's repair "*Malaysia expensive everything*": one is a negative assessment of the Malaysian cultural group, and the other is the ungrammatical structure produced. It is possible for ZON to make relevant and respond to one or both of these phenomena. ZON moves to grammatically correct HAN's utterance by switching the order of words and deleting the country name from his corrective turn, from "*Malaysia expensive everything*" (Line 5) into "*everything expensive*" (Line 7), making a point of the linguistic accuracy of the utterance, rather than showing agreeing/ disagreeing with the assessment element of the turn. ZON's initiation for repair as a response to the prior assessment in this extract can possibly be characterizable as disengaging from the current assessment sequence. That is, he moves to develop talk on language accuracy/language learning, rather than giving a direct response, agreement or disagreement (Pomerantz, 1984a), to the assessment in which a phenomenon in his cultural group is negatively assessed.

While ZON seems to display his orientation to linguistic accuracy through correcting HAN's prior turn (i.e. "*Malaysia expensive everything*") to "*everything expensive*," HAN does not show the same orientation in this moment; he is seen to refuse to take part in the repair sequence which appears to be invited by ZON's correction. Rather, he responds with a declination, "*up to you, whatever you say*" (Line 8), showing no desire to give further comment on the correction and does not treat the teaching-learning sequence as relevant here.

In this extract, the repair initiation can be seen as a device in interaction (Sacks, 1992), in that the speaker's making relevant of repair initiation in spite of achieving some understanding of the prior turn (e.g. from his facial display), rather than producing an action that is due at that current turn (e.g. showing agreement or disagreement in this case). The initiation of repair can permit his moving to repair sequence, rather than showing direct agreement or disagreement with the prior assessment. This is supported by Sacks' (1987) notion of preference for agreement and contiguity in that the action of repair initiation can be used to delay the disagreement or even re-organize the trajectory of participation of the ongoing talk to a sequence of repair, rather than showing agreeing/disagreeing that is due at the current turn.

As shown in the above extracts (Extract 5.6 and 5.7), members of the referred to country are observed to take the turn to respond to the assessments that negatively assess phenomena in their cultural group. However, when an agreeing or disagreeing response is due, the participants refrain from showing agreement/disagreement explicitly with the assessments; rather, they make other sequences relevant where appropriate (i.e. questioning the assessment or initiating repair). Informed by the preference for agreement in conversation (Sacks, 1987), this lack of agreement itself can suggest disagreement with the assessment. It can be noted that to agree with negative assessments of referents in his/her country, the speakers can be interpreted as accepting the criticism-related assessments and can somehow decry their own cultural group. In contrast, disagreeing with those negative assessments can possibly lead to the impression that the speakers do not accept what the fact is (if what is being assessed negatively is true) and disagreeing with the co-participants can often be oriented to as uncomfortable, difficult and risking offence. This may not be a desirable occurrence in their socializing. In these cases, the speakers may avoid showing overt disagreements or prefer to keep the disagreement at a very low level, and this may lead speakers to rely on other ways to respond to the assessments, for example by making other activities relevant, rather than showing explicit disagreement with the prior assessments.

5.5 Summary

This chapter has demonstrated how negative assessments of referents of particular cultural groups are responded to by recipients who are members of the referred to cultural groups. The analysis has shown that assessments of any referents in specific cultural groups are taken by the members of the cultural group to respond (i.e. alone or together with the other non-member of the cultural group who also have access to the cultural groups). Extract 5.2 and Extract 5.4 have shown that non-members who have experienced or accessed the referents being assessed appear to join in to respond to the assessments, together with the members of the referred to cultural group.

The analysis has also shown that the recipients respond to the negative assessments of referents in their cultural groups in some patterns. Generally, negative assessments are not responded to with explicit disagreement. Often, the recipients show less than strongly agreeing responses to the assessments. Extract 5.1 shows that the agreements can be characterizable as not strong agreements through their prosody (i.e. their softness) and are

followed by an account or explanation of the existing characteristics being negatively assessed. Apart from that, the agreements are produced in a manner that can be characterized as not fully agreeing; it is not only the agreeing responses that are produced but also the disagreeing components, and their agreeing responses are seen to be produced in dispreferred turn shapes (Pomerantz, 1984a), neither quickly nor explicitly agreeing. Extract 5.4 shows that their agreement is expressed through the production of mere agreement tokens, followed by further information that works to contrast or refute the true-in-all-cases of the prior assessment. In some cases, agreement is not shown, but the participants make other actions relevant. Extract 5.6 and Extract 5.7 showed cases where other actions are produced as responses to the assessments (i.e. questioning the assessment and initiation of repair), rather than showing agreeing or disagreeing responses. Previous research has suggested that even though disagreements are not explicitly produced, the lack of displayed agreement can suggest disagreement (Mori, 1999).

The recipients' responses to negative assessments can be generally shaped by what the facts are about the referents being assessed. They can agree with the prior assessment when the assessment accords with an existing fact, and disagree when the assessment does not accord with the existing fact. Apart from that, it may be plausible to say that the recipients' responses can be influenced by the preference for agreement in interaction (Sacks, 1987) when the recipients produce responses that show both agreeing and disagreeing components, possibly making their responses appear agreeing, or at least not explicitly disagreeing. Moreover, the possible consequences of agreeing/disagreeing with the assessments may have influenced the participants' responses. That is, showing agreeing responses to those negative assessments of artefacts or practices in ones' own cultural group may have the implication of opening the opportunity for more negative assessments to be produced (Eder et al., 1995), while showing disagreement may imply the recipients' being narrow-minded, not open to negative assessments which are appropriate according to what the facts are. The recipients' characterizable mid-range responses can be similar to the ones shown in Pomerantz's (1978) study of compliment responses, where in-between responses which exhibit both agreement and disagreement seem to be produced as a solution to satisfy the "acceptance/agreement preference" and "self-praise avoidance".

Chapter 6. Discussion

6.1 Introduction

There have been attempts to understand the phenomena occurring in interaction in cultural exchange programs or the like in which participants from different countries take part in. Different actions of participants' interaction in these programs, for instance self-presentation (Chen, 1993), language learning (Scollon, 2002), and establishment of common ground (Victoria, 2011), have been described. However, very little research has explored the interactional moments in these programs in which offence to the participants is possible.

This study contributes to this line of research by examining the under-researched interactional moments when one party makes negative assessments towards referents in the co-participants' home countries when talking about experiences or phenomena in the co-participants' countries. This type of assessment has occurred in interaction among participants coming from different countries in exchange programs and is examined by this study, particularly with regard to how the assessments that display their negative evaluation on artefacts or practices in the co-participants' countries are produced and how those assessments are responded to by the recipients who are members of the referred to cultural groups. These negative assessments may create unease/offence for the recipients who might have an emotional attachment to those cultural groups, and the participants involved in interaction might interact in some ways to deal with these moments. Using CA and MCA as micro-analysis research tools, this study demonstrates from an emic perspective how assessments are produced by non-member speakers and responded to by the recipients who are cultural members of the referred to cultural group, attending to what the participants make relevant by themselves in talk-in-interaction.

The overall findings suggest that when negative assessments are involved in interaction both the speakers and the recipients of the assessments are observed to do interactional work that appears to make light of the situations in which the co-participants' displeasure or offence is likely when negative assessments of referents possibly connected to the recipients are involved. In this chapter, a discussion of the features of the speakers' production and the recipients' responses to the assessments that may contribute to the making light of interaction and the lack of development of offensiveness in on-going conversation will be presented,

which will be followed by the discussion of the two contributions of the study. Then, future research related to assessment sequences in conversation is recommended for a deeper understanding of the action of assessment that occurs in intercultural encounters.

6.2 Discussion of the Findings: Making and Responding to Negative Assessments

It was found in the analysis that interactional work is performed by both parties in the conversation (both the speakers and the recipients of the assessments), who seem to contribute to making light of situations where negative assessments of one party's cultural group occur. Both parties do not appear to make the situation more intense or develop the potential offence that may result from the negative assessments. Speakers often produce the assessments which display their negative evaluation less than overtly, and the recipients never produce their disagreement with the assessments explicitly. These actions, performed by the speakers and the recipients of assessments, may contribute to the non-development of a potential offence or conflicts in conversation.

6.2.1 Interactional Work Displayed by Both Parties

This study has argued that in interactions on socializing occasions in cultural exchange programs which involve negative assessments towards artefacts, practices or phenomena in the recipients' countries, both speakers of the assessments and recipients are seen to display their orientation towards not developing an undesirable or hostile conversation that could possibly result from those negative assessments. Rather, they are seen to engage in actions to defuse a potential offence or threat that might possibly be caused by those assessments.

The lack of the development of offence or challenges in these interactions can be a result of the speakers' incorporation of some mitigation in the production of negative assessments, showing their consideration to soften those negative assessments, making negative assessments only in positions where it is more likely to be acceptable (e.g. making an assessment explicitly after prior similar assessments are agreed upon). These features of the production of assessments point to an orientation to not making those assessments explicitly in the first place. A similar trend is shared by the recipients' responses to those assessments. The recipients do not seem to show explicit disagreement or challenge the negative assessments of referents in their cultural groups.

6.2.1.1 *Production of Assessments which Display Negative Evaluation*

When talk involves assessments that display the speakers' negative evaluation towards referents in the co-participants' countries (e.g. food items, practices, people's preferences, and infrastructure), the speakers of the assessments who are not members of the cultural group appear to mitigate their assessments in some ways; they do not express those assessments overtly or formulate them as containing only a negative evaluation but also incorporating turn elements that display positive evaluation. The assessments which are explicit are limited to some certain environment, for example after an agreement with the similar assessment is displayed from the co-participants. The ways in which the speakers produce their negative assessments of artefacts or practices in the co-participants' countries point to their preference or orientation not to explicitly produce those assessments.

The analysis shows that the speakers of assessments are seen to mitigate their negative assessments through various actions (e.g. be less explicit in producing the negative assessments and displaying a mixture of both positive and negative evaluations in the assessment). Mitigation usually occurs in situations where speakers assume negative impacts or difficulties that can occur for the recipients, as well as the speakers themselves, and turns which are produced with mitigation are usually treated as delicate ones (Holmes, 1984; Schegloff, 1980). Mitigation incorporated into the production of negative assessments in this data may suggest some potential problems or undesirable impact. For instance, members of the referred to cultural group may feel awkward or be offended when listening to assessments that negatively assess artefacts or practices in their cultural groups by non-members. As a result, the speakers display their consideration to soften those negative assessments and avoid potentially unwelcome effects that may result from those assessments (Caffi, 2013; Fraser, 1980).

Additionally, negative assessments of artefacts, practices or phenomena in the co-participants' cultural groups appear to be produced in dispreferred turn shapes (Pomerantz, 1984a), in that the assessments are often produced with hesitation or withholding from explicitness. Pomerantz notes that preferred responses, whether they are agreements or disagreements, are typically performed with minimal delay, direct, explicit formulation, and without prefacing or qualification. In contrast, dispreferred responses are usually performed hesitantly, by means of equivocal, implicit formulations and often prefaced. Utterances that are produced in dispreferred turn-shape can commonly occur in some actions in which some

difficulties can be expected, for instance declining an invitation, rejecting a request, and making a request which can be demanding. Similarly, negative assessments of artefacts, practices or phenomena in the co-participants' countries which are produced in a dispreferred turn-shape can suggest some problems with the production of those assessments.

Both mitigation and the organization of dispreferred turn shapes incorporated in the production of assessments in this data can point to problems or difficulties in the production of negative assessments of referents in the co-participants' countries. These difficulties may presumably be derived from the three conditions of the interaction examined in this study: 1) the lower epistemic status of the speakers relative to the co-participants who, being members of the referred to countries, are assumed to have more knowledge and information about the referents being assessed; 2) a presumably existing emotional attachment between the referents in the assessments and the recipients; and, 3) the setting of interaction in initial encounters in which the participants do not seem to be acquainted very well yet, a setting which may restrict the speakers from producing their assessments overtly.

In interactions where speakers make negative assessments of referents in the others' countries and the recipients who are members of the countries and are assumed to know better about the referents being assessed are at the conversation sites, it may be relevant for the speakers of assessments who are assumed to hold lower epistemic status with regard to the referents of the negative assessments in certain ways. For instance, they appear to seek confirmation or some agreement from the members of the referred to countries, showing subordination and hesitation in making assessments as well as making less than explicit assessment, as presented in Sections 4.2 and 4.4.

The delicacy of making negative assessments of artefacts, practices or phenomena in the co-participants' countries in this data can have something to do with the speakers' awareness that the recipients, who are members of the referred to country, might have some connection (e.g. sense of belonging) to the referents that are being negatively assessed. Negative assessments of those referents that may be attached to the recipients can be heard as, in some sense, 'threatening' to the face of recipients who are co-present at the conversation sites. This consideration can also result in their less than explicit production of negative assessments in this data.

Additionally, the setting of interaction in these short-term cultural exchange programs, in which the participants' encounters can be described as initial ones where the participants do

not know one another very well, may work to govern the kind of interaction that is possible in this setting, in which self-revelation, getting acquainted and building interpersonal relationships should be established, and it may not be ideal for giving explicit negative assessments of the referents that co-participants might have attached to. This setting of socializing in initial encounters in which the conversation takes place may explain the less explicit negative assessments made in this data. In this particular setting, explicit negative assessments may be kept low or not produced at all as they may be heard as criticizing the referents in recipient's home countries to which they may feel attached. The literature has shown a similar line of interaction that explicit critical remarks (e.g. negative assessments) are not likely to be produced in initial encounters among the unacquainted, but they can occur only in certain environments, such as between the participants of a close relationship (Leve, 2003) or in assessments where there is no clear connection between the referents being assessed and the recipients, for instance TV programs that speakers and recipients have access to (Ergul, 2014; Hoey & Kendrick, 2018).

6.2.1.2 *Recipients' Responses to Negative Assessments*

The previous section noted that the speakers of assessments do not appear to explicitly produce negative assessments of artefacts, practices or phenomena in the recipients' countries but rather give assessments that often contain mitigating actions and are produced in dispreferred turn-shape. In other words, they seemingly make an effort to display consideration to possibly soften the negative assessments and avoid the potentially undesirable impact of those assessments in the course of interaction. Similarly, the recipients of assessments who are members of the referred to countries also display their orientation not to overtly disagree, challenge the speakers of assessments or develop potential offences that can result from those assessments. Often, they show in-between responses that contain both agreeing components and disagreeing components, showing not fully agreeing responses to the assessments (e.g. A: "*In Thailand it is difficult to find halal food.*" B: "*yeah..... but in big city yeah you can*"). In some cases, their disagreement seems to be withheld when it is not explicitly produced but can be assumed when they do not provide any agreeing responses to the prior assessments. These types of responses to assessments may contribute to the non-development of potential offences in interaction.

The analysis shows that the recipients of assessments do not produce disagreeing responses explicitly to the assessments; their disagreement can be implied when there is no

agreeing response produced. This can possibly be explained by the notion of preference for agreement in conversation (Sacks, 1987). The preference for agreement can be operated in many situations, including in this interaction during the socializing in cultural exchange programs, in which negative assessments of artefacts, practices or phenomena in particular cultural groups occur. The notion of preference of agreement describes that disagreement is less preferred; participants in conversations generally prefer to show agreement and tend to minimize their disagreement with one another (Leech, 1983; Sacks, 1987). This preference can be commonly observed from the way speakers show disagreement; the speakers tend to produce disagreement in delay, less directly and less explicitly (Pomerantz, 1984a). Thus, it is possible that when speakers in this data delay or complicate their responses, their disagreement can be assumed and expected.

Similarly, pragmatic perspective studies argue that speakers generally tend to minimize their disagreement with the co-participants. For instance, Leech (1983) proposed that it is one of the maxims of his Politeness Principle that speakers minimize their disagreement with others. Brown and Levinson's politeness theory (1987) suggests that speakers may have the desire to appear to agree with co-participants and avoid explicit disagreement with co-participants. It may be possible that the recipient's inexplicit disagreement in response to an assessment in this examined interaction is modulated or mitigated as a result of considerations of politeness.

Lastly, the lack of recipients' explicit disagreements or challenges to assessments in this data may be influenced by the setting in which the interaction takes place. Their interaction is occurring in socializing occasions in encounters in which the participants are not well acquainted with one another yet. In the data, they sometimes do not know the correct pronunciation of the co-participants' name, full name, and the background of the co-participants. In these initial encounters where an interpersonal relationship is developing, they may not desire to develop a potential offence, even though it is possible to do so as a result of the negative assessments.

6.2.2 Facets Contributing to Less Explicit Negative Assessments and Disagreements

Apart from such interactional work (e.g. the production of negative assessments with mitigation and less than explicit disagreeing to assessments) that may have an effect to defuse intensity in a conversation, these defusing actions in the course of interaction may be derived

from the participant's orientation to the acceptability and rights to making assessments, the awareness not to undermine the 'face' of co-participants in interaction, as well as the setting in which the interaction takes place, i.e. in initial encounters where interpersonal relationships are not yet well developed.

6.2.2.1 *Attending to Accessibility to the Referents and Rights of Assessments*

The analysis of this study, together with prior studies (e.g. Pomerantz, 1984a) has confirmed that knowledge of and access to the referents of the assessments can be a crucial element of the possibility and acceptability of the speakers to make any assessments about them. In interaction between members and non-members of a particular country, it was found that speakers of assessments who are non-members of the referred to country are seen to attend to their rights, knowledge and accessibility to make assessments of the referents which are located in the co-participants' territory.

The findings have shown that speakers attend to their knowledge and access to the referents of their assessments in some ways in the course of interaction. In many cases, they seem to invoke their knowledge or access to the referents in their assessments. This can be seen clearly in Extracts 4.6 and 4.8, where the non-member speakers explicitly refer to sources of their knowledge about the referents, i.e. invoking their past experience in the co-participant's country "*when I go to Thailand, ...*", "*I heard from the news...*" and "*I just got a news from my friend*". It needs to be noted that the participants are also seen to invoke their knowledge or access to the referents at other moments of interaction which are not presented in the transcripts due to space.

This invocation may work to make public their sufficient knowledge and access to make any assessments about the referents. As a result, their assessments sound acceptable as they assess the referents that they have had access to. Particularly, the speakers' explicit invocation of their knowledge and access to the referents seems to be crucial when they assess referents which seem to be closer to the co-participants (e.g. cost of living, infrastructure, table manners, food packaging in the co-participants' home country) and possibly makes their assessments less likely to be challenged by the member(s) of the referred to country.

In other extracts, the participants' knowledge or access to the referents in their assessments has been presumably recognized or inferred by the co-participants in some ways. For instance, the speakers are seen to make assessments of referents in the co-participants' country after the information of the referents is shared to them by the cultural member (see

Extract 4.5), and the referents being assessed are right in front of them (as in Extracts 4.2 and 4.4). In these two cases, the speakers' knowledge of or access to the referents may not need to be invoked as it can presumably be recognized by the co-participants.

Moreover, the speakers of assessments who are non-members of the referred to country are seen to display their lower epistemic status and seek confirmation from members of the referred to cultural group when they make assessments of the referents located in the co-participants' home country (see Extract 4.7). Their seeking confirmation may reduce the assertiveness of the assessing turns, projecting their caution and seeking the alignment from the co-participants who hold greater epistemic status regarding the referents being assessed and presumably have a connection with them.

The speakers' invocation of their knowledge or access about the referents in the co-participants' countries and seeking confirmation from the members of referred to countries to which the referents of their assessments belong suggest the speakers' orientation to the acceptability of their assessments. They appear to make sure that their knowledge of and access to the referents is recognized by the co-participants in some ways and sometimes offer a position for the recipients who are members of the referred to country to confirm the assessments that are being made about the referents, which are closer to the recipients. As a result, these assessments which negatively assess the artefacts, practices or phenomena in the co-participants sound less explicit in many cases.

6.2.2.2 *Participants' Attending to Face in Interaction*

The analysis of the production of negative assessments and responses has pointed to the type of interaction that can be characterized as saving situations, in which the speakers of assessments and the recipients display their attempt to make light of the interaction where negative assessments of the referents in the co-participants' cultural group occur and threaten to cause offence. The analysis in Chapters 4 and 5 has shown that the orientation to make light of these situations has been attended by both the speakers of the assessments and the recipients. For instance, the speakers show attempts not to produce their negative assessments overtly, and the recipients do not challenge or express their disagreement explicitly.

Studies on face and face-work in interaction have assumed that participants attend to face in various actions in spoken interaction (Goffman, 1967; Ting-Toomey et al., 1991; Ting-Toomey, 1988, 1994). Goffman (1967) described face consideration as "something that is diffusely located in the flow of events in the encounter" (p. 7). This is also the case for the

interaction examined in this study. The analysis shows that face consideration can be attended in interaction when the participants do not explicitly produce negative assessments of artefacts and practices in the co-participants' cultural group (to which the recipients might feel attached), as well as in moments in which the recipients, who are members of the referred to cultural group, do not explicitly disagree with or challenge the speakers of those assessments.

The speakers are observed to produce assessments which negatively assess referents in the co-participants' home countries in a manner that reduces the explicitness and assertiveness of the negative assessments, possibly considering lessening the possible threat to the co-participants' face in interaction. Likewise, the recipients of negative assessments who are members of the referred to cultural group are seen to respond to those assessments in a manner that does not challenge the speakers of the assessments; they are less than explicit when they show disagreement. Their disagreement is not seen to be explicitly produced but can be assumed in the in-between responses, and when they do not show agreement in their responses. The inexplicitness in the recipients' disagreeing responses can be derived from the fact that they attend to the face of the co-participants who produce assessments; showing disagreement explicitly may threaten the face of the speakers of assessments, who may favour (some) agreement to be shown to their assessments while disagreement can be less preferred (Lerner, 1996; Sacks, 1987), and may be heard as argumentative, rather than showing different opinions.

It can be shown that face consideration is displayed by both parties in the conversation; the speakers of assessments who produce the negative assessments that can be described as avoiding threatening the face of the recipients who are members of the referred to cultural group, as well as the recipients of the assessments who do not explicitly show their disagreement or challenge the speakers of the assessments. Moreover, it can be argued that the participants also display to save their own face in interaction. For instance, the speakers of assessments are observed to make it visible that the negative assessment is not directly from themselves, i.e. marking explicitly in the turn that the assessment is originally from a third-party, they are someone who speak out the others' ideas (Goffman, 1981), positioning themselves not as the ones who are directly responsible for the negative assessments that might be offensive to the recipients. This created distance can help save their own face from being considered improper or rude to the co-participants. This action is supported by Brown's (1977) face-saving study, which highlights that participants may perform some strategies in

interaction to “hide, soften, ward off, prevent or block... the occurrence of the future events...that will impair one’s image” (pp. 278- 279).

Goffman (1967), the author of a ground-breaking study on face in interaction, argues that individuals do not only attend to their own face but also that of others. They may perform actions so that they themselves, as well as the others, will not lose face. As argued by Goffman (1967) and more recent studies (e.g. Ting-Toomey, 1988) regarding face consideration, speakers may have dual roles in interaction: looking after their own face and the face of others. This consideration may lead speakers and recipients of assessments to make light of situations when offensiveness can potentially develop, as demonstrated in the analysis of this study.

6.2.2.3 *The Setting of Interaction*

It is possible that negative assessments of referents in recipients’ cultural groups can cause unease or offence to the recipients. In this data, the potential offence does not seem to get developed in the course of the interaction. This may be a result of the interactional work that is performed by both parties in the conversation. The setting in which the interaction takes place can also be assumed to contribute to the non-development of a potential offence in this course of interaction. The examined interactions take place in encounters which can be characterized as initial encounters in which participants from different countries who are unacquainted spend time talking to one another, as it can be observed in some recordings that the participants do not know the details of the co-participants’ background; some data show that the participants could not even get the co-participants’ names right yet. This setting can be one of the opportunities in which the participants socialize, get to know one another and possibly establish relationships with one another. Also, there is a tendency for the participants to meet again in their future activities on short-term exchange programs. This nature of initial encounters may influence, to some extent, the speakers’ production and recipients’ responses to the negative assessments, shaping the participants’ choice to make light of the situation, rather than to seriously challenge one another.

Sociolinguists who pay attention to situations of communication (e.g. Hymes, 1974, 2009; Moerman, 1988) have asserted that talk in different situations/contexts can be said to be governed by differential norms or rules for talking, concerning when, what and to whom people can say things. This can be the case for interactions occurring in the participants’ socializing on short-term exchange programs when they do not explicitly make negative

assessments of artefacts, practices or phenomena in the co-participants' countries, as well as not challenging or explicitly disagreeing with the co-participants who negatively assess referents in their own countries.

One may assume that the non-development of potential offence in the course of interaction may be influenced by the presence of the recording devices. The effects of the presence of a video-recorder might be expected and can be said to contribute to the less explicit production of assessments, less explicit disagreement from the recipients, as well as the non-development of an offence in the trajectory of the conversation. However, it can be argued that all these phenomena of participants' interaction cannot be explained alone by the presence of a video-recorder. As we can see in mundane conversations without the appearance of the camera or any recording devices, individuals tend to talk less directly when assessing negatively some properties or referents with a possible connection to the recipients, such as their children, their jobs, the food prepared by the recipients, as well as typical practices in the recipients' country.

6.3 Contributions of the Study

This study investigates assessment sequences in conversation at a micro-level from an emic perspective and adds to the knowledge of interaction occurring in cultural exchange programs, showing how participants interact when the conversation involves potential offence, i.e. when negative assessments of artefacts, practices or phenomena in the co-participants' cultural group are produced in an on-going conversation. This study demonstrates that when conversation is involved with those assessments, the speakers appear to display their consideration to mitigate assessments which may have a negative impact on recipients who are members of the referred to cultural group. Similarly, the recipients of the assessments seem to show a desire not to develop a possible offence that may result from the negative assessments, i.e. they do not challenge or show explicit disagreement with the assessments; their disagreement is not produced explicitly but only assumed from the lack of displayed agreement in their responses.

Overall, this study offers contributions to the field of social interaction in cultural exchange programs, and, importantly, to assessments in interaction, as described below.

6.3.1 Contribution to CA Assessment Studies

By investigating this underexplored area of negative assessments in conversation occurring in cultural exchange programs, this study is seen to make three significant contributions to CA assessment studies.

While previous CA assessment research has paid attention to negative assessments in conversations mainly in the form of self-deprecation (e.g. Asmuss et al., 2014; Pomerantz, 1984a) and sometimes to the referents with no emotional attachment to parties of conversation (e.g. Maynard, 1989), the study is seen to make original contribution to the CA assessment studies in that it moves to investigate negative assessments in a new context, in which negative assessments of referents with the possible connection to the recipients (e.g. a way of eating, road conditions and cultural practices in the recipients' countries) are made. In this interaction in which offense/unease among the recipients who may feel attached to the assessed cultural group is likely, the organization of interaction appears to be different from those assessment sequences examined earlier in the self-deprecation sequence.

Pomerantz (1984a) examined negative assessment in self-deprecation sequence and found out that the recipients show strong disagreement to the speakers' self-deprecation. When the referents with no connection to the speakers are made, Maynard (1989) found that recipients also show agreement or strong agreement with those negative assessments. On the contrary, this study demonstrates that negative assessments of referents in the recipients' countries receive less than fully agreeing responses, and strong disagreement with these negative assessments is never displayed by the recipients.

This study also appears to furnish the constitution of assessments which has been proposed in previous assessment studies (e.g. Edwards & Potter, 2012; Goodwin & Goodwin, 1992). This study sheds extra light on CA assessment studies by highlighting assessments which can potentially be classified as negative assessments based on three elements. Firstly, the constitution of negative assessments can be provided by the assessment terms or lexical items that display the speakers' negative evaluation, for example "*expensive*" or "*difficult to find halal food*", together with the prosody of the production as described as assessment segment and assessment signal in Goodwin and Goodwin's (1992) assessment framework. Secondly, the sequential position of the assessing turns can also provide for the constitution of negative assessments in the data of this study. To illustrate, assessments that come after positive assessment and are marked by the use of contrastive conjunctions such as "*but*" can

be classified as negative assessments; the contrastive conjunction employed can inform about the constitution of the turn as a negative assessment. Importantly, negative assessments can be informed by the participants' actions in their production when they put additional work into the production, e.g. hesitation, multiple turn initiation attempts, and other mitigating actions, such as withholding from the articulation of assessment terms in the turn production. Finally, the recipients' responses can display their understanding of prior turns as negative assessments (Edwards & Potter, 2012). For instance, certain types of the recipients' responses to the assessments, for example providing accounts or defending for the referents being assessed, can demonstrate that the recipients treat the prior turn as a negative assessment.

This study can also be seen to make theoretical contribution to CA assessment studies in that it informs the field about the formulation of negative assessments in the perspicuous setting of intercultural encounters. While the turns that are formulated with assessment terms (e.g. "*bad*" or "*too small*") can be easily recognized as assessments, it is emerging in this study that turns with no explicit use of assessment terms can be interpreted as assessments by the recipients in the interactions in this setting. Taking into account the recipients' uptake of the turn as informed by a principle of CA (next turn proof procedure), this research explicates on inexplicit assessments, an aspect of the field which has been granted scant attention in prior research. That is, some utterances (e.g. questions or declaratives) about referents in the co-participants' countries in some manner, even though not formulated with assessment terms (e.g. "*bad*" or "*too small*"), appear to be treated as assessment-embedded by the members of the referred to countries in this setting of intercultural encounters. This type of turns, which has been pointed out in recent CA studies (e.g. Edwards and Potter, 2012; Hoey & Kendrick, 2018), can be described as an assessment-relevant utterance, despite no assessment terms being explicitly incorporated in the formulation of the turns.

This study also sheds light on how the participants' epistemic status comes to play a role in assessments of the referents which are located or occurring in the co-participants' countries in interaction on these cultural exchange programs, in which speakers of assessments can be assumed to hold subordinate or lower epistemic status regarding the referents relative to members of the referred to cultural group who are also present at the conversation sites. The analysis illustrates that the speakers of assessments make visible their lower epistemic access to the artefacts, practices or phenomena in a particular country, in the presence of members of the country who are assumed to have greater epistemic status and

authority with regard to those referents (Stivers et al., 2011). For instance, the speakers produce assessments in a subordinate position and seek confirmation from the recipients who are members of the referred to country. The data also shows that the speakers of assessments are seen to claim or display publicly their epistemic access to the referents (e.g. extracts 4.1, 4.2, and 4.7, in which the speakers clearly invoke their sources of knowledge or epistemic access to the referents). This invocation of sources of knowledge or access, for example “*when I go to Thailand*”, as part of the assessment can foreground and enhance the legitimacy of the assessment of referents in Thailand (Terasaki, 2004), as well as reduce the possibility of being disagreed with or challenged by recipients of the assessments who possibly have a sense of ownership of the assessed referents.

6.3.2 Contribution to Interaction Studies on Cultural Exchange Programs

This study can also contribute to studies of interaction in cultural exchange programs in that it demonstrates the interlocutors’ actions to make light interaction involved the negative assessments of referents in the co-participants’ countries in intercultural encounters. The speakers of assessments appear to withhold from making negative assessment explicitly/directly (e.g. withholding the assessment terms from the utterances, making explicit that others originally make the assessment, and incorporating both positive and negative assessments towards the cultural group). Likewise, the recipients of the assessments appear to neither agree strongly with the negative assessment nor disagree explicitly with the assessment. They show agreeing response and other actions that somehow work against the prior negative assessments (e.g. giving explanation on the existence of the items/artefacts that were assessed negatively, and providing further information that work to reject the prior assessments).

These actions from the speakers of the assessments and the recipients can be seen to maintain their robust social relation to each other in the interaction in which negative assessments on the referents in the co-participants’ countries occur. This study is seen to contribute to a growing body of research on cultural exchange programs from an interactional perspective, which is quite different from the previous studies which tend to inform the field from quantitative perspective and often from retrospective investigation (e.g. questionnaires, or interviews). Still, many aspects of interaction naturally occurring in these short-term exchange programs have not been sufficiently documented and are underexplored, including

interaction when an offence is potentially developed, i.e. in interactional moments when participants are involved with negative assessments of artefacts or practices in one party's cultural groups, which can occur in naturally occurring intercultural encounters. This underexplored interaction is highlighted by this study.

Findings from this study can add to what have been informed by the previous intercultural communication studies which have focused on other areas, such as self-presentation and the ability to cope with social difficulties (Chen, 1993), the language learning and interactional skills participants gain from their participation in exchange programs (Scollon, 2002), and the establishment of common ground among the participants (Victoria, 2011).

6.4 Recommendations for Future Research

This study has revealed how speakers produce assessments which seem to negatively assess artefacts, practices or phenomena in the co-participants' cultural groups and how the recipients who are members of the referred to cultural group respond to them in their socializing in short-term exchange programs. In this setting, the participants appear to invoke their intercultural identities, making visible in interaction that they are from different cultural groups through actions, for example specifying the country name of the co-participants' home country and displaying orientation to the co-participants as members of that country through their gaze.

The speakers tend to share their direct/indirect experiences in one another's countries, which occasionally involve making negative assessments of the artefacts, practices or phenomena in the co-participants' countries, which may possibly cause offence to the recipients who may have emotional connections with those referents being assessed negatively. This research has demonstrated that when a conversation involves these assessments, both speakers of the assessments and the recipients show their attempts to make light of the situation by some actions, for example the speakers do not make the assessments overtly, and the recipients do not challenge or disagree explicitly with the assessments. The interactional work from the speakers of the assessments and the recipients may contribute to the non-development of offensiveness in interaction that could potentially result from those negative assessments. In order to gain a more comprehensive picture of assessments in

interaction in these intercultural encounters, the following sections recommend a number of possible research directions related to assessments occurring in intercultural encounters.

6.4.1 Longitudinal Studies

As its central focus, this study has examined assessment sequences in setting which can be described as initial encounters, in which participants are seen not to be well acquainted with one another. It was found that their assessments which negatively assess artefacts, practices or phenomena in the co-participants' countries tend to be produced in dispreferred turn design (e.g. less than explicitly), produced with mitigating actions and in a certain position which is more likely to be acceptable.

It is worthwhile to study further the production of assessments and responses at a later point when participants have become acquainted. A longitudinal study of assessment sequences investigating how the participants involved with the sequences when time has passed in their longer-term interaction would be of interest. This line of investigation can gain a better understanding of how assessment sequences are dealt with when an interpersonal relationship has developed over a period of time.

6.4.2 Comparative Studies of Assessment Sequences

A number of comparative studies to be conducted on the assessment sequences in interaction can be recommended, for example comparative studies of positive assessments and negative assessments, and explicitly produced assessments compared to the ones less explicitly produced. These comparative studies could portray how the assessments of different conditions unfold and perhaps generate different types of consequences after the assessments.

Firstly, it would be worthwhile to conduct a comparative study which examines the sequence organization, the production, as well as how the two types of positive assessments and negative assessments are responded to by the recipients. To undertake such a comparative study, it is important to distinguish positive assessments from negative ones. This may not be a straightforward task as the border between the two is often blurred. However, an attempt has been initiated in this study. The distinction of the turns as positive assessments or negative assessments can be preliminarily based upon the formulation of the turns (e.g. the use of positive or negative assessment terms), the prosody of the production, the organization of the

turn design, the embodied actions, and the recipients' interpretation (Edwards & Potter, 2012; Goodwin & Goodwin, 1992).

It was also observed in the data that speakers produce assessments that could be classified as explicit assessments (i.e. clearly containing assessment terms) and less explicit assessments (i.e. not containing assessment terms that clearly display the speakers' evaluation towards the referents but are treated as assessment by the recipients). This could contribute to a better understanding of assessments in interaction as these two distinguishable assessments will potentially lead to different types of interaction.

6.5 Summary

This section has reported reflections on the findings of the study. It started off with a discussion of the important findings of the manners and position of the production of assessments of artefacts, practices and phenomena in the co-participants' countries and how they are responded to by the members of the referred to countries.

Notions and theories in social interaction which may impact how participants interact with one another were consulted, for example interactional work, the consideration of face in interaction, and the setting of initial encounters in which the conversation takes place. Then, the chapter presented two contributions of this study to research in 1) interaction on intercultural exchange programs; and 2) CA assessments in social interaction. Lastly, two recommendations related to CA assessments were outlined for future research in the field.

Chapter 7. Conclusions

In this concluding chapter, the background and aims of the research are re-visited, followed by how the aims have been achieved, the findings and their importance to the field of interactional communication and CA assessments, and, finally, recommendations for further research.

7.1 The Background and Research Objective

There have been a number of attempts to understand how participants interact in intercultural communication in general (Gordon, 2013; Gumperz, 1982; Gunthner & Luckmann, 2000; Tyler & Davies, 1990) and in cultural exchange programs in particular (e.g. Anderson et al., 2006; Jackson, 2009). However, little is known about how participants' assessments actually unfold when they are involved in interaction in which offence is possible in the course of interaction, for example the interactional moments in which the artefacts, practices or phenomena in one party's home country are assessed negatively by the co-participants who are non-members. For instance, how a Thai participant deals with it when one non-Thai co-participant makes an assessment, negatively assessing artefacts, practices or phenomena in his/her country. This phenomenon can be seen to occur in interactions in cultural exchange programs, distinguished from interaction in other settings, and is still under-researched.

This study aimed to investigate the assessment sequences where in the participants are involved in assessments which seem to negatively assess artefacts, practices or phenomena in the co-participants' home countries in interactions in short-term cultural exchange programs. In order to fulfil this objective, two sub-questions were explored:

1) How are assessments which negatively assess the referents in co-participants' countries produced by the speakers who are non-members of the referred to countries?

2) How are the assessments responded to by the co-participants who are members of the referred to countries?

7.2 Data Collection and Data Analysis

The interaction data was collected during the socializing occasions of participants who were taking part in cultural exchange programs organized in Southeast Asian countries (Thailand and Malaysia). Ten hours of the participants' interaction while socializing with peers from different countries outside the core activities of the programs was video-recorded. The recordings were examined repeatedly to obtain an overall view of the interaction and the emergence of the phenomenon of interest, assessment sequences. For instance, the positions in which the assessment sequences occurred in talk and the number of participants who were involved were reviewed. Adopting Goodwin and Goodwin's (1992) assessment framework, instances of (potential) assessment sequences occurring in interaction were generously collected, and collections were built before being transcribed following Gail Jefferson's transcription convention (2004).

This study employed CA and MCA as tools of analysis to examine the sequential organization of assessments (i.e. the production of assessments and how they are responded to) and the categorizations the participants display between themselves and the others. As demonstrated in prior research, talk is multimodal and speech production should be studied in relation to other interactional conducts (Hazel, Mortenson, & Rasmussen, 2014; Lindström & Mondada, 2009). This study pays attention to both verbal and non-verbal elements of the interaction examined, which together explicates in detail how the sequences are organized and engaged in by the participants.

7.3 Findings and the Discussion

Ten hours of the participants' interaction was analysed at a micro level. The findings show that interactional work has been put into interaction by the participants (both speakers of assessment and the recipients) when involved with assessments which seem to negatively assess artefacts, practices or phenomena in the co-participants' countries. The speakers of the assessments are seen to: 1) produce those assessments with some mitigating actions (e.g. withholding from articulating the negative assessment terms, using indirect addressivity, and incorporating both positive and negative evaluations in the assessing turns); 2) produce assessments which are explicit and without mitigating action in a position which is more likely to be agreed with by the co-participants (e.g. after similar assessments are agreed by the

co-participants in the prior turns); 3) show subordination and seek confirmation from the co-participants who are members of the referred to countries; 4) invoke their knowledge/access to the referents being assessed which seem to be within the co-participants' territories; and, 5) produce a number of utterances which are not produced with assessment terms but seem to be treated as such by the recipients of the assessments who are members of the referred to countries.

The findings regarding the manner in which the speakers produced negative assessments in this setting suggest that the speakers tend to make the negative assessments in a dispreferred turn design (e.g. less than explicit linguistically and interactionally), and, as a result, their negative assessments do not appear overt. Also, the findings have an important implication in relation to the constitution of negative assessments in that the assessments which are negative tend to be produced with certain characteristics, apart from the linguistics employed, (e.g. they are less direct, less explicit and often involve additional work from the speakers).

It was observed that the participants incorporated mitigating actions (e.g. hesitation, and indirectness, or provision of both positive and negative evaluations) into the production of negative assessments. Schegloff (1980) and Holmes (1984) pointed out that mitigating actions usually occur in situations where difficulties of production or negative impacts can be assumed by the participants, either the speakers or the recipients. By incorporating mitigating actions into the production of assessments, the speakers are displaying their consideration to soften the tone of their assessments and possibly avoid potentially unwelcome effects that may result from the assessments (Caffi, 2013; Fraser, 1980). In other words, assessments which negatively assess referents in the co-participants' home countries are produced in a dispreferred turn-design (Pomerantz, 1984a), containing hesitation or a reluctance, which may suggest some problems with the production of those assessments.

The difficulties in making negative assessments of artifacts, practices or phenomena in the co-participants' home country may be derived from a number of relevant considerations. A first factor is the speakers' lower epistemic status relative to the co-participants who are members of the referred to country and who are assumed to know better and have greater authority talking about the referents which fall closer to them on the gradient of knowledge (Heritage, 2013). Making any assessments of these referents from the K- speakers who are non-members of the country, it is likely that their assessments will be challenged by the K+

recipients who are members of the referred to country. It is apparent that the speakers who are non-members of the referred to country make their access to the referents recognized in the course of the interaction (e.g. invoking sources of knowledge), possibly to make public their accessibility to the referents being assessed and legitimate their assessments (see Extract 4.1, 4.2, 4.6). Non-members of the referred to country are also seen to seek confirmation of the assessments they make from the members of the referred to country (see Extract 4.7).

Secondly, the consideration of the presumably existing attachment between the co-participants and the referents being negatively assessed may contribute to the difficulty in making negative assessments of those referents. This attachment can be seen to be attended to in the course of interaction through the speakers' eye gaze directing towards a particular co-participant when specifying the country name or referring to artifacts, practices or phenomena of the country during their assessing turns. With the existing attachment between the co-participants and the referents in the assessments, it may not be appropriate for speakers to explicitly assess negatively referents to which the co-participants may feel attached.

Additionally, the setting in which the interaction takes place (i.e. in initial encounters on the short-term exchange programs) may restrict the speakers from producing their negative assessments overtly. Negative assessments which may cause offense or displeasure for any participants in these initial encounters may be withheld from production explicitly in this setting. In contrast, initial encounters may be appropriate for other types of actions (e.g. getting acquainted or establishing common ground), namely those which enhance the interpersonal relationship among the participants who will meet in various activities in the programs.

In relation to the participants' responses to the assessments negatively assessing artefacts, practices or phenomena in their home countries, the findings showed that the recipients of the assessments who are members of the referred to countries show a variety of responses, but they never display disagreement explicitly. They are seen to produce: 1) agreeing responses, which are followed by accounting for the referents being negatively assessed; 2) in-between responses, which do not display their fully agreeing responses (both agreeing elements and disagreeing elements are produced); and, 3) no agreeing or disagreeing responses, but seemingly disengaging from assessment sequences and engaging with other actions instead in responding this way to the prior assessment - i.e. agreement is not displayed—their disagreement can be assumed (Sacks, 1987).

Like the formulation of the production of negative assessments, the recipients' responses to the assessments can be described as a dispreferred turn-shape (Pomerantz, 1984a), i.e. they are produced as less than explicit or ambiguous responses. For instance, the responses appear to be in-between responses, containing both agreeing and disagreeing elements. Importantly, their disagreement is never produced overtly. This lack of overt disagreement from the recipients of the assessments can be influenced by a number of related facets: the operation of preferences of agreement in conversation, consideration of face in interaction and the setting in which the interaction takes place.

The operation of preferences for agreement in interaction (Kuo, 1994; Pomerantz, 1984a; Sacks, 1987), in which agreement to the prior turns is generally preferred and disagreement can be less preferred, may influence the way the recipient's response to the assessments with which they might disagree; their disagreement can be shaped to look like agreement, or at least it is not an explicit disagreement. The midrange or in-between responses to the negative assessments of referents in their home country may be a solution in which both agreeing and disagreeing components are exhibited rather than a clear and explicit disagreement. The participants' characterizable midrange responses can be similar to the ones shown in Pomerantz's (1978) study of compliment responses, where in-between responses seem to be produced as a solution to satisfy two incongruent interactional preferences of "acceptance/agreement preferences" and "self-praise avoidance".

Secondly, the consideration of face in interaction may be attended by the recipients of the assessments, who respond to the assessments and seem to withhold their direct disagreement with the assessments. In this case, producing disagreement overtly to the assessment may threaten the face of the co-participants who have produced the turns. This production of disagreement is similar to other cases where disagreement with the co-participants tends to be produced in a less explicit, a delayed or in a dispreferred turn shape (Pomerantz, 1984a; Sacks, 1987), as generally, speakers tend to favour being agreed with by the co-participants (Lerner, 1996; Sacks, 1987). In the same vein, Brown and Levinson's politeness theory (1987) may well explain the recipients' inexplicit disagreeing responses in this setting. As argued by Goffman (1967) and others (e.g. Ting-Toomey, 1988), speakers attend to their own face and the co-participants' in interaction. In this setting, they may enact inexplicit disagreement with the assessments to save the face of the speakers of the

assessments, and, equally, this action may lead to non-development of offensiveness in the course of interaction.

Moreover, the setting of interaction in initial encounters in which the interaction takes place may contribute to the recipients' production of less overt disagreement with the assessments and the non-development of the offence afterwards interaction. The initial encounters are generally the place for certain activities to be carried out, for example getting acquainted and self-disclosure that promotes liking (Jenks, 2009; Sprecher et al., 2013), which may enhance the participants' interpersonal relationship. This setting may constrain the recipients from displaying disagreement explicitly or strongly to the co-participant's assessments.

Overall, the findings of the study make clear that the speakers of the assessments and the recipients have put interactional work into interaction that may soften the interaction in which offence or unease are possible in conversations. The ways in which the speakers who are non-members of the countries produce negative assessments less explicitly, with mitigation actions, as well as the recipients' responses to the assessments which lack challenging or explicit disagreements with the assessments, together with the setting of the interaction, may be contributing to the non-development of the potential offence in the interaction when negative assessments are involved.

7.4 Contributions of the Study

This study contributes to studies in social interaction in two main areas: 1) illustrating the participants' interactional management in interactions in intercultural exchange programs from an interactional perspective, and 2) informing CA assessment studies from an intercultural encounter setting.

Firstly, the participants' encounters in exchange programs are important research loci which have been studied in depth in previous studies. However, it emerged that investigation into this area in intercultural exchange programs has heavily relied on retrospective data, e.g. interviews, questionnaires, and self-reported diaries (Anderson et al., 2006; Jackson, 2009). Employing the ethnomethodologically-rooted approaches of CA and MCA, this study extends this body of research by examining naturally occurring interactions in these programs from an interactional perspective. Relying on a micro-level analysis of naturally occurring interaction data and the participants' own orientations displayed in the examined interaction, the findings

of this study illuminate the interactional work the participants put into the interaction when making and responding to negative assessments of artefacts, practices or phenomena in one party's home country, which can be difficult or impossible to be elicited by retrospective methods.

Moreover, this study is seen to contribute to CA assessment studies in that it extends previous conversation analytical work on assessments by examining assessment sequences in specific settings in intercultural encounters in which the speakers made assessments of artefacts, practices or phenomena in the co-participants' countries. The referents which seem to have attachment to the recipients were assessed in these sequences. This aspect has not received much attention in previous studies (i.e. artefacts, practices and phenomena in the participants' countries to which they might feel attached), and the investigation by this study can contribute to CA assessment studies regarding the constitution of assessments, as well as negative assessments in an intercultural setting.

7.5 Recommendations for Further Studies

Two recommendations were made for future research to investigate the domain of assessments in interaction, relating to: 1) longitudinal studies in making assessments and the responses over different periods of time, and 2) comparative studies of different types of assessments.

First, this study found that the participants who interact with one another in cultural exchange programs make assessments of artefacts, practices or phenomena in the co-participants' home countries less explicitly (e.g. with hesitation, mitigating actions, and showing lower epistemic status or sub-ordination in making assessments), and the recipients who are members of the referred to countries do not appear to display disagreement with the assessment strongly or overtly (e.g. producing in-between responses and disengaging from the assessment sequences and engaging with other activities). It can be worthwhile to examine this area further: how this phenomenon of the production of negative assessments and responses might change across different periods of time when the participants have become better acquainted with one another.

Also, two comparative studies were recommended to investigate the organization of: 1) positive assessments and negative assessments; and, 2) explicitly produced assessments and inexplicitly produced assessments. Classifying assessments as positive and negative may

be possible, relying on Goodwin and Goodwin's (1992) assessment framework. For instance, assessment terms that are employed by the speakers, the prosody and embodiment of the production, the turn design of the production (i.e. dispreferred turn design) as well as the recipients' responses to the assessments may inform about the constitution of positive/negative assessments of the turns. Additionally, classification of assessments into explicit and less explicit might be possible based on the formulation of the turns. For instance, an explicitly produced negative assessment (i.e. clearly containing assessment terms) can be compared to those that are less explicitly produced (i.e. do not contain assessment terms but are treated as such by the recipients). These two distinguishable assessments may lead to different sequences of interaction.

With the increasing number of cultural exchange programs and intercultural sojourns organized in Southeast Asia, where the study was conducted, and elsewhere in the world, it may be worthwhile to investigate interactional phenomena occurring among participants when they meet in this setting. Assessments of referents in the co-participants' home countries may be one type of interaction that can occur in the encounters. The manners of the production of negative assessments and responses have been informed by this study. Further studies in related areas (e.g. longitudinal studies of the assessment sequences, differentiated types of assessments in interaction, as well as the actions involved when the assessments unfold) still need to be empirically investigated and could be helpful in understanding the action of assessments occurring in intercultural encounters.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A:

Participant Information Sheet



Research Title

Interactional Managements in Intercultural Encounters in Cultural Exchange Programmes

Invitation

I would like to invite you to take part in this research project. The research examines the interaction managements the participants put into their talks when interacting with peers from different cultural backgrounds using English as a Lingua Franca. Your participation is entirely voluntary and is appreciated as the primary data source of this research project.

Research Procedure

In this study, the interaction will be recorded as much as is permitted by you. I can assure that your identity will not be shown in publications. The recorded data will be used only for the purpose of research analysis. Your utterances and gestures will be shown anonymously in research chapters.

Participants' Right

Please note that your participation is voluntary. You are free to withdraw from the research participation at any time if you would like to. To show that you agree to take part in this research project, you will be asked to sign the consent form enclosed within.

Researcher's Contact Information

You can contact the researcher for questions and further details of this research at s.manechote@ncl.ac.uk and s4692010@hotmail.com.

Appendix B:

Participation Consent Form



Researcher's Statement

I hereby confirm that the participant was given an opportunity to ask questions about the research project, and all the questions asked by the participant have been answered correctly and to the best of my ability.

Miss Somporn Maneechote
Researcher's name Signature Date

Consent Given by Participant

By signing this form, I confirm that I have read the information sheet enclosed with this form and I agree to take part in this research project.

.....
Participant's name Signature Date

Appendix C:

Date, Length of Time and Numbers of Participants in Each Interaction

Recording	Length (mins)	No. and Countries of Origin of Participants		
1. 21/08/2014 (1)	23	2 Malaysian	+ 1 Thai	+ 1 Nigerian
2. 21/08/2014 (2)	4	1 Thai	+ 1 Nigerian	+ 1 Bangladesh
3. 23/08/2014 (1)	1	1 Thai	+ 3 Malaysian	
4. 23/08/2014 (2)	13	1 Thai	+ 1 Saudi Arabian	
5. 24/08/2014 (1)	1	1 Thai	+ 1 Malaysian	
6. 24/08/2014 (2)	8	4 Thai	+ 2 Saudi Arabian	
7. 24/08/2014 (3)	3	3 Thai	+ 1 Malay	
8. 24/08/2014 (4)	3	3 Thai	+ 2 Malaysian	
9. 18/09/2014	30	1 Thai	+ 2 Indonesian	+ 2 Chinese
10. 29/09/2014	66	2 Indonesian	+ 2 Thai	
11. 02/10/2014	67	3 Thai	+ 2 Indonesian	
12. 12/10/2014	29	2 Thai	+ 1 Indonesian	+ 1 Malaysian
13. 14/10/2014	70	3 Thai	+ 2 Malaysian	
14. 15/10/2014	52	2 Thai	+ 1 Malaysian	
15. 05/11/2014 (1)	29	2 Thai	+ 3 Indonesian	+ 1 Libyan
16. 05/11/2014 (2)	70	1 Thai	+ 1 Burmese	+ 1 Indonesian
17. 08/11/2014	32	2 Malaysian	+ 2 Thai	
18. 14/11/2014	30	2 Thai	+ 2 Malaysian	
19. 16/11/2014	40	2 Thai	+ 1 Indonesian	
20. 17/12/2014	13	1 Malaysian	+ 2 Thai	
21. 19/12/2014	14	1 Malaysian	+ 1 Thai	
Total	10 hrs	56* Participants		

Appendix D:

CA Transcription Conventions

Glossary of transcript symbols with an introduction, adapted from Jefferson, G. (2004), in G. Lerner (Ed.), *Conversation Analysis: Studies from the first generation*.

[]	Beginning and end of overlapping or simultaneous utterances
=	Latched utterances
(0.4)	Length of silences in tenths of a second
(.)	Micro pause by +- a tenth of a second
::	Stretched sound
?	Rising intonation
.	Falling intonation
,	Continuing intonation
↑ ↓	Shift into high or low pitch
-	Cut-off utterances
°soft °	Markedly soft utterance
<u>underline</u>	Stress or emphasis
CAPS	Loud utterances
.hhh	Sound of inhalation
hhh	Sound of exhalation
><	Faster than surrounding utterances
<>	Slower than surrounding utterances
(uncertain)	Uncertain utterances
(xxxx)	Unintelligible utterances
(())	Transcriber's description of gestures and body movement
((<i>Translation</i>))	Translation of non-English utterances

Appendix E:

Full Extracts

Extract: But in Malaysia

(10-15-2014: 675-717; 15.12-15.40)

ZON: Malaysian, GEM: Thai, HAN: Thai

1 *ZON: Hat Yai (0.6) I like the beer man.
2 (0.2)
3 *GEM: [hahuhuhu ha ha ha]
4 *HAN: [hahahahaha]
5 *GEM: in Thailand it's (0.4) °many° (0.4) so expensive
6 (0.4)
7 *ZON: ((ZON fixes his gaze on GEM and lifts his eyebrow))
8 *GEM: HIY
9 *HAN: SO = ((Directing his gaze toward GEM))
10 *GEM: = so [cheap]
11 *HAN: [so] [cheap]
12 *ZON: [so] [cheap]::
13 *HAN: ha[ha]
14 *GEM: [yes] yesyes ((Smiling voice))
15 *ZON: the beer so cheap
16 *GEM: yes =
17 *HAN: =so cheapo
18 (0.6)
19 *GEM: but | in Malay
 | ((GEM shakes his head))
20 (0.2)
21 *ZON: Malay I think in Malaysia it's expensive
22 | (1.1)
 | ((ZON looks away and shakes his head))
23 *HAN: <Malaysia:> expensive everything
24 | (0.9)
 | ((ZON focuses his gaze at HAN and smiles))
25 *ZON: what((Smile voice))
26 | (0.6)
 | ((ZON leans closer to HAN as if to listen to him))
27 *HAN: Malaysia expensive everything ((Speaking louder))
28 (0.3)

29 *ZON: |everything expensive
 |((Smiles and looks at HAN))
 |((ZON slightly nods))
 30 *HAN: yeah:: (0.2) er:: (0.2) °tam nun lae°
 ((Speaking Thai: Up to you, whatever you like to put it))
 31 *ZON: ha ha [ha haha]
 32 *GEM: [haha ha]
 33 *HAN: [up to you]
 34 | (0.6)
 |((HAN raises both his hand above his head))
 35 *GEM: [hahahaha]
 36 *ZON: [hahahaha]
 37 (0.5)

Extract: So many gender

(05-11-2014(2): 3702-3766; 65.40.901-66.28.813)
 AHM: Indonesia, MIS: Thailand, KHI: Myanmar

1 *AHM: I still love (0.5) thailand (0.3) uh::: (0.3) altho-
 2 although they have |(1.2)
 |((AHM looks away))
 3 *AHM: so many::gender.
 4 |(1.0)
 |((MIS focuses gaze at AHM))
 5 *AHM: [°right°]
 6 *MIS:|[what do] you [mean?]
 |((MIS smiles while tilting her head))
 7 *KHI: [haha]
 8 *KHI: °so many [gender°] ((Laughing Voice))
 9 *AHM: |[so man]y gender↗ ((With mitigating laughter))
 |((AHM directs his gaze to KHI))
 10 *KHI: ((Laughing))
 11 *AHM: |you know: [right↗]
 |((AHM direct his gaze towards MIS))
 |((Both KHI and MIS laugh))
 12 *MIS: [ha ha] ha ha .hh
 13 (0.7)
 14 *MIS: [real[ly:].
 15 *KHI: [fem [ale]
 16 *AHM: [we] have

17 *KHI: shemale hefemale
18 *AHM: yah.
19 (0.5)
20 *MIS: oh::↑ =
21 *AHM: =kae↗theoy ((Speaking Thai: Transwoman)) er:(0.3)
22 *MIS: [kath]eoy.
23 *AHM: [tom] ((Speaking Thai: Tomboy))
24 *MIS: you: know:..
25 (0.7)
26 *MIS: yah [yah]
27 *AHM: [er:] I: ah(0.8)I watch (0.2) and I (0.5) I read
28 from: °from° internet
29 (0.3)
30 *MIS: aha:↑
31 *AHM: thailand↑ they (0.2) er: they make it like another
32 gender right↗
33 *MIS: ((nods))
34 (0.3)
35 *AHM: so many | right↗
| ((MIS nods))
36 *MIS: °uhu°
37 (0.4)
38 *AHM: °yeah:°
39 *KHI: xx [xxxxxxxxx]
40 *MIS: [uh missti]ffany* like that right.
41 *AHM: uhm.
42 *MIS: we have like uhm. uhm
43 (0.3)
44 *AHM: because they do this they-
45 (0.4)
46 *MIS: [yah:]
47 *AHM: [they]
48 *MIS: (there are occasion [and:])
49 *AHM: [contest]
50 *MIS: >you mean< (0.2) you know↑ like sometimes (0.2) er: the
51 one who is katheoy* like er: beautiful more than real
52 girl original girl.
53 *KHI: ouhm◦
54 (0.3)
55 *AHM: yah.
56 *MIS: u:hm

Extract: Still these day?

(05-11-2014(2):2788-2819; 50.39-51.6)

AHM: Indonesia, MIS: Thailand, KHI: Myanmar

- 1 *KHI: oh yes: we are not ((Addressing to MIS))
2 (0.3)
3 *KHI: |you know↑ in my country↑
|((Turning toward AHM))
4 *AHM: ((AHM slightly nods and fixes his gaze at KHI))
5 *KHI: if you want to take the rice (0.9) er: we have to give
6 you first (0.6) the boy: (0.4) we have to give you
7 [first but now]
8 *MIS: [(ah still these)]day?
9 *KHI: a huh huhhuh
10 (0.3)
11 *MIS: is it okay ↗
12 *KHI: [yah::]
13 *AHM: [it is a] culture?
14 (0.6)
15 *KHI: uh yah
16 (0.6)
17 *MIS: o[h:::]]
18 *AHM: [but in] indonesia↗ it's ok.[(you don't want to ask)]
19 *MIS: [for me: it's ok yes::.]
20 (1.1)
21 *MIS: just [take.]
22 *KHI: [like] just like I'm not close with you:↓ that's
23 why I don't give you anything but(.)
24 *MIS: rea[lly:]
25 *KHI: [before] we take everything (0.4) I have to give you
26 first.
27 *AHM: oh::↗
28 *MIS: [uhm:::]]
29 *KHI: [I mean not] you: I mean boy.|(0.5)
|((AHM nods))
30 *KHI: uhm::(1.0)[(xxxxxx but family)]

Extract: Food in plastic bags

(02-10-2014 (1):49-9 14.40-15.39)

JAY: Thailand, NAS: Thailand, HED: Indonesia, THO: Indonesia

1 *THO: mum do^ʔ you know^ʔ (.) my biology teacher said that (0.4) if:
2 |the: food::(0.4)°er° take (0.2) in plastics not good for °health°
|((THO directs gaze towardsJAY))
3 *JAY: [why::]
4 *HED: [oh::]::
5 (0.3)
6 *THO: [but why↑]
7 *HED: [then why-] why do you keep eating↘ =
8 *JAY: = >but< in: so many Thai people eats.
9 | (0.7)
|((JAY takes the food bag and prepares to display it to THO))
10 *JAY: xxxxx((Speaking Thai: Don't overact))
11 *NAS: [ah ha xxxxx ah ha]((Speaking Thai: Don't overact))
12 *THO: [xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx] ((Speaking Indonesian))
13 *JAY: yo- |you^ʔ you can try this.
|((JAY shows sticky rice squeezed in his hand To THO))
14 (0.5)
15 *THO: hah:↗
16 | (0.4)
|((JAY shows food in his hand to THO))
17 *NAS: [Ni Goo JaYibNum Hai Gin]((Speaking Thai:I offer you the drink))
18 *JAY: [xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx](.) try (0.3)like me.
19 | (0.8)
|((JAY shows how to eat the food))
20 *THO: aha↗
21 *HED: oh:::
22 (0.4)
23 *THO: °oh:↗ like that°
24 (0.4)
25 *HED: xxxxxxxxxx ((Speaking Indonesian))
26 (0.7)
27 *JAY: should try.
28 | (1.7)
|((JAY takes the food bag and looks at THO))
29 *THO: °I don't like it° |amm::
|((THO takes food into his mouth))

30 | (1.1)
 | ((JAY puts back the food bag))
 31 *THO: ha ha↑ ha
 32 (0.6)
 33 *JAY: my culture lah::↗
 34 (0.6)
 35 *THO: your culture?
 36 (0.5)
 37 *JAY: I follow you: (0.9) when I: (0.7) I live in:: (0.3) your country
 38 (.) I (.) I follow:
 39 *THO: [↑okay: we follow you]
 40 *JAY: [follow your culture ev]ery- thing

Extract: Traffic in Jakarta

(12-10-2014: 21.00-22.09)

WAH: Malaysian, AHM: Indonesian, ZOD: Thai

1 *WAH: not not just (0.4) focus on KL because (0.2) kl is (0.2) REALLY
 2 REALLY crowded.
 3 (0.3)
 4 *AHM: °uhm° ((AHM slightly nods))
 5 (0.2)
 6 *WAH: and: (0.9) for ah: staying in KL for ah since I was a child
 7 °wow°
 8 (0.4)
 9 *AHM: but kay ale is more better than jakarta.
 10 (0.7)
 11 *WAH: [(°really°)]
 12 *AHM: [jakarta] is very crowded always traffic every where↗
 13 *WAH: every whe|re.
 | ((AHM nods))
 14 (0.4)
 15 *AHM: every where.
 16 *WAH: wow (.) its- I just (0.5) er::: read the news (0.3) maybe
 17 (0.6) ah: (.) one year or two years ago that (0.8) what they
 18 ca- (0.4) people that work in the corporate company they
 19 prefer to use bicycle
 20 (0.4)
 21 *AHM: yah [the capi] tal (0.2) so many cars (0.3) °in road°

22 *WAH: [to jakatar]
 23 *ZOD: and so many horns
 24 (0.2)
 25 *AHM: uhm
 26 *ZOD: they always [horn]
 27 *WAH: [I just]((*Blowing his nose*)) (0.3) I just ah: get a
 28 new-got a news from my friend(0.3) even just(0.3) the distance
 29 between (0.4) his home and his campus just around maybe(0.5)
 30 one kilometer right =
 31 *AHM: = uhm
 32 *WAH: but(0.8) one kilo meter if we(0.6) by bike it's just maybe
 33 take around (0.7) five to seven minutes maybe you just you can
 34 just reach that place (0.4) but he says wow it's (0.5) it's
 35 jammed and it gonna take around half an hour (0.2) even you're
 36 using bike ah: motorcycle (0.6) so:↗ I can't imagine how come
 37 jakatar is:=
 38 *AHM: = yah
 39 (0.9)
 40 *AHM: °very: very bad°

Extract: Hat Yai the road is so small

(15-10-2014: 614-654; 14.7.642-14.54.135)

ZON: Malaysian, GEM: Thai, HAN: Thai

1 *ZON: but (0.4) Hat Yai the:: when? in you in the town? (0.4)
 2 the: road is so small right (.) but [it's]
 3 *GEM: [yes]
 4 | (1.0)
 | ((*ZON looks away and display thinking face*))
 5 *ZON: [it's]
 6 *GEM: [be]cause it's (0.2) old city I [I think.]
 7 *ZON: [>yah yah<]
 8 it's old city (0.3) and the electric wire?
 9 | (0.7)
 | ((*ZON points to the cable in the restaurant*))
 11 *HAN: yeah:
 12 *ZON: the electric↑ (0.2) [cable?]
 13 *GEM: [ah:: ah] (.) ah ah:
 14 (0.5)

15 *ZON: it's very: (0.3) at (0.3) it's not at the high:
16 le [vel] right.
17 *GEM: [yes]
18 (0.2)
19 *GEM: yes
20 *ZON: it's very short (1.1) it's very: many (0.4) right(0.4)the wire.
21 (0.5)
22 *GEM: °yeah°
23 *ZON: the::::: =
24 *GEM: = ah:
25 *ZON: cable?
26 (0.3)
27 *GEM: yes I [know]
28 *ZON: [it's] very many
29 (0.7)
30 *GEM: but it's (0.3) ((TH1 smacks his lips)) today:
31 |(1.9) they want to: |(1.4) move cable |(0.6) for underground
|((GEM performs hand movement))
|((GEM's embodiment))
|((Both hands set at
above head level and moves downward))
32 *ZON: yah under[ground just]
33 *GEM: [yes- yes]
34 |(0.8)
|((ZON looks away))
35 *ZON: [same]
36 *GEM: [but](.) some (0.7) some place (0.3) not (0.2) not all of Hat
37 Yai

Extract: For Arab people always expensive

(05-11-2014 (1): 820-828; 16.57.773-17.10.173)

TH1: Thai, TH2: Thai, LIB: Libyan, IND: Indonesian

1 *NAT: in: in the mall maybe have like (0.8)
2 um:: [like halal] food [too]
3 *MOD: [xxxxxxxxxxx] [really?]
4 (0.3)
5 *NAT: but: it's for Arab and it's too: ↑expen[sive.]
6 *MOD: [°ex]pensive° I
7 know: Arab [always expen]sive.

8 *JUB: [°h ya(h)h °]
9 *NAT: [uhm:]
10 *JUB: [.hh]ha haha =
11 *PUT: = °yah°
12 (1.0)

Extract: Even though you order chicken, it's not halal

(05-11-2014 (1):1187-1215)

AHM: Indonesia, FAZ: Indonesia, PUT: Indonesia NAT: Thailand,
JUB: Thailand, MOD: Libya

1 *AHM: even that you [ordered the chicken]
2 *MOD: [fish fish] yeah [fish]
3 *NAT: [yah]
4 *AHM: or even you order chicken I think it's not halal halal=
5 *PUT: =too difficult to be there to eat food ha[lal]
6 *AHM: [yeah]
7 *NAT: yeah
8 *JUB: maybe big country yeah you can (xxxx)
9 *AHM: yeah the same similar.
10 *NAS: ha hahaha
11 *PUT: [ha huhuhu]
12 *FAZ: [XXXXXXXXX]
13 *NAT: no, it have: halal ehmm. [food in]:: mall for A:rab.=
14 *JUB: [it have but]
15 *AHM: = but in::
16 *NAT: and: (0.2)
17 *AHM: Hat Yai its
18 *NAT: expensive.